

# Animacy

The inherent spirit and agency found in all beings and parts of nature. Viewing the world around one as animate rather than inanimate can lead to deeper respect and stewardship for the other-than-human world.

## Further readings

Robin Wall Kimmerer, “The Grammar of Animacy” from *Braiding Sweetgrass*

David Abrams, “Animism and The Alphabet”

## Related terms

Life

Language

Term developed by Shio Tsurudome, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Anthrotexderdness



**A**n area and its naturally developed life community. Used as an alternative to wilderness, but includes humans in the life community rather than separated. Consists of anthro-, meaning human, tex-, meaning woven, and der-, meaning animal. From this etymology, it is clear that anthrotexderdness is a space in which all beings, human and non-human, are woven together and interdependent.

## Further readings

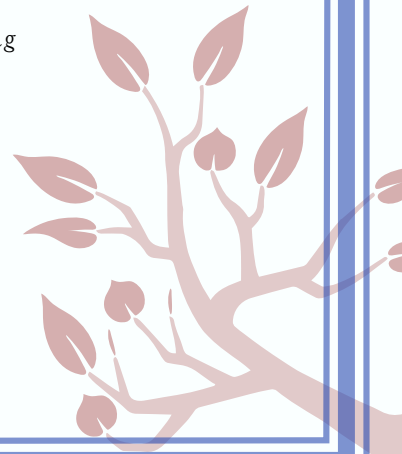
Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant: A Living Science for Life*

## Related terms

Interdependence

Nature

Term developed by Malia Armstrong, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# *Autocatalysis* *Autocatalytic cycle*

**C**omponents of a system enjoy a symbiotic relationship in which the growth of one element aids the growth of the entire system, creating a cycle of mutual and reciprocal growth. Recognition of autocatalytic cycles removes the ability to separate parts from a whole, and necessitates consideration of a whole system because the components of an autocatalytic cycle “belong together.” Recognition of autocatalytic cycles can also encourage the nourishment and stewardship of other parts of the system we find ourselves part of beyond ourselves, because of the knowledge that the growth of those parts will benefit our own growth.

## **Further readings**

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

Robert E. Ulanowicz, *A Third Window Natural Life beyond Newton and Darwin*

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

## **Related terms**

Interdependence, Reciprocity, and Polycyclical

Term developed by Alex White and Nina Callahan, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Biomodelling



**S**imilar to the more common term biomimicry, biomodelling is humans using wild or natural solutions as inspiration for solving human problems. By using modelling rather than mimicry, this design strategy acknowledges the natural world as the inspiration, rather than simply copying it without credit.

## Further readings

Janine Benyus, *Biomimicry's Surprising Lessons from Nature's Engineers*

## Related terms

Fractal

Term developed by Isaac Danuloff, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Ceremony

**A**n occasion that enables participants to consciously experience wonder while in relationship with other beings. When stripped of the grandeur associated with its common use, ceremony is simply a recognition of something significant and meaningful.


## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Metapresence

Reverence



Term developed by Kendal Pittman, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# *Changeable Consciousness*

**A** consciousness and awareness of being in which ignorance and imperfections of perception are inherent, and which can therefore shift with the reception of new knowledge. An awareness of the fundamental ignorance of our consciousness may temper our hubris as powerful actors in the ecosphere.

## Further readings

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

Herbert Hensel, *Goethe's Way of Science*

## Related terms

Plasticity and Intentional Adaptation

Term developed by Lev Snyder, Fall 2018  
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Middlebury College

# Christian Perennialism



The theological principles presented in the Bible that support the perennial mentality of preserving, nurturing, and enriching the Earth in order to coexist with all of its inhabitants. Examples of these theological principles include wonder, purpose, stewardship of Earth, redemption, and love.

## Further reading

George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant*

## Related terms

Ceremony

Language

Reverence

Term developed by Josh Stretten-Carlson, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Community

A group of beings and the area they inhabit that usually share one or more common characteristics and rely on one another in varying degrees. While community can be a component in reinforcing dominant paradigms, it can also be the organizational structure around which change is organized and implemented.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

J. Feibleman, *Culture as Applied Ontology*

## Related terms

Integration

Interdependence

Term developed by Charlie DiPrinzio, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College





# Consent

**E**arth in agreement with human practices, indicated by mutual respect between the earth and humans which leads to prosperity for both and all. Practices that are regenerative for a sustainable and perennial future are practices that consider consent before occurring. The positive responses of growth and prosperity from these practices are the assurance that the act is indeed consensual. Consent also applies to the consent of knowledge and culture, specifically when knowledge and practices that white people use are not culturally our own.

