Master Thesis

A Qualitative Study on the Integration and Conceptualisation of Solarpunk in Reddit Users Daily Lives

Pia Wegener

Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences, University of Twente

Master of Positive Clinical Psychology and Technology

1st Supervisor: Dr. Heidi K. Toivonen, Assistant Professor

2nd Supervisor: Dr. Tessa Dekkers, Assistant Professor

13th of December 2023

Abstract

Climate change is a frequently discussed topic with many different climate change narratives characterising these discussions. Most of these narratives have a rather negative focus on e.g. the negative consequences and possible disasters and have been associated with an increase in negative feelings and impacted mental health. One climate change narrative that has a more positive focus is Solarpunk which focuses on imagining a more socially just future in which humanity lives sustainably in harmony with nature. So far scientific literature around Solarpunk is quite rare and mostly focused on Solarpunk as a literary genre. Thus far, no study has delved into exploring Solarpunk in online discussions, despite the majority of Solarpunk interactions taking place online. Therefore, this work examines Solarpunk as discussed by Reddit users of the Solarpunk subreddit. A reflexive thematic analysis was conducted to gain an in depth understanding of the Reddit users' experiences with Solarpunk. 114 different comments from five different Reddit threads of the Solarpunk subreddit were examined, resulting in four themes: 1) *Solarpunk as Positive, Useful, and Superior Mindset*, 2) *Solarpunk as a community who shares responsibility for the climate and the people*, 3) *Solarpunk as Sustainability that is Strenuous and Unattainable*, and 4) *Solarpunk as a State of Being Enabled by the Circumstances of the Person*. These findings add to a more complete understanding of Solarpunk and fills a gap in the literature around more positively focused climate change narratives. This work concludes by highlighting potential implications for both practical applications and scientific exploration, suggesting ideas for further research.

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The last years have seen an increase in natural disasters all over the planet. Scientists attribute this to rising global temperatures which will continue to increase if climate change is not stopped (Coronese et al., 2019). Since climate change presents an imminent threat to the wellbeing of humanity, it is a frequently discussed topic in traditional as well as social media (Flottum & Gjerstad, 2016). Pelletier and Sharp (2008) found that how climate change is presented and discussed can influence motivation to take mitigating action. Additionally, how a certain topic is discussed may influence the feelings associated with that topic (Hulme, 2008). Examining climate change narratives provides information about how the people using the narratives perceive climate change as well as what kind of solutions they see (Daniels & Endfield, 2009; Pueyos-Ros & Garau, 2023). This information is important for designing effective climate mitigation policies (Bushell et al., 2017), as well as to better understand behaviour and feelings connected to climate change (Niceforo, 2021). In the discourse around climate change many different climate change narratives exist, for instance the apocalyptic narrative or the green growth narrative. So far, most research has focused on examining apocalyptic or disaster narratives, or narratives told by people who deny anthropogenic climate change. This is problematic as these are by far not the only narratives out there and the literature therefore presents a limited understanding of how people perceive climate change. Hinkel et al. (2020) also call for more examination of positive or solution-oriented narratives especially which have not received much attention yet. One such narrative is Solarpunk which is characterised by a positive and hopeful outlook on the future (Johnson, 2020) and is the focus of this thesis.

As stated above, different climate change narratives exist, which will be shortly introduced to position solarpunk in the broader context of climate change narratives. One narrative fundamentally different from solarpunk is the narrative commonly told by people who deny or downplay climate change. In this narrative there is no anthropogenic climate change and thus also no need for climate change mitigating action (Harvey et al., 2018). This narrative is much discussed on social media (Bloomfield & Tillery, 2018) as well as online blogs (Harvey et al., 2018) and has been associated with reduced climate change mitigating behaviour and political inaction (Tyagi et al., 2020). Another common narrative is the apocalyptic or disaster one. This narrative is characterised by discussions about imminent unavoidable disasters and catastrophes induced by climate change (Stoknes, 2015). This narrative is popular in traditional

media such as newspapers or news broadcasting stations, fictional literature and movies (Paz Durán et al., 2023), and also in online discourse around climate change (Hidalgo et al., 2015). Online manifestations of this narrative are defined by people sharing their negative emotions around the topic of climate change. Hulme (2008) remarks that the discussion often centres around fear inducing words, such as catastrophe, danger, or collapse. The negative focus of this narrative has been linked to increased feelings of climate anxiety, desperation and hopelessness (Hulme, 2008).

Since the apocalyptic narrative has been associated with such negative feelings, Hinkel et al. (2020) and Meurs et al. (2023) call for more examination of positive and solution-oriented narratives which have not received much attention in research yet. Emphasizing these perspectives may contribute to fostering a nuanced understanding of how climate change is perceived and discussed. Further, Meurs et al (2023) suggest that for increasing climate change mitigating action, the framing of climate change discussions plays an important role. They argue that such a discussion should be based on hope and focus what can be gained by stopping climate change, instead of focusing on what should be avoided. This might increase action directed at achieving this world (Meurs et al., 2023). The authors thereby emphasise the importance of narratives that focus on positive outcomes and actions based on shared values. Bowen and Frankhauser (2011) similarly emphasise that a positive climate change narrative centred around possible gains instead of possible losses is needed. Such a narrative might not only be connected to more climate change mitigating action but also to more positive emotions and decreased anxiety. Having an optimistic focus has been linked to improved psychological wellbeing. Serrano et al. (2020) suggest a link between higher levels of optimism, and subjective wellbeing and psychological resilience, and higher levels of optimism. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct more research into positive and solution-oriented narrative to explore how people conceptualise and deal with climate change in those narratives.

As mentioned above, positive climate change narratives have not received much attention in the scientific literature. However, one positive narrative that has been mentioned is the Green Growth Narrative, which centres around discussions of achieving sustainability while also continuing economic growth (Hickel & Kallis, 2019). This would be achieved by a decoupling of the economy from its environmental impact fast enough to stop climate change (Vezzoni, 2023). This narrative is used by many big corporations and governments, such as the European Union (Hickel & Kallis, 2019). The discussion around this narrative is characterised

by a focus on gain and possibilities for improvement and prosperity (Bowen & Frankenhauser, 2011).

Solarpunk, as mentioned above, envision a future in which humans live sustainably in harmony with nature and give equal power and voice to all people (Reina-Rozo, 2021). Thereby presenting a focus not only on climate change but also on societal change. Solarpunk, at its core takes an optimistic and solution-oriented stance to the climate change problem by imaging a future in which the climate change problem can be or has been solved (Williams, 2021). Thus, compared to the mentioned climate change narratives, Solarpunk can be positioned as opposite to the denialist and apocalyptic narrative. Solarpunk takes climate science seriously, calls for climate change mitigating action and encompasses a positive outlook on the future. While there is significant overlap between the narratives of Solarpunk and Green Growth on climate change, Solarpunk's conceptual framework can be characterized as more radical in its ideas and viewpoints. While the Green Growth narrative merely aspires to keep the status quo regarding the climate (Hickel & Kallis, 2019), Solarpunk envisions large scale societal changes, a moving away from capitalistic overconsumption and the re-integration and protection of nature (Williams, 2019).

The emergence of Solarpunk in the 2000s resulted from online discussions and short stories which focused on sustainability, living in harmony with nature, and promoting social justice (Reina-Rozo, 2021). Even though Solarpunk only gained traction in the 2000s, traces of Solarpunk ideas have existed earlier and can be found in popular media such as studio Ghibli movies or short stories such as Ernest Callenbach's Ecotopia, published in 1975 (Johnson, 2020). In literature, Solarpunk is a prominent subgenre of climate fiction (fictional stories centring around the topic of climate change (Schneider-Mayerson, 2018)) and is often published in the form of short stories (Johnson, 2020). These short stories often feature marginalised groups and their way to more social justice. Further, the short stories usually contain a way of dealing with climate change successfully and an approach to more sustainable living (Johnson, 2020). Solarpunk media and artwork often feature the integration of nature into urban spaces or the integration of technology into nature, depictions of cultural diversity, sustainable architecture in organic styles, sustainable energy technologies, close-knit communities and self-sufficiency (Reina-Rozo, 2021). As a movement Solarpunk inspires discussions in online spaces, such as Tumblr (Williams, 2019), as well as offline events aimed at connecting researchers, scientists, and activists (Reina-Rozo, 2021). Even though Solarpunk is a movement, a literary genre, and a climate change narrative, scientific literature has to my

knowledge mostly analysed Solarpunk as a literary genre (for example: Johnson, 2020; Wieckowska, 2021). A few other studies have focused on explaining and illustrating what Solarpunk is (Reina-Rozo, 2021; Williams, 2019). Discussions of Solarpunk in online spaces or how Solarpunk is conceptualised in everyday life have also not been studied yet. This leaves a gap in the scientific literature around Solarpunk, as Williams (2019) states that most engagement with Solarpunk takes place in online discussion spaces. Hence, a substantial part of Solarpunk has not been studied yet.

Pearce et al. (2019), Treen et al. (2022), and Pueyo-Ros and Garau (2023) underline the importance of examining climate change narratives in the context of social media. Social media is an influential source of information about climate change for many people (Jones et al., 2023), and thus plays a part in shaping and organising climate change discourse (Pearce et al., 2019). It is also a much-used space for people to express their thoughts, feelings and opinions around climate change (Tyagi et al., 2020) making it an ideal space for examining climate change narratives (Pearce et al., 2019; Treen et al., 2022; Pueyo-Ros & Garau, 2023). However, the research about climate change narratives is still rather unidirectional, regarding the narratives as well as the platforms that have been studied. So far, most research about social media has focused on examining to what degree narratives that accept anthropogenic climate change, are sceptical towards it, or completely deny it are present on social media (e.g. Pueyo-Ros & Garau, 2023; Tyagi et al., 2020). Studies that have examined narratives supporting climate change science on social media have focused on examining apocalyptic narratives (e.g. Sternudd, 2020). Research into more positive or solution-oriented narratives on social media is thus still lacking. Additionally, research has focused on the platform X (formerly Twitter). Pearce et al. (2019) describe a substantial bias towards studies using data from X in their literature review of climate change on social media. This is problematic as platform architecture seems to impact the nature of the discussions (Treen et al., 2022), indicating that it is not necessarily possible to transfer findings from one platform to another. Other platforms such as Reddit remain understudied (Treen et al., 2022). Reddit is visited more than X globally, is a popular space for climate change discourse, and also structured differently from X (Treen et al., 2022). Thus, examining a positive climate change narrative on Reddit can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how climate change narratives are discussed on social media.

Therefore, this study will take a closer look at how people conceptualise Solarpunk in their daily lives in online discussions on Reddit. Doing so will be a first step in understanding what Solarpunk looks like as a climate change narrative. It will thus contribute to a more

complete understanding of climate change narratives and deepen the knowledge around how people conceptualise climate change. The research question of my thesis is: "How is the Solarpunk narrative discussed on Reddit as a part of the Reddit users' daily lives?".

Methodology

Design

To study how Reddit users discuss Solarpunk as a part of their daily lives, I will employ a qualitative approach and examine Reddit data. For this I will use reflexive thematic analysis which will allow me to understand how Solarpunk is conceptualised and perceived. Qualitative research is suitable for explorative research into fields that have not been researched much yet (Clarke & Braun, 2006) and allows for a deeper understanding of human thought, action, and meaning making around a certain topic (Queirós et al., 2017). To analyse how people discuss Solarpunk as a part of their daily lives, I will look at discussions on Reddit. Reddit has a Solarpunk subreddit where the users discuss all kinds of different topics and questions centring around the idea of Solarpunk. Reddit data is suitable for qualitative analysis as it is publicly available, has a high character limit compared to other social media, and is defined by large levels of self-disclosure (Chew et al., 2021; Kilgo et al., 2018; Pearce et al., 2019; Pilkington & Rominov, 2017). This study received ethical approval from the BMS ethics committee of the University of Twente.

