

Should academics work less to help the planet?

Podcast transcript

Please note: this is an auto-generated and unedited transcript of the original, unedited recording of the podcast.

Dallas O'Dell: So higher education today is brought with a variety of issues surrounding work: precarious contracts, pay disputes, strikes, and increasingly heavy workloads. In today's podcast for LSE's higher education blog, we're going to discuss one of these in greater detail. That is how much time we spend working in Academia. My name is Dallas Odell, and I'm a Phd. Student here at LSE, researching de-growth, which can be defined as a planned downscaling of production and consumption to bring these systems within planetary boundaries whilst prioritizing well being over economic prosperity.

Now I have come to feel a bit of a paradox as a researcher of the topic between the pressure to put my work out there, whilst also wanting to prioritize a less intense, more deliberate way of life in line with de growth: work, time, reduction policies aimed at reducing the hours of paid work in a week are often cited in de growth. Literature, which is written by academics. Yet this feels quite disconnected from the compounding pressures on academics to work more and more. I wanted to discuss this topic further with some fellow academics who are at different career stages.

So today we have Doctor Emma Garnett, who is a post doctoral researcher at the Sustainable and Healthy Food group at the University of Oxford.

Thanks, Emma, for joining

Emma Garnett: thanks for having me great to be here.

Dallas O'Dell: Right? We also have Dr. Fred Bosso, who is an associate professor at Lse Department of Psychological and Behavioral Science. Welcome, Fred, thanks for joining me.

Great. So I wanna preface this conversation just by acknowledging that workloads in higher education do depend on career stages and other factors. But that said, I'm curious what each of your thoughts are on the current state of work in academia today. So could you describe your current workload, for example, how much time maybe you spend on work in a week and then say, what's the most challenging aspect of your workload is so embar, maybe you can start

Emma Garnett: sure. So I work a full day week. So that's 80% full time equivalent, and, let's say, kind of average between 9 30 Am. To 5 30 pm. If I've done a few few hours during my Monday to Thursday. I'll make some time up on Friday, or if there are deadlines coming up and stuff like that some extra hours. I think my workload. I'm quite lucky with the position

I'm in. I'm I'm not happy to do teaching which can take up a lot of academics time. I'm able to focus on research. But the uncertainty over contracts, and where the next lot of funding is gonna come from means that that does sort of hang over you and influence the the work you're doing, and you know, short term and long term plans.

And I'm very aware that for so many others around me who perhaps do have permanent positions, or maybe even not, but particularly administrative staff it people working on the legal side, a a really under resourced. And the people that are there have a huge workload. So I think that is challenging for the people and the institutions as well.

Dallas O'Dell: Great thanks, Emma. Fred, how about you.

Fred Basso: Yeah. So when when it comes to my workload, it's actually not easy to say, because it can vary according to the the constraints, the duties that I will have, but I will say, but because I don't like to to sleep. So it's not something that I I like doing. So. I wake up quite early in the morning. So the first thing I do is to read a bit of a newspaper, get myself to date. Better so, then to to start working on my, on my papers and on my research or reading articles. So I started quite early, and and so around like depends. Sometimes I mean usually 5, but sometimes early on it depends if I have a lot of work to do, and because I can't sleep anymore, anyways and and so then it takes like I do that for 10 h usually, and then I stop quite early in the evening, so I don't finish as late as Emma. Does it around 6 or 7. And I do that 5 days a week, and then during the weekends, I also because I wake up very early, cause I don't sleep at home weekend ziver I read things or work in a Saturday and Sunday morning. So usually I do 50 to 60 HA week when it comes to work could be more intense sometimes, if you have a lot of marking, or things like that during a short window of time. Then I would say that this is not that much painful to me. Given that I actually don't consider that reading an article is that much of work? I mean. Sometimes I do feel that this is pleasure also. So it's very hard for me to say where the differences and what it becomes challenging is to find the boundary between my work and my private life, because it's hard to stop at some point thinking about my research, or what I read or book that I am working on an article or data collection, an article to revise and resubmit, for instance, which sometimes, like like, keeps you keeps you very aware, and and focused. And so that's that's this is part of the workload that I find difficult to do is to find the the the difference between your private life and and your and your work. So that's that's what I would say. Briefly.