## Further readings

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Wes Jackson, Aubrey Streit Krug, Bill Vitek, and Robert Jensen, “Transforming human life on our home planet, perennially”

Gary Snyder, “Good, Wild, Sacred”

## Related terms

Dialogue, Indigenous Science, Reading the Land, Restraining, Thriveability, and Reciprocity

Term developed by Joslyn Sullivan, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# *Crisymed* [krahy-sim-d]

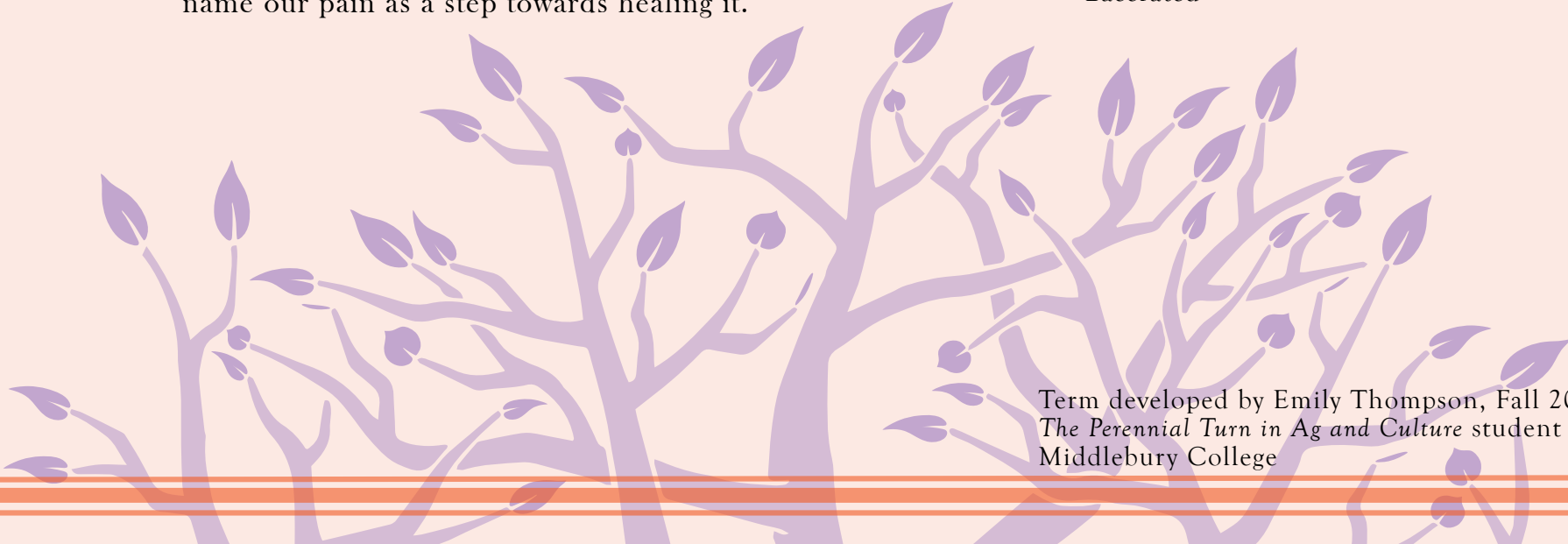
**D**erived from the English word “crisis” and the Greek root “syn,” meaning “together,” *crisymed* describes our planet’s current state of social, environmental, economic, and political chaos and degradation. Acknowledging the planet’s state as *crisymed* enables us to collectively name our pain as a step towards healing it.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Lacerated



Term developed by Emily Thompson, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Degrowth

A term and movement that recognizes that the Earth cannot continue to support our societies' current systems of capitalism and consumption. A process as much as a goal, degrowth describes a transition to an economic, political, and cultural way of life that can coexist with the more-than-human world upon which we depend - a perennial way of being. Degrowth comes from the French word "décroissance," which refers to the process of a river returning to its natural level after a flood.

## Further readings

E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*

Riccardo Mastini, "Degrowth: the Case for a New Economic Paradigm"

## Related terms

Emerge

Term developed by Finn Lester-Niles, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Dialogue

Any conversation between beings of the interconnected world, speaking each other's language even when no common words exist. Dialogue begins with listening with an open mind, and between humans and nature can be sparked by becoming a participant in the world by observation and interaction. Dialogue allows interactions and support, increases understanding and appreciation, and can facilitate the healing of broken relationships.

## Further readings

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Henry David Thoreau, "Walking"

## Related terms

Saunter, Ensoulment, Feeling (v.), and Homecoming

Term developed by Maya Gomez, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Ecological Worldview



An outlook rooted in nature's interconnected processes and which examines individual components in the context of the whole ecosphere; an alternative to a knowledge-based worldview rooted in western science.

## Further reading

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

## Related terms

Interdependence

Interconnectedness

Changeable Consciousness

Ensoulment

Fundamental Schematics

Systems Thinking

Term developed by Beatrice Lee, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Emergence

**M**ove out or away from something and become rooted, established, and prominent as part of the overarching paradigm. Shifts in a system that emerge are those that are not readily apparent, but they become noticeable over time when one looks closely. Emerging must recognize all of the parts of systems, and how complexity and change can arise spontaneously from the interconnection of all of these parts.

## Further readings

Paul R. Fleischman, *Wonder: When and Why the World Appears Radiant*

Robert E. Ulanowicz, *A Third Window: Natural Life beyond Newton and Darwin*

Fikret Berkes, *Sacred Ecology*

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant: A Living Science for Life*

## Related terms

Interconnectedness, Interdependence, Autocatalysis, Systems Thinking, and Degrowth

Term developed by Mikayla Haefle, Fall 2018  
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Middlebury College

# Ensouled

# Ensoulement

A new way of defining the relationship between humans and the other-than-human world, and a rejection of the divide between the two. A recognition of how strongly we are bound up with the world: rather than a world of interacting objects, we are all bound up together and ensoulment allows for the appreciation of these relationships and reciprocity.

## Further readings

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant: A Living Science for Life*

Wes Jackson, Aubrey Streit Krug, Bill Vitek, and Robert Jensen, “Transforming human life on our home planet, perennially”

Stan Rowe, *Earth Alive*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

## Related terms

Interconnectedness, Dialogue, Interdependence, Life, and Reciprocity

Term developed by Anna Durning, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# *E n u m i o*

**T**he Latin word for “to build up, secure strongly, strengthen, and fortify.” Created to balance the term “erosion,” enumio refers both to efforts to strengthen top soil from erosion as well as describes the gradual process of societal and systemic change perennialism requires.

## Further reading

Timothy Crews, et al. “Is the Future of Agriculture Perennial?”

## Related terms

Emerge

Term developed by Clara Wolcott, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Feeling <sup>(n.)</sup>

**E**motion as a way of knowing and as a way of reaching people. Humans cannot rely only on science and “knowledge” to make decisions and walk through the world, but must also rely on their feelings, both good and bad as they walk through the world. Feelings are also a tool for reaching people, through art or music or other mediums.

## Further readings

Paul R. Fleischman, *Wonder: When and Why the World Appears Radiant*

James K. Feibleman, “A Defense of Ontology”

Alfred N. Whitehead, “Nature Lifeless”

## Related terms

Community

Term developed by Deanna Hammel, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College





# *Feeling* (v.)

**F**eeling as a process. Plants grow by what they feel in the soil, humans can grow and move through the world by feeling the environment we move through and making connections with it. Feeling will allow us to view ourselves as more dependent on the earth around us, and in turn treat it that way.

## Further reading


Lynn Margulis in *Symbiotic Earth*

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant: A Living Science for Life*

## Related terms

Dialogue, Ecological Worldview, Indigenous, Interconnectedness, and Reading the Land

Term developed by Deanna Hammel, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Flow

**D**escribes the movements and patterns of interconnected and interdependent life on Earth. Living in the flow comes naturally and means living sustainably and in reciprocity with the Earth.

## Further reading

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Interdependent

Term developed by Olivia Pintair, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Fractal

**P**atterns, often found in nature, that are repeated at varying scales. Fractals can also help understand how individuals, societies and the Earth are intertwined.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

Confucius, “The Great Learning”

The Dalai Lama, *The Universe in a Single Atom*



Term developed by Shayla Coates and Clara Wolcott, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# *Fundamental Schematics*

**L**enses, stories, and assumptions that influence our consciousness and view of the world. The basic framework for Perennial thinking that the Perennialist establishes over time through exposure to new ideas and ways of thinking that inform the Perennial way of seeing will be the fundamental schematic of Perennialism. Lasting and broad change requires the disruption of the fundamental schematics that are currently in place, and the development of a new framing shared by humanity regarding our treatment of the rest of nature.

## Further reading

Wes Jackson, “Toward a Common Covenant” in *Nature as Measure*

George Lakoff, *Don’t Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*

## Related terms

Ecological Worldview, Changeable Consciousness, Perennial Education, and The Turn Towards Sustainable Agriculture

Term developed by Lev Snyder, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Gnosis

**T**he knowledge one gains from lived experiences. While frequently neglected and delegitimized in our society, it is a powerful way of learning and knowing that has the potential to reorient our culture towards stewardship, justice, and more sustainable ways of being.

## Further readings

David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*

## Related terms

Feeling (v.)

Term developed by Finn Lester-Niles, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Helical

An alternative to viewing patterns as 2-dimensional closed circles or repeating cycles: the helix-like nature of the world and the systems within it. At every turn of a helix a new cycle begins and goes on around and around, but on each pass it reflects the past iterations of the cycle.

## Further readings

Dalai Lama, *The Universe in a Single Atom*

Gary Snyder, "The Practice of the Wild"

