

# **Community Economies and Post-Capitalism (why wait?)**

Gemini Center for Post-Growth Futures

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(slides adapted from those provided by Katherine Gibson)

# Our fundamentals as scholars:



Image: The Polička Collective participating in a cooking session with members from a food policy council, a community-supported agriculture initiative and civil society groups in Leipzig organised as part of their January 2024 writing retreat. Courtesy of the Polička Collective.

**What role can the humanities and social sciences play in making other worlds possible?**

**What capacities do we have as scholars and engaged researchers to shape the world?**

**Why do we need a new way of researching?**

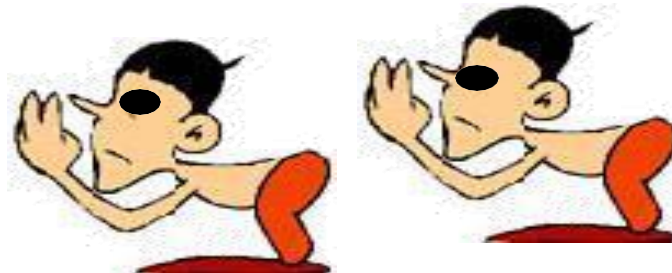
# Challenge representations of CAPITALISM



**encompassing power**

**generalizable dynamics**

**enlarged spaces of agency**



**covering communities**



ARTURO ESCOBAR



# Designs for the Pluriverse

*Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*

# THE END OF CAPITALISM

*(as we knew it)*

A Feminist Critique of Political Economy



J.K. Gibson-Graham



E.F. Schumacher  
**SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL**  
Economics as if People Mattered



Many voices speaking against an  
essentialist capitalism:

# Capitalocentrism

A system of knowledge that enrolls all economic identity into capitalism—positioning a wide range of practices as

- the opposite of capitalism
- subordinate to capitalism
- a complement of capitalism or
- existing within capitalism's orbit



HOUSEHOLD  
SECTOR

INDIGENOUS KIN-  
BASED  
ECONOMIES

ALTERNATIVE  
MARKETS

VOLUNTARY  
SECTOR

INFORMAL  
SECTOR

GIFTS

CARE  
ECONOMY

LOCAL  
CURRENCIES

ECONOMIES OF  
SURPLUS

COMMUNITY  
ENTERPRISES

CULTURALLY  
EMBEDDED  
ECONOMIES

ALTERNATIVE  
FINANCE

SOCIAL  
ECONOMY

COOPERATIVES

- the opposite of Capital-ISM
- subordinate to Capital-ISM
- a complement of Capital-ISM
- existing within Capital-ISM's orbit



# The Iceberg:

«Situating existing economic politics within a diverse economy»

Expanding our language of economics to move beyond the essentializing vision of capitalism.



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# Researching Post-capitalist Possibilities