Dallas O'Dell: great thanks. Brod, yeah, it's interesting to hear different perspectives from different career stages, but also maybe different positions in life, and I would definitely be curious to know how your workloads compare to sort of your average academic but anyway, so in the Uk 61 companies entered a 40 work week trial in 2022, and the project appears to have been rather successful. So 56 of these companies extended the trial indefinitely to my knowledge, though there has been no such conversation about reducing work hours for academic staff in higher education of Uk institutions.

Fred, why do you think that this might be the case?

Fred Basso: I thought about it because I think it's an excellent question, because academic stuff might like be very happy to actually work full day a week. I think that actually, if they wanted to, they could. So I went back to the terms and conditions of my work at Gnc. And it's written that we are supposed to work 35 HA week, and it's not said that it has to be 5 days a week. Not that I have noticed. So you could, for instance, do the 35 HA week within 4 days, if you wanted to. But to my knowledge, academics. And this is something that we know from the recent strike and the the social movements that we had in academia, academics on average work 50 to 60 HA week. That's that's what we observe. That's the that's the tendency. So it's hard to pack 60 h in a 4 days. And I believe that's this is because, in a sense, what we do is very time consuming. And it's sometimes very hard also to anticipate how long something is gonna is gonna be. If you think of data analysis, for instance, when you start analyzing, your data might take like, sometimes it goes fast, but sometimes it takes like ages. I recall when I was crunching some fmri data on the project. It was like dragging forever, and it could be endless, and it extended my work by hours, but also by weeks and months, and and so on. So I think at the end of the day. The thing is the the fact that we cannot really ring fence our work and say, Okay, today, within 12 h, I'm doing to do. I'm going to do that, and they will be done by that day. It is possible at times, but it might be very difficult, and this is where I think academics might be not reluctance, but might find difficult to work to, to to work 4 days a week. I don't say it's impossible. I think it might be difficult.

Emma Garnett: Well, that's interesting, because I think if academics are working, or if anyone is working 60 h work weeks and doing that over a prolonged period of time, I think you know. Well, being like physical and mental health, you know, could suffer, or also simply, even if it's not that the quality of work per hour, what they might. You're getting done per hour is probably much less than if you have a shorter working week, because some of the findings from the 4 day work week. So there isn't a decrease in productivity. Sometimes it's an increase. And I think if we're thinking about sustainable you know, equal societies, if you're working a 60 h week, you know. Who's making your meals? Who's cleaning your house? Is that a female partner? Is that an underpaid laborer that you know what are the externalities of having work schedules, that punishing, I think, flexibility in working is really beneficial. And so I'm not saying that no one should ever work a 60 h week so often when it's a deadline or a crunch period, or you know all of your marking like you, said Fred. Then it can be quite satisfying to just really. You know, Blitz, through a huge workload. But I think that for that to be sustainable that has to be counterbalance with much fewer hours, and next week to avoid burnout, which we know is also a huge problem in in many fields, including academia.

Fred Basso: Yeah, no, that's that's an excellent point. And but to say, for instance, to follow up on what you said this this month, I was working on a colleague with a book that I was finishing with him. So we were working like we were starting very early in the morning, and having long days, and as soon as I submitted the book then during the week, but followed. That was a bit less working less intensively because I know that the academic year is is resuming is starting now. Sorry, and the and then I will feel that I can't. I can't keep working that much, and I need to restore a bit or my my energy. But, as I said before to me sometimes, what we call work is not necessarily or can I say, like work, it could be also pleasure, just because reading an article might be a relaxing. And if you, if you divide your

time in some ways you can find magazine back in 2,013, talking about the tyranny of like, do what you love, and you'll never work a day in your life.

Emma Garnett: and just that, how that denigrates people who are doing less lovable jobs, which, often producing like producing food or kind of oh, this is often like the physical labor jobs, and some of those people probably do love doing what they do, but kind of some menial tasks. Saying oh, only that counts as work. But doing work you do love. Isn't absolutely fluffing that. To conclude I think just because academics or anyone enjoys aspects of their work certainly does not mean it should not count towards your work hours total. I think that's a very dangerous path.