## Related terms

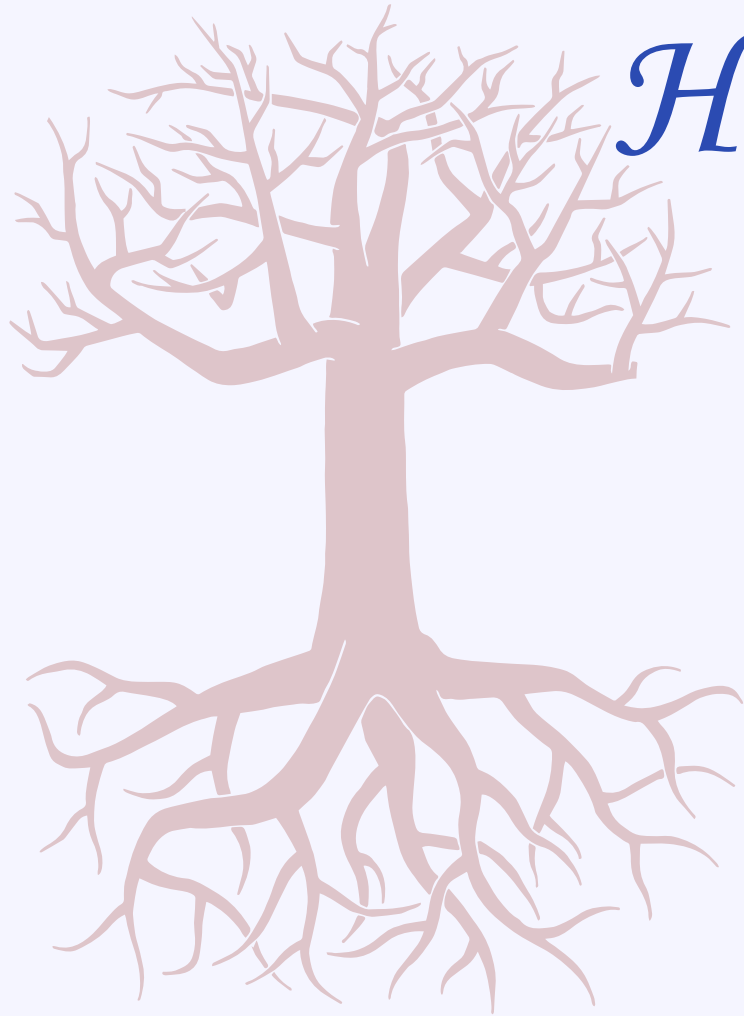
Autocatalytic Cycle

Emerge

Polycyclical

Term developed by Samuel Kaelin, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College





# Homecoming

The act of becoming native to a place. Homecoming appreciates nature's control over itself, and combines gained outside knowledge with the wealth of a native place to realize the local ecosystem's unique status as a mosaic of interconnected components and processes upon return to it. With homecoming, one becomes part of the native place, physically and spiritually.

## Further readings

Paul R. Fleischman, *Wonder: When and Why the World Appears Radiant*

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

Gary Snyder, *Practice of the Wild*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

## Related terms

Indigenous, Interconnectedness, Reading the Land, Systems Thinking, Reciprocity, and Thriveability

Term developed by Beatrice Lee, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College





# Horizonless



**L**acking boundaries or a distinct endpoint; there is always more to discover. In a horizonless world, one is allowed to wonder, and the recognition of our own tiny role in the expansiveness of the universe and the value of all parts can be realized and respected. Furthermore, with a horizonless view we can eliminate the boxes we place ourselves in, and recognize that the work is never done.

## Further readings

Paul R. Fleischman, *Wonder: When and Why the World Appears Radiant*

Henry David Thoreau, "Walking"

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant: A Living Science for Life*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Lynn Margulis in *Symbiotic Earth*

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

James K. Feibleman, "A Defense of Ontology"

## Related terms

Emergence and Imagination of Boundaries

Term developed by Josephine Bourne, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# *Imagination of Boundaries*

**T**he imagination of boundaries acknowledges that the borders and lines humans draw for ourselves and the world are not as concrete and defining as we like to think they are. Acknowledging certain bounds as our own creations rather than steady realities enables new and creative thinking to emerge in the liminal spaces that boundaries attempt to limit or contain.

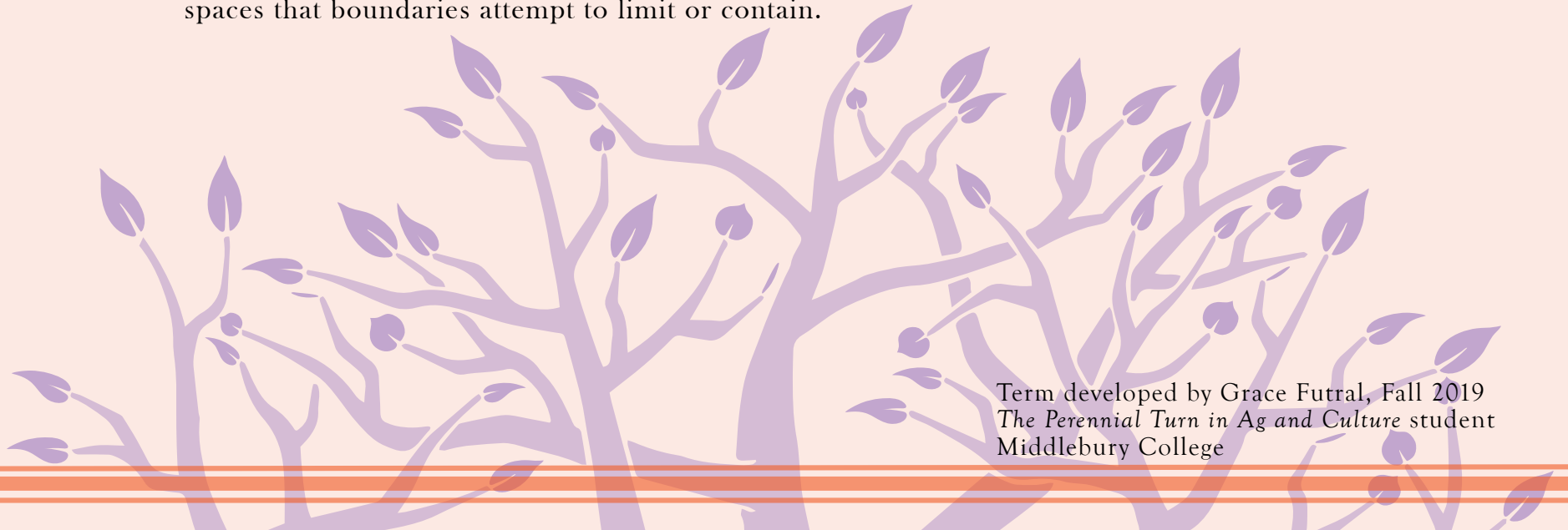
## Further readings

Stephen Edelglass et al, *The Marriage of Sense and Thought*

## Related Terms

Language

Term developed by Grace Futral, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College





# *Indigenous* (n.)

**T**hose with a deep understanding of a local area. Becoming indigenous to a land involves adapting and integrating into the systems of that place, and allows for easier adaptation in the future. Space and methods for all of living indigenously on a land need to be created to allow for a respect and greater stewardship of the land. Indigenous peoples in America have historically been oppressed and denied the right to live indigenously on their land; their rights to the land must be acknowledged and incorporated in a return to indigeneity.