Selection and Preparation of Data

To search for fitting Reddit threads, I filtered the Solarpunk Subreddit for discussion threads and checked what kind of topics were discussed in the individual threads. I looked for threads in which the Reddit users[1] discuss their personal experiences with Solarpunk, as well as the meaning of Solarpunk in their own life. I therefore, did not include threads where the users expressed their opinions or feelings primarily through quotes, pictures, or links to articles, as I was interested in the Reddit user's experiences expressed in their own words. I found five discussion threads in which people described their own experiences with Solarpunk or discussed integrating Solarpunk into society. The five threads that were fitting are:

1. "Any European Solarpunks?", where people discuss what they do to be Solarpunk (58 entries),

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[1] For the sake of readability, I from here on refer to the Reddit users of the Solarpunk subreddit as Reddit users. Unless explicitly mentioned otherwise, I am always referring only to the users of the Solarpunk subreddit, not all Reddit users.

2. "How do YOU define Solarpunk?", with people discussing definitions of Solarpunk but also how they define it for themselves in their life (7 entries),

3. "How To Be A Solarpunk", which features discussions about how to be a Solarpunk (38 entries),

4. "If capitalism can't solve climate change, then what other system can we use?" which discusses the advantages and disadvantages of various political systems and ideologies, but also contains comments about the integration of Solarpunk into society (190 entries), and lastly,

5. "Solarpunk feels different from other leftist communities", which contains comments about various topics (such as comparisons of Solarpunk to other ideologies, or criticism on other left leaning ideologies), as well as comments in which the Reddit users discuss the influence of Solarpunk in their lives and the views they have about Solarpunk (90 entries).

After deciding which threads would be usable for me, I copied the entries of the threads into a text file. In total that left me with 383 entries. After reading through the entire data set, I deleted comments that were not relevant to my research question. I deleted, for example, comments of the thread "Any European Solarpunks?" where users just stated the country they are from (e.g., "I live in France at the moment."), or comments that simply said things like "Joined!" or "Hey". Further, I also deleted comments where the users did discuss their personal views or lives but that did not centre around Solarpunk, e.g. ("capitalism is involuntary so you can't just organise differently without the ruling class trying to kill you or lock you up or force you to live how they want you to"). This left me with a final data set of 114 entries (Appendix). I then copied the remaining entries into Atlas.ti, a software for coding.

Data Analysis

For the data analysis, I chose a reflexive thematic analysis as conceptualised by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse the meaning making around the topic of Solarpunk. This method is well suited for an experiential and inductive approach and will thus allow me to inspect and analyse the Solarpunk subreddit user's discussions of their lived experiences with Solarpunk (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Experiential thematic analysis deals with examining people's experiences, perspectives or behaviours situated in a certain context. It assumes that language can reflect the true nature of things. Therefore, people's true experiences, perspectives or behaviours can be analysed through their language (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Using an inductive

approach means that I am not using a preexisting theory or coding framework to examine the data. An inductive approach is thus grounded in the data; meaning the codes and later themes are devised from the data itself, as opposed to being determined by a preexisting theory (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The researcher plays an active role in this process. The themes are formed through the researcher's analytic engagement with the data; instead of already existing in the data, waiting to be discovered by the researcher.

In reflexive thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke, the subjectivity of the researcher is seen as a research tool instead of something that should be cancelled out as much as possible (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Instead of using measures like interrater reliability Braun and Clarke emphasise the importance of a reflective process for ensuring the quality of the analysis. Braun and Clarke (2022) also emphasise the importance of reflecting on what kind of assumptions one brings to the analysis as well as with what kind of background one is going into the analysis. I am a young white woman from central Europe pursuing a master's degree. I am studying positive clinical psychology which makes me rather fond of a positive climate change narrative such as Solarpunk. I believe that looking at a problem from a solution-oriented focus can be beneficial for mental wellbeing. During the analysis I was therefore quite sensitive to expressions of experiencing Solarpunk as something positive. This also made me blind to expressions of experiencing Solarpunk as something difficult or negative at first. I further realised a tendency in myself to focus on emotions and to focus on analysing individual users instead of collective meaning making, which was also pointed out to me by my supervisor. While researching Solarpunk I have also formed an opinion about what I consider to be Solarpunk which sometimes clashed with what the Reddit users were expressing. To ensure that I did not leave out those comments because of my personal opinion on the matter, I marked the comments which made me react negatively (e.g. feel judgemental, annoyed, dismissive)feel judgemental to examine them again after reflecting on why I disagreed. For reflexivity purposes, I also kept a diary in which I kept track of my thoughts during the analysis. This helped me to become more aware of what kind of thoughts and assumptions were influencing me in the process. Frequently discussing my findings with my supervisor and with other students conducting thematic analyses also helped me become more aware of possible blind spots and make my analysis more objective.

Familiarisation with the Data

During my analysis I followed the steps developed by Braun & Clarke (2006). For the first step of data familiarisation, I printed the entire data set and read through it a couple of times while making comments about things I noticed in the margins. During this initial reading I did not yet focus on trying to answer my research question but just marked what stood out to me while reading through my data. This could be for example an entry that seemed to be particularly rich in information or an unexpected behaviour that was being described by user which caught my attention. After reading through the data set a couple times, I started to make notes about possible codes or themes in the margins and highlighted passages of text that I thought would be relevant for the coding process.

Coding Process

After familiarising myself with the data, I started the coding process. While coding I paid attention to expressions that were relevant to my research question. For example, particular behaviours described by the Reddit as a part of being Solarpunk (such as using public transportation), as well as descriptions of expressions of perceived effects Solarpunk had on their life. I also looked for expressions indicating what Solarpunk means to them in their daily life (e.g. having faith or being optimistic).

My units of analysis varied from single words to multiple sentences. The Reddit users' comments often consisted of lists of behaviours or orientations that they described integrating into their lives. For example, "composting" or "vegan", which I coded with "caring for nature" and "adjusting eating behaviour" respectively. Mostly, however, my unit of analysis consisted of a couple of words to a sentence such as "As for daily necessities, I'm straining after zero-waste (at least low-waste) for everything.". This I coded with "trying to reduce consumption/ trash". The longest unit of analysis consisted of a couple of sentences where the user elaborated on a specific assumption or behaviour, such as:

> European here as well. Not as hardcore as some other comments here in this thread, but that's also one of Europe's biggest strengths – it's very easy (at least in urban settings) to be baseline Solarpunk. Most Europeans live in apartments, have access to good public transport and at least passable bike infrastructure. In many parts it's also extremely easy to purchase locally-made food. Here in Malmö we also have a well-functioning recycling system. So I don't really need to make an effort to be Solarpunk.

This was coded with "being European makes you Solarpunk".

In reflexive thematic analysis often more than one code is applied to the same piece of text (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The piece of text above is an example of this. I applied the code "being European makes you Solarpunk" to the entire extract, and also applied codes such as "recycling" or "using bike & public transport" to the parts where the reddit user talked about the recycling system, and the good public transport and bike infrastructure. During the coding process I continued to adjust my codes, by e.g. grouping codes with the same meaning together or splitting a rather general code into more specific codes. Thus, my list of codes continuously evolved throughout the coding process.

Generation and Revision of Themes

Next, I started the process of generating themes. For this stage, I first sorted the codes that I had generated into themes according to similarities in their meaning making around Solarpunk. So, for example, I grouped together codes that centred around the topic of environmental behaviour, as well as codes that were focused on the expressed mindset of the Reddit users. I then examined the text extracts of each theme again, to check whether the text extracts all expressed the same meaning making and thus form a coherent theme. During this process I continuously checked whether my themes were coherent, distinct from each other and whether it was actually a theme of meaning making and not a code. Reflexive thematic anaysis is an iterative process which involves going back and forth between coding and theme generation frequently. I started with a set of themes which was rather literal and scattered consisting of seven themes. I revised my themes several times until they were coherent in themselves but distinct from each other, until they accurately presented the meaning making of the Reddit users. Then I generated names for the themes that properly describe the meaning making of each theme. After one final check whether all themes are relevant to my research question, I ended my analysis with the four themes: "Solarpunk as a Positive, Useful, and Superior Mindset", "Solarpunk as a Community who Shares Responsibility for the Climate and the People", "Solarpunk as Sustainability that is Strenuous and Unattainable", and "Solarpunk as a State of Being Enabled by the Circumstances of the Person".

Results

The following themes resulted from my analysis to answer the question of how users of the Solarpunk subreddit discuss Solarpunk as a part of their daily lives.

Theme 1: Solarpunk as a Positive, Useful, and Superior Mindset

This theme maps the Reddit users' discussion of Solarpunk as optimistic and flexible. Solarpunk is conceptualised as a mindset and positioned as superior compared to other narratives or mindsets because of its positivity and flexibility. Along with Solarpunk the Reddit users also position themselves highly. The following comment illustrates this quite nicely, along with the emphasis on the inherent positivity of Solarpunk:

> it is optimistic, but not naive. It is a decision - I decide to project myself into a world
>
> where there is hope, where today's biggest issues can be solved, even if terrible things
>
> happen. Being positive, optimistic is a bit overrated in the US, but there's still a
>
> potential benefit : it helps to think rationally. Cyberpunk raises fears and stimulates the
>
> reptilian brain, the seat of our most primitive emotions, meanwhile solarpunk raises
>
> hope and serenity, and stimulates the neocortex, the seat of rational and analytic
>
> thinking.

This person compares Solarpunk to Cyberpunk, which entails a dystopian, technology-led view on the future. Compared to Cyberpunk, Solarpunk is painted in very positive light. This comment evokes the impression that the Reddit user sees the optimistic Solarpunk narrative as far superior to an apocalyptic dystopian narrative such as Cyberpunk. By connecting Solarpunk to rational, analytic thinking and the neocortex, compared to Cyberpunks primitive emotions, they present Solarpunk as something innovative and more advanced or developed. Along with lifting up Solarpunk, the Reddit user also positions themselves in a rather positive way. Solarpunk is painted in a very positive light by them: it is optimistic, makes people think rationally. They emphasise deliberately adopting this narrative, thereby making the smart choice of adopting the rational narrative instead of the irrational one. Thus, Solarpunk is discussed as a mindset which the Reddit user adopts because of its positivity, and positions as superior. This positioning of Solarpunk against other narratives is evident in other comments as well.

For example, one Reddit user said: "in contrast to popular ethos, what I like, is the faith here", which again positions Solarpunk against other narratives or ideologies in a favourable manner. Solarpunk is superior as it includes faith. This comment was made on the "Solarpunk feels different from other leftist ideologies" discussion thread, where people discuss what

differentiates Solarpunk. The reddit user who started the discussion thread characterised other leftist ideologies as a place of much rigidity, infighting, and pessimism, which makes them undesirable and ineffective. Therefore, emphasising that Solarpunk includes faith in contrast to infighting and pessimism, positions it as superior.

A comment by another user underlines how Solarpunk is discussed as something useful:

I kinda disagree with this. I think solarpunk lends itself to direct action. Creating art, growing plants, doing research, advancing technology, reading, doing mutual aid, caring for people and animals etc make bettering the world much more tangible for me. This is where I personally draw some of the peaceful feelings of solarpunk from

This user is responding to someone expressing their view of Solarpunk as purely an aesthetic without much thought about how it could be realised. By presenting a long list of behaviours they see as part of Solarpunk, they underline their conceptualisation of Solarpunk as useful. Solarpunk is used as sort of a guide which enables the user to work on big and obscure goals such as making the world a better place. This comment thus exemplifies how the Reddit users conceptualise Solarpunk as serving a purpose in their lives. Apart from using Solarpunk as a guide it is also used as a source of positive emotions.

