Author/s:
Gould, H;Halafoff, A

Title:
Girl Mossing, Rotting, and Resistance: Relational Naturalism and Dying Well Together

Date:
2025-04-01

Citation:
Gould, H. & Halafoff, A. (2025). Girl Mossing, Rotting, and Resistance: Relational Naturalism and Dying Well Together. Religions, 16 (4), pp.447-447. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16040447.

Persistent Link:
https://hdl.handle.net/11343/369420

religions

MDPI

Article

Girl Mossing, Rotting, and Resistance: Relational Naturalism and Dying Well Together

Hannah Gould [1,*] and Anna Halafoff [2,*]

[1] School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, Grattan Street, Parkville, Melbourne, VIC 3010, Australia
[2] School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, Melbourne, VIC 3125, Australia
* Correspondence: hannah.gould@unimelb.edu.au (H.G.); anna.halafoff@deakin.edu.au (A.H.)

Abstract: Living and dying well together in the Anthropocene, in the context of intensifying climate crises, global pandemics, and fast-paced hustle culture, is an increasingly daunting task. While many wellness movements call for strict regimes and vigorous activity, striving for largely unattainable bodily norms and longevity, an emerging trend centres on embracing natural processes and temporalities of resistance focused on relaxation, rest, and even decay. So-called 'girl mossing' and 'girl rotting' encourage women to be intentionally unproductive, and to spend time instead lying on a forest floor, staring up at a canopy of trees, caressing moss. Similarly, members of the 'death positive' and 'new death' movements advocate for sensorial connection with nature at the end of life, and for an embrace of practices of decay and decomposition. Both trends are dominated by women and influenced by Buddhist and Pagan traditions. They also exemplify spiritual complexity, particularly relating to biomedicine and consumerism. Examining these interconnected lifestyle and deathstyle movements, this article considers the uptake of 'relational naturalism' in contemporary societies as an antidote to the personal and planetary harms of neoliberal capitalism.

Keywords: spirituality; wellness; relational naturalism; feminism; death positivity

Academic Editors: Stefania Palmisano and Matteo Di Placido

Received: 4 February 2025
Revised: 17 March 2025
Accepted: 17 March 2025
Published: 31 March 2025

Citation: Gould, Hannah, and Anna Halafoff. 2025. Girl Mossing, Rotting, and Resistance: Relational Naturalism and Dying Well Together. *Religions* 16: 447. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16040447

1. Introduction

Across Instagram, Tik Tok, and other social media platforms, images abound of women "girl mossing", that is, lying on a forest floor, staring up at a leafy canopy, and resting on a bed of moss (Figure 1). Sometimes, the women are pictured enchantedly, in fae, long flowing dresses, with bare feet and unbound hair. In other images, they wear activewear and hiking boots. Posts tagged with #girlmoss and associated lexicons feature lush hues of verdant green and earthly brown, often with moody lighting, and occasionally a whimsical musical soundtrack. In these posts, productivity, work, and hustle culture give way to rest, relaxation, and 'rotting', as the posters encourage their followers to "embrace the slow days", "fall in love with taking care of yourself", and, more radically, to know that "it's okay to just decompose sometimes". In this manner, natural temporalities of rest, (slow) growth, and even decay are deployed to subvert the rhythms and demands of fast-paced neoliberal, capitalist life.

Figure 1. Instagram images of women posed in and on moss, from Canada, the USA, Norway, and Scotland, all posted under #girlmoss and publicly shared in 2023. The images have been de-identified by the authors.

More than just a social media aesthetic or temporary hashtag, we argue that 'girl mossing' constitutes the latest expression of a larger evolving, and diverse politico-spiritual movement that focuses on nature-based activity as a route to wellness for young women. In doing so, we answer spirituality scholars' (Griera et al. 2022; Fedele and Knibbe 2020; Halafoff et al. 2023) and social media scholars' (Leaver et al. 2020) invitations to take aesthetic trends, memes, and hashtags seriously, rather than simply dismissing them as the frivolity of 'young women being silly online'. In this paper, we articulate the core commitments of the girl mossing movement, analysing what it can teach us about emerging

popular perspectives on green spirituality, gender, rest, and healing in a late capitalist world. Girl mossing here is defined as a movement for women toward intentional unproductivity and rest in and through nature as a route to holistic wellness and health, or put simply, women rejecting the figure of the 'girl boss' in order to 'girl moss'.

Our analysis of this phenomena stitches together several distinct theoretical strands in contemporary spirituality and wellness. It articulates girl mossing as a new version of earlier ecofeminist (Plant 1989) and "dark green religion" theories (Taylor 2020), as well as more contemporary theories of "reverential" and "relational naturalism" (Bramadat 2022; Halafoff et al. 2023). It also engages with African American feminist literature on self-care and rest as resistance (Lorde 1988; Hersey 2022), and spirituality scholarship centred on critiques of biomedicine and capitalism, as well as the risks associated with commodifying their resistance (Gauthier 2020; Halafoff et al. 2024).

Further, girl mossing, as with many other holistic healthcare trends, originated in Asia, specifically within the Buddhist tradition and alongside Japanese 'forest bathing' (Vermeesch et al. 2024), before being adopted by mostly white, western influencers, whose memes nod more to fae/fairy Pagan faith symbolising re-enchantment with the natural world (Magliocco 2018). Finally, in embracing decomposition and decay, mossing reaches into the realm of natural deathcare (Westendorp and Gould 2021), also strongly shaped by Paganism and Buddhism, as young women share new ways to live and die in harmony with the natural world. Embracing this kaleidoscope of forces in contemporary spirituality, girl mossing thus demonstrates the complexity and sophistication of young women's attempts at holistic health in a world in disrepair. Whether girl mossing effectively functions as a rallying cry to resist the personal and planetary harms of neoliberal capitalism is questionable. But perhaps, as we suggest, action was never the point. Before questioning the productiveness of a movement dedicated to intentional unproductivity, we should instead attend to the demands placed on women to fix a broken world, and how they choose to cultivate wellness in response.

2. Mossing in the Anthropocene

Living and dying well together in the Anthropocene, in the context of intensifying climate crises, global pandemics, and hustle culture, is an increasingly daunting task. The fast pace and pressure of neoliberal capitalism take an enormous toll on wellbeing, not just personal, but social and planetary. These pressures are acutely felt by women—whose labour remains, in large part, undervalued and underpaid—and by young people, who often juggle precarious work alongside study, and are unable to obtain the stability of housing and employment afforded to previous generations. In the face of insurmountable structural inequalities, neoliberal pressures on the individual to 'grind it out', 'work harder', and 'hustle' abound. Women, and in particular young women, are positioned as the ideal neoliberal subjects, capable of crafting self-managed lives through self-transformation of both mind and body via consumption, as Foucault (1988) labelled 'technologies of the self'. Simultaneously, women are asked to be responsible for the wellbeing and (self-) transformation of kin.

