

Beyond Vocation or Avocation: Regenerative Food Growing as a Way of Life

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The binary work/leisure continues to be used to categorize many human activities, but falls short for ways of life in which a particular set of values undergirds all activities. This paper discusses regenerative forms of growing and harvesting food – in particular, permaculture and natural farming – as values-based practices that blur the boundaries between work and leisure. While there are other values-based practices that unite vocation and avocation, permaculture and natural farming are of special interest because they respond to young climate activists’ desire for ways of life that acknowledge that human activities are part of ecosystems, and that accept the need for an ecological transition.

Introduction

In February 2020, I had the opportunity to moderate a panel of six youth climate activists from the West Coast of Canada and the United States who had been invited to open a conference of the Surrey Teachers’ Association. The conference theme, “What do we teach when the world is burning?” pulled no punches, and neither did the panelists. Speaking with these young activists left a deep impression on me, not only because of their dedication, passion, and stamina, but also because of their scathing indictment of their education. With the exception of one activist who was enrolled in an alternative, online program, the activists struggled to think of much they were learning in school that was helping them either in their activism today, or in preparing for a future with a drastically changed climate.

The activists were acutely aware of living in a transition time,¹ a time when new structures and ways of living need to be designed, but their experience was that their teachers generally taught for the unsustainable status quo, rather than for a livable future. Panelist Rebecca Hamilton called for an education that is based on “an understanding that climate change is the biggest challenge that civilization has ever faced, and that the next ten years need to be a massive restructuring of our society.” The only kind of education that prepares students for their future, she pointed out, is one that has “that sense of transition in mind.”

The activists’ words, and their demand that education do better, have continued to resonate with me these past years, as I have sought my own ways to contribute to the transition Hamilton mentioned. I was reminded of the activists’ words again when considering this special issue’s focus on the categories of work and leisure, and how they continue to affect and inform education, against the backdrop of the regenerative design approaches and forms of food growing I have been studying.

¹ The concept of “transition” has been proposed in the United States by John Bennett (e.g., *The Ecological Transition: Cultural Anthropology and Human Adaptation*, 2005) and the United Kingdom by Rob Hopkins (e.g., *The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependency to Local Resilience*, 2008). A more recent example of its uptake in education is the report of the French working group “Teaching the Ecological Transition in Higher Education” submitted to the Minister of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation in 2020 (Jouzel & Abbadie, 2020).

These forms of food growing are neither hobby gardening nor large-scale agriculture, but rather small-scale approaches that focus on soil regeneration and the long-term sustainability of ecological and social systems. In this paper, then, I discuss ways of living for which the distinction between vocation and avocation falls short, in which a person's paid and unpaid activities are extensions of each other, and united by one set of values and commitments. In particular, I am interested in non-commercial and values-based forms of growing and harvesting for which the concepts of "leisure," "recreation," "hobby," and "avocation" seem inadequate. I will consider two related forms of food growing practiced today: "natural farming" as developed and promoted by Masanobu Fukuoka in Japan (Fukuoka, 1975/1978; Fukuda, 2018) and "permaculture" as developed and promoted by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in Australia (Mollison, 1988; Ferguson & Lovell, 2014). Natural farming involves food growing practices that avoid or minimize human interventions such as tilling the soil and adding compost or other fertilizer; permaculture involves the design and maintenance of integrated systems, including but not limited to food growing and waste disposal, that allow human beings to live with, but not at the expense of, the ecosystems of which they are a part. I will discuss how natural farming and permaculture can be understood as what Robert Frost called a "full-time interest," in which vocation and avocation are united. However, different from the emphasis on the self and the spiritual development of the self in American transcendentalism, natural farming and permaculture decentre the human self and emphasize the ecosystems humans inhabit. I will discuss how both natural farming and permaculture are not so much the results of education but a form of "learning anew how to inhabit an environment" (Centemeri, 2019, p. 97). Finally, I will reflect on the lack of preparation in common schooling for understanding such values-based ways of living.