## Further readings

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

## Related terms

Homecoming, Indigenous Science, Homecoming, Ensoulment, Thriveability and Reading the Land

Term developed by Spencer Ainsworth, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Indigenous Science



**P**lace-specific science for which the natural world is inspiration and which is rooted in cultural ways of “knowing”. Solutions based in indigenous science can be harmonious with the world around them. Acknowledging indigenous science as such rather than as indigenous “knowledge” is important because it raises indigenous “knowing” to the same level as western science, and designates that they be used in conjunction with each other.

## Further readings

Robin Wall Kimmerer and other indigenous scientists,  
“To the March for Science, DC and satellite marches  
across the nation and the world”

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Fikret Berkes, *Sacred Ecology*

## Related terms

Indigenous

Term developed by Gabriel Desmond, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# *Integration*

**T**he merging of multiple ideas, practices, or sectors so that they are united. Integration involves a change in perspective in order to view different spaces as connected rather than distinct, separate parts. Integration has emerged from a perennial understanding of the interconnectedness of our world.

## Further readings

*Video - Raimon Panikkar: The Window*


Thomas Berry, *Twelve Principles for Understanding the Universe and the Role of the Human in the Universe Process*

## Related terms

Interdependence

Interconnectedness

Term developed by Charlie DiPrinzio, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# *I n t e n t i o n*

**A** direction of actions, rooted in observed reality and studying things to understand their systems. Actions with intention are informed by past knowledge and give us tools to construct the world in which we wish to live.

## Further readings

Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone, *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in Without Going Crazy*

Confucius, "The Great Learning"

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Intentional Adaptation

Changeable Consciousness

Term developed by Anna Durning, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# *Intentional Adaptation*

**A**rising from the understanding that change is a constant reality, intentional adaptation is an effort to respond to change consciously. Instead of reacting in the short-term as our world changes, intentional adaptation is understanding how our behavior affects everything around us and planning for future change accordingly.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *emergent strategy*,  
Chapter 5

## Related Terms

Intention



Term developed by Raechel Zeller, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# *Interconnectedness*

**R**ecognition that the boundaries of the world are mostly made-up, and the world and all its parts can be recognized as an intertwined whole; interconnectedness eliminates “otherness”. All things, even the “non-living”, make a living whole, and acknowledging this recognizes the value of each part, and ensures they are respected.

## Further readings

Bill Vitek, “God or Nature”

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

Stan Rowe, “What on Earth Is Life?” in *Earth Alive*

## Related terms

Interdependence and Ensoulment

Term developed by Maya Gomez and Isaac Danuloff, Fall 2018 and 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Interdependence



A relationship in which beings are mutually reliant and their well-being is interconnected. An interdependent view of the world can insight the action needed to shift our destructive ways of being to perennial ways of beings.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*, Interdependence

Bill Vitek, *God or Nature: Desire and the Quest for Unity*

Stan Rowe, *Earth Alive, Essays on Ecology*

Lynn Margulis, *Third Culture: Beyond the Scientific Revolution*,  
Chapter 7: Gaia is a Tough Bitch

Lynn Margulis and Dorion Sagan, *What is Life?*

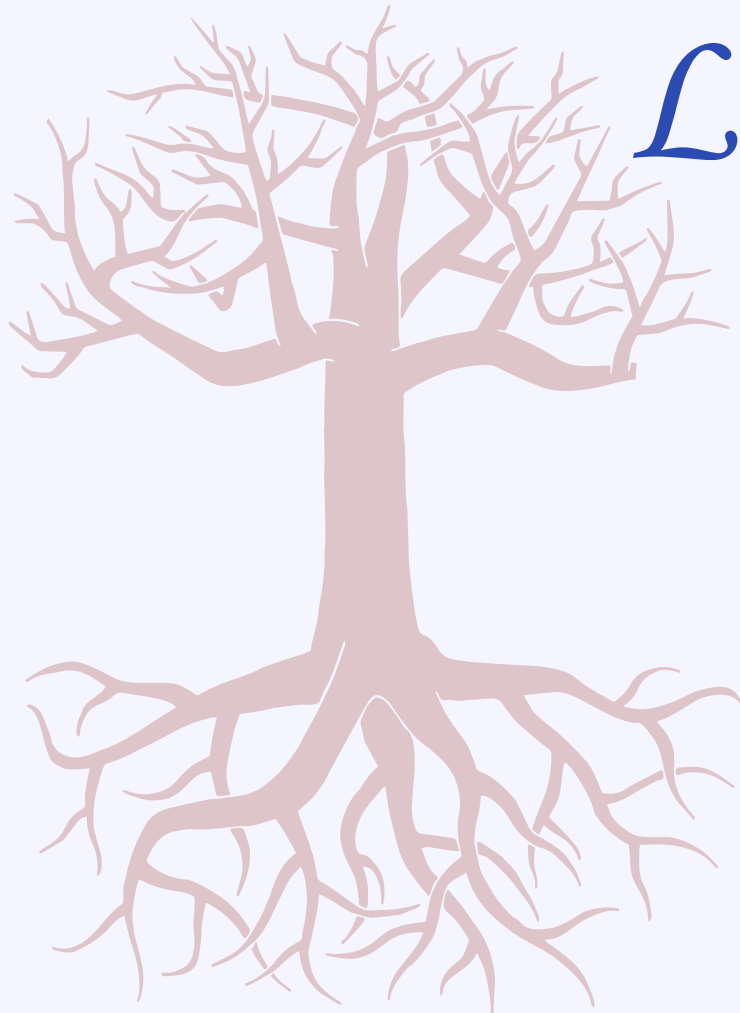
Hummingbird Films, *Symbiotic Earth: How Lynn Margulis Rocked  
the Boat and Started a Scientific Revolution*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Term developed by Alec Fleischer (Fall 2018),  
And Malia Armstrong, Adam Blachly, Isaac Danuloff and Olivia Pintair (Fall 2019)  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student, Middlebury College