Wellness has long been positioned as a powerful antidote to capitalist pressures. As Halafoff et al. (2024, p. 18) articulate, "the wellness industry promises natural, gentle and caring" remedies "to the ailments of late modernity (i.e., environmental pollution, overwork, stress, mental illness, ultra-processed foods, etc.)". Twenty-first century wellness has antecedents in romanticism's critique of modern industrialization and urbanization (Gauthier 2020; Watts 2022) and in late 19th and 20th century spiritual movements, such as Spiritualism, Christian Science, Theosophy, and the New Age, which promoted mind–body–spirit healing, often drawing on Indigenous, Pagan and/or Asian knowledge

(Baker 2022b; Roginski and Rocha 2022; Halafoff et al. 2023, 2024). By the 21st century, spirituality and wellness "had become intertwined mainstream trends" associated with a growing 'democratization' of health, a rejection of 'medical experts' and a rise in 'medical freedom movements' enabled by the internet and particularly social media (Halafoff et al. 2024, p. 18).

But wellness, too, can reproduce the same rhythms of productivity and self-optimiza tion. Many wellness movements call for strict regimes and vigorous activity, ever striving for largely unattainable bodily norms and ever-increasing longevity. In short, wellness has been cannibalized by the capitalist system it was nominally created to resist. The turn of the twentieth century 'Spiritual Revolution' (Heelas and Woodhead 2005) was characterized by "expressive individualism, along with its ethic of authenticity" fused with "consumer capitalism" (Carrette and King 2005; Gauthier 2020, p. 131). At the same time, and seemingly without irony, it maintains a core of "nostalgic yearning for [an idealised] pre-industrial past in which humans were supposedly more connected to the spiritual world and nature" (Roginski and Rocha 2022, p. 182). Indeed, this ascendency of 'active wellness' is reflected in sociological studies of the subject, whereby rest and retreat have received comparatively little attention as practices of wellbeing (Halafoff 2017; Hodgson 2022).

Mossing is by no means the first wellness movement to resist productivity and fight for rest. In the 1960s, leading figure in the counterculture movement and psychedelics advocate Timothy Leary urged American youth to "tune in, turn on, drop out". The multi-dimensional 'Slow Movement' arose in the mid-1980s, inspired by Italian activist Carlo Petrini's protest against a proposed McDonalds restaurant to be built by the Spanish Steps in Rome. Carl Honoré's *In Praise of Slow* (Honoré 2004) describes how slow movement stresses quality—which takes time—applied to many facets of life, from cooking to fashion to democracy. More recently, there has been new attention on rest and retreat in popular culture, alongside the need for '*tikkun olam*/repairing the world' (Seidenberg 2021), particularly in the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, when societies were forced to slow down. This is evident in interest in the Dutch concept of *niksen* (Gottfried 2019) and Dzogchen Buddhism (Halafoff 2021, 2022), which both share an emphasis on 'doing nothing', as well as bestselling books like May's (2020) *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times* and Hersey's (2022) *Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto*. In China, young people have embraced *tangping* or "lying flat" by rejecting high-pressure jobs for a "low-pressure life" (Feng 2021), and in *bai lan* or letting things rot, "a voluntary retreat" from goals now seen as "too difficult to achieve" (Ni 2022).

Accompanying the need to slow down has been a parallel trend of deepening nature connection, documented in American, Canadian, European and Australian studies. Bramadat's (2022) study of spirituality in the Cascadian region revealed 'reverential naturalism' to be the most prevalent worldview. Taylor (2020) called this 'dark green religion' in 2010, predicting its growing popularity. Palmisano and Pannofino's (2021) study of spirituality in Italy also highlighted the 'sacralisation of nature', natural lifestyles, and awareness of environmental issues among spiritual adherents. Research on the worldviews of Australia's Generation Z teens found that 76% had experienced a connection with nature that has inspired some of their diet choices and activism for animal and environmental rights (Singleton et al. 2021). Subsequent research on spirituality in Australia has also found that understandings of spirituality, and spiritual wellbeing, are strongly informed by First Nations and Asian knowledges of relational interconnectedness with the more-than-human and natural world and that this reflects a more down-to-earth 'relational naturalism' particular to the Australian context (Halafoff et al. 2023, p. 14). This is part of a broader decolonial, 'more-than-human' turn in late modernity, where people and scholars are questioning Durkheimian binaries of the sacred and the profane. Instead, scholars are drawing

on Indigenous, African, Asian, Pagan, and feminist knowledges of interconnection and relationality in order to address the harms of colonization and modernity and reconceive how to live well together in multispecies societies (Beaman 2017; Halafoff 2017, 2021). Girl mossing can be viewed as another articulation of this phenomena.

Another observable global trend is towards a 'sciencey-spirituality', where the benefits of spiritual and nature-based practices are increasingly measured scientifically and this scientific evidence is then used to market products (Halafoff et al. 2023). Science can also measure the negative effects of hustle culture and social media. The (dis)function of the vagus nerve, nervous system (dis)regulation, and somatic therapies are central concerns of contemporary wellness movements, linked to a cascading array of ailments, including insomnia and anxiety (Matei 2024). The adoption of this language contests the clean juxtaposition of biomedicine, typically positioned as rational and evidenced-based, and alternative medicine, typically seen as experiential, affective, and irrational. For many, science and spirituality are no longer viewed as inherently incompatible (Harambam and Aupers 2021; Houtman et al. 2021), with research showing how spiritual persons are particularly interested in the kind of science that proves the wisdom of pre-modern, pre-colonial, holistic healing frameworks (Halafoff et al. 2024). While there is growing dispute about the evidentiary basis for polyvagal theory (Grossman 2023), it has clearly found a welcome audience in wellness communities as a language to make sense of and resist contemporary work culture.

All of the above reveals a 'spiritual complexity' (Halafoff et al. 2023) related to biomedicine, capitalism and consumerism, in that the legitimate critique of and need to resist hustle culture and to prioritise rest for wellness and spiritual wellbeing in turn becomes something that is marketable, aiming to generate influence on social media through increasing views and likes. Concurrently, scholars argue that this does not delegitimise such movements and influencers, whose motivation for personal and planetary wellbeing may still be sincere (Gauthier 2020; Halafoff et al. 2023). Similar complexity is evident in the girl mossing movement.

3. Locating the Girl Moss Trend

The exact origins of girl mossing are difficult to pinpoint. Hashtags including #girlmoss, #girlmossing, and #girlrot have seen significant growth on social media accounts since mid-2023. The term "girl moss" specifically can be traced back to mid-2022, when US journalist Daisy Alioto tweeted "The girl boss is dead, long live the girl moss (lying on the floor of the forest and being absorbed back into nature)". Alioto's tweet was rapidly picked up by influencers, particularly on the visual-heavy platforms of Instagram, Tik Tok, and Tumblr, and soon trickled through to lifestyle and wellness blogs, and finally through to secondary media reporting on this trend (including our own report). Notably, the English-language phenomena emerged a few years after Japanese hashtags for "moss girl(s) (#苔ガール and #苔ガールズ), which depict young women who grow and appreciate moss as a hobby. The mainstream status of girl mossing was concretized in early 2024, when the US National Forest Foundation borrowed the term to kick off its yearly engagement campaign on Instagram.

Girl mossing is one in a series of social media trends focused on the cultivation of specific 'Girl' personalities. They include phenomena like "Girl Math" (the mental gymnastics women use to justify spending), "Girl Dinner" (a meal consisting of random snacks like cheese and fruit), and "Hot Girl Walks" (outdoor walks while reciting affirmations). Girl trends are often fleeting, bursting into prominence on social media, buoyed by a content-hungry influencer economy, before fading away. 'Girl' trends are also not without critique. Young women may encounter such trends as "unsustainable and unrealis-

tic" (Palmer 2024), while commentators have described them as postfeminist infantilizing (Browning 2024) and "thinly-veiled marketing campaigns" (Jennings 2023). Browning takes a particularly critical view, suggesting that the promulgation of girl trends "necessitate women's constant self-improvement and bodily discipline to emulate narrow beauty standards, regulates their consumption habits according to traditional gender roles, and shapes their decision-making around capitalist logic" (2023, p. 1). More broadly, Koffman and Gill (2013) describe the workings of the "girl effect", whereby governments, NGOs, and marketers alike bestow young women with the power—and thus responsibility—to fix the ills of the modern world.

Our inquiry into girl mossing does not entirely align with this analysis. For one, the phrase originates from an ironic mockery of the 'girl boss' label. On Instagram, posts tagged with #girlmoss simultaneously occupy the visual space of wholesome 'granola girl' and 'cottagecore' aesthetics, while condemning capitalist work culture. Consider, for example, the list of hashtags on an Instagram post, featuring a drawing of animals from *The Wind and the Willows* enjoying a picnic by the riverbend (Figure 2). While some of this hashtag activity can be interpreted as the pragmatic choice of influencers hoping to maximise content reach, the alignment of the girl moss trend with explicitly anti-hustle, anti-work messages hints at its political potential.

Figure 2. Hashtags accompanying one 'girl mossing' post on Instagram, posted 9 February 2024.

Delving into the girl moss trend for this research, we collected and analysed a corpus of over 500 posts and reels from Instagram tagged with #girlmoss and #girlmossing between January 2022 and December 2024. In addition to this corpus, this paper also draws on insights from our more serendipitous personal discoveries, for such is the nature of the algorithm; the more we engaged with girl mossing, the more we were served related content. These posts were often tagged with #forestbathing, #naturelovers and #holistichealth, or had no hashtags (reflecting a broader shift away from hashtags and toward reliance on the algorithm on Instagram). This approach reflects the methodology of digital or "virtual dwelling" (Wiens 2021) within a digital community, which values "small, embodied data curation as a key space of method and analysis" (Wiens and MacDonald 2024). It is particularly suited to working with small, emergent, and woman-centred movements, which often bleed from online spaces to the offline lives of the researchers. We were also inspired by Maggie Maclure's (2010, 2013) methods of data 'glowing' and 'wonder', particularly given moss girls' re-enchantment with the natural world. Our method of virtual dwelling, animated and fascinated by the glow and wonder of the data memes and images themselves, has informed which images we have chosen to focus on in our study. Indeed, our curiosity has resulted in unexpected and surprising insights, as Maclure predicted. From this analysis, we identify three major commitments that define girl mossing: the necessity of retreat from society, the restorative powers of nature and the positive embrace of decay.

3.1. Commitment One: Contemporary Society Demands Healing Through Rest

The central provocation of girl mossing and associated wellness trends is that the demands of modern life are fundamentally or incrementally harmful to one's physical, psychological and spiritual health, such that a period of retreat from society is necessary. Of particular concern is the demand for constant productivity, exemplified by the profusion of 'grind' and 'hustle' content online. The harshness of modern working life and its long hours stands in contrast with the soft qualities of moss (Figure 3). While this critique is predominantly directly at work culture, it extends to other areas, including family life and friendships, fitness and biomedical health systems, which have been taken over by similar capitalist logics of work. The healing and wellness of mossing involves resting in nature, reliant on the personal autonomy of taking time out, rather than medical authority or prescriptions.

Figure 3. Instagram reel featuring a photograph of Gio-ji Buddhist Temple in Arashiyama, Japan, with the caption "Why do capitalism when you can lie on a plush bed of moss under dappled sunlight?". Posted 29 September 2024 and publicly shared by username 'Lisaellenknight'.

Disillusionment and discontent with biomedicine abound among women in post-colonial, post-modern and post-secular societies. This comprises a mistrust of the pharmaceutical industry ('Big Pharma'), including medical practitioners and institutions (Aechtner 2021; Kata 2010; Wiley et al. 2020), who are perceived as uncaring, dishonest, and

profit-driven (Connor 2004). Such critiques extend through to dying, whereby the final stages of life are now marked by significant intervention and medicalization, and death is framed as an unnatural pathology (Sallnow et al. 2022; Westendorp and Gould 2021). By contrast, 'alternative', 'holistic' medicines and therapeutic practices, often based on Indigenous, Pagan and Asian knowledges, are valued for their capacity to treat the whole person, including the mind, body, emotions and spirit (Rocha 2017; Roginski and Rocha 2022; Gould et al. 2024a). Alternative wellness practices are therefore viewed as more effectively addressing people's, and particularly women's, unmet medical and metaphysical needs (Baker 2022a; Halafoff et al. 2024). Young women are consequently self-prescribing mossing as an antidote to neoliberal capitalism.

Pointedly, at the same time, mossing extends its critique of productivity onto holistic wellness itself, and specifically the demands that wellness makes to continually work on the project of the self. This sentiment is exemplified in multiple public posts within the girl mossing trend, for example by 'macabredarklingwanders', who posts reels featuring forest landscapes and mystical instrumental music. From 2 July 2023:

> "i am actually not interested in being the best version of myself today, i instead would like to lie down on the floor of the forest, slowly be absorbed by nature and become one with the moss.
>
> If you need me l'll be in the woods getting some r & r (rest and rot) and becoming the tree I always wanted to be. 🌲
>
> (Forest = For rest 🤰😴🍃)"

The project of self-improvement, self-actualization or just 'being the best version of myself', as promoted by contemporary wellness, is thus ultimately rejected as harmful to health. Indeed, online, mossing is often contrasted with other holistic wellness trends of recent years, such as marathon training, and even nature-based practices focused on action, such as through-hiking.

While stress, burnout and general malaise are the afflictions most commonly addressed by mossing, more specific diagnoses reveal a blend of 'sciencey-spirituality' (Halafoff et al. 2023) discussed above. They include "dopamine addiction" and "disregulation" of the autonomic nervous system. Our corpus of girl moss memes includes a picture of a young woman pausing during frenetic daily activities, accompanied by the text "POV: when you remember that slowing down is the easiest way to regulate your nervous system". There is also a reel showing a babbling brook, with the text "them: going to the woods won't solve your problems. Me in the woods regulating my nervous system and suddenly the problems aren't a big deal anymore".