Hobbies and Avocations

The binaries of work/leisure and vocation/avocation are deeply entwined with capitalism and its modes of production and distribution. As historian Steven Gelber (1999) explains, "the attitudes and values reproduced in hobbies arose not with industrialism but with capitalism. Hobbies originated as a category in response to the industrially induced bifurcation of work and leisure, but the values they reproduced were mercantile as well as industrial" (p. 4). In other words, the concept of leisure predates industrial capitalism and can be traced to merchant capitalism. Peter Burke (1995) agrees that, while "the emergence of leisure is part of the process of modernization" (p. 137), this process should be understood not only in economic terms, but also in social terms and, in particular, as part of an increasingly regulated society: "In the 'disciplinary society,' even play has to be subject to rules saying when, where, and among whom it is permissible" (p. 149).

Hobbies, it should be noted, are a subset of leisure activities; without attempting a tight definition of this much-debated concept, Gelber (1999) lists three features of leisure activities that are helpful in distinguishing them from work activities, namely that the former "take place in time that is free from work" (with "work" understood as those activities undertaken for economic necessity and subsistence), "are voluntarily undertaken," and "are pleasurable" (p. 7). To give some 21st century examples, leisure activities can include less productive and organized activities such as watching Netflix, texting with a friend, and hanging out at the mall, as well as more productive and organized hobbies such as collecting hockey cards, geocaching, and fly-fishing. In Robert Stebbins' (1982) definition, "a hobby is a specialized pursuit beyond one's occupation, a pursuit one finds particularly interesting and enjoys doing because of its durable benefits" (p. 260). Together with "amateurism" and "career volunteering," Stebbins counts hobbies among what he calls "serious leisure," an idea to which I will return in the next section.

In the early 20th century, there was growing concern in industrializing countries about the increase in leisure time that would be available to workers due to demands for an eight-hour workday and the increase of automation in factory production. The concern was not that people would be bored, but rather that they would engage in the wrong kinds of leisure activities such as drinking and

gambling. Nathan Schaeffer (1908), state superintendent of public instruction in Pennsylvania, wrote: “If the hours which are not devoted to work and sleep are spent in dissipation and riotous living, the eight-hour day will prove a curse instead of a blessing” (p. 110). Historian Arthur Pound (1922) concurred that “it is everlastingly true that the bulk of human mischief is done in spare time” because “while human beings are at work, they are, perforce, reasonably decent” (p. 206). As a result, the increase in leisure time led to calls for leisure education or “education for avocation” (Schaeffer, 1908) so that people would learn to use their spare time for meaningful and edifying pursuits. Gelber (1999) summarizes: “a growing chorus of leisure reformers called not only for more parks and playgrounds but also for more hobbies as a mischief-free use of spare time” (p. 40).

Pound (1922) explained in colourful detail that hobbies, that is, productive leisure-time activities, often focused on cultural (crafting, collecting) and outdoor (sports, gardening) pursuits, are key to a meaningful life, especially for the factory workers whose work had been rendered meaningless, repetitive, and unskilled due to automation:

The attendant of automatic tools does not live while he is on the job; he exists, against the time when he can begin to live, which is when he leaves the shop. His task does not call for a fraction of his full powers as a sentient being, or monopolize his interest. (p. 208)

However, the lives of those lucky enough to have more meaningful and creative work are also greatly enhanced by hobbies:

Is the tireless business man better company when he is chasing a golf-ball or when he is chasing a profit? Is the banker best satisfied with himself when he is figuring interest or when he is hip-deep in the stream, figuring trout? (p. 208)

The Canadian physician Sir William Osler agreed that highly trained professionals were equally in need of meaningful hobbies. He recommended to young physicians: “While medicine is to be your vocation, or calling, see to it that you also have an avocation ... some intellectual pastime which may serve to keep you in touch with the world of art, of science, or of letters. Begin at once the cultivation of some interest other than the purely professional” (1899/1932, p. 204, as cited in McManus, Jonvik, Richards, & Paice, 2011, p. 2).

Seemingly in direct response to Schaeffer’s title, “Education for Avocation” (1908), the English educator and philosopher Lawrence Pearsall Jacks wrote *Education through Recreation* (1932), in which he argued that recreation and leisure should be understood not as sharply distinct from work or education, but as continuous with them. Like Schaeffer and Pound, Jacks was concerned that people might use the increase in leisure that would surely be the result of automation for unhealthy pursuits:

If the director of a company is a director of night clubs, or a Monte Carlo gambler, let the shareholders look out for themselves. If the artisan spends his week-end in a debauch, or in attempting some athletic feat beyond his strength, you will know of it on Monday morning. (pp. 17–18)

However, Jacks argued not for separate “education for avocation” but rather for education that united work and leisure in one view of the good life:

A master in the art of living draws no sharp distinction between his work and his play, his labour and his leisure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence through whatever he is doing and leaves others to determine whether he is working or playing. To himself he always seems to be doing both. Enough for him that he does it well. (pp. 1–2)

In some ways, much has changed since those calls for “education for avocation” and the promotion of meaningful hobbies for all. For example, it has been well documented how predictions that increasing automation would lead to a “leisure society” missed the mark (Veal, 2018). Today’s “attendants of automatic tools,” when they leave the factory floor, may need to work additional hours as Uber drivers or Airbnb hosts. Secondly, the overtly moralizing tone of Schaeffer, Pound, and Jacks, cautioning against “ready-made pleasures and external excitement” (Jacks, 1932, p. 18) and promoting more elevated pursuits, is less common in Western educational texts today.

Thirdly, workers cannot be assumed to be men, as they were in the writings of Schaeffer, Pound, and Jacks, as the participation of women in the workforce has changed substantially in the past century. In the United States, for example, the participation of women in the paid labour force rose from 23.3% in 1920 to 58.6% in 2010 (Ortiz-Ospina, Tzvetkova, & Roser, 2018). The greater likelihood that women do a “double shift” of paid work outside the home and unpaid work at home (Kay, 1996) affects not only leisure patterns but the very understanding of what activities should be considered as such. Feminist leisure scholars have pointed out that leisure has traditionally been defined “in relation to paid (male) employment” (Aitchison, 2000, p. 141). As a result, activities “associated with the home, with children, or related to household work, shopping, or everyday consumption,” which may be harder to classify as either work or leisure, especially if undertaken by people who do not also hold paid employment outside the home, “are frequently omitted from empirical research within mainstream leisure studies” (p. 141).

In other ways, however, remarkably little has changed since the writings of Schaeffer and Pound. While the overtly moralizing tone promoting “worthwhile” activities may be gone, moral concern persists about specific leisure activities such as violent video games (Delamere & Shaw, 2006), forms of collecting that promote more consumerism (Cook, 2001), or sexualized images on social media (Hasinoff, 2013).

One of the most striking features of at least Schaeffer’s and Pound’s writing is that they assume a clear distinction between work and play, vocation and avocation, with the latter offering respite from the former, and an opportunity to “recreate” the energy needed for a return to work. The banker fishes for trout in his spare time; the fisherman plays music; the factory worker grows vegetables; the farmer carves wooden toys. Schaeffer’s and Pound’s texts don’t trouble the binary separation between work and leisure, nor the assumption that a flourishing life involves leisure activities that offer a clear break from one’s working hours. This assumption of a clear distinction between work and play and of meaningful play as a way to maintain work productivity persists today, evidenced by, for instance, the emphasis on “work-life balance” in human resource management as well as scholarly fields such as the sociology of work and leisure studies (e.g., Veal, 2020).

In what follows I will focus on the inadequacy of the work/leisure binary for paid and unpaid activities driven and united by a common set of values. I will broadly follow Jacks’ (1932) view that work and leisure should ideally be extensions of each other in the sense that they are shaped by the same values and commitments. The concepts of “full-time interest” and “value practice” capture well how activities can be united by one set of values, regardless of whether they are paid or unpaid, and take place in working hours or leisure time.

Full-Time Interests and Value Practices

But yield who will to their separation,
My object in living is to unite
My avocation and my vocation
As my two eyes make one in sight. (Frost, 1934)

In the poem “Two Tramps in Mud Time,” Frost describes a man who loves the practical task of chopping wood and who, because of his love for it, refuses to yield the task to others in need of paid

work. The task of chopping wood, while a form of reproductive labour that meets the man's own need to stay warm, is both a vocation and an avocation, that is, both the calling of one's occupation, and that which calls one away from one's occupation. Following George Monteiro's (1988) interpretation, Frost's poem reveals his inspiration by the transcendentalism of Henry Thoreau. Indeed, Thoreau (1863) had argued against the "incessant business" that served no purpose other than making money, and for the pursuit of meaningful activities that benefited both society and the spiritual development of the person: "There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting his living. ... You must get your living by loving."