The first theme thus, maps the Reddit users' discussion of Solarpunk as a mindset which they adopt because of its inherent positivity and because it serves a purpose for them. The Reddit users highlight the benefits and strengths of this mindset and position is as superior.

Theme 2: Solarpunk as a community who shares responsibility for the climate and the people

The second theme captures the Reddit users' meaning making around community as an integral part of Solarpunk and as essential to mitigating climate change. The Reddit users discuss a shared responsibility of mitigating climate change and of bringing about a Solarpunk future. The Reddit users further express a sentiment of responsibility to take care of people who are not part of the group, through e.g. restructuring society in a more socially just way, or integrating them into Solarpunk. Community and collective action are presented as the only way to successful climate change mitigating action.

The following quote captures many aspects of this theme, especially the importance of community and collective action, and a shared responsibility of solving the problem of climate change:

For now, what we need to do is to work together, and alone, in order to start changing things in our everyday life: try to grow our own food, reuse clothing, share tools, books, medicine and other resources with our friends and neighbors. We must try and built local chains of cooperation in our neighborhoods, in our towns and cities. We must try and limit our carbon emissions by stop using cars so much. Use public transport, bikes, carpool with your neighbors and friends. We must also spread our ideas, try and make them more well-known: videos, zines, even just simple posts like this one can help the Solarpunk movement spread. We must rage against the Machine. I personally only use public transport to move around, and I and my dad have started a vegetable garden in my house. I also plan to learn how to mend so I can fix my clothes and use them longer. These are really small steps for sure, but it is a start, and I hope that it is the start of something better than what we have now. Our efforts must be both personal and collective in order to achieve our goals."

The language that this user uses can be found in many other comments in this theme as well. They express a need for action taking, for actively working towards a solution. These actions are conceptualised in the context of a group. Primarily they are discussing actions that need to be taken by the collective "we", thereby placing emphasis on collective action over individual action. Even when they do discuss their own personal actions, they still conceptualise their actions as part of the collective group action by saying "our efforts" and "our goals". For this theme, who is part of the group or the community does not always become clear and differs from user to user. However, most users seem to conceptualise this group as people who share the same goal, as this user does as well. As the reddit users engage in discourse on the Solarpunk subreddit, the context implies that their communication is directed either towards their fellow users on the subreddit or individuals associated with the Solarpunk community at large. The fact that the reddit users refer to climate mitigating action as something that "we need to do", further evokes the impression that this is the collective task of the group. The Reddit users seem

to have a shared sense of responsibility and ownership of the climate change issue. This further becomes evident in the following comment:

"The thing is, we can't wait until the situation is so bad there's no alternative. People need to *want* to do these things-- as in, they need to actually find them desirable. We need to reach a point where, given a choice between a sustainable and non-sustainable alternative, they would pick the sustainable one, not out of desperation, but because it genuinely appeals to them more. We have to meet these people halfway, and that means coming up, as closely as possible, with equivalents to the things they take for granted. It's the only way to get them on board with what we want."

This Reddit user positions the group as the ones in charge of solving the problem of low engagement in sustainability behaviours. In this comment the positioning of the in- vs. out-group is articulated rather explicitly as well. The Reddit user draws a clear line between people who they consider part of their group and the people who are not part of it ("we" vs. "they" or "these people"). This distinction is accompanied by a responsibility for ensuring that the out-group will become more sustainable. Since the outgroup is not able to act sustainably on their own, the ingroup takes initiative and solves this issue for them. The user thus positions the ingroup as a caring community who takes responsibility not only for themselves but also for others.

Apart from integrating the out-group for the purpose of climate change mitigating action, the Reddit users also discussed a need to care for the out-group. One Reddit user for example writes:

I agree with all of this but I think that in addition to these local-scale steps, we do still need to focus on political change both locally and at the national level so that we can have things like international climate finance. People are already suffering the impacts of climate change, particularly in the Global South. If we get understandably frustrated with political and large-scale organizing and only tend our gardens, we're leaving them to die

illustrating a sense of responsibility not only for fighting climate change but also for ensuring the wellbeing of people. This Reddit user positions themselves critically against smaller scale actions and calls for bigger scale actions, such as political actions. This is something that can also be found in the comments above. In the first comment of this theme, the Reddit user talks about raging against the machine, a reference to the American rock band Rage Against the Machine who are known for their critical lyrics and revolutionary socialist orientation. A call for political action and restructuring society in a more socially just way for everyone is also evident in other comment, e.g. "politics are a part of life, we (at least people like me who live in whats considered "the west") cant keep ignoring the world around us like we did in the 90's and most of the 2000's." or "it's about trying to create a better society for all". This indicates a a care for less advantaged people. Apart from integrating the out-group for the agenda of the in-group, the in-group is positioned as also having a responsibility for ensuring the wellbeing of the out-group by restructuring society. Hence, even though how the in- and out-group conceptualised varies, a sense of responsibility is shared by the Reddit users.

Thus, for this theme the Reddit users discuss Solarpunk as something that makes them part of a group sorts them into groups and includes collectively sharing a responsibility for implementing solutions as well as ensuring the wellbeing and sustainability even of people who are not part of this group. Collective action is presented as necessary for standing a chance to fight climate change and achieve their shared goal of a Solarpunk future.

Theme 3: Solarpunk as Sustainability that is Strenuous and Unattainable

The third theme centres around the Reddit users' discussion of their environmentally friendly behaviours. The Reddit users discuss engaging in environmentally friendly behaviours as something that they put a lot of effort in and present it as something strenuous. For example, one Reddit user writes: "Trying to have a frugal hedonistic lifestyle: making things for the house, buying second hand as much as i can can, repairing electronic and mending clothes". Similar to this comment, many comments consist of lists of behaviours the Reddit users describe engaging in, which are focused on achieving more sustainability. The discussion around these behaviours is characterised by expressions such as "trying to", "whenever I can", or "straining to", to emphasise the amount of effort that is put in. The long lists of sustainability behaviours evoke the impression that sustainability is the most important part of Solarpunk for these Reddit users. Apart from conceptualising these actions as effortful or difficult, Reddit users also often express a sentiment of their actions and efforts not being much or not being

enough. After listing the sustainability behaviours they have already implemented into their lives, Reddit users make statements such as: "It ain't much, and I know I can do better". This underlines how the Reddit users express experiencing being sustainable and being Solarpunk as something requiring a lot of effort and dedication, and as something hard to reach.

In their efforts to be sustainable the Reddit users also describe going to great lengths to reach this goal and being willing to sacrifice time and comfort. This underlines again the importance that the Reddit users attach to being sustainable. For example, one Reddit user writes the following:

Hi, Greek here. So i moved to the centre of Athens, the only place with pretty decent public transport, and i am car free for like a year or smth. I was vegetarian for 2 years or smth but then I got really sick and had to quit and I need to see a doctor in order to become again.

They also position themselves as someone very dedicated and willing to sacrifice, even to the point of where it could affect their health. This way of describing their struggles to be sustainable is common in the comments of this theme, indicating something like a social norm of presenting one's experience as strenuous and oneself as self-sacrificing. Another thing that becomes evident in this comment is, how many Reddit users discuss being limited by their circumstances in how sustainable they can be; such as not being able to give up meat due to their health. This also becomes evident in the following comment:

Northern european here, still at school.

Doing my best to use public transport where better, though living in a rural area means school has to send a worn inefficient diesel bus to take the 2 people here + being a swimmer accounts for ~140km in commute to training per week (to add, many people around here commute to work ~400km a week), so not solarpunk at all here, however i bike a lot more in summer.

Choosing local food produce where possible.

As for daily necessities, I'm straining after zero-waste (at least low-waste) for everything.

They position sustainability as so integral to Solarpunk that it is not possible to be Solarpunk without being sustainable. However, for them an absolutely sustainable lifestyle is not possible due to their living circumstances. The sentiment of trying really hard to reach the goal of sustainability also becomes evident in this comment again. Another Reddit users describes walking everywhere for up to three hours, which exemplifies how the Reddit users seem to be willing to even adopt behaviours that do not seem feasible for everyday life. This evokes the sentiment that the Reddit users are chasing a goal that is unattainable, or at least not feasible in their circumstances. The Reddit users conceptualise being Solarpunk as something that demands extreme measures and that cannot be achieved with small actions.

Thus, the third theme centres around the Reddit users' expression of Solarpunk being something effortful and strenuous and almost impossible to attain. For achieving the Solarpunk goal, being sustainable is crucial. The Reddit users do describe engaging in many different sustainability behaviours, characterise them, however, as not being enough and being limited by their circumstances. Presenting themselves as someone who makes sacrifices and downplaying their own efforts characterises the discussion.

Theme 4: Solarpunk as a State of Being Enabled by the Circumstances of the Person

The meaning making of theme 4 differs greatly the that of theme 3. For theme 4 the Reddit users discuss Solarpunk as something that comes easy to them, as they describe themselves not doing much or describe not having to do anything personally. The language that is used by the Reddit users of this theme also differs greatly from the one used in theme 3. Instead of discussing obstacles they discuss the things that enable them to be Solarpunk. Most of the comments of this theme come from the "Any European Solarpunks?" thread, which explicitly excludes US Americans. This might be why the users emphasise being European quite a lot. For example, one Reddit user writes:

> European here as well. Not as hardcore as some other comments here in this thread, but that's also one of Europe's biggest strengths - it's very easy (at least in urban settings) to be baseline solarpunk . Most urban Europeans live in apartments, have access to good public transport and at least passable bike infrastructure. In many parts it's also extremely easy to purchase locally-made food. Here in Malmö we also have a well-functioning recycling system. So I don't really need to make an effort to be solarpunk.

Similar to theme 3, Solarpunk is mainly conceptualised via sustainability behaviours. Here, contrary to theme 3 rather passive language is used. The Reddit user does not describe themselves actively engaging in any of these sustainability behaviours , but rather simply states that these are available and implies that they use them. Being sustainable or Solarpunk is conceptualised as a passive process by going along with what is already there, instead of something that one has to actively work for. The Reddit users also discuss Solarpunk as a state of being one can be simply due to their surroundings, instead of a goal that they strive after. This is interesting as the behaviours that the Reddit users list in this theme are very similar to the ones that are discussed by the Reddit users in theme 3. However, the sentiment attached is completely different. In theme 3 these behaviours were associated with a sentiment of not enough to reach Solarpunk goals. While in this theme they are sufficient for being Solarpunk and are discussed with expressions such as "very easy". Indicating two rather different views on what would constitute as Solarpunk. Solarpunk is conceptualised as something less extreme in this theme, basic environmentally friendly behaviour seems to be enough to count as Solarpunk. This position can also be found in the following comment:

> In a way, its pretty funny that I personally do not actively do much of anything to be
>
> solarpunk, but I am living a pretty solarpunk life (which is how it can work for
>
> everyone). It could always be better and the population density here definitely puts a
>
> strain on especially land, which affects how much food can be locally produced, but I
>
> am already meeting 2030 energy targets and all I did purposely was get a green energy
>
> contract. My energy consumption is extremely low just by virtue of living in a Dutch
>
> studio meeting the current Dutch insulation standards.