If modern work culture is framed as an illness, then retreat is, if not a cure, then at least a respite. As previously mentioned, there has been significant media and literary attention placed on phenomena associated with rest, slowness and retreat since the COVID-19 pandemic. Girl mossing, we argue, shares similarities with retreat going, derived from spiritual traditions. Retreats are increasingly popular internationally as part of a burgeoning USD 6.3 trillion wellness industry (Global Wellness Institute 2024) and are one of the most common wellness practices alongside yoga and meditation. They offer opportunities to slow down and step away from the pressures of fast-paced urban life, to intensify reflexive practices, rest, heal, and/or create (Halafoff 2017, 2021).

Until recently, retreats were the domain of a small percentage of dedicated religious practitioners and often associated with Buddhist and Catholic monasticism. Following the 1960s counterculture movement and the 1990s New Age, retreat-going has become a popular form of 'spiritual', 'holistic' or 'wellness tourism' expanding beyond religious contexts to a wide range of practices including yoga, surfing, plant medicine and con-

scious dance (Hodgson 2022; Ingram 2020; Kelly 2012; Norman 2011; Norman and Pokorny 2017). Intensive periods of meditation, while on retreat, have been found to produce 'profound insights' and 'mystical experiences' of 'internal unity' and 'noetic quality' (Zanesco et al. 2023, p. 606). As purveyor of girl mossing content, *macabredarklingwanders*, professes in a post from 30 July 2024 that

> "Cancelling plans is okay. Staying home to read is okay. Disappearing into the forest for awhile to get your life together is okay. Re-emerging 10 years later haunted and full of forbidden knowledge is okay. It's called self-care.
>
> Reminder that it's okay to take a break whether it's for 10 min, 10 h, 10 days, 10 weeks or 10 years. 🙃🤷‍♀️✨🖤📚🍄🌲"

Yet there are sharper edges to this ethic beyond the mere 'JOMO: joy of missing out'. Variations of the quote "rest is a radical act of self-love in a world that glorifies exhaustion", inspired by African American activists and poets Lorde (1988) and Hersey (2022), circulate and recirculate online among moss girls, shared alongside nature photographs, handwritten notes, and memes. Rest is not something to be earned or that should generate guilt. As one creator proscribes, in the language of a yogic meditation, "Inhale: I've given enough. Exhale: I can rest without apology" (Instagram user 'black liturgies', 6 October 2023).

With its history in Black activist spaces, 'self-care' and rest have been framed as generative of new energies for the work of social justice and building community. As Lorde articulates, "caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare" (Lorde 1988), and Hersey affirms that "rest is resistance" (Hersey 2022). This work emphasizes the anti-capitalist and decolonial dimensions of rest, arguing against the imposition of a Western, colonial, capitalist, patriarchal mindset, shaped by Protestant values, that valorises material rewards through work and is dependent on exploitation (Hersey 2022). The potential for a more radical affirmation of the value of rest is critical for feminists, notably black feminists and ecofeminists, as discussed below.

By contrast, the mainstreaming of rest and retreat are not without potential risks or flaws. Self-care in contemporary capitalist wellness has been substantively stripped of its radical, community-focused origins (as girl mossing itself articulates). Retreats, too, have been critiqued as being expensive and elitist, and for their lack of diversity and white hegemony (Piacenza 2014; Gleig 2019). Certainly, the decision to 'drop out' of one's life and responsibilities to spend restorative time in nature is not a pathway that is open to most, and certainly not most women. For girl mossing, which is framed almost entirely positively online, risks appear to primarily stem from its potential for destructive nihilism, rather than growth. This is articulated in the slide between girl mossing and the associated "(girl) rotting" or "(bed) rotting". 'Brain rot', Oxford Dictionary's Word of the Year for 2024, involves spending extended periods of static time consuming low-quality television or romance novels or scrolling through social media. While rest and retreat are intended to be restorative, extended periods of 'rotting' can leave people feeling worse. This has generated, somewhat ironically, a whole genre of productivity-centric content on resetting from rot, including guides published by public health services on how to "bed rot in moderation" and avoid self-sabotage.

3.2. Commitment Two: Nature as Restorative

For those able to do so, retreat into nature promises significant restorative powers. Mossing is premised on the idea that simply being in, and resting with, trees, rivers, and other non-human actors can replenish or improve one's health. Girl mossing content is replete with praise for the superpowers of nature. One popular meme proclaims that "nature is the new nightclub", and multiple posts play with the pun that the 'forest' is de-

signed 'for rest'. Significant numbers of photographs depict women lying on a bed of moss (Figure 1), seemingly asleep, but also camping or walking in the woods with female friends or companion animals. Girl mossing often, but not always, involves physical, tactile connection with moss. Thus, while nature retreats may conjure up an image of isolation, a multi-species frame suggests a deeply social therapeutic relationship emerging between humans and non-human actors. Research into nature-based retreats has been deeply attentive to the relational dimensions of human–nature encounters (Conradson 2005, p. 338). Halafoff's interviews with religious retreat facilitators in the EU and USA, for example, revealed a deep relationality among fellow retreatants, retreat facilitators, and with the natural world (Halafoff 2017). Forest bathing and spiritual retreats have also been identified as potential sites to inspire biophilic connections and green-care through environmental education (Groen 2013, 2016).

There are good reasons for moss occupying this semiotic slot. Moss does not move fast. It is soft and pillowy, almost inviting one to nestle within it. Moss plays a protective and nurturing role in soil health, by helping to retain key nutrients, avoid erosion, and ward off disease. It also helps in the process of decomposition, transforming decaying leaf matter into new life. There is a strong crossover between girl mossing and a worldwide trend for the literal appreciation of moss. On Facebook, the Moss Appreciation Society has over 267.1k members. There are whole Instagram accounts devoted to photos of moss, like Mossgirlny, with 14.9K followers. Even more so in Japan, moss has long been a national craze, sparked partly by Hisako Fujii's 2011 runaway hit book, entitled "*Mosses, My Dear Friends*". Popular retreats catering to so-called "moss girls" in Kansai and Shikoku are accompanied by forest walking tours, green-decor hotel rooms, and even special themed desserts. Japan is home to over 2500 of the globe's approximately 12,000 varieties of moss, and moss has long been cultivated in the Zen Buddhist temples as part of the creation of garden landscapes for meditative contemplation. More recently, Japan's association with moss has become promoted to international tourists. Saihoji Temple offers online memberships and in-person walking tours to support its status as the "moss temple" of Kyoto. Even Oprah Winfrey appeared to get in on the trend, sharing her visit to the moss gardens at Saihoji Temple for "forest bathing" to her many hundreds of thousands of subscribers to her daily newsletter.