The protagonist of Frost's poem chops wood for the personal satisfaction of it, rather than because he cannot afford to pay the tramps, and his indifference to the plight of the tramps looking for work has been criticized, including by the Marxist Malcolm Cowley. "There is no question that Frost must fail Cowley's test in socioeconomics and collectivist philosophy, but so must Thoreau," acknowledges Monteiro (1988, p. 80). Indeed, American transcendentalism was most concerned with individual independence and flourishing, which will be important to bear in mind when I discuss the more collectivist approaches of permaculture and natural farming. Nonetheless, the idea of a full-time interest is an apt description of the forms of food growing I will describe in the next section, and which are part of encompassing philosophies of life that cannot be captured fully by the work of farming or the leisure of gardening.

Of course, food growing is not the only area in which we see examples of full-time interests. For instance, think of someone whose life is dedicated to health and fitness. Perhaps she has a degree in kinesiology, physiotherapy, or human nutrition, and works as a dietician, personal trainer, or physiotherapist. In her spare time, she may play sports or enjoy other athletic activities, such as running or cycling. Her grocery shopping and eating habits are aligned with her commitment to health and fitness. She may even volunteer as a coach of a children's sports team or as an organizer of athletic activities in her local community centre. We could certainly say this person's vocation and avocation are an extension of one another and united by the same set of values. Similarly, we can imagine a resident teacher at a Buddhist centre, whose paid work includes leading meditations and retreats, writing dharma talks, and counselling members of the community. Outside the designated hours for the aforementioned activities, he may go for forest walks, enjoy vegetarian cooking, and practice archery. Here, too, the vocation and avocation are extensions of one another and united by a clear set of values. The reason I am focusing on the examples of permaculture and natural farming is because they are the kinds of practices that respond to the youth climate activists' demands for new ways of living in the face of the climate crisis. While there are many kinds of full-time interests, not all of them offer hope in imagining a livable future in conditions of climate change. However, the other examples further illustrate that when vocation and avocation are an extension of each other, they tend to be informed by the same set of strong values, spiritual or otherwise.

As I touched on in the previous section, Stebbins (1982) proposes the idea of "serious leisure" to emphasize the "earnestness, sincerity, importance, and carefulness" (p. 258) with which certain leisure activities are undertaken. Full-time interests have a number of qualities in common with Stebbins's "serious leisure." For example, they often require "significant personal effort based on special knowledge, training, or skill, and sometimes all three" (p. 256), and "tend to develop subcultures composed of special beliefs, values, moral principles, norms, and performance standards" (p. 257). As an example of the latter, many permaculture practitioners connect locally, nationally, and internationally via "permie" websites, social media hashtags, workshops, and summits. However, Stebbins maintains the work/leisure distinction to understand, for instance, the baker who is also a stamp-collector (hobby), the lawyer who serves on the board of a community organization (volunteerism), and the nurse who is a keen guitar player (amateurism). By contrast, in the integrated ways of life that are my focus, the work/leisure distinction is unsatisfactory.

Isabelle Dussauge, Claes-Fredrik Helgesson, Francis Lee, and Steve Woolgar (2015), writing in the context of medicine and the life sciences, propose the concept of "value practices" as enactments of values in practice. The study of value practices focuses not on values in the abstract but rather on

“how ... the question ‘What comes to count as valuable?’ [is] answered in practice” (p. 28). Laura Centemeri (2019) uses this concept of “value practices” to study everyday enactments of social and ecological values, for example, by those practicing permaculture. Her framing of permaculture as a “value practice” underscores that what matters is that the activities are driven by a desire for repair and regeneration, and not whether they are paid or unpaid, or would more traditionally be considered work, leisure, or some other in-between category such as volunteer work or political engagement. The “crucial practices by which people and things make stakes, matters of concern, or matters of care – or displace them” (Dussauge, Helgesson, Lee, & Woolgar, 2015, p. 10) are not enactments of minor values or trivial preferences, things that people consider “sort of important but can ultimately take or leave”; they are enactments of values that give shape to people’s lives. To return to Frost’s term, they are “full-time” values that affect all aspects of life. Both natural farming and permaculture are rooted in such full-time values.

Natural Farming

I do not particularly like the word “work.” Human beings are the only animals who have to work, and I think this is the most ridiculous thing in the world. Other animals make their livings by living, but people work like crazy, thinking that they have to in order to stay alive. (Fukuoka, 1975/1978, p. 64)

Fukuoka’s aversion to work was not an aversion to activity. In fact, some might have called him a hard-working man, experimenting tirelessly with farming methods until he had developed the “natural” or “do nothing” farming method for which he became known. Fukuoka’s aversion was to “work” as a category of activity separate from other aspects of life, to the pursuit of a career for the sake of status and money, and to work that separated humans further from nature: in a life of simplicity, “work is not work as people generally think of it, but simply *doing what needs to be done*” (p. 64, emphasis added).

Fukuoka (1913–2008) was a Japanese farmer and thinker who developed a method of growing food with a minimum of human intervention. More specifically, he argued that many of the most labour-intensive processes of mainstream farming are both unnecessary and harmful, because the soil will do better over time when food growing is less invasive and respects natural processes: “I ultimately reached the conclusion that there was no need to plough, no need to apply fertilizer, no need to make compost, no need to use insecticide. When you get right down to it, there are few agricultural practices that are really necessary” (p. 11).

Fukuoka (1975/1978) advocated a pre-industrial way of life in which the category of “hobby” made as little sense as the category of “work,” if these terms are understood in their industrial sense as binary opposites. This way of life was shaped by a larger philosophy “that penetrates beyond considerations of soil analysis, pH, and harvest yields” (p. 64). For example, Fukuoka was explicitly critical of economic growth for its own sake, excessive human desire and consumption, and analytic scientific approaches that amass knowledge like capital but fail to capture the interconnectedness and interdependence of all elements in an ecosystem.

Natural farming continues today, both within and outside of Japan and whether inspired by Fukuoka or by the similar and related approaches of Mokichi Okada (1882–1955) or Yoshikazu Kawaguchi (1939–). Kaoru Fukuda (2018), when studying practitioners of Kawaguchi’s natural farming, observed a broader desire to live in harmony with nature, to revitalize the ecosystem along with their personal health, and to lead a simpler life away. Some of Fukuda’s research participants

had worked long hours as company employees before joining the [natural farming] school. Their aversion to stressful urban lifestyles had led to their interest in farming and being in contact with nature. Many referred to agriculture as “the basics of human life.” (p. 19)

Many people who follow natural farming methods are not full-time farmers, nor can they live off the food they grow or income they generate from sold crops. They may rent rather than own the land on which they grow food, or use the “learners’ fields” of a natural farming school. However, referring to natural farming as a “hobby” would trivialize the significance of natural farming as a way of life that is based on values that extend well beyond the activities directly associated with growing food. The same applies to permaculture, which, even when it generates only part of the practitioner’s income, or none at all, tends to be a full-time interest.

Permaculture

Permaculture was developed in the 1970s in Australia by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren. Their approach was inspired by the work of, among others, Fukuoka (discussed above), the Australian agronomist and engineer P. A. Yeomans, and the Indigenous peoples of Australia.

Permaculture (permanent agriculture) is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. ... The philosophy behind permaculture is one of working with, rather than against, nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation; of looking at systems in all their functions, rather than asking only one yield of them; and of allowing systems to demonstrate their own evolutions. (Mollison, 1988, pp. 1–2).

Permaculture practitioner, writer, and teacher Toby Hemenway (2006) preferred to think of permaculture as a form of horticulture, that is, the less intensive and smaller-scale forms of food growing we tend to call “gardening,” rather than agriculture, the more intensive and larger-scale forms of food growing we tend to call “farming.” “Horticulturists use polycultures, tree crops, perennials, and limited tillage, and have an intimate relationship with diverse species of plants and animals. ... Permaculture, in its promotion of horticultural ideals over those of agriculture, may offer a road back to sustainability.” Whether or not permaculture is best understood as agriculture or horticulture is an open question. However, because farming is more commonly seen as work and gardening as a leisure activity – in spite of hybrid concepts such as the hobby farm and market garden – I prefer the more neutral and descriptive term “food growing.”