This Reddit user conceptualises Solarpunk as a state of being as well, it is something that they are, not something they work on. While they do express an opinion of "I could do more", this is not presented as an obstacle to being Solarpunk. Similar to the first comment of this theme, the Reddit user positions themself as being Solarpunk without having to make a personal effort as they are Solarpunk simply due to the circumstances they live in. Solarpunk is conceptualised as a sort of default for everyone living in these circumstances. Hence, for theme 4 Solarpunk is discussed as a state of being enabled by the circumstances of the person. Similarly, to theme 3 is it mainly conceptualised via sustainability behaviours. However, for this theme the sustainability behaviours are discussed as easy.

Discussion

This thesis examined Reddit discussion threads of the Solarpunk subreddit to delve deeper into how Solarpunk is discussed on the Solarpunk subreddit as a part of the users' daily lives. While conducting a reflexive thematic analysis, I developed four themes connected to the meaning making around Solarpunk. The reddit users discuss Solarpunk as a positive mindset they adopt, as a community they are a part of and share a responsibility with, a goal they strive for but can never quite reach, and as something that they are simply due to their circumstances. To my knowledge no other study has investigated Solarpunk as a climate change narrative or in the context of online conversations. I will therefore compare my findings to studies that have investigated Solarpunk as a phenomenon or as a literary genre, or, since Solarpunk literature is limited in general, to studies which have investigated other climate change narratives in social media contexts or climate change discourse in general. To further consolidate the conceptualisation of Solarpunk, it is important to see how much my findings overlap with what is already known about Solarpunk, as well as to examine how the Solarpunk narrative compares to other climate narratives and climate discussions on social media.

Solarpunk is an actively discussed topic on Reddit. It has a dedicated where people use the space to discuss not only what Solarpunk means to them, but also to exchange, for example, helpful articles or showcase their Solarpunk art. This supports Williams (2019) who stated that Solarpunk is an actively discussed topic in online spaces, often with a dedicated spaced for its community, e.g. a subreddit. In the future it should be examined how Solarpunk is conceptualised on other social media platforms besides Reddit. Reddit has quite a unique structure compared to other social media platforms and Solarpunk may therefore by discussed differently on other platforms. This is important to further understand Solarpunk as a climate change narrative, as well as to further consolidate what Solarpunk is and what it entails in online discussions. In my study Solarpunk was discussed in a variety of ways. Theme 1 shows how the Reddit users discuss Solarpunk as something that they use, while for theme 2 and 3 it is a goal they strive for, and in theme 4 something that they are. The Reddit users further emphasise different aspects of Solarpunk, i.e. the positivity, the importance of community, or the importance of sustainability, indicating that what part of Solarpunk is seen as the most important differs. Further, even though theme 3 and 4 both centre around the importance of sustainability, the meaning making is antithetical. This reflects the variability of the conceptualisation of Solarpunk on the Solarpunk subreddit.

An important part of the Reddit users' discussion of Solarpunk was its inherent positivity and optimism in theme 1 which was discussed as something making Solarpunk superior to other narratives. The Reddit users expressed *belief superiority*, a phenomenon documented by literature, which describes the feeling that one's own beliefs are superior to the beliefs of others (Toner et al., 2013). This is often related to *social vigilantism*, which is the tendency to attempt to impress one's opinions on others. Higher levels of social vigilantism have been connected to more extreme attitudes towards environmental issues (O'Dea et al., 2018). The fact that the Reddit users of the Solarpunk subreddit expressed belief superiority and social vigilantism fits well, since Solarpunk has been connected to more radical views, such as drastically restructuring society and redistributing power and resources in scientific literature (Reina-Rozo, 2021).

The optimistic and positive focus of Solarpunk discussed by the Reddit users is present in scientific literature as well. Williams (2019), Johnson (2020), and Reina-Rozo (2021) all emphasise the inherent positivity and optimism of Solarpunk. Wagner and Wieland (2020) describe the Solarpunk short stories as focused on characters rejecting dystopian hopelessness, and Solarpunk stories as serving as examples of how we can and should act. Hence, this positive focus seems to be an important part of Solarpunk as it can be found in the Solarpunk stories, scientific literature, and the Reddit discussions. This finding might be very interesting in the context of counteracting the potentially detrimental effects of the constant exposure to threats of climate change on mental wellbeing (Clayton, 2020). Wieckowska (2021) states that the negative focus on the potentially catastrophic consequences of climate change and its labelling as a crisis can result in an inability to imagine a liveable future which can result in feelings of powerlessness. My findings underline the position of Solarpunk as a climate change narrative opposite to the apocalyptic narrative. While the apocalyptic narrative has been connected to negative emotions, in my study the Reddit users connect Solarpunk to deriving positive feelings such as optimism and hope. It might therefore be interesting for future research to examine a possible relationship between positive narratives, such as Solarpunk, and mental wellbeing. The Solarpunk narrative seems to explicitly include aspects which have been connected to increased mental wellbeing, such as optimism (Serrano et al., 2020) and having approach goals (Tamir & Diener, 2008). Solarpunk could be conceptualised as an approach goal insofar that it focuses on imagining a desirable future that one wants to achieve, instead of imaging a future that should be avoided at all costs. However, the Reddit users also discussed struggling while trying to achieve this goal in theme 3. Thereby, highlighting a potential negative influence of

Solarpunk. Therefore, future research should further examine what kind of emotions are connected to, or induced by, a Solarpunk narrative, as well as how Solarpunk is connected to mental wellbeing.

Another important aspect discussed by the Reddit users is community and collective responsibility as part of the second theme. A focus on community and groups is something that is found in the literature examining Solarpunk as well. Williams (2019) points out an emphasis on collaboration, and Johnson (2020) describes communities as a common theme in Solarpunk. A sense of shared responsibility to mitigate climate change, as well as the importance of collective action have not been discussed concretely by the Solarpunk literature yet. They have however, been found in discussions around climate change activism. A study by Haugestad et al. (2021) examining youth climate activism in Norway found protestors expressed a feeling of collective responsibility to mitigate climate change, as well as an emphasis of collective action as the only viable option. Hautea et al. (2021) who examined climate activism on TikTok reported similar findings. Both studies also discussed how the youth protestors and TikTok users conceptualised themselves as part of an ingroup fighting against climate change. Another aspect discussed by the Reddit users as part of the importance of community was a need for political action and structural societal changes. This can be found in general climate activism (Haugestad et al., 2021), as well as the scientific literature around Solarpunk, where it is emphasised as an integral part of Solaprunk (Reina-Rozo, 2021; Johnson, 2020). This theme thus, further underlines the importance of community in Solarpunk and showcases the existence of common themes of climate activism discourse in the Solarpunk discussion of the Reddit users.

For the third theme *Solarpunk as Sustainability that is Strenuous and Unattainable,* the Reddit users describe a focus on sustainable behaviour. A focus on sustainability is often described in scientific Solarpunk literature as part of Solarpunk. For example, Reina-Rozo (2012) mentions sustainability efforts as an integral part of the Solarpunk movement. Johnson (2020) argues that Solarpunk ideas and values inspire critically analysing the environmental impact of one's actions and that the Solarpunk way includes living sustainably and in harmony with nature. Focusing on environmentally friendly behaviour or climate change mitigating action is not something that is only inherent to Solarpunk and can be found in other climate movements trying to stop climate change, such as Fridays For Future or Extinction Rebellion (de Moor et al., 2021) and on other social media sites. For example, Hautea et al. (2021) found

calls for more environmentally friendly actions by users discussing climate change and climate activism on TikTok.

Trying to achieve sustainability is presented as strenuous and the Reddit users often characterised their efforts as not being enough. Thereby, presenting themselves as someone humble and self-sacrificing. Johnson (2020) remark that in sustainable living this is often connected to a willingness to sacrifice comfort in Solarpunk, suggesting that framing one's environmentally friendly actions as strenuous, difficult and sacrificing might be part of Solarpunk discourse. Bar and Gilg (2006) state a willingness to sacrifice comfort has been connected to greater engagement in environmental behaviour. Therefore, discussing one's environmentally friendly actions in the context of sacrifice might also not be exclusive to Solarpunk. Further research could thus explore if this way of discussing sustainability as strenuous and difficult also takes place in discussions of other platforms and in other climate change narratives. Additionally, studies should focus on exploring what kind of emotions are associated with this framing, and how it might affect motivation and appraisal of environmentally friendly actions. While the Reddit users do not explicitly discuss suffering, trying to reach an unreachable goal could result in negative feelings such as frustration and resignation, and ultimately inaction.

The last theme *Solarpunk as State of Being Enabled by the Circumstances of the Person* expresses the Reddit users' perception of Solarpunk being something very easy to integrate into their lives due to the already existing structures around them. Solarpunk is conceptualised as something that one is, instead of a goal one has to reach. While the scientific literature around Solarpunk has defined Solarpunk as various things (e.g. movement, literary genre, vision, aesthetic, …), Solarpunk as a state of being has not been discussed in literature yet. It thus presents a new conceptualisation of Solarpunk. Another interesting point about this theme is that the Reddit users conceptualised Solarpunk solely based on living a sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyle, while scientific literature so far has always characterised Solarpunk as something that places equal importance on sustainability and fighting for more social justice (e.g., Reina-Rozo (2021); Johnson (2020); Williams (2019)). While the Reddit users placed emphasis on sustainability in theme 3 as well, in this theme they explicitly conceptualised themselves as Solarpunk or living a Solarpunk lifestyle solely based on their environmentally friendly behaviours. For this theme, Solarpunk seems to be synonymous with basic environmentally friendly behaviour which raises the question of whether these Reddit users can be considered as part of Solarpunk at all. Being Solarpunk simply due to one's

location would make the meaning of Solarpunk rather hollow and would also make Solarpunk inaccessible to people living in different places or systems. Future research could examine if Solarpunk is discussed as a state of being in other Solarpunk discourse, since this has not been examined in the literature yet. Further, studies could look into the implications of the sentiment of being Solarpunk without personally doing much for climate change mitigating behaviour. If being Solarpunk is determined by external factors, motivation to engage in climate change mitigating action apart from basic environmental-friendly behaviour could be low.

Limitations and Strengths

One limitation of this study that comes with analysing Reddit data is that I have no demographic information about the people who were participating in the Reddit threads and whose comments I analysed. I therefore, cannot know for whom my study findings are representative. However, according to Proferes et al. (2021) Reddit is a rather US American dominated website and in one thread the Reddit users report being from Europe. I can therefore infer that a good portion of the comments I analysed were written by people from the US and Europe. It is therefore likely that the perspective I analysed showed me a very westernised way of discussing Solarpunk ideas and values. This is problematic in so far that it only shows me a limited scope what the implementation of Solarpunk can look like. Further, Solarpunk is a movement that originated from non-western cultures, more specifically African and South American cultures (Johnson, 2020). As far as I can tell these perspectives are not included in my research. It is therefore possible that I have missed essential ways of discussing Solarpunk by choosing Reddit as a platform. However, I do still believe that Reddit has strong advantages since it allowed me to analyse many different comments of varying lengths which were readily available, instead of having to limit myself to for example only looking at a few blogs or at short twitter messages.