## Related terms

Autocatalysis and Reciprocity



# Lacerated

**A** feeling of emptiness that comes from being torn between how the world is physically and how it is meant to be; an ache, a dissonance, reality not ringing quite true and leaving you reeling as you are stretched between it and your own consciousness.

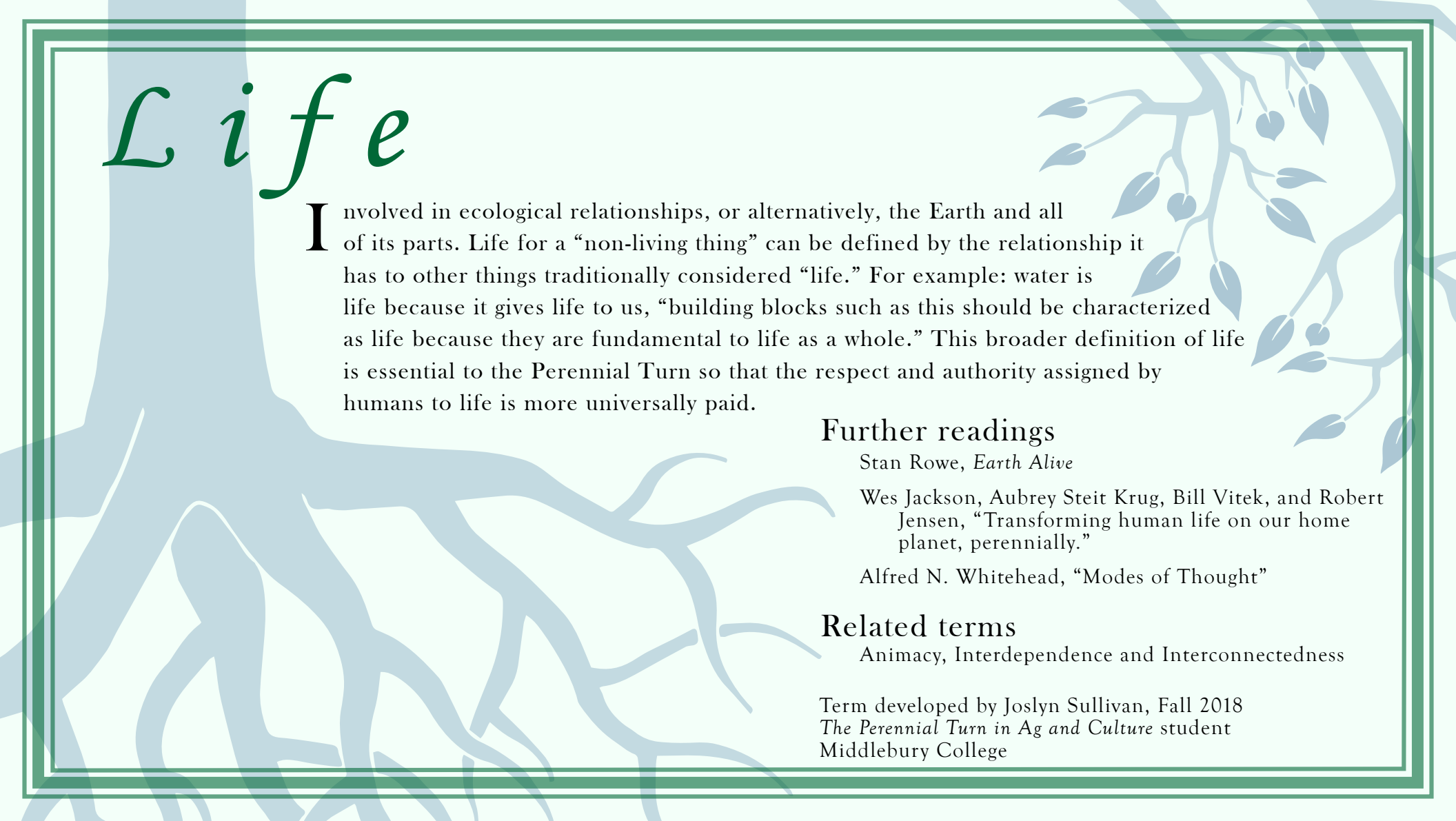
## Related terms

Crisymed

Term developed by Emily Thompson, Fall 2019  
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Middlebury College



# Life



**I**nvolvement in ecological relationships, or alternatively, the Earth and all of its parts. Life for a “non-living thing” can be defined by the relationship it has to other things traditionally considered “life.” For example: water is life because it gives life to us, “building blocks such as this should be characterized as life because they are fundamental to life as a whole.” This broader definition of life is essential to the Perennial Turn so that the respect and authority assigned by humans to life is more universally paid.

## Further readings

Stan Rowe, *Earth Alive*

Wes Jackson, Aubrey Steit Krug, Bill Vitek, and Robert Jensen, “Transforming human life on our home planet, perennially.”

Alfred N. Whitehead, “Modes of Thought”

## Related terms

Animacy, Interdependence and Interconnectedness

Term developed by Joslyn Sullivan, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Metapresence

An act of consciously being in relationship with living and non-living entities around us. In Greek, the prefix meta- means being in a variety of relationships, and the colloquial use of meta- means self-referential. So, to be metapresent means to be aware of our existence in relation with others.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

Stephen Edelglass et al, *Marriage of Sense and Thought*, "Conscious Participation"

## Related Terms

Interdependence

Term developed by Kendal Pittman, Fall 2019  
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Middlebury College





# Multinary

**R**elating to, composed of, or involving a multitude and diversity of things. The multiary is a rejection of the binary, and encourages viewing the world through a multitude of lenses that work in tandem with each other rather than opposing lenses such as “man” and “nature.” A multiary supports collaboration and diversity of knowledge and perspectives; within a multiary, the hubris of an anthropocentric view is replaced with a humbleness of ignorance.

## Further readings

Wes Jackson, Aubrey Steit Krug, Bill Vitek, and Robert Jensen, “Transforming human life on our home planet, perennially.”

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Lynn Margulis in *Symbiotic Earth*

## Related terms

Interconnectedness, Indigenous Science, Reciprocity and Symmathesy

Term developed by Mimi Soule, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Mutualism

A relationship between two or more living beings in which they coexist and benefit one another. Mutualism is originally a scientific concept, but also acknowledges the community and partnership between living beings.

## Further readings

*Symbiotic Earth*

## Related terms

Interdependence

Term developed by Samantha McClellan, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College





# Nature

**A** word that defies definition within our limited language. Nature is earth and everything alive beyond humans and including humans. Nature is also wonder at the inherent chaos of the world, and every single sense, emotion, physical thing, and process that makes the Earth. Nature is one of the narratives through which the Perennial Turn can take place, as a turn in our relation to, view, and activities with Nature.

## Further readings

Bill Vitek, "God or Nature: Desire and the Quest for Unity"

Alfred Whitehead, "Modes of Thought"

Carolyn Merchant, "Science and Nature Past Present and Future"

Joanna Macy, *World as Lover World as Self*

Julianne Warren, "Weeds, Seeds, and Shovels"

Paul Fleischman, "Wonder: When and Why the World Appears Radiant"

Wes Jackson, Aubrey Steit Krug, Bill Vitek, and Robert Jensen,  
"Transforming human life on our home planet, perennially."

## Related terms

Life, Interconnectedness and Multiary

Term developed by Helene Rowland, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# *Ontological collective duty*

Created as a contrast and solution to James Feibleman's term "implicit dominant ontology" (the rules concerning ways of being that are so pervasive in our culture we rarely notice them, ie. materialism), ontological collective duty proposes that we embrace our innate desire for connection. It means living intentionally in an effort to strengthen one's personal and community connections.

## Further readings

James Feibleman, "Culture as Applied Ontology"  
adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Interdependence

Term developed by Grace Futral, Fall 2019  
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# Perennial Education

**I**nstruction from a myriad of authors and knowers, as well as from the natural world, with more flow between subjects and continuity from year to year. Perennial education moves beyond the traditional classroom and recognizes the embeddedness of teachers and learners in their environment, more easily accepts the world as it is, and has emphasis on diverse explanations and less focus on answers. Perennial education recognizes gaps in human knowledge and allows for wonder and humility in gaining knowledge from the other-than-human world.

## Further readings

Henry David Thoreau, "Walking"

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

## Related Terms

Indigenous, Interconnectedness, Fundamental Schematics and Ecological Worldview

Term developed by Maisie Anrod, Fall 2018  
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Middlebury College



# Plasticity

An ability to adapt and be flexible that is active and environment-dependent. Part of plasticity involves ceding the powers that one may hold, and instead being flexible in the interest of self as well as the whole. For example, plasticity in agriculture would look like shaping agriculture to suit the place and adapting with changes when they come, rather than shaping the place to suit the agriculture and ignoring changes in environment and resources. Plasticity requires a shift to a less rigid and binary, more holistic and contextual framework.

## Further readings

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

Stan Rowe, *Earth Alive: Essays on Ecology*

Wes Jackson, Aubrey Steit Krug, Bill Vitek, and Robert Jensen, "Transforming human life on our home planet, perennially."

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Robert Ulanowicz, *A Third Window*

## Related terms

Intentional Adaptation, Intention and Fundamental Schematics

Term developed by Nina Callahan and Spencer Ainsworth, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College

# Polycyclical

**R**efers to how our universe is made up of all numerous kinds of cycles that overlap, are intertwined, and continue indefinitely. Describing the world as polycyclical contributes to a perennial understanding of the world as continuous and interconnected.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Fractal

Interconnectedness

Interdependence

Term developed by Shayla Coates, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College





# Productive

**P**roducing or able to produce any good or service that is beneficial to the self or to others, not confined to the market value of a product. In Perennialism, productivity requires partnership, and two things can be productive simply because they allow for each other's continued existence or for the role they play in the greater exchanges of energy in the food web. Being productive in a Perennial context also requires greater human relation to the land beyond the economic, and necessitates benefit beyond the economic.

## Further readings


Aldo Leopold, "Wherefore Wildlife Ecology?"

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

## Related terms

Autocatalysis/Autocatalytic Cycle, Ecological Worldview,  
Fundamental Schematics and Intention

Term developed by Mikayla Haefle, Fall 2018  
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# *Reading the Land*

**W**orking towards and achieving a feeling of intimate understanding and oneness with the physical ecosphere. Reading the land allows one to form a connection with it, and facilitates a sense of responsibility to care for the land in mutual interest; once this relationship is established, one will no longer be tempted to harm the land. Reading the land is an ongoing relationship that is never complete and facilitates a sacred bond between the reader and the land.

## Further readings

Aldo Leopold, "Wherefore Wildlife Ecology?"

## Related terms

Indigenous, Saunter, Perennial Education, Interconnectedness, Homecoming, Ensoulment and Dialogue

Term developed by Samuel Kaelin, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
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# Reciprocity

An ongoing process of sharing gifts so that all may flourish. A reciprocal relationship, such as that between the milkweed plant and their primary pollinator the monarch butterfly, allows both members of the relationship to thrive in ways that they would not without the other. As humans with the power to often manipulate the other-than-human world to our will, reciprocity involves decisions that include respect, gratitude, and care and consider the benefits we can provide on our end: such as placing crops on plots where they will thrive naturally and leaving other plots that are better suited to less human intervention untouched.

## Further readings

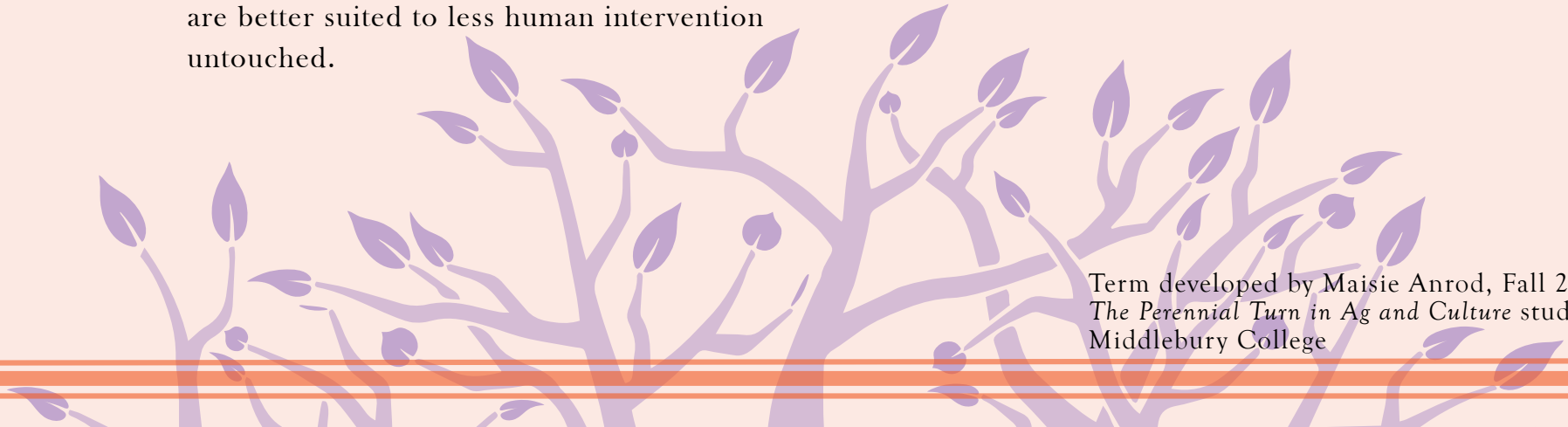
Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Aldo Leopold, "Land Ethic"

## Related Terms

Interdependence, Interconnectedness,  
Autocatalysis and Sympathesy

Term developed by Maisie Anrod, Fall 2018  
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# Restraining

Acting with self-restraint that comes from humility and recognition of the world around us, rather than being restrained by ecological limits and external powers. In a horizonless world, it would be (has been for humans) easy to ignore the needs of other beings and continue expanding and taking until there is nothing left to share. However, restraining involves a recognition and appreciation of all that surrounds us and premeditation of what our actions may take from others, humans and not. Restraining in the Perennial Turn also involves being aware of the historical context and assumptions in which our work takes place, and restraining ourselves as we discover these assumptions and reframe ourselves.

## Further readings

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

Julianne Warren, “Weeds, Seeds, and Shovels”

Robert Ulanowicz, *A Third Window*

## Related terms

Horizonless

Intention

Plasticity

Degrowth

Term developed by Josie Bourne, Fall 2018  
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Middlebury College

# Reverence

A feeling of respect for someone or something. While somewhat similar to awe, reverence elicits a feeling of being small that acknowledges the scale of the universe around us.

## Further readings

Deborah Bird Rose, *"Shimmer When All You Love is Being Trashed"*

## Related terms

Ceremony

Term developed by Samatha McClellan, Fall 2019  
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Middlebury College