As with Fukuoka, Mollison’s work was based on a deep concern about environmental degradation and a belief that systemic change was needed, both in systems of food production and in other life systems involving energy and resource use, including home heating and cooling, waste management, and general patterns of consumption:

We have expanded our right to live on the earth to an entitlement to conquer the earth, yet “conquerors” of nature always lose. To accumulate wealth, power, or land beyond one’s needs in a limited world is to be truly immoral, be it as an individual, an institution, or a nation-state. (1988, p. 1)

This explains why permaculture, regardless of the role it plays in income generation, is a “full-time interest” and does not remain contained to either work or leisure.

Rafter Sass Ferguson and Sarah Taylor Lovell (2014) observe that, over the years, the term “permaculture” has come to be used to refer to the design approach, the international movement of people embracing this approach, the values underpinning the design approach, and even the specific techniques or elements commonly used by permaculture designers. This can lead to confusion about “permaculture” as a standalone term. Nonetheless, whether referring to the people, design principles, or practical approaches, it is clear that permaculture is a value practice in the sense that it is informed by a worldview and a set of ethical principles: “At the core of the permaculture worldview is the idea

that – with the application of ecologically informed holistic planning and design – humans can meet their needs while increasing ecosystem health” (p. 266). In other words, humans are seen as neither superior, nor necessarily detrimental to other elements in the ecosystem. Mutually regenerative interspecies cohabitation including human beings is possible, as long as those human beings curb their desires so that their efforts regenerate all life systems, not just their own. It is this worldview that makes permaculture relevant to agroecological transition, more broadly (p. 265). Based on her study of permaculture practitioners in Italy, Centemeri (2019) writes,

The alternative value practices that I observed in Italian permaculture initiatives are articulated with alternative value arguments and emerging socio-technical imaginaries. Recurrent topics in these arguments and imaginaries are “transition,” “degrowth,” “slow living,” “conviviality,” “living in harmony with nature,” “abundance,” “rurbanity,” inclusion and emancipation, and also “collapse,” self-sufficiency, and natural order. (p. 107)

The permaculturists I know may have a part-time paid job in a bakery, grow food in their garden, exchange seeds or plant cuttings with others in their community, and attend webinars on rainwater and grey water harvesting. They may be a landscape designer, run a small tree nursery, teach children in school gardens, and forage for mushrooms in the right season. They may be carpenters, architects, tree planters, writers, lawyers, musicians, or teachers with full, part, or no paid employment, but their commitment to living in regenerative systems extends and exceeds the boundaries of their careers and the categories of work and leisure. The youth climate activists who spoke on the panel were asking for examples of ways of living that are consistent with the societal restructuring they see as necessary, and that will enable them to imagine a livable future. Such examples and alternative imaginaries exist, but whether youth are introduced to them seems to depend on their family and family’s network, rather than these examples being offered as part of the school curriculum.

Conclusion: Beyond Vocational Education and Education for Avocation

Natural farming and permaculture are just two examples of a wide range of approaches to growing and harvesting food that are focused on land regeneration and sustainability, and that escape the work/leisure binary. The most obvious examples I did not discuss, for the simple reason that I know them less well, are Indigenous agroecological approaches such those of the Kichwa-Lamista people in Peru (Caradonna & Apffel-Marglin, 2018), the Lacandan Maya people in Mexico (Krebs & Bach, 2018, par. 3.1.3), and many others.² One scholar who has successfully bridged Indigenous and Western discourses is Robin Wall Kimmerer. In her book *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013) she recounts numerous experiences that cannot be captured neatly as either “work” or “leisure” because they are expressions of a core set of values that inform all life activities. When she is looking for wild leeks, for example, her observations as a plant scientist cannot be separated from her foraging for dinner or asking the plants for permission:

Asking permission shows respect for the personhood of the plant, but it is also an assessment of the well-being of the population. Thus I must use both sides of my brain to listen to the answer. The analytic left reads the empirical signs to judge whether the population is large and healthy enough to sustain a harvest, whether it has enough to share. The intuitive right

² Some have criticized permaculture as perpetuating colonial practices (Massicotte & Kelly-Bisson, 2019), and the risk of cultural appropriation persists. However, conscientious permaculture teachers explicitly acknowledge their indebtedness to Indigenous approaches and bodies of knowledge. Mollison (1988), for example, writes that “unless we adopt sophisticated aboriginal belief systems and learn respect for all life, then we lose our own, not only as lifetime but also as any future opportunity to evolve our potential” (p. 2).

hemisphere is reading something else, a sense of generosity, an open-handed radiance that says *take me*, or sometimes a tight-lipped recalcitrance that makes me put my trowel away. (p. 178)

Foraging for leeks is not a hobby that happens to provide an interesting example for Kimmerer's work as a plant scientist any more than her professionally gained knowledge of plants enriches a leisure activity. These categories fail to capture Kimmerer's foraging for leeks as an enactment of a central set of values.

When Schaeffer wrote his "Education for Avocation," it was because schooling was, in his mind, focused too narrowly on the knowledge and skills students would need for their working life, neglecting a preparation for the pursuit of worthwhile leisure activities. In some ways, school curricula today already seem to take a more holistic approach to students' readiness for the vocational and avocational aspects of their adult lives. For example, curricula typically include physical education as well as arts and/or music; while only a small proportion of students is likely to pursue these professionally, these subject areas offer other students opportunities to explore activities they may wish to continue recreationally. Moreover, where explicit "career education" curricula exist, these may now call more attention to the connections between the working and non-working portions of an adult life. For example, the Alberta "Career and Life Management" curriculum (grades 10–12) brings together career planning, financial literacy, and education on health and wellbeing (Alberta Ministry of Education, 2015), while British Columbia's "Career-Life Education" (CLE) and "Career-Life Connections" (CLC) curricula emphasize how an exploration of personal strengths and interests prepares students for a life in which they will likely need to change career paths:

For most people, career-life planning will not be a matter of making one major decision and living with it for a lifetime. Educated citizens in today's world are open to multiple possibilities for the future, and are flexible and able to adapt to emerging opportunities that fit their overarching values and aspirations. The CLE and CLC curricula are designed to help students learn how to effectively manage their life journey toward several possible preferred futures. (BC Ministry of Education, 2019, p. 2)

Career-Life Education also calls attention to the need for balance between one's personal and work life. It is less clear whether students, in either of these curricula, also have an opportunity to discuss the values that shape dominant value practices, and to understand alternative sets of values that can shape different value practices. As Centemeri (2019) writes, "In the current phase of global capitalism, dominant value practices are influenced by arguments and imaginaries that establish the uncontested centrality of economic growth, which is recognised as the source of social well-being" (p. 99). The school curricula I mentioned do not contest this dominant paradigm of assumed economic growth, or the implicit work/leisure binary. By contrast, the youth climate activists I described in my introduction to this paper demanded quite pointedly that their education help them imagine other futures, ways of living that are consistent with their understanding of the acute need for a transition to sustainable economic and social structures.

What the examples of natural farming and permaculture hopefully illustrate is not only the existence of groups of people seeking to enact values of ecological regeneration and sustainability, but also how such practices cannot be understood as either work or leisure, career or hobby, regardless of the income they generate and how many waking hours they occupy. The youth climate activists understand that the world they will inhabit as adults will inevitably be marked by climate change and environmental degradation, and it is imperative that their education prepare them for living in those circumstances, as well as for contributing to the reversal or at least slowing down of further heating and degradation. Natural farming, permaculture, and other agroecological approaches that are "meant to repair socio-ecological systems and to help people *reinhabit* them" (Centemeri, 2019, p. 104) show that such reinhabiting is a value practice that crosses the borders of work and leisure. Students are asking teachers and other adults explicitly for examples of ways of life that take seriously the idea that a socio-ecological transition is inevitable. The integrated ways of life I have described in this paper, which

exceed the work/leisure boundaries and are informed throughout by a commitment to mitigating and adapting to climate change, are two of such examples.

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