Another clear strength of this study is that it examined Solarpunk in a new context. To my knowledge no other study has examined Solarpunk in an online discussion focused on how people implement it into their lives. Using a qualitative approach with reflexive thematic analysis as my chosen method allowed me to conduct an in-depth analysis of the Reddit users' lived experiences which would not have been possible using a quantitative approach. Reflexive thematic analysis is particularly suited for explorative research into understudied topics and allows for examining the phenomenon in a more natural environment (Braun & Clarke, (2012). Using a qualitative method such as reflexive thematic analysis means that I cannot make

inferences about the generalisability of my results to experiences with Solarpunk outside of the analysed subreddit. However, examining how Reddit users implement Solarpunk in their lives provided a clearer idea of what a lived Solarpunk can look like. So far, this information was missing as research focused on examining what an imagined Solarpunk looks like. Therefore, my study added important findings to the scientific literature on Solarpunk.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in this study I investigated how Reddit users of the Solarpunk Subreddit discuss and conceptualise Solarpunk in their daily lives, which contributes to a more complete view of Solarpunk and adds to the literature on positive climate change narratives. I found that the Reddit users conceptualise Solarpunk as a mindset characterised by positivity and position Solarpunk as superior to other narratives because of it. They further discuss community as an important part, together with a shared responsibility for taking climate change mitigating action and taking care of people. Other Reddit users emphasise sustainability. Being sustainable is strenuous and unattainable for some, while it is easily achieved without much personal action for others. My findings suggest that Solarpunk as discussed in an online space and Solarpunk as a literary genre share much of the same values and ideas, with the exception of the conceptualisation of Solarpunk as a state of being without personal action. Solarpunk discussions further seem to include many elements found in other climate change activism discussions. As hypothesised in the introduction, Solarpunk as a climate change narrative seems to be opposite to the apocalyptic narrative due to its positive focus. Solarpunk is thus a climate change narrative which is actively discussed in online spaces and is characterised by a positive and communal vision of the future, and a striving for sustainability.

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Appendix

Table 1

Discussion Thread 1: Any European Solarpunks?

Discussion prompt	Any European Solarpunks? Are there any Europeans here? It seems kind of dominated by people from the USA and while some things can be applied worldwide the living situations are quite different from each other. So, what do you fellow euro solarpunks do? Myself I already live in an apartment, am car free and have access to a cheap good quality cargo bike pool via my landlord (and the landlord is the city with quite good conditions, no slumlord here), use my bike everywhere or train/bus when going further than my legs can carry me. I'm vegetarian and have inspired people close to me to eat more plants. I regularly join demonstrations and manifestations and sometimes I join the local free for all bike club on rides. The fiancé and I have an allotment where we grow some of our own food in summer, just yesterday we ate our own potatoes. Non-Americans, what do you do?
Comments	European here! Living in the city car free (bike + panniers goes a long way). Vegan. Trying to have a frugal hedonistic lifestyle: making things for the house, buying second hand as much as i can can, repairing electronic and mending clothes. Nice to meet you fellow!
	i live in vienna and have almost exclusively used public transport. tho i am getting a drivers licence rn for those few times you have to rent a car (i.e moving and transport of furniture)
	On the cursed island, community gardening, foodbank volunteering, cargo bike pottering, union rep being. Solar panels and allotment gardening. Next year's project is to double the size of my composting efforts and collect more veg waste and coffee grounds for composting. Really interested in natural building and lower embodied energy solutions to problems.
	I'm from Britain. I established a local subreddit for solarPunks in the UK If anyone else here is from the UK and wants to join, the sub is r/UKSolarpunk. Non-Brits are welcome too! :)
	Central European here! Vegan, composting, veggies in raised beds, commute by bike and train, restoring an almost abandoned old farmer's house, buying somewhat locally, trying hard to minimize waste, buying almost exclusively second hand, boycotting amazon, DIY all the way.
	I work in the Solar Industry and fill as many commercial roofs with solar PV as fast as possible here in Switzerland.

Yeah. I don\`t know Unite at all. I tend to be by the side of my unionized co-workers but don\`t really understand what is going on.

Germany, I have created or helped create a few urban gardening projects and am active in politics (city level). Mostly involved with bicycle infrastructure and creating green spaces. Life-long bicyclist.

Hey! European here, leaving in the French Alps. Building a small community while trying to propagate this awesome way of life. Solar panels, reusing rain wate, growing food, composting, cycling, helping to implement solarpunk policies in this beautiful valley !

Northern european here, still at school.

Doing my best to use public transport where better, though living in a rural area means school has to send a worn inefficient diesel bus to take the 2 people here + being a swimmer accounts for ~140km in commute to training per week (to add, many people around here commute to work ~400km a week), so not solarpunk at all here, however i bike a lot more in summer.

Choosing local food produce where possible.

As for daily necessities, I'm straining after zero-waste (at least low-waste) for everything.

This summer I was in a geology camp and they had a community garden there + a wall for insects to live which was very cool.

I pick up trash on my way home from school, which is in a resort in a regional park that's expanding into the vulnerable areas with endangered species, attracting more visitors who leave heaps of trash behind. Hate how tourism ruins nice things.

I tend to repair most things, if something's beyond repair - salvage the parts. I make things instead of buying when I can, usually from things I already have.

Using a 2012 ThinkPad with lightweight software & operating system and it's very snappy. Installed Linux on friends' old laptops to bring them back to life. Seriously, this is an easy way to prevent **lots of e-waste**.

That's about it, as you can see there's still a long way to go, so be grateful if you have good public transport & infrastructure to life eco friendly.

I like how so many of the EU solarpunks are actually living the lifestyle that we Americans usually only approximate and hope for in the future.

European here as well. Not as hardcore as some other comments here in this thread, but that's also one of Europe's biggest strengths - it's very easy (at least in urban settings) to be baseline solarpunk. Most urban Europeans live in apartments, have access to good public transport and at least passable bike infrastructure. In many parts it's also extremely easy to purchase locally-made food. Here in Malmö we also have a well-functioning recycling system. So I don't really need to make an effort to be solarpunk.

USian living in Barcelona… a city with a ton of solar punk potential

Present! Admittedly, I don't think I do a lot that'd count as solarpunk, I'm still kind of orienting on what I can do. But I do try to live consciously; I'm vegetarian, i try to reduce my plastic use as much as possible, I usually cycle to work etc. Soon I'll move to a place that's properly isolated and uses district heating instead of gas. Then I'll also have a garden, where I can grow my own food and share any surplus with others.

I live in the Netherlands, in Leiden.

- Carfree is pretty normal here. Our bike and pedestrian infrastructure is as complete as the car one, including complete access to the Rotterdam sea harbor (this wasn't even a thing a decade a go and I doubt there are walking or biking routes in any other major harbor). Our water and public transport networks are also excellent and you can get anywhere with these modes.

- My energy provider is 100% green energy and is a cooperative, which invests all their profits into building wind mills.

- Studio is extremely energy efficient, I have not had to heat my home yet this year. All heating in my building is from recycled heat from the heavy industry in Rotterdam harbor.

- I dont have a cargo bike, but don't own a car either. My normal granny bike works for most things. Home delivery works for the rest.

- All municipalities have community gardens here. These have existed sine at least WW2, to make sure urban dwellers have a food source. Our country went through a famine in 1945, so we've had these since at least then, often earlier. A lot of people grow their own vegetables. This is very popular and waiting lists are long, unfortunately.

- My municipality is currently run by social liberals and green social democrats, so a lot of fruit trees, local wild flowers, etc have been planted and they're no longer cutting the grass in spring for the pollinators. A lot of these trees and plants are planted on the canal quays and pavement has been removed to plant more plants. This is also the cheapest longterm option and most sustainable way of

improving air quality by main roads.

- I reduced my meat consumption to special occasions only and eat in season as much as possible. I eat meat/fish once or twice a week on average now. As a university student, I basically dont buy any meat and only eat it at my parents' place, who only buy their meat and eggs from a local care farm (subsidized farm where disabled people, people with dementia or mental illness go work, who are officially on disability, but want to be productive. The food they sell is about the prices of supermarkets, but it is local, animal friendly, and socially conscious).

- I dont really have time or money to do much more at the moment, but I fully support what my town is doing for communal sustainability and the greening of neighborhoods is very noticable. I used to call this city brick/paver city, because there were hardly any front-facing gardens or municipal greenery. The neighborhoods that have been greenified already are a lot more 'friendly' looking.

In a way, its pretty funny that I personally do not actively do much of anything to be solarpunk, but I am living a pretty solarpunk life (which is how it can work for everyone).

It could always be better and the population density here definitely puts a strain on especially land, which affects how much food can be locally produced, but I am already meeting 2030 energy targets and all I did purposely was get a green energy contract. My energy consumption is extremely low just by virtue of living in a Dutch studio meeting the current Dutch insulation standards.

Hey i am from southern Spain, i didn't have to change a lot about my way of living because it is already close in many ways. I have always walked everywhere (as long as it's under 3 hours of walking i can go and return in the same day) although i recently bought a bike. I don't like meat so becoming vegetarian wasn't even a choice it just came naturally and i am active with people around me trying to create a better world with every small step. I also want to start working on propaganda as the Spanish internet is very lacking about solarpunk and i think many people would enjoy the concept.

Being able of driving while bad for the environment and technically anti solar punk is needed for many jobs as a skill so don't feel bad about getting it. It's a useful skill

I mostly take bicycle if it is less than 30 minutes ride, otherwise metro. I also produce relatively little trash. If garbage didn't smell, I could bring it out once in couple months.

but like how would you get your furniture and other stuff to the other side of town without renting a minivan or whatever? i am not gonna take my matress thru the subway

Poland here, we have a dozen activists working towards Solarpunk! I recently had an interview in one of the biggest national newspapers (Wyborcza.pl).

I'm mostly focusing on international activism, co-creating podcast.tomasino.org/ Solarpunk Prompts podcast and co-organized https://alxd.org/solarisecon-2022.html conference this year!

Yep, I live in Sweden. I can't do much with SolarPunk at the moment, since I'm a teen and mostly dependent on my parents.

Dutch here.
Not very solar punky, besides a green roof of the shed but planning to add that to the house as well. Flat roof, so ideal for multi-use. Have some solar panels but the combination of solar+sedum green roof seems a good one.

Being Dutch, cycling where I can, taking electric cargo bike with the kids when possible, taking train when I can.

That's interesting, i've seen this subreddit mainly populated by people from the US, but most of the people i've spoken to that are in active projects/organizations regarding solarpunk have all been from europe. From what i've seen, most of the tighter, smaller communities are much more demographically represented by europeans.

Hej fellow Malmöit! Yes, it's easy to be baseline solarpunk, and we do have a lot of perks here in our city with all the bike lanes :)

Hi, Greek here.
So i moved to the centre of Athens, the only place with pretty decent public transport, and i am car free for like a year or smth. I was vegetarian for 2 years or smth but then I got really sick and had to quit and I need to see a doctor in order to become again. Also, every friend I ve shown this subreddit loved it!

The Netherlands really is one of the most solarpunk countries. A while ago they sold green roof tiles in the supermarket here (Albert Heijn). You just give them your roof size, pay and a while later they'll deliver the preseeded tiles to you for you to put them on your roof.

Really, Albert Heijn? Where was that?

But yeah, the green roof on our shed came in a pallet: bit of geotextile, glass wool and rolls if sedum mixed. Was on there in a couple hours.

I live the solarpunk dream in rural Netherlands.

Solar panels on the roof

eBike and escooter (moped) to get around

We get most of our food directly from farms, i bike to them with a cart

behind my eBike. Enough space for fruit, veggies, potatoes and a couple of our kids. Food is cheap too, we spend about 20 to 25 euros a week on fruit, veggies and potatoes for a family of 5. Meat is expensive, but league's better and more ethical than supermarket meat.

We grow a bit of fruit and veggies in our garden. Next year we're getting chickens for eggs.

When the kids are a bit older (youngest is only 2 months old) I'll get a plot of land to grow some more.

We work mostly from home. When my wife has to be at the office she uses the electric scooter.

They have these coupons in the store for some products (bonus klappers?) Which you pay for and then they deliver it to you I believe. This summer they had a green roof. I see ebikes a lot too. Currently they have a tado smart thermostat https://bonusklappers.ah.nl/bonusklappers/364/tado-smart-thermostat-v3-starter-kit/158776/

Balkaner here, from Romania.

* I also live carfree and basically bike everywhere if it's not more than 30 km away from my apartament. If it is, bus, tram, or train are my means of transport.
* Have been on and off vegetarian for almost a decade now, with the longest period of strict vegetarianism being 4 years.
* I buy locally whenever that is feasible, and if is possible, source foodstuff directly from grandma's household in the countryside (vegetables, milk, eggs, poultry).
* Encouraged and helped grandma install solar panels on the old generational house.
* Member of a local cycling club, sports related, but we also go out on Critical Mass type of rides.
* I recycle about 80% of all my waste by sorting it and bringing it to a local recycling center every week.
* I like to think myself - like most Balkaners in general - as a general-purpose handyman. I like to repair stuff, be them bicycles, light switches or even my own apartment's plumbing.

It ain't much, and I know I can do better.

European from Italy here!
I live in an apartment, I am car free but in January I need to take my driving license for long distances but I don't want too, but I need to.
I walk when needed and where I can reach.

I buy secondhand when I can and if I can eat more veggies, I am eating them.

I push my relatives to keep and care for plants, I had a plant called "small mint" also I try to use what I already have in my house.
I ask my mom to buy food from our region (the potatoes are majestic, you'll need to try them).

When I change region and go to my grandma she always buys local veggies and fruit (the stuff there is tasty, even better from where I am from).

I try to shop for clothes once in a while, if it fits it fits even if it can be adapted I'll adapt it.

And that's it :)

I have been meaning to get to know people around here to see if we can get a kind of Swedish Solarpunk Centre going. You should come out to our homestead sometime in the Spring. We have pigs for scarrifying and will get more chestnuts planted in the Spring, sheep to manage wetlands and ducks for snails. Solarpanels are hooked up since September and we are self-sufficient on firewood. Only thing missing for it to be a good step towards solarpunk in practice is the community (which tbf is the most important aspect imo).

German here. I'm active in a local branch of an environmental group, we already had talks with the local energy provider, and the cafeteria of the local university to get them to go greener.

Shortly after the last federal election I also joined a leftist political party and started to engage more in local politics.

I wouldn't consider the things I'm contributing to as solarpunk, but sometimes it does go in that direction, or generally my city is taking steps to go in that direction. We have a special tram system new in place that connects the city, without needing to switch vehicles, to rural areas. Other than that tram rail beds have been greened, fruit trees are planted all over the city (but sadly rarely used from what I can tell), and projects to green roofs are being evaluated.

I'm usually less into incorporating solarpunk and rather enjoy its art, but happily the world around me is going a bit more into the solarpunk direction in real life :)

A Brit here. I tinker in my shed, attempting to raise heat, light and power with handbuilt means.

https://www.instagram.com/greenshedbuilds/

Table 2

Discussion Thread 2: How do YOU define Solarpunk?

Discussion prompt	How do YOU define Solarpunk
Comments	Practicality over aesthetics. Sure, it looks super good on concept arts and video but it isn't necessarily the most efficient way to do something. When we're trying to build a community which is interwoven with nature, first comes feasibility and scale of operation. Aesthetics will naturally follow.
	I really like this definition from the article: > The intersection of technology, ecology, and social justice. We recently had a pretty lengthy conversation about this over on the Solarpunk Hub Discord server! We came to many different definitions we liked, here are some after some iterations (listed in approximate order of suggestion): 0. "An optimistic vision of the future with a harmony between the environment and technology." 1. "The belief in and pursuit of a rosy, positive, optimistic scientific and technological future based in a vision of social justice and environmental wisdom." 2. "An environmentally conscious social movement that focuses on community autonomy, sustainability, and equality" 3. "A social movement focused on devleping communities which prioritize equality & sustainability over the generation of capital." 4. "The idea that communities should strive for harmony with you, the community, and with nature altogether" 5. "An Aesthetic and social movement that is, at it's core, anti-authoritarian leftism focusing primarily on positive human-nature co-existence and a tolerant cosmopolitan of ideas and people."
	Was it not the transition of civilization radically transitioning to one structured around solar power?
	and the limitations of sustainable energy production and responsible resource usage, surely. i don't know how people are imagining all those Art Deco kimonos will be made sustainably.
	I only know this sub. But in contrast to popular ethos, what i like, is the faith here. You have heard of 'mind over matter', well, that was the vision of machines, and science, overcoming the practical issues of mankind, 150 years ago. To me solarpunk is, 'asthetics over matter', or morals, and beauty overcoming the current issues of mankind. Many that are caused by the machines and science, that moved the earth in the past century. Therewithin, proving the superiority of morals and beauty, over machines and science.

Or my geraniums blooming behind glass, dec. 15, at 25°F.

Simply put, modernization of technology while living with nature.

That's it.

While I do believe the best way to do it is in an anarchist society, I unfortunately believe that social Justice does not inherently have to be a Precursor.

I'm just saying that if the Amish had solar panels And electric cars, They would be much more solar punk than most people on the sub. And they are not necessarily known for being equitable.

Table 3

Discussion Thread 3: How To Be A SolarPunk

Discussion prompt	How To Be A SolarPunk I worked with a team of sustainability professors, students, artists, and more to create a guide on how to be solarpunk. I know this community is super intelligent and I'd love any and all feedback. https://solarpunkpark.org/what-is-solarpunk
Comments	I would cross check the guide in respect of effectiveness towards the two most important facets of solarpunk: real life communities / societal change and sustainability. My framework would look like this: Facts - Solarpunks know that in order to change reality, they need to understand reality. They need to know how to identify facts and des/misinformation. Action / Art - Solarpunks act and inspire. Community - Solarpunks build a local community to act globally Technology - Solarpunks use [appropriate technology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appropriate_technology). Sustainability - Solarpunks always have [strong sustainability](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weak_and_strong_sustainability) in mind. Nice idea! Considering the harm that animal products cause to the environment (even when locally sourced), I'd focus on plant based foods in the "food" section.
	I guess being solar punk means not eating food that's unfortunate.

>You can make the most beneficial decision by visiting your nearest farmer's market each weekend and stocking up on organic vegetables, fruits, nuts, meats, coffees, teas, and more.

Aaaaand, you lost me already. Organic is anti-GMO, and has larger carbon footprint for equal results. Are there some good techniques to adopt from organic? Yes. But organic is dogmatic anti-science bullshit. Align yourself with the FACTS. In the form of large scale peer reviewed studies.

People have already commented on appropriate technology. Additionally 90-95% of our technology economy is attached to fossil fuels in some way. There is a lot you could learn from r/collapse as a learning of what is and what is not sustainable and solar punk

I told you already. "Align yourself with the FACTS". Be science based. In a nutshell: Reduce animal products consumption. Meatless mondays, go vegetarian, go plant based, whatever floats your boat. That's the only real thing a consumer can do in the short term with little to no research. And even then, I quite dislike short term individualist thinking. Long term? **Political activism is always the solution**.

I think the Chobani yoghurt commercial should be listed as solarpunk, because so far it was the best display of solarpunk I've seen (safe for some remarks).

Edit: Dear alice is the chobani yoghurt commercial. I do think the original music and sound effects brought out the vibe better.

As for the technology section it still lacks high-tech solutions. Solarpunk also means maintaining quality of life, without our current profit seeking economic system and requiring jobs to survive.

In other words, we create and invent new technology to create more freedom for all. This means GMO and robotics certainly can be very solarpunk, and I'd even go so far as to say they are essential to achieve this.

For technology we should always make sure our technology can be produced locally and easily, which would be most easy to do with GMO, as opposed to engineering-based alternatives (biosensors vs mechanical sensors, bioluminescence vs light bulbs, drought resistant food vs irrigation). For chemicals the same applies: one can use natural compounds to combat pests.

Edit: I guess appropriate technology closely resembles what I wrote, although I do not necessarily agree on it having to be labour intensive.

So I guess also a focus on science and allowing or encouraging

everyone to participate in science, without requiring 4-10 years of education per se.

I personally do not like the short term advice, even though it's well meant. Taking shorter showers, eating less meat etc. are nice, but do not really put a dent in the climate change problem, if industry still pollutes rivers, the air and our land. Vote with your wallet does work (at least in our current economic system), but I also believe solarpunk is about changing the way we live entirely (including the current economic system and way of life).

Building non-profit food forests/ farms to feed a local community on the other hand would be pretty solarpunk. Actions that make people less reliable on the global supply chains (and emissions associated with them), and give them more freedom in return.

I think in addition to politics (which are needed to allow certain experiments to take place and set restrictions on pollution) we really need scientific innovation to create more freedom or high-tech solutions that can be locally sourced, so rural comunities too can survive easily.

The globality of the global supply chain is not the problem. Transoceanic transport is extremely efficient emissions-wise. The advice for locality is almost nationalist and not very rational in my opinion.

In my opinion it is, for the global supply chain is dependent on capitalism as a whole (including mining of metals), and so solarpunk can never exist unless we would convert the whole world (which will never happen), instead, small communities with locally sourced sustainable tech is more realistic, if one knows what they're doing.

Start small and then grow is more feasible than thinking one can convert the world by politics. Lead by example and all that.

"FOOD - Our relationship with our food is the most crucial relationship will have in our lives. Each thing we decide to eat is quite literally the choice between consuming poison or consuming medicine. To be a SolarPunk, you are aware of the effect food has on you, and you decide to choose to eat medicine over poison. Healthy food for you and the environment is local (made near your town) and without harmful chemicals. You can make the most beneficial decision by visiting your nearest farmer's market each weekend and stocking up on local vegetables, fruits, nuts, meats, coffees, teas, and more. Making this decision is healthy for you and more beneficial for the planet. "

The good thing here is mentioning supporting your local farmers and economy, it's gerat for food security. But things locally grown aren't necessarily more healthy or safer than foods grown elsewhere, they may be grown with all sorts of chemicals, etc. It's important to not be

anti-chemical because that's just being anti-science. As others have mentioned, everything is a chemical and even organic foods are grown with chemicals, just ones from approved lists.

There's a great chart from your world in data that compares the greenhouse emissions per kilogram of food

https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food

and one that breaks it into down into more detail - greenhouse emissions across the supply chain

https://ourworldindata.org/food-choice-vs-eating-local

and lots more charts to check out too. I highly recommend checking them out.

There's an eternal battle about whether the focus on to be on systemic change vs individual change, but we need both IMO, and individual is a great place for someone new to start.

On clothing, cotton is actually pretty resource intensive, and it's worth mentioning other materials such as linen or wool.

Community is the biggest thing left out here, this isn't about individuals just trying to be environmentalists, they're trying to create communities full of coops, mutual aid, ending homelessness by providing them with housing (see: Finland), stop treating addicts like they're criminals (see: Portugal) etc. etc. it's about trying to create a better society for all. So while yes bring your own bags to the store but it's about a lot more than that.

We've got an ever-growing wiki that might be helpful - https://old.reddit.com/r/solarpunk/wiki/index

I think this framework is both more suitable and more *accessible*. With the OP's framework, you can't be solarpunk in a food desert, or living in an unhealthy urban environment. With your alternative framework, anyone can be solarpunk and push forward the movement.

Small communities that try to diverge will be subjugated by capitalist countries. Capitalism can't exist without imperialism, since it's essentially economic imperialism. I was born in a dictatorship because we democratically tried to break free of capitalism. Almost every country in my continent has a similar story. So we **need** to convert the whole world. Hence why I'm communist. We need a government to fight off the other governments until everyone frees themselves.

It will be quite the fight, but we need to fight it. When automation

reaches it's zenith, capitalists won't need people anymore. And we will come to a head.

Anyway, back to the topic at hand, circulation of goods and long distance transportation is not exclusive to capitalism. Not at all.

True, but self-sustainable communities will want prevent depending on supply chains from outside (until solarpunk communities are established worldwide)

But I guess there are several ways to reach a solarpunk future. Focusing on automation is probably the easiest one for all of us.

Yeah, that is true. The main weapon of capitalism is economic strangling. But that's just weaponizing the interdependency. I think interdependency is a good thing for society. Keeps us cooperating when we otherwise may not.

Table 4

Discussion Thread 4: Solarpunk feels different from other leftist communities

Discussion prompt	Solarpunk feels different from other leftist communities
	r/solarpunk in general feels a lot more peaceful than other communities on the left. I can't quite put it into words, but a lot of leftist communities are full of people who are married to their ideology, and I feel like that keeps them from growing as people, and it creates a lot of infighting that is often very petty.
	Anarcho-communism, democratic socialism, heavily regulated capitalism with a lot of socialist-inspired elements...I don't care what we end up with, as long as we get what works for all of us and the world we live in. Nothing will be perfect, but some solutions are better than others.
	I was kind of surprised during the war in Ukraine that a lot of you took the general stance of "I don't support NATO, but Finland joining it, for the time being, is probably for the best." Maybe it will be a completely bad decision in the long run, but the conflict in Ukraine is a very complicated situation.
	The world is filled with so much complexity that I fear that we are too dead-set on finding the "perfect solution" that we divide ourselves. I am so sick of leftists fracturing and then believing they can still change the world without any compromise.
	r/solarpunk feels different though. Everyone on here is pretty chill for the most part. You guys are often, calm, optimistic, and able to

	reasonably sort out your differences while making a great effort to call out greenwashing. All of this gives me hope.
Comments	That's mostly because solarpunk is not necessarily a leftist philosophy. It's mostly apolitical so people (hopefully) leave their politics at the door.
	It's also a philosophy with an inherent positive outlook on the future. I personally came here from the r/collapse angle, but i leave the doom and gloom at the door.
	I guess this is partly because Solarpunk isn't tied to a particular ideology. It's a vision of a future we all share. What ideology is mostly likely to achieve that vision isn't as much of the focus, as the actions we take, the art we create and the science we make.
	It's Star Trek meets Ghibli meets tikkun olam.
	Yeah, I agree with this. I came to it because I understood it to be defined by optimism about creating improvements to quality of life, reducing environmental impacts, and realigning our relationship with nature without requiring primitivism. Sometimes those goals are yoked to other ideologies as a matter of practical politics, but I don't think they have to be, and in fact I think those goals are so desirable they should attract a pretty wide group of people.
	That's a very good point you're making. \- solarpunk is not an ideology, so you can project anything onto it. How do you get there? Social democracy, anarchy, regulated capitalism, communism... in a way all belong here. So it tends to attract people who are not affiliated to an ideology, at least not in a dogmatic way. \- it is more practical than ideologies. Instead of fighting on the meaning of such or such thinker's works, we have to think about how, in practice, things might work. \- it is optimistic, but not naive. It is a decision - I decide to project myself into a world where there is hope, where today's biggest issues can be solved, even if terrible things happen. Being positive, optimistic is a bit overrated in the US, but there's still a potential benefit : it helps to think rationally. Cyberpunk raises fears and stimulates the reptilian brain, the seat of our most primitive emotions, meanwhile solarpunk raises hope and serenity, and stimulates the neocortex, the seat of rational and analytic thinking. I believe ideologies are useful and we need them, but we need not be prisoners of them, like feelings and emotions. Anger against the current world is justified and understandable, so we should listen to it and then learn from it, not act on it without thinking.

Exactly, it's more of an aesthetic or a dream than a particular program or course of action.

This is a blessing and a curse. On one hand, there's little to no infighting, but on the other hand, there's no concrete plan for how to make this vision become reality.

Not that I really want to talk about it here, because I don't want to get into infighting... but my political tendency is Maoism, and love it or hate it, it undeniably has a pretty concrete plan for how to achieve its vision.

I kinda disagree with this. I think solarpunk lends itself to direct action. Creating art, growing plants, doing research, advancing technology, reading, doing mutual aid, caring for people and animals etc make bettering the world much more tangible for me. This is where I personally draw some of the peaceful feelings of solarpunk from, but I may just be fooled by the tranquil aesthetic 😄

Yeah I agree. It's kinda the strength of Solarpunk because it embraces many diverse solutions to the same problems. Focuses on community level organizing which is a lot easier to grasp and envision. It's additive and not exclusionary in nature!

I think that largely comes from the optimism that's crucial to solar punk. People who feel passionate about Solarpunk in some form, tend to see it as a source of hope.

As many others have said, we tend to have heavier and more polarizing conversations elsewhere. I'm probably not the only one who is concerned about a sort of "hollow solar punk" or solar punk flavored/green washed capitalism where nothing improves... But why knock the wind out of your own sails?

Solar punk doesn't mean exactly the same thing to everyone. It doesn't look the same in everyone's mind either. Its nice to dream that we can all be happy though.

Yeah, my parents kind of slide to the right (and have historically been very right-wing) but are actually pretty solar punk! They are all about all-natural farming, sustainability, conservation etc. Even though we vote differently sometimes, our actions in our day to day lives typically align.

Man I wish people would say this more in leftist communities. It's much more pronounced online than in person, IMO, but still. It's perhaps even more radical to maintain utopian ends *and* a welcoming, empathetic stance toward outsiders, but too many don't see it that way.

Anything that helps heal us and the world. Create the future not argue about which ideology is best to create the future. It's "the discourse" that has blinded us to each other and to our own hope and yearning. I'll

talk deeply with friends and family, but not just anyone to hash out some nationalized dialogue about nothing

I agree, I'm personally AnCom and do want my personal ideals to win out, even though unlikely. Solar punk should fit in any one of the political ideologies and, as such, is a reasonable and easily attainable goal.

In short, plants or no plants and renewable or non-renewable are no-brainers. The political systems that would allow it tend to be left leaning and I'm just trying to reach achievable "leftness" so that things can start to be a better world since i know my own ideals cannot just pop up overnight. Plants and renewable energy are possible now and i feel it's rather insane that they're not the standard.

It certainly helps inspire me. We have a world to win! A beautiful, solarpunk world!

The how is the do. The talk is just talk. I can spend my whole life talking about what we should be doing. One day spent doing it is worth more than that.

Not the person who downvoted you, but we have to actually get to this world somehow. Politics are a part of life, we (at least people like me who live in whats considered "the west") can't keep ignoring the world around us like we did in the 90's and most of the 2000's.

.... r/fuckcars is colonialist?

Can you back this up?

Also, colonialism and fascism are inherently not of punk ethos. They and solarpunk will never legitimately go together. They're just colonialist or fascist period.

I came to the sub thinking of solarpunk as a genre that came into being as a direct response to cyberpunk, and I continue to believe the best thing about this concept is its proximity to art and storytelling.

I think the more we view it as a set of "what ifs", the more useful it is for elevating new ideas and promoting consideration of many outlandish concepts, without the expectation that they form a coherent, singular manifesto.

I would say that solarpunk's greatest value is as a genre of influence rather than a movement.

Movements are coordinated, and in almost every other case I'll advocate for coordination. But in seeding lots of new ideas to lots of different people, I think a free-form genre is so powerful. Every show and book and game and movie has the possibility to give anyone of any age a spark of realization: what if things were cool? And earthy? And radical? And kind?

	I don't like Moonhaven, for instance, but I know there are people out there who are watching it and discovering a whole new playground for their imagination, and I love that.
	No I'm not because the argument will go nowhere and I'm going to continue eating meat and participating in [r/solarpunk](https://www.reddit.com/r/solarpunk) because my version of solarpunk doesn't include veganism And arguing over it will go nowhere because I personally am never going vegan I don't have a problem with you being vegan So please don't have a problem with me not being vegan And I shouldn't have to remind you that non-vegan users are welcome here as well and to act otherwise would be gatekeeping which is against this subreddits rules
	I think solarpunk is focused on sharing and building constructive visions while so many ostensibly leftist communities focus on deconstructive criticism of the status quo. Criticism is necessary but if of a community is overly focused on it I think it ends up less able to search for a path to somewhere meaningful.

Table 5

Discussion Thread 5: If capitalism can't solve climate change, then what other system can we use? How do we start doing that right now?

Discussion prompt	If capitalism can't solve climate change, then what other system can we use? How do we start doing that right now?
Comments	permaculture + socialism or communism, little to no profit incentive and decentralised native plant growing
	Well, Solarpunk is mostly inspired by anarchist and Communalist ideals. For me personally at least, a decentralized, communal, sustainable economy is the goal. A non-capitalist system of production, distribution and consumption, based on local autonomous communities, cooperative businesses and technological innovations that will help us slowly built a global network of interconnected communities that will share and equally distribute resources among themselves. For now, what we need to do is to work together, and alone, in order to start changing things in our everyday life: try to grow our own food, reuse clothing, share tools, books, medicine and other resources with our friends and neighbors. We must try and built local chains of cooperation in our neighborhoods, in our towns and cities. We must try and limit our carbon emissions by stop using cars so much. Use public transport, bikes, carpool

with your neighbors and friends. We must also spread our ideas, try and make them more well-known: videos, zines, even just simple posts like this one can help the Solarpunk movement spread. We must rage against the Machine.

I personally only use public transport to move around, and I and my dad have started a vegetable garden in my house. I also plan to learn how to mend so I can fix my clothes and use them longer. These are really small steps for sure, but it is a start, and I hope that it is the start of something better than what we have now. Our efforts must be both personal and collective in order to achieve our goals.

>How do we start doing that right now?

Literally stop everything that spews out co2 and endure the consequences. leave only paramount utilities as we shift. problem is:

1; people find this too radical, which means humanity needs to rethink its priorities. veggie burgers or annihilation? using the tram or civilization's end?

2; even if we knew 100% what to do, the fact that we as a species won't be able to cooperate, and that countries not going carbon neutral have the advantage on the world stage until the end, means nothing radical will be done until the breaking point. it's a prisoner's dilemma.

So everything policymakers do today are more moderate and politically acceptable compromises of this. hard to stop subsidizing the fuel industry when they make 20% of your GDP. full respect, some are trying their best.

İt is inevitable that the climate change will have its name as a title in future history books, but if we try, we might be able to actually write them.

I my self see solarpunk as a proto technocracy. spreading information of strategies to begin grassroots experiments in living outside the decaying grid. Constructing sustainable farms and livable greenhouse shelters, connecting green power generation with computer information gathering and sharing and designing peer reviewed AI algorithms to coordinate manage resources. Use every reclaimable resource of the old grid to build the new infrastructure. Every smartphone a university library and a voting booth and edutainment center

I Disagree force is how the current system works. And that system understands the use of force very well. What it does not understand and has no defense against is soft power. Focusing attention and action in another direction leaves the old paradigms obsolete. Solar panels on the roof put coal burning energy plants out of business, electric cars close oil wells, online classes make universities available to everyone regardless of income

As an aside, I think a couple countries do have carbon taxes.

Anyway your argument is silly and lacks nuance. As unlikely as getting people to vote for a carbon tax is, it's even less likely you'll get them to join your weird anti capitalism party. Capitalism is just a tool, and can be used for good as well as bad. It's the only reliable system because it already assumes the worst of people (they're greedy), so there's no worse behaviour to sink to that would break the system.

