

In defense of degrowth: Opinions and minifestos

Tags

Degrowth, economics, ecosocialism, post-capitalism, Europe, financial crisis, alternative economics, environmentalism

The book in five tweets

This free book will make you change your mind about economic growth #indefenseofdegrowth @g_kallis

In his new (free) book In Defense of #Degrowth, @g_kallis addresses newcomers, critics, and old-timers alike.

In his new book, @g_kallis presents an accessible and enjoyable defense of #degrowth

In his collection of essays on #Degrowth, @g_kallis talks #Greek crisis, #scifi, @airbnb, the #Pope, and much more.

“Engaging commentary, bold analysis, and creative policy tools” @NaomiAKlein about new book by @g_kallis, indefenseofdegrowth.com #degrowth

Short biography

Giorgos Kallis is a citizen of Greece, professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, publisher of over 50 peer-reviewed journal articles, and an active member of the group Research & Degrowth.

Links

Book website for downloads, donations, sample content, and media coverage.

indefenseofdegrowth.com

Giorgos Kallis' profile at ICTA, Barcelona

http://ictaweb.uab.cat/personal_detail.php?id=34

Research & Degrowth, a network of prominent degrowth scholars based in Barcelona, of which Giorgos Kallis is a member.

<http://degrowth.org/>

The online portal, featuring sample content, of the book Degrowth: A vocabulary for a new era, co-edited by Giorgos Kallis.

vocabulary.degrowth.org

Extended biography

Giorgos Kallis was born and raised in Athens, Greece. At the age of 18 he moved to London to study Chemistry. The white-coat labs didn't work for him, and he decided to change course and study environmental policy and planning. After a short spell at cold but welcoming Luxembourg, working for the European Parliament during the revision of the Union's water legislation, he returned to Greece and to beautiful Lesbos for a doctorate degree. In 2005 he won the prestigious Marie Curie post-doctorate fellowship and moved to Berkeley to work with Dick Norgaard, a prominent ecological economist. At Berkeley, Giorgos got in contact with the radical theories of political ecology through the classes of scholars like Nancy Peluso and Michael Watts. His subsequent work cultivates the interface of ecological economics and political ecology, what he calls – not very imaginatively – ‘political ecological economics’. Since 2008 he is a permanent professor in Barcelona, and together with Joan Martinez-Alier and a group of young and active scholars he has built the Barcelona School of Degrowth and Environmental Justice.

Sample interview questions

What are some of the most common arguments against degrowth? How do you respond to these critics?

The concept ‘degrowth’ is often misinterpreted. Why do you think it is seeing so much confusion?

Why is ‘degrowth’ as a concept so important today?

What about it appeals to people right now?

What are some of the guiding themes of the essays in this book?

Many of the essays in the book came out of blog pieces and articles in online media. What are some of the benefits of publishing them together as a book?

Many of the essays in the book revolve around the 2008-2009 financial crisis, the Greek crisis, and the rise of parties like Podemos and Syriza. How do you think this time period influenced your thinking?

Looking back on the essays you've written, what about them do you think is still relevant, and what has changed?

Why did you decide to publish the book for free?

Press release

In new book, ecological economist argues the West can no longer afford economic growth

Economic growth has long been equated with progress. But today a movement is flourishing that calls for 'degrowth': sustainably scaling down economies in order to deal with today's environmental and political crises.

On March 1st, 2017, Giorgos Kallis, a professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, will release his collection of essays, *In Defense of Degrowth: Opinions and Manifestos*. The book is intended as an accessible introduction to 'degrowth', a controversial idea that has become a rallying cry for many dissatisfied with today's economic system.

As one of the degrowth movement's leading thinkers, Kallis has a good deal of experience sparring with its biggest critics. "I spent the last few years doing public talks, writing opinion pieces in newspapers, blogging, and trying to reason with angry Twitter users," says Kallis. "This book is a result of many of those debates and conversations."

The environmental historian Joan Martinez-Alier, who first invited Giorgos Kallis to teach at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, writes that "it answers a widespread demand to have the many short articles and blog entries by

Giorgos Kallis of the last four years made more easily available... They certainly deserved to be collected and

edited as a book."

Essays in the book are wide-ranging, including essays on the Greek crisis, the history of economics, science fiction, the problem with AirBnB, and even Pope Francis' 'Laudato Si'.

"My hope is that, after finishing the book, newcomers and skeptics will have a more clear understanding of what is meant by degrowth," Kallis notes. "But I also want to provoke those already familiar with the concept."

In defense of degrowth is being released for free as an e-book. "I decided to make the book available for free, but encourage people to donate," says Kallis. "Many of the essays can already be found online, but putting them all together, editing, and updating the text took half a year of work."

The book has received praise from Naomi Klein, writer of *This Changes Everything*. "Whatever your level of familiarity with the subject," says Klein, "the book's mix of engaging commentary, bold analysis, and creative policy tools is certain to deepen your thinking."

Arturo Escobar, a Colombian-American intellectual and professor at North Carolina, also expressed his excitement about the book's release. "*In Defense of Degrowth* vividly demonstrates why the civilizational obsession with growth, fueled by economic theories that have become outdated, must come to an end."