In this manner, girl mossing extends from established practices of "forest bathing" or "forest therapy". The term forest bathing or *shinrin yoku* (森林浴) was coined by Prof Yoshifumi Miyazaki at Chiba University in the 1980s, and has been adopted into various public health programs in Japan. It encourages participants to move slowly through nature and use all of their senses—sight, smell, sound, etc.—to connect with the forest around them. According to a recent systematic analysis of the evaluations of forest bathing (Wen et al. 2019), it is associated with a broad range of scientifically proven health benefits, including improved cardiovascular function, lowered cortisol levels, enhancements to people's emotional state and attitudes, physical and psychological recovery, and the alleviation of anxiety and depression. Forest bathing has thus crossed the rubric from personal spiritual practice to public health intervention. Indeed, the practice of 'green scripts', 'nature-based prescribing' or 'green social prescribing' involves recommending activities like spending time in the garden, participating in a park run, or learning to surf for the purposes of treating or preventing biomedical conditions like depression, dementia, heart disease and more (Ivers and Astell-Burt 2023). More than an individual treatment, such activities are understood as population-based interventions with the potential to address the 'disease' of modern society, related to sedentary lifestyles, chronic stress, and a loneliness epidemic (Mughal et al. 2022). In so doing, exposure to nature is promoted for its

potential to reduce the burden of disease on public health systems (Mughal et al. 2022) and has been adopted by the NHS, among other national health bodies.

Mossing is one particular iteration of a broader shift toward green spirituality and the 'relational naturalism' described above. Given its prevalence among young women, it also shares similarities with earlier eco-feminist movements. Ecofeminism emerged out of the counter-culture period, in Europe, North and Latin America and India, as women rose up in protest against environmental destruction and for women's rights, calling out patriarchal religion and modern science for societies' ills (Griffin 1989; Mies and Shiva 1993; Plant 1989; Ress 2006; Ruether 2003; Shiva 1989; Orrego Torres and Rossello 2024). Women were thought to be equated with profane realms of nature, reproduction, emotions and weakness, while men were valorised as connected with the mind, spirit, production and strength. Consequently, men were seen to have dominion over both women and the earth. Ecofeminists rose up to challenge this, replacing hierarchies of dominion and exploitation, with feminist ethics of care and healing and Indigenous and Pagan spiritual understandings of relational interdependence that respected women and nature. They argued that the responsibility to care for ourselves and the planet should not solely be the responsibility of women, but that all people could and should cultivate this ethics of care (Orrego Torres and Rossello 2024; Plant 1989; Ruether 1989, 2003).

The ecofeminist anthology *Healing the Wounds* (Plant 1989) acknowledges the traumas and toll inflicted on women and nature by religion and science. In her contribution, Susan Griffin notes that 'Both institutions within Western civilization have been shaped by and have deepened our alienation from the earth". (1989, p. 10). She adds "We are afraid to remember what we, in our bodies and in our feelings, still know… That, like the forests we destroy, or the rivers we try to tame, *we* are Nature". This delusion, of being separate from and above Nature, has led to the destruction of Nature and humanity. Yet Griffin argues that despite the delusion of being divided from ourselves and Nature, we have a "secret knowledge of wholeness" such that "there is to the earth and the structure of matter a kind of resonance". She concludes that (1989, pp. 16–17) "Suffering grief in my own life… I have felt the will toward self-annihilation. And still the singing in my body daily returns me to a love of this earth. I know that by a slow practice, if I am to survive, I must learn to listen to this song…"

The slow practice of mossing involves this listening; however, its potential for transforming listening into action is rather questionable. Ecofeminists turned to pre-modern and pre-colonial wisdom of nature-based spirituality for frameworks of how to live in harmony with the earth, respectful of diversity, and challenging all forms of oppression, pertaining not just to sexism but also racism, class and multispecies inequality (Orrego Torres and Rossello 2024; Shiva 1989). Ecofeminists famously mobilized, in social movements such as Chipko in India, protecting forests and trees, and in protests against nuclear power plants and testing in the US, the Pacific and the former Soviet Union (King 1989). They also stressed the importance of non-violence, community, creativity, sustainable living and right livelihood, envisioning new ways of living well together with multiple species (Plant 1989). In contrast to earlier ecofeminists, online at least, moss girls seem more preoccupied with resting than environmental activism, or indeed collective action of any kind.

And yet, the (non)action of moss girls' sharing of online memes is poetic, instructive and inspiring. It is a similar dynamic, in ways, to Taoist and Buddhist sages who employ biophilic poetry as a means of 'pointing' to the very essence of life, for the benefit of all beings. According to Lao Tzu and Longchen Rabjam, spending time resting in nature naturally leads to an awareness of deep relational connection with nature. This in turn results in "compassionate-responsiveness" towards all life, including self-care, and ulti-

mately writing poetry to share these insights with others (Halafoff 2021, 2022; Lobel 2018, p. 286). As naturalist Mary Oliver writes in her poem *Sometimes*,

> Instructions for living a life:
>
> Pay attention.
>
> Be astonished.
>
> Tell about it.

3.3. Commitment Three: Embracing Decay

In addition to being led by young women, girl mossing and retreat into nature are distinguished from mainstream society by their embrace of natural rhythms, including decay. If hustle culture works on an upward trajectory of constant productive labour and growth, then mossing subsumes humans to grander temporal cycles that fundamentally include decomposition and death. For example, one post from Instagram in December 2024 depicts a cottage garden with the caption "just cover me in compost. i am ready to decay this december". Another, from June 2023, shows a woman digging herself into soil and reads "A weighted blanket is not enough. I need to merge with the soil and co-regulate my body with the earth's mycelial network". Alongside moss, trees, mushrooms and soil have emerged as powerful metaphors for making sense of human mortality within the green death movement (Gould et al. 2024b). These forces work to disassemble and transform the corpse and distribute its nutrient components into the earth, thereby traversing the boundary between the human and non-human.

More broadly, there is significant overlap to be found here between mossing and the natural death, new death, or 'death positive movement'. Westendorp and Gould define this movement as a "a diverse and dispersed social–spiritual movement" working to "reframe society's relationship to death via a return to "traditional" or "natural" ways of dying and death" (Westendorp and Gould 2021, p. 2). It has gained a critical mass over the last decade, rising to popular consciousness and a prominent role in the deathcare sector. In illustration of this, *The Atlantic* declared that "death is having a moment" (Hayasaki 2013) and the Global Wellness Summit 2019 (the peak international forum for wellness industry leaders) selected 'Dying Well' as one of its top ten annual trends. Notably, as with girl mossing, this trend is dominated by young—specifically millennial—women (Cummins 2020).

In light of the changing composition of worldviews in contemporary societies, and the declining authority of religion, Miller and Beaman's (2024) analysis of Death Cafés (in this Special Issue) shows that rather than viewing it as something transcendent or otherworldly, many have immanent understandings of death. They draw here on William E. Connolly's (2011, p. 43) description of immanence as "a philosophy of becoming in which the universe is not dependent on a higher power". Miller and Beaman (2024, p. 108) stress complexity in non-religious understandings of death, moving beyond outdated ideas that simply see non-religious/secular death as "extinction/annihilation" and religious death as "continuation". Specifically, they find "nature" to be "central" to imminent framings of death: "whatever happens after death is often considered to occur through connection with the natural world or natural forces rather than intervention from a higher, external power" (Miller and Beaman 2024, pp. 110–1 & 116). They prefer the term "energy" to "recycling", as energy was often mentioned by participants to describe a continuation of the physical body into the earth through decomposition, or absorption into a quantum field. This 'recycling/energy death stance' displays parallels with the 'sciencey-spirituality' observed by Halafoff et al. (2023) above. Miller and Beaman (2024, p. 106) explain how Death Cafés were conceived "to increase awareness of death" in order to help "people make the most of their (finite) lives". Similarly, mossing can be seen to increase awareness

of finite bodies, by stressing the need for rest in supportive and restorative natural settings, and of eventual decomposition, composting and new life. Mossing is also an immanent frame; there is no promise of connection with or of becoming anything other than the natural world.

The new death movement thus advocates for sensorial connection with nature at the end of life, environmentally conscious practices at funerals and for an embrace of the process of decomposition, such that preservationist interventions like embalming are generally eschewed. Founder of the Order of the Good Death, author and mortician Caitlin Doughty, advocates for embracing decay and the "freedom found in decomposition, a body rendered messy, chaotic, and wild" (in Westendorp and Gould 2021). Her movement thus includes advocating for home-based funerals and postmortem body care, as well as new methods of handling human remains, like natural burial and composting. Doughty explicitly contrasts the expansive freedom afforded by decomposition and death with the myriad ways in which women's bodies are surveyed and regulated in life, writing "women's bodies are so often under the purview of men, whether it's our reproductive organs, our sexuality, our weight, our manner of dress". The "messy, chaotic, and wild" corpse, with all of its leaking fluids, smells, and uncontrolled decay, is thus reframed as a positive future for women that may be realized through death. Perhaps the perfect coming-together of the death positive and girl mossing movements are the moss-lined mycelium coffins, produced by Dutch company *Loop* (Figure 4). Living Loop coffins are designed to biodegrade within just 45 days from burial, in order to enhance the nutrient exchange of the body to the surrounding earth. Social media reaction to these images (analysed in Gould et al. 2024) emphasizes the romance, re-enchantment and femininity offered by the promise of a natural death. Comments include "Imagine getting buried in a mushroom coffin filled with beautiful flowers and you wearing a flower crown on your head, that would be amazing" ('EmberMay', April 2021), and "I want to be buried in this, with a dress made of flowers and moss. The ultimate cottage core death. 🤣💀🌸🍄" ('Maria', May 2021).

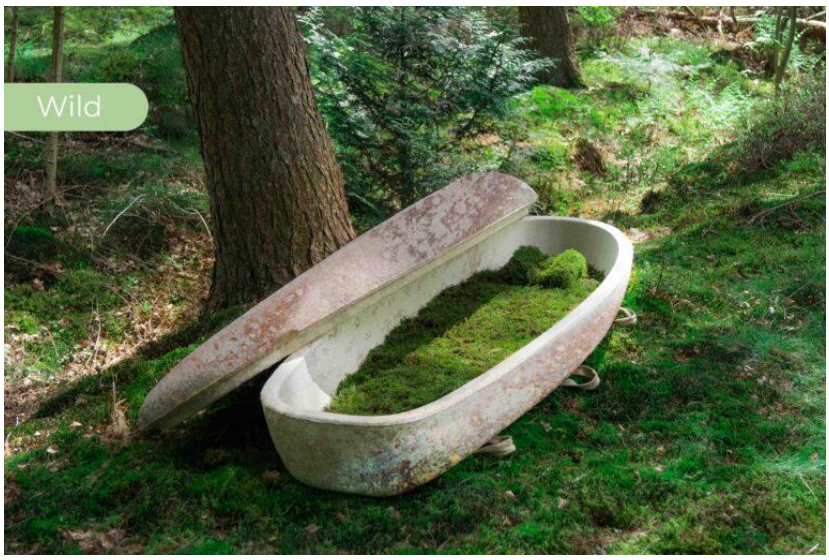

Figure 4. An advertising image for the 'Living Loop Coffin', featuring the 'wild' external finish of speckled mycelium matter and a bed of moss. Source: Loop Website, 25 March 2024.

4. Conclusions: Women, Rest and Resistance

The emergence of girl mossing, and the growing popularity of associated practices of retreat into nature, forest bathing and green deathcare, demonstrate a strengthening of

the need for rest, stillness and slowness associated with personal and planetary wellbeing. This desire to remove oneself from the pressures and distractions of urban, modern life and to immerse oneself in more-than-human connection for the purposes of healing and repair mimics relational spiritual and religious practices, particularly of Pagan and Buddhist communities.

These practices are increasingly being adapted, secularized and undertaken by 'spiritual but not religious' and non-religious persons. Both are growing demographics, whose desires for natural health practices are too-often dismissed, as are the beliefs and practices of many hyper-online young women who are burdened by both the demands of late-capitalist labour and its apparent cure in neoliberal self-care. It may appear glib to declare that the "girls" have had enough—enough of work, but equally, enough of wellness, and enough, perhaps, even of activism and community-building—and that they are choosing to moss and rot instead. And they are choosing to share this feeling online, perhaps to gain attention and influence, but also to sincerely challenge neoliberal norms and share benefits of mossing and rotting with others. In this way, girl mossing is an expression of both spiritual complexity and relational naturalism.

Without overstating the scope or staying power of the specific 'girl mossing' trend, then, we advocate for deeper engagement with the sophistication of emerging rest and nature-based wellness practices. Particularly, it should be added that these practices are promulgated by young women, whose religious and cultural power is too often overlooked by scholars, and who suffer acutely from the demands of neoliberal capitalism. It is easy to express cynicism and dismiss this movement as mounting an ineffective response to the problems of neoliberal life and for occupying spaces of self-promotion like Instagram. However, to do so would be to reinforce the same pressures placed on young women to solve the conditions they are forced to live through. In expressing their desires for restorative rest in nature online, young women articulate a complex vision of holistic wellness, one not currently available to them in conventional modes of work and health, life and death.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, H.G. and A.H.; methodology, H.G. and A.H.; writing—original draft, H.G. and A.H.; writing—review and editing, A.H. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: Anna Halafoff receives funding from the Australian Research Council DP23100538. Hannah Gould receives funding from the Australian Research Council DP250101054. Hannah Gould and Anna Halafoff received funding from the Contemplative Studies Centre for 'Dying "Buddhish" in Australia'.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The manuscript was prepared in line with the Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, which governs human research at the University of Melbourne and Deakin University.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: The original contributions presented in this study are included in the article. Further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

Aechtner, Thomas. 2021. Distrust, danger, and confidence: A content analysis of the Australian vaccination-risks network blog. *Public Understanding of Science* 30: 16–35. [PubMed]

Baker, Stephanie Alice. 2022a. Alt. health influencers: How wellness culture and web culture have been weaponised to promote conspiracy theories and far-right extremism during the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 25: 3–24.

Baker, Stephanie Alice. 2022b. *Wellness Culture: How the Wellness Movement Has Been Used to Empower, Profit and Misinform*. Bradford: Emerald Publishing.