So we should keep capitalism, strongly regulate it and tax things that are bad for the people and the environment. Make it work for us rather than the few rich bastards.

Capitalism has the best chance of finding a solution, totalitarianism has the best chance of implementing said solution. And libertarianism or even anarchism has the best chance of people being treated humanely but the lowest chance of having the general populus working towards a shared goal.

I beleive the key to environmentally friendly living is people and their direct surrondings. I'd sure listen to my freinds and family sooner than some politician or government agency

I have an e-bikes that charges from solar panels. It uses zero fossil fuel in transporting me around. It is more productive to think of a way out than dwell on the obstacles

My take on this is that what has to change isnt the market/economy structure, but the "capital" part.

If more companies where driven by their employees there would be much more care and concern for others and the future.

So companies should be owned by their workers to equal parts, they can still elect a ceo and have hirarchies btw.

But also workers then should be able to choose not to work (that job), so something like a basic universal income, unemployment ensurance or state job ensurance would be ideal imo.

Some cooperatives I've heard of are mondragon in catalonia Spain and premium cola in Germany.

- Eco socialism

- Learn about environmental science, learn how capitalism destroys the environment, and educate others on how to make the world more green.

With or without capitalism, we need a carbon tax. Markets are the best tool we have for coordinating the behavior of 8B people.

Organize! Riot!

YES on it all, but especially that last point. I'm going to do what I can do with my people, and your people don't have to do it exactly the same, we just need to be working towards the same goal: keeping the planet alive.

It's not that simple.

First off I'd learn socialist and Marxist theory by reading.

It's important to learn stuff like gardening, composting, even possibly foraging in some specific cases which I could get more into.

But under a socialist society, the environment would be more planned and protected with things like clean renewable energy, public transportation (transits, buses, trains, bicycles), recycling (and ending plastic), land space usage (wasted by highways, parking lots, lawns, other useless infrastructure), better agriculture, water usage, etc. And of course waste would be eliminated by recycling and composting. Socialism will solve climate change because it is democratic, and doesn't work for protecting corporations who harvest the Earth, it works for the people.

If you're interesting in socialism and the basics of it read "[Why Socialism](http://redandgreen.org/pete/einstein.pdf)" By Albert Einstein and "[The Principles of Communism](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/11/prin-com.htm)" by Friedrich Engels. There are some other great beginner reads too, but those are very short themselves. [Second Thought](https://youtu.be/yAOWoV9_2SQ) it also a great YouTube channel on beginners to socialism.

We have a world to win. ☭

Edit: permaculture and other efficient based systems instead of modern agriculture. And I forgot to mention light pollution being combatted.

I agree with all of this but I think that in addition to these local-scale steps, we do still need to focus on political change both locally and at the national level so that we can have things like international climate finance. People are already suffering the impacts of climate change, particularly in the Global South. If we get understandably frustrated with political and large-scale organizing and only tend our gardens, we're leaving them to die.

I think a lot of people are concerned about climate change but are either too comfortable or don't see how they can change to a more sustainable lifestyle. I live in a city with infrastructure that supports a car free lifestyle but many North America cities and towns don't have it. Also, I doubt the majority will buy into an anarchist approach. Maybe if we had some awesome anarchist moves for tiktok. I've been looking into strong towns because it's a way to infiltrate, if you will, mainstream society and find common ground between suburbanites and city dwellers. For instance, if they could easily walk, bike or bus to a nearby mixed use area coffee shop, maybe the light would start to dawn. I think it might get more traction than the combative blame game we environmentalists have been taking. Of course, big oil is still evil and self interested so direct action is a crucial component.

Capitalism has many forms.

Solving Climate Change isn't about Capitalism or Socialism.

Developing Green Technologies and Methods to manage the usage of resources, and actually implementing them regardless if it's under a capitalist or socialist system is what matters.

Resource-based economy :)

Climate change has no real solution other than reducing power output per capita. This will be devastating economically.

One can think that the good outweighs the bad for this but it is going to have significant downsides for the entire globe.

Currently we can offset most carbon (and do a bunch of other positive things) by going hard into Nuclear (and in about 10 or so years Geothermal) plus switch agriculture to Regenerative models.

But we simply can't produce enough battery's and other such things to replicate modern life (to say nothing of bringing up poor countries to first world living standards).

There are a bunch of cool 'maybe' tech out there on the fringes but unless we have a breakthrough no economic model, socialist, capitalist, communist, whatever, is going to be able to fix the problem.

... And it doesn't matter if it's Capitalism or Socialism.

The big obstacle to implementing Green Tech and Methods is general Greed and Corruption.

On the political side, what we need is transparency and democratic control of the state so that Green Policies get implemented properly without loopholes. You don't see rivers of plastic in the US or Europe, but you do see them in India and Central America.

Socialism is no more an ecological system that Capitalism. But Socialism often has the caveat that it has no incentive for efficient usage of resources or a feedback system.

Finding Green Energy technologies, better Urban Planning, and Universal SexEd/Family Planning are some of the most important things we need.

The Poor Proles Almanac (https://poorproles.com/)

And

The Revolutionary's Garden (https://www.therevgarden.com/)

are both great podcasts for learning about eco anarchism, ecology, social ecology and building a better society through DIY farming

go vegan

Multi-Stakeholder cooperative organization

That is why and where peer reviewed AI is essential to manage the economic system.

I think the first step is refusing to participate in the worst practices, the second is limiting harmful practices, and the third is to seek out best practices. The problems and solutions are big and varied enough that the first steps are probably unique to each person - what do you care enough to change?

Buying second-hand clothing is fun, frugal, and ethical. I can make sure my money doesn't directly fund slave/child labor and reuse or upcycle something old. I can build a great Halloween costume without adding more plastic production and packaging.

I think going vegan would help a lot, but I can't imagine that lifestyle so I skip meat for a few meals and buy grass fed, etc instead.

I don't think economic systems will change until we refuse to participate in their worst abuses.

Participate in and start new co-ops and build local co-op networks, aiming at building the solidarity economy.

Something you can do right now is join a freecycle or buy-nothing group.

https://www.freecycle.org/

https://buynothingproject.org/

Of course, this assumes you live near a local group. If that's not an option, using resale websites like Vinted, Depop, or FB Marketplace lowers consumption of new items if not shipping waste. It's a small step, but the more people re-use items, that small step can become a marathon.

I have to agree with you. *(with someone saying solarpunk is a pipedream and will never happen and our society cannot function without fossil fuels because of the way it was built and that collapse is unavoidable)*

While the idea of solarpunk is something that I'd really love to see I'm extremely pragmatic and logical and when I read most of the comments in this subreddit I see that they're very passionate but fail to see the impact that they're idea would have on other humans, and I'm not talking about the 0.1%, I'm talking about normal people in developed and developing Countries.

Also there is a lot or America-centrism in the subreddit (on reddit in general).

Not everyone of us live in suburbian hell where we can have gardens or where car are a necessity, most European living in cities live day by day not even entering in a car, same goes for billion of people across the globe.

Something to add to this but I'm with a credit union that gives $1 of their stock to the customer itself so the customers have more of a say

I think for now it should work like this where employees of a co-op get a small percentage of stock in the co-op until a stable lasting way can be found for people to break away from capitalism

After that I think it should move to each employee at the co-op each having a small percentage of ownership of the co-op

Among the many possible answers I think we should focus on those, that are implemantable right now.
I work within an organization that is about to find an answer to exactly that question. The idea: Start with "businesses" - build up or connect the small and medium sized organisations that have aligned intentions towards a doughnut economy and enable them to redistribute wealth, power, tools, skills and ressources among each other and the people. Give them what our states have failed to provide.

I know this won't be popular here, but…

Capitalism has already solved this - you can rent tools from the big box stores, and there are (at least for me) several local stores that rent tools by the day/week/month, from small power tools, up to residential backhoes.

You can also rent cars or take an Uber. I suspect that when self-driving cars become widespread, some company will make a car subscription service, where you call a car with an app whenever you need it.

And if you don't want to pay someone, you also have neighbors and friends that you can borrow stuff from. That seems more Solarpunk to me than some centralized community warehouse that likely needs staffing and security and accountability for borrowers.

The thing is, we can't wait until the situation is so bad there's no alternative. People need to *want* to do these things-- as in, they need to actually find them desirable. We need to reach a point where, given a choice between a sustainable and non-sustainable alternative, they would pick the sustainable one, not out of desperation, but because it genuinely appeals to them more.

We have to meet these people halfway, and that means coming up, as closely as possible, with equivalents to the things they take for granted. It's the only way to get them on board with what we want.

A practical step I took was to join my local Food Not Bombs, which collects food that local businesses would otherwise throw out and makes food for everyone who needs it, which is partly unhoused people, but also includes people like me who live alone and struggle to make food for themselves (ourselves?), but enjoy preparing large batches of food with others and then taking home a couple of days of meals so that I don't go broke eating out or have to buy cheap, plastic-covered ready-made meals from the grocery store.

With long or short-term collapse of capitalism, I have confidence that my local food not bombs will continue being a point for food drop-offs and distribution in some fashion.

Easy. Fix the money. Bitcoin is a great contender. Stop being afraid and start using it & accepting it as payment.
Still in development but close to beta, Holochain has a Nature based fully distributed approach that's solarpunkish with Mutual Credit as currency. Holochain.org 🖐️🤚🌐

Green Shrinkage. Capitalism is the only system that could sustain 8 Billion PPL. BC of greed we let it scale up to fast. So we need controlled shrinkage, Focus on a standard which is lower than todays industry-nations, but for all human beeings and focus high energy industry to the global south, bc it has the most hours of sunlight

There have been and are so many movements and ideologies throughout history that would work perfectly with the basis of solarpunk ideas, all of which are vigilantly anti-capitalist. Personally in my own research and real life experiences I've come to the conclusion that anarchism, or libertarian socialism as some call it, is the best way of going about it. Capitalism treats the earth as property to make profit from regardless of the damage caused to make such profit, and views the people living under it the same way. Liberation of the people from such a nightmare hinges on the liberation of everything, including the environment.
Unfortunately, capitalist control over the world is centered around a monopoly of violence, and will not give up its control peacefully. You cannot vote away it's power and wealth. It would take a full scale revolt, which wouldn't be pretty at all, to achieve the necessary end goal, which itself would be beautiful.

Note that you are constructing a binary between socialism and capitalism, there are multiple issues with this:

1. This is a false dichotomy, which limits what you can discuss or envision for the future.
2. Related to point 1, these ideas are old and so this doesn't give you a more modern understanding of these topics.

>As a counterfactual to capitalism not inherently meaning environmental destruction i would point to the fact that most reforestation projects, aswell as other environmental protection projects have occured and are occurring

within capitalist economies.

But are these re-forestation projects enough to actually solve anything or are they just a thin veneer to show that "something" is being done?

If you read "The Climate Book" by Greta Thunberg, she'd argue that these are still steps backwards, because the line at which we finally step forward is not when we do just barely more than nothing, it's when we start doing enough to actually solve the problem, which I'm sure even you can admit that these actions are not enough.

What needs to be done is to completely move away from fossil fuels. How quickly this needs to be achieved depends on the degree of warming we want to inflict on ourselves by a certain amount of time.

>So my conclusion is, that environmental policies depend far more on the people demanding them, than the political system in which they occur.

Once again, this is a false dichotomy. People demanding them is good but the political system still matters, and it's pretty ridiculous of you to posit that it simply doesn't matter. It should be obviously important.

So got bikes and e scooters instead, because car market is to big… second biggest purchase make is a vehicle…