Dallas O'Dell: Thanks, Emma, and thanks front definitely interesting and different perspectives. And we will come back to, I think, this this topic a bit more. But before we do so, I curious, Emma. So you have had some experience recently. You say you work a 4 day work week, which is pretty atypical amongst academics. And there are, you know, work, time reductions that people take for a variety of different reasons might be in relation to to degrowth. It might have no sort of idea or awareness of the idea of the term degrowth. So I'm curious. In your case, what was your motivation for reducing your work? Time? And what has been your experience so far?

Emma Garnett: Well, the postdoc I applied for after my Phd. On the application form there were options for an 80% full time equivalent or a hundred percent. And I thought, Oh, that's that's great. I'll I'll go for the 80%. And I'd like to do that over a 4 day work week and I was supported in doing that. And someone in the organization did say, Well, why do you want to work a 4 day week, and I thought, Well, why don't you want to work a 6 day week? That just seemed a very that kind of 5 day normality the norm has become very, very ingrained. And this first job I began in September 2020. So the kind of lockdown and that part of the covid pandemic which is ongoing. But the lockdowns were, you know arriving and leaving and arriving and leaving, especially in the Uk. So I think it was quite an odd start up to a 4 day work week, but my motivations were to have more time, essentially, and to work better when I was working. Not just have the sort of presenteeism of just just because you, you know, state that you're working while you're at the office or at your desk doesn't mean you're necessarily being productive. And so that was more time, you know, for sleep and hobbies, and visiting friends and family and relaxation. But also more time for what I'd call like unpaid labor. And I think that can run the spectrum from, you know, cooking, which is something I enjoy doing to, you know, cleaning my house, which is something that I don't enjoy doing, but also environmental and political activism. And I think that speaks to Fred's points about. You know the the when you're working on sustainability, the the the blurred boundaries between what is your kind of day, job, and what when you, stepping outside of that, but still very related. does get quite thorny. And I don't want to overstate the activism that I do. But you know I do spend time doing environmental and political campaigning. and I think you know that is often UN. I'd I'd call a little bit more unpaid labor than a hobby, you know. I wish the climate and biodiversity and inequality crises we solved, and I could be relaxing with friends rather than marching in London on a cold or too hot a day. But, we're not there yet. So someone has to say, we need things to change, and many, many people do.

And so I think that's just having a bit more time to do these non paid labor labor activities which I think are really important. And I think those were important, regardless. But for academics you're thinking about a full day working week, and a bit worried that they'll have less productivity. I think my involvement on the whole activism side has also informed and benefited my research. It means I found out things which meant I've ended up on papers. I wouldn't have done otherwise. It's given me insights into new topics.

So I think, purely from a productivity point of view. You can say, you know, doing things with your time other than work can could help your academic career, which for some people might sound a bit counterintuitive. But it gives you a chance to step off the treadmill, take a look around, and come back on with a bit more energy.

Dallas O'Dell: Awesome. Thank you. So my main motivation for this whole discussion, which is somewhat relevant to the talk we were having before is you know, thinking about sustainability de growth. Well, being researchers how they should be the best informed about the benefits of working less including reducing emissions, but also improving health and well being. They might have even published pieces, promoting work, time reductions. And you know, some academics even oversaw the UK. 4 day work week trial. And yet as individuals, academics tend to push themselves to work harder and harder, to get papers out there, to win more grants, to achieve more accolades. So there feels like this is a a very large disconnect from the sort of cognitive knowledge of the benefits versus the personal experience in how you behave so, Emma, do you think that academics consider themselves exempt from these benefits? Of working less? Or do you think that there is maybe the sense of urgency or the sort of yeah activism role as well from the climate crisis that makes their work feel more pressing or more timely, or in in need to work more.

Emma Garnett: Well, I think there's a whole thesis in that question. These are really important points. Let me see if I can go through these and some semblance of order. I think everyone can struggle to practice what they preach. I think that is also true within academia in terms of the, you know, have to work really hard because of what I'm working on is so important. I think research is important, and it is, you know, often very enjoyable why academic jobs are so competitive. At the same time, I think, looking at the climate and biodiversity crises, these are not gonna be solved by one more paper. We are not stopping from acting due to a lack of information. We are swimming and information about climate and biodiversity loss. What we need are policy changes. And one of the ways we get those policy changes is through activism. You can't. It is very difficult to get employed as an activist more. This is an academic. I think this is the real stop gap on action. And so for academics who are feeling that? Yeah, oh, this is so urgent I can't stop working, I would say, well, you know, maybe work a bit less in your, you know office in on your papers, and, you know, go out and start marching, start protesting, start lobbying for actions to be taking get involved with. You know, local national elections Try and change the needle. We know that this can work, and it's the only way it works. I think the data underpinning that is important but kind of use that privilege of getting paid to do research to also go and advocate because you were very well informed. And so I think that is really key. I think academic. Some academics, perhaps we can consider self slightly separate from the society that we're trying to, you

know, change or advocate. I know you know one conservation academic. When I was saying, well, we should be campaigning, and, you know, lobbying for action on biodiversity, he was like, Oh, but we already work on it so surely that's for other people to do, and I just completely disagreed with that. And I thought, no, this is our passion. We're getting paid for this, we're very well informed. It's up to us. you know, because is he loving and advocating for policies about homelessness? Or, you know, female reproductive health, or all these other super super important issues which he's not working on. But other people are. I think, if we want people to also take part in our kind of I don't know quite say special interest. But if we want non people who don't work in sustainability to to join in the campaign for change, we should also join in other campaigns across environmental and social justice. So I think in terms of the urgency of it, I think we can't afford not to devote some time away from work and towards campaigns.

Dallas O'Dell: Great! Thank you so much. And, Fred, what what sort of interventions do you think could be put in place? So at what level of the academic institution. Do you think interventions need to be made for academics to work less? So you said maybe, that they could But what do you think really would need to change?

Fred Basso: That's that's a good question. I think it's It would depend on the which academic you asked to. For instance, if I imagine that some of my colleagues, they might say, Oh, we should have less teaching or less marking or less supervision. For instance, in my free up sometime. I'm not sure I'm not sure about that, because I think it's it matters a lot also to pass in the knowledge and part of my activism. Quotation mark is also full education, I believe, because this is what can make a change By educating the generations and and not to think the next generations not to think that. Oh, can I say That that is just with short term interventions, that something might work out that we need. It's really like a mindset. It's really a world view that we need to share. With people. Now, if speaking of world view and mindset. I think that one thing that we could change institutionally is the whole policy. Can I say industry, policy, or education policy that is revolving around research, which is, for instance, to always be focused on impact, to always been focused on grants and so on. And academics play a lot of part in there. I mean, there is a kind of if you use Max term, for instance, form of a false consciousness, you know, or or some form of governmentality. If you take Fukov just that people tend to embody at some point to incorporate the way of thinking that is in their environment, and they justify the entire system. And I see some colleagues who are very much into sustainability, or even the growth, and that starts commoditizing themselves as we do commoditize research, commodify research with where papers become a commodity while you are researcher who is looking for funding. So then you get the funding and you are manager. You're managing people, and your ideas have been sold to someone. And then you have also your advertising. Your research could be on LinkedIn could be on your website. And so there is like a kind of trend that is created around that and that then it becomes very difficult to escape the obsession with publication and being more productive, because if you do have a website where you advertise yourself, if you have nothing to advertise after a few months. Then it looks like you don't have activity anymore. You see. So as this mindset that you need to grow because you are showcasing yourself and advertising yourself. So I think that to some extent this is part of what we can change like this, focus on the individual when it comes to research this terrification that we can observe at star at times with with research, and think more about long-term perspective

and something that is like, Okay, well, I might not do anything for 2 years in terms of publications, but I'm working on a big project that I believe could make sense. When it comes to this kind of research and sustainability, or whatever. Okay? Well, yeah, I think you touched on a lot of very important points, one of them definitely being these sort of

Dallas O'Dell: the idea of reproducing these institutional norms of productivity even within spaces like de growth research, which leads very well to my next question, which is about how in the past few years, so the field of de growth research has obviously proliferated substantially. A recent review suggests that from 2014 to 2020 the literature grew by 5 times, and it has continued this acceleration since then, and you know, even talking about pieces related to reducing work time that has also proliferated in in this time period. So this heightened sense of productivity is obviously not the most degrowth approach to academic research, and it does appear to contradict the downscaling objective of the growth, at least superficially. Now, there could be more of a discussion about whether or not that is the case, but at least I would say on the surface it does so, Fred, as an academic who works on the growth related research. How do you feel about this vast increase in interest and publications on the topic? And do you feel the pressure to keep up.

Fred Basso: That's that's that's an important question. And indeed it's a paradox. So on one side, I would say, this is very positive, because I think that it's an important topic. And so but the growth is one way of I mean to question things and to look differently at sustainability by questioning the roots of the economic system and the obsession that we have with growth, and some of the very western centric ideas that we have about what should, what the world should be, and that growth is good for the sake of growing, and so on. On the other side. I would like to see whether this, the fact that it has been multiplied, multiplied by 5 in a in a few years stands only for the growth, or more generally for sustainability, because, perhaps, relatively to sustainability. Actually, there is more interesting growth. But not that's much more than what ha! What is happening to a sustainability, and especially the alternative model, which is green growth. So perhaps there is more interesting green growth in absolute terms, but by comparison with green growth. It's not It's not the the case. Just to add to what you mentioned about. Do I feel the pressure to keep up. Not that much, actually, because I'm not working only on z growth. So sometimes my attention shifts to something else was working on embodiment beforehand, like for a few months. Not that mentioned the growth. But one thing is that where I would feel the kind of feelings I will have is overwhelming, because then, when I go back to the literature, I come across like 100 more papers and something, and then I don't know what I should say, you know. So which questions the thing of okay, should I focus only on one part of research? Or should I try to encompass several things which is which is a big problem that we could have also in research at some point when we have to choose aware topic.

Emma Garnett: I think one of another reason de growth. Research is, it's important to find a balance between doing timely work and maintaining values is for gender equality. And one of the things an growth talks about is the value of unpaid labor like and how much is done by women. And you know, Dallas, you know, you've said not many academics work part time, but lots of moms work part time, and indeed my line manager. She is a parent, and she also works for 4 day week. So I think if you're wanting to have gender equality within academia and within the growth research as well, if you're not allowing and making space

and people who are working part time like both. For you know, fathers and mothers, but particularly how much that kind of impacts women. I think that's really key. And and we know that in terms of the leaky pipe syndrome, which means you have fewer and fewer women in Academia. The higher up you go. That's what the leaky pipe prefers to, and that there is a particular drop off after the first postdoc, which is, you know, late twenties, early thirties when many people are starting families. So I think that is so key as well.

Dallas O'Dell: It's a great point. And yeah, I think it. It kind of relates, maybe to this idea of slow science as well. So opening up possibilities for different and slower working styles that might actually benefit our research and our lives at the same time. So this idea of slow science prioritizes a slower and more thoughtful type of research practice. Than I think most academics face today. And the book, the slow professor sort of goes into a bit more detail about this idea. Fred, I'm curious what your thoughts are on slow science, and how you think that sustainability researchers could integrate these practices into their work despite this sort of pressing need to do more work for the climate crisis.

Fred Basso: So I have to confess that they haven't read the book. I have read the review of the book, and I think it's very interesting perspective. And I I'm I might read the book. I there is a whole slow movements that's that's grew quotation in the in the late I mean in the past decade or so, and and it's it's it's a key thing, I think, to some extent to try to find out some more authenticity and things also by slowing down thinking about what is important, what is key stopping being focused on accumulation. One thing that's you mentioned. And that is intrinsically within your question is the fact that okay. But if we slow down the research on the graph or sustainability, what's gonna happen when it comes to tackling climate catastroph and global warming. I have to say that my, in my opinion, in my opinion, we should not over emphasize the the role of researchers. I have to say they are important, of course, but to help understand, to document, to inform, to explain, to educate, and so on. But the changes are not gonna come for from researchers. I think they are, I mean, partly, but they. The growth is a democratic movement. It's an activist movement or so. And sustainability is something that should be democratic. And it's not. We should not lean to one some form of technocratic solution where we believe, oh, we will have a lot of scientific solutions, and we are gonna apply them. And we are gonna sort out the problem. No, that's a collective discussion that everyone should have. And the change and the way we can tackle global warming should come from collective discussions. So if we slow down, for instance, publish less and sustainability. But actually, as Emma suggested, we become more active in what we do in the public sphere, in the democracy in the public debate. Well, perhaps that might help more tackling the tackle. The problem of global warming and just publishing papers that no one is gonna read apart from a community who already believes that actually, yeah, there is a problem. And we need to do something, you know, because you are just preaching to people who think like you. So I would say, like, Yeah, to some extent we might see some very good sides with the slow professor perspective. And, by the way, within this move there is also a connection to education, the importance of transmitting values and ideas and working with the students in a way that is more progressive, not just to spoon, feed information, and so on. And so I think that's that's part of the of of of the general mindset that should be adopted by by Academics at least that's the one I try to have

Dallas O'Dell: I think it's really interesting to think about. Yeah. So de growth talks about not just less of everything, but potentially more of social and ecologically just jobs, more access to those sorts of jobs, and it is interesting to think about whether academia or the role of an academic fits into that or sort of what aspects. So maybe education being more important to emphasize than research. Working in the future. But so maybe let's let's imagine a world in which academia does start to adopt work, time reductions obviously working less. If you look at the literature is not necessarily a silver bullet when it comes to emissions, reductions, and there could actually be a sort of rebound effect. Increasing emissions if people spend their free time consuming more so, for example, if they cook or eat more meat, heavy dishes, or if they do more, long haul traveling. Emma. Given your work around behavior change toward more sustainable diets. What do you think is needed to prevent academics from actually consuming more if they do work less. And how do you think behavior would change?

Emma Garnett: That is a really important challenge. And of course, if people start taking a 4 day week and are using that third day that 3 day weekends to take budget flights to other cities in other countries, or domestically, that they wouldn't do with a 2 day weekend that would lead to much higher carbon emissions. So exactly as you say we can't assume it's a silver bullet. But I think the policies we need to decarbonize and conserve biodiversity and our environment a pretty similar like, regardless of. If we've got 4 day week as default or 5 day work week, we need. you know, high quality, frequent and accessible public transport. We need carbon taxes. We need investment in public goods. And massive reductions in inequality. So that holds regardless. I think, speaking personally, but as someone who's very conscious of their content. Footprint, I think having a 4 day week it, the way you use your annual leave is different, and I think it can make people more prepared to travel by a train rather than plane, because you've got more Tyler in the bank. And you don't feel like you're burning through your annual leave. So much. and indeed, some organizations give employees some extra days off, if they're traveling by train instead of playing, which I think is a brilliant idea, and should be rolled out very widely, and I think because I've got that third day, which is generally on a Friday. But my line manager is great, and I can move that sometimes to a Monday or another day as as need be. this means I'm not having to use up my annual leave for a long weekend. I came back from, you know, 3 day festival last weekend. I didn't have to take extra annual leave for that and if I needed, and so that I don't need to take time off to do various administrative tasks or run errands, I can do that in that extra time, and that means that my annual leave budget I can have kind of exclusively, for, you know, quote unquote proper holidays or longer weeks another friend of mine who's worked a full day week in the past. She had her day off on Wednesday, so she only had to work 2 days a week 2 days in a row. Let me start again. A friend of mine who worked a full day week in the past. She's a full time parent now had her day off on Wednesday, so she never had to work 2 days in a row, and that suited her best, and that meant on that Wednesday she could rest, you know, do some chores. And then that left the 2 days Saturday and Sunday at the weekend for more. You know, family time, friend time getting up to things. And so I think that has been one of the big changes for for me just having that flexibility, not having to spend your annual leave on smaller things, quote unquote.

Dallas O'Dell: great. So it sounds a bit like some personal mindset shifts behavior shifts, but also some policy level implementation of allowing for maybe a different usage of your time

and incentivizing those sorts of programs. Great, thank you so much for those thoughts. So I guess I'll wrap up with the last question. And I'm curious. We've used the word degrowth a fair bit today. Personal bias, perhaps based on my research. But it has been called the missile word, and the word degrowth often evokes a very strong and potentially negative reaction from a variety of people on both sides of the aisle. And though I do think it's important to connect dots across behaviors and values that may be aligned with key growth and the related movement. But maybe not using the word. So do either of you have any final thoughts about how to engage listeners who may be a bit turned off by the word degrowth or their perceptions of the movement but may connect to the idea of working less, both inside and outside of academia and other ways of protecting the environment or having a sort of simplified life.

Emma Garnett: I think when people, some people, when they hear the term degrowth, can worry about recessions and that economic uncertainty and job losses, and possibly, you know, lower standards of living. However, gross domestic product, GDP, that's how we measure growth. And it's not a good metric for well-being. And instead, if we're focusing on, how can we have a healthy society where everyone has their needs met, so physical, mental, etc.? Help? I think a lot of people could get behind that. And I think the idea of not you know, just running in a rat race and having time for things that matter does chime with a lot of people. There's a 2012 Guardian article from a palliative care nurse about the top 5 regrets of people who are dying, which is very interesting. You can find it with some googling, and the second one listed is, I wish I hadn't worked so hard and just knowing that so many people regret that, and that we could set up the system differently, I hope would chime with many people.

Dallas O'Dell: Great. Thank you, Fred, do you have any thoughts?

Fred Basso: Yeah. I mean, it's I think what Ms said is is very important, and it's very meaningful. I believe that if you are thinking of the world. Z. Growth. It's true that it's shocking, but on to some extent, I mean, isn't it the purpose of some activist research, at some at some point like to create like form of a awareness for people to be shocked. It means that oh, wow! It's challenging something that we were taking for granted that growth is good, and that perhaps, actually, we may discuss that. And it's not always good. We equate, especially in Western societies, economic growth with progress, but not sure. There are many things that are about progress that came from social movements, right? I don't recall, but it's economic growth that gave people I don't know. Holidays, for instance, you had to fight for this. I mean, progress generation. So it's there is something about the growth that that I believe is important in the in the world, in the fact that for people it might be difficult to adopt. Perhaps words like sufficiency or minimalism. Or you have also some alternative use. For instance, recently, some colleagues in ecological economics. They suggested the world. Well, being economy. You have also a whole movement that comes from what we call the global south, that is, climate justice which is a bit different from the growth. But you have some overlap. so there are plenty of ways. We can approach these alternative ways of thinking. In a sense, the point is always the same. It's going back to a community and something that is meaningful to people where social relations are more valued than economic growth. And that's that's, I believe, what is essential and that you can find across these several movements that I mentioned. So yeah. wait and see where it goes.

But I think they do a great work with the work, with the one. See growth at the end of the day.

Dallas O'Dell: Thank you. Well, yes, whether or not you like the word. Hopefully, the ideas do resonate and thank you both for your thoughts, and thank you just generally for joining me today. This is really a great discussion. I hope you enjoyed it as well. This is a topic that has definitely been weighing on my mind for the past few years, as I've navigated through my Phd, and I think it's just really essential that we have these discussions. And start breakdown, these breaking down these unhealthy norms. In our academic culture and sort of think about other ways that we can spend our time. maybe not more productively, but for better use. And for our own. Well, being as well. So thanks again. And if you are soliciting and you have any thoughts about what you heard today. Please do leave a comment below, or you know, share some ideas. We would love to hear what you have to say. but otherwise, if if there are no other closing thoughts I'll just leave it there, and thank you so much for joining Fred and Emma. thank you for listening to us, and I hope you can find some time today to think maybe a little bit more about how to work a little bit less. So cheers. Thanks so much.