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Politics of Language

Politics of the Subject

Politics of Collective Action

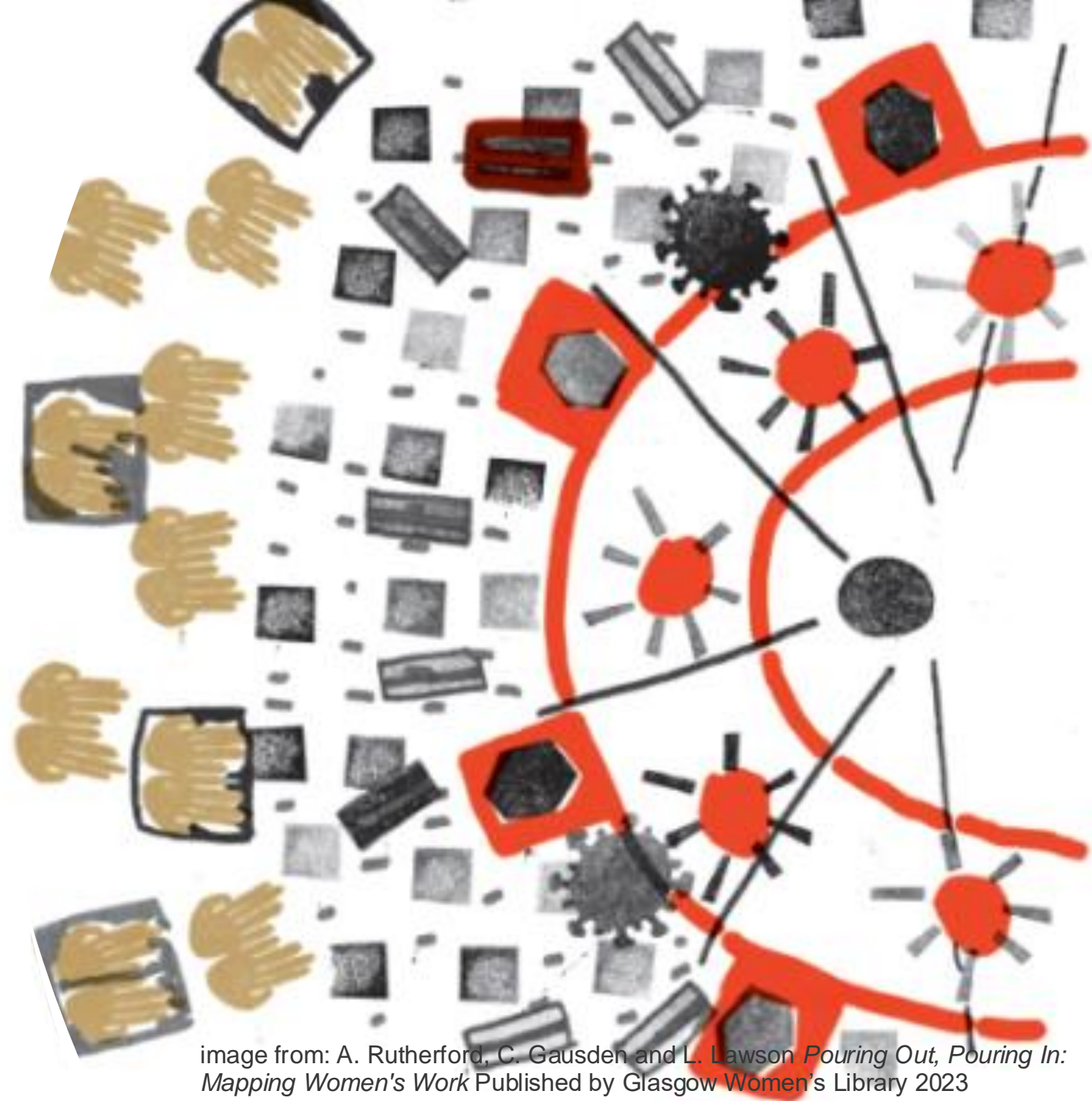


image from: A. Rutherford, C. Gausden and L. Lawson *Pouring Out, Pouring In: Mapping Women's Work* Published by Glasgow Women's Library 2023



# Researching Post-capitalist Possibilities

Involves

adopting a different stance towards knowledge and explanation

KNOWLEDGE

Performative not Realist / Reflective

EXPLANATION

Ethical, political not Structural

# Knowledge beyond Marxist frames

Marxist dictum: understanding  
the world in order to change it.

Post-structural Marxist dictum:  
changing our understanding is to  
change the world.



*alpine  
community  
economies  
laboratory*

# Community Economies

*“seeks to bring about more sustainable and equitable forms of development by acting on new ways of thinking about economies and politics...To try to mobilise social transformation”*

- Premised on anti-essentialist thinking
- Affirms that our lives unfold in a pluriverse
- Posits that we are all engaged in ongoing processes of learning with each other and the world around us, always “becoming ethical subjects”



# The ethical coordinates



SURVIVAL



SURPLUS



TRANSACTIONS



CONSUMPTION



COMMONS



INVESTMENT

**TAKE BACK  
THE ECONOMY**  
AN ETHICAL GUIDE FOR  
TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITIES

