

Postgrowth Society

FEMINIST INSIGHTS

Francisca Niklitschek

✉ fran.niklitschek@gmail.com

Introduction

Well-being as the Foundation

Regardless of where you contribute to society, well-being of people and the planet should be the foundation of all our efforts, not the pursuit of profit.

The Role of Technology

Technology plays a vital role in facilitating this transition, focusing on serving people and the environment in first place.

💬 This presentation invites us to decolonize our view of economic development and explore new paths that can truly succeed.

⚠️ We are in an emergency, and this ecological crisis requires a radical policy response.

The Flaws of Endless Growth

Questioning the Logic of Capitalism

❗ In an age of ecological collapse, we urgently need to question the logic of capitalism—the system in which we live.

Key Issues with the Current Economic Model

- ➔ **Endless Accumulation:** The current economic system is centered on capital accumulation, which is an endless story.
- ⚠️ **Economic growth is seen as synonymous with progress.**
- ⚖️ **GDP as a Flawed Metric:** GDP increases with oil spills but fails to account for unpaid care work, such as raising children or looking after elders.
- 🌿 **Environmental and Social Impact:** Endless growth is direct cause of environmental degradation and social inequality.

We have the power to rewrite this story, to take a different path

Degrowth as the Beginning

Radical shift that challenges of the obsession with “more” — and asks us to slow down, to reflect, and to let go of what isn't serving us. It's about making space for what truly matters.

✔ **Challenging Economic Growth Imperative:** Degrowth redefines success by prioritizing quality of life and ecological sustainability over economic growth. All economic and political efforts should aim to enhance these conditions.

↓ **Equitable Downscaling:** We must put an end to everything that does not serve our well-being or the health of our planet. This involves reducing production and consumption by ending practices such as planned obsolescence, fast fashion, or harmful advertising.

A Post-growth society is one in which:

- ★ **Prosperity is Redefined:** Success is measured by well-being, community, and harmony with the planet, prioritizing care and connection over wealth.
- 🌍 **Global Ecological Justice is Achieved:** Transforming material consumption reduces ecological harm, ensuring justice for all, and not displacing problems to the Global South.
- 👥 **Social Justice is Consolidated:** The imperial mode of living is replaced by a solidarity-based one, fostering sustainable lifestyles.
- 🏢 **Institutions and Infrastructure Are Redesigned:** Systems operate without reliance on perpetual growth, promoting equity, sustainability, and a good life for everyone.

Feminist Insights on Degrowth

Critique of Systems of Domination

Degrowth challenges interconnected systems of domination, including all exploitative relationships.

A Consequence, Not a Goal

The feminist perspective within degrowth is not an end in itself. It emerges from the necessity of ending all forms of oppression.

 **Valuing Life:** Nature and social reproduction are foundational to life, yet they are devalued and invisible in the capitalist growth paradigm.

 **Focus on Care:** Degrowth centers on caring for people and the environment, recognizing the vulnerability of life as central to its political vision.

Feminist Insights on Degrowth

Radical Transformation

A radical transformation of society beyond the growth paradigm can only be achieved by addressing the capitalistic growth dictate alongside its deep patriarchal roots, which disproportionately affect marginalized groups.

Holistic Approach

Degrowth aims for a systemic transformation that confronts not only environmental challenges but also the social and economic injustices perpetuated by all systems of oppression linked to capitalism, patriarchy, imperialism, and neocolonialism.

 **Vision for the Future:** This interconnected approach is essential for building a truly sustainable and equitable society for all.

Final Thoughts

What we call “economy” is our material relationship with each other and with the rest of the living world. What kind of relationship do we envision?

- Do we wish to perpetuate systems of domination and extraction?
- Or do we aspire to an economy built on reciprocity and care—where people create useful goods, are fairly compensated, and innovations make longer-lasting products, reduce ecological impact, lighten labor, and enhance well-being?

We have everything to lose, and a world to gain.