Beaman, Lori G. 2017. *Deep Equality in an Era of Religious Diversity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bramadat, Paul. 2022. Reverential naturalism in Cascadia: From the fancy to the sublime. In *Religion at the Edge: Nature, Spirituality, and Secularity in the Pacific Northwest*. Edited by Paul Bramadat, Patricia O'Connell Killen and Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme. Vancouver: UBC Press, pp. 23–40.

Browning, Karasik Macy. 2024. Digital "Girl" Culture: Postfeminist Sensibilities of Social Media "Girl" Trends. *Journal of Student Research* 13: 1–8.

Carrette, Jeremy, and Richard King. 2005. *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion*. New York: Routledge.

Connolly, William E. 2011. *A World of Becoming*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Connor, Linda H. 2004. Relief, risk and renewal: Mixed therapy regimens in an Australian suburb. *Social Science and Medicine* 59: 1695–705. [PubMed]

Conradson, David. 2005. Landscape, care and the relational self: Therapeutic encounters in rural England. *Health and Place* 11: 337–48. [PubMed]

Cummins, Eleanor. 2020. Why Millennials Are the "Death Positive" Generation. *Vox*, January 22. Available online: https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2020/1/15/21059189/death-millennials-funeral-planning-cremation-green-positive (accessed on 23 March 2025).

Fedele, Anna, and Kim Knibbe, eds. 2020. *Secular Society, Spiritual Selves? Gendering the Overlaps and Boundaries Between Religion, Spirituality and Secularity*. New York: Routledge.

Feng, Lydia. 2021. 'Lying flat': The millennials quitting China's '996 work culture to live 'free of anxiety'. *ABC News*, September 23. Available online: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-23/tang-ping-lying-flat-generation-rejecting-chinas-work-culture/100477716 (accessed on 23 March 2025).

Foucault, Michel. 1988. Technologies of the Self: Lectures at University of Vermont, October 1982. In *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. Edited by Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton. Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, pp. 16–49.

Gauthier, François. 2020. *Religion, Modernity, Globalisation: Nation state to Market*. New York: Routledge.

Gleig, Ann. 2019. *American Dharma: Buddhism beyond Modernity*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Global Wellness Institute. 2024. 2024 Global Wellness Economy Monitor. Available online: https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/2024-global-wellness-economy-monitor/ (accessed on 23 March 2025).

Gottfried, Sophia. 2019. Niksen Is the Dutch Lifestyle Concept of Doing Nothing—And You're About to See It Everywhere. *TIME*, July 12. Available online: https://time.com/5622094/what-is-niksen/ (accessed on 23 March 2025).

Gould, Hannah, Anna Halafoff, and Ruth Fitzpatrick. 2024a. Dying 'Buddhish': Death, Diversity, and Worldview Complexity in and Beyond Australia. *Journal of Global Buddhism* 25: 186–201.

Gould, Hannah, Tamara Kohn, Michael Arnold, and Martin Gibbs. 2024b. The Dead Who Would Be Trees and Mushrooms. In *Death's Social and Material Meaning Beyond the Human*. Edited by Jesse D. Peterson, Natasha Lemon Dekker and Philip R. Olson. Bristol: Bristol University Press, pp. 168–79.

Griera, Mar, Morales i Gras Jordi, Clot-Garrell Anna, and Cazarín Rafael. 2022. Conspirituality in COVID-19 times: A mixed-method study of antivaccine movements in Spain. *Journal for the Academic Study of Religion* 35: 192–217.

Griffin, Susan. 1989. Split Culture. In *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*. Edited by Judith Plant. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, pp. 7–17.

Groen, Janet. 2013. From malaise to re-enchantment. *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* 3: 46–55.

Groen, Janet. 2016. Rediscover, reawaken, renew: The potential role of spiritual retreat centres in environmental adult education. *The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education* 28: 83–96. [CrossRef]

Grossman, Paul. 2023. Fundamental challenges and likely refutations of the five basic premises of the polyvagal theory. *Biological Psychology* 180: 108589.

Halafoff, Anna. 2017. Beneath religion: Whale watching and the more-than-human turn in sociology of religion. Paper presentation at the 2017 Development for Species: Animals in Society, Animals as Society Conference, Melbourne, Australia, September 18–19.

Halafoff, Anna. 2021. From abundance to enough: What we have learned from the pandemic. *ABC Religion & Ethics*, January 4. Available online: https://www.abc.net.au/religion/from-abundance-to-enough-learning-from-the-pandemic/13030464 (accessed on 23 March 2025).

Halafoff, Anna. 2022. Longchen Rabjam's The Precious Treasury of the Basic Space of Phenomena. Paper presentation at Works that Shaped the World Lecture Series, Canberra, Australia, September 23.

Halafoff, Anna, Andrew Singleton, and Ruth Fitzpatrick. 2023. Spiritual complexity in Australia: Wellbeing and risks. *Social Compass* 70: 243–62.

Halafoff, Anna, Ruth Fitzpatrick, and Cristina Rocha. 2024. The Body Complex: (Con)spirituality, Wellness and COVID-19 in Australia. In *Researching Contemporary Wellness Cultures*. Edited by Naomi Smith, Clare Southerton and Marianne Clark. Bingley: Emerald Publishing, pp. 15–32.

Harambam, Jaron, and Stef Aupers. 2021. From the unbelievable to the undeniable: Epistemological pluralism, or how conspiracy theorists legitimate their extraordinary truth claims. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 24: 990–1008.

Hayasaki, Erika. 2013. Death is Having a Moment. *The Atlantic*, October 25.

Heelas, Paul, and Linda Woodhead. 2005. *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion Is Giving Way to Spirituality*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hersey, Tricia. 2022. *Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto*. New York: Little, Brown Spark.

Hodgson, James. 2022. Potent connections, mystery- work and the relational nature of retreat-going. *The Sociological Review* 70: 199–214. [CrossRef]

Honoré, Carl. 2004. *In Praise of Slow: How a Worldwide Movement is Challenging the Cult of Speed*. London: Orion.

Houtman, Dick, Stef Aupers, and Rudi Laermans, eds. 2021. *Science under Siege: Contesting the Secular Religion of Scientism*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.

Ingram, Matthew. 2020. *Retreat: How the Counterculture Created Wellness*. New York: Random House.

Ivers, Rowena, and Thomas Astell-Burt. 2023. Nature Rx: Nature prescribing in general practice. *Australian Journal of General Practice* 52: 183–196. [PubMed]

Jennings, Rebecca. 2023. "Girl" Trends and the Repackaging of Womanhood. *Vox*, August 16. Available online: https://www.vox.com/culture/23831903/girl-dinner-tiktok-trends-hot-girl-walk (accessed on 23 March 2025).

Kata, Anna. 2010. A postmodern Pandora's box: Anti-vaccination misinformation on the internet. *Vaccine* 28: 1709–16. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Kelly, Catherine. 2012. Wellness tourism: Retreat visitor motivations and experiences. *Tourism Recreation Research* 37: 205–213.

King, Ynestra. 1989. The Ecology of Feminism and the Feminism of Ecology. In *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*. Edited by Judith Plant. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, pp. 18–28.

Koffman, Ofra, and Rosalind Gill. 2013. The Revolution will be Led by a 12-Year-Old Girl: Girl Power and Global Biopolitics. *Feminist Review* 105: 83–102. [CrossRef]

Leaver, Tama, Tim Highfield, and Crystal Abidin. 2020. *Instagram: Visual Social Media Cultures*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lobel, Adam S. 2018. Allowing Spontaneity: Practice, Theory, and Ethical Cultivation in Longchenpa's Great Perfection Philosophy of Action. Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA.

Lorde, Audre. 1988. *A Burst of Light and Other Essays*. Ithaca: Firebrand Books.

MacLure, Maggie. 2010. The offence of theory. *Journal of Education Policy* 25: 277–86.

MacLure, Maggie. 2013. The wonder of data. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 13: 228–32.

Magliocco, Sabina. 2018. "Reconnecting to Everything": Fairies in Contemporary Paganism. In *Fairies, Demons, and Nature Spirits. Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic*. Edited by Michael Ostling. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Matei, Adrienne. 2024. Oversensitive and Overreactive: What Is Nervous System Dysregulation and How Can It Be Resolved? *The Guardian*, March 5. Available online: https://www.theguardian.com/wellness/2024/mar/04/what-is-nervous-system-dysregulation (accessed on 16 March 2025).

May, Katherine. 2020. *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times*. Melbourne: Penguin Books Australia.

Mies, Maria, and Vandana Shiva. 1993. *Ecofeminism*. London: Zed Books.

Miller, Chris, and Lori G. Beaman. 2024. Nonreligious Afterlife: Emerging Understandings of Death and Dying. *Religions* 15: 104. [CrossRef]

Mughal, Rabya, Helen Seers, Marie Polley, Abigail Sabey, and Helen Chatterjee. 2022. *How the Natural Environment Can Support Health and Wellbeing Through Social Prescribing*. London: National Academy for Social Prescribing.

Ni, Vincent. 2022. The Rise of 'Bai Lan': Why China's Frustrated Youth Are Ready to 'Let It Rot'. *The Guardian*, May 26. Available online: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/26/the-rise-of-bai-lan-why-chinas-frustrated-youth-are-ready-to-let-it-rot (accessed on 16 March 2025).

Norman, Alex. 2011. *Spiritual Tourism: Travel and Religious Practice in Western Society*. London: Continuum.

Norman, Alex, and Jennifer J. Pokorny. 2017. Meditation retreats: Spiritual tourism well-being interventions. *Tourism Management Perspectives* 24: 201–07.

Orrego Torres, Ely, and Diego Rossello. 2024. Imagining ecopolis: Visions of ecofeminist political theology and ecocriticism in Latin America. *Social Compass* 71: 442–64.

Palmer, Abby. 2024. Consumercore: The Girl Commodification and Girl Romanticization of Girl Self Because Girl Internet Said So. Ph.D. thesis, Ohio University, Athens, OH, USA.

Palmisano, Stefania, and Nicola Pannofino. 2021. *Contemporary Spiritualities: Enchanted Worlds of Nature, Wellbeing and Mystery in Italy*. London: Routledge.

Piacenza, Joanna. 2014. TIME's Beautiful, White, Blonde 'Mindfulness Revolution'. *HuffPost*, January 29.

Plant, Judith. 1989. Toward a New World: An Introduction. In *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, pp. 1–6.

Ress, Mary Judith. 2006. *Ecofeminism in Latin America. Women from the Margins*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

Rocha, Cristina. 2017. *John of God: The Globalization of Brazilian Faith Healing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Roginski, Alexandra, and Cristina Rocha. 2022. The body as evidence of truth: Biomedicine and enduring narratives of religious and spiritual healing. *Journal for the Academic Study of Religion* 35: 168–91. [CrossRef]

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 1989. Toward an Ecological-Feminist Theology of Nature. In *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*. Edited by Judith Plant. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, pp. 145–50.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 2003. Ecofeminism. In *Feminism and Theology*. Edited by Janet Martin Soskice and Diana Lipton. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 23–33.

Sallnow, Libby, Richard Smith, Sam H. Ahmedzai, Aisha Bhadelia, Catherine Chamberlain, Yu Cong, Brett Doble, Luckson Dullie, Robin Durie, Eric A. Finkelstein, and et al. 2022. Report of the Lancet Commission on the Value of Death: Bringing death back into life. *The Lancet* 39: 837–884.

Seidenberg, David Mevorach. 2021. History and Evolution of *Tikkun Olam*, According to the Textual Sources. *Journal of Jewish Ethics* 7: 129–63. [CrossRef]

Shiva, Vandana. 1989. Development, Ecology and Women. In *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*. Edited by Judith Plant. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, pp. 80–90.

Singleton, Andrew, Anna Halafoff, Mary Lou Rasmussen, and Gary Bouma. 2021. *Freedom, Faiths and Futures: Teenage Australians on Religion, Sexuality and Diversity*. London: Bloomsbury.

Taylor, Bron. 2020. Dark Green Religion: A decade later. *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 14: 496–510.

Vermeesch, Amber L., Alexis Ellsworth-Kopkowski, Jenna G. Prather, Connor Passel, Heather H. Rogers, and Meghan M. Hansen. 2024. Shinrin-Yoku (Forest Bathing): A Scoping Review of the Global Research on the Effects of Spending Time in Nature. *Global Advances in Integrative Medicine and Health* 13: 27536130241231258.

Watts, Galen. 2022. *The Spiritual Turn. The Religion of the Heart and the Making of Romantic Liberal Modernity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wen, Ying, Qibing Yan, and Yan Pan. 2019. Medical empirical research on forest bathing (*Shinrin-yoku*): A systematic review. *Environmental Health and Preventative Medicine* 24: 1–21. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Westendorp, Mariske, and Hannah Gould. 2021. Re-Feminizing Death: Gender, Spirituality and Death Care in the Anthropocene. *Religions* 12: 667. [CrossRef]

Wiens, Brianna I. 2021. Virtual Dwelling: Feminist Orientations to Digital Communities. In *Me Too and Beyond: Perspectives on a Global Movement*. Edited by M. Mendes and S. Ringrose. Lanham: Lexington Books, pp. 17–34.

Wiens, Brianna I., and Shana MacDonald. 2024. Dwelling as Method: Lingering in/with Feminist Curated Data Sets on Instagram. *Journal of Digital Social Research* 6: 27–45.

Wiley, Kerrie E., Julie Leask, Katie Attwell, Catherine Helps, Chris Degeling, Paul R. Ward, and Stacy M. Carter. 2020. Parenting and the vaccine refusal process: A new explanation of the relationship between lifestyle and vaccination trajectories. *Social Science and Medicine* 263: 113259. [PubMed]

Zanesco, Anthony P., Brandon G. King, Quinn A. Conklin, and Clifford D. Saron. 2023. The occurrence of psychologically profound, meaningful, and mystical experiences during a month-long meditation retreat. *Mindfulness* 14: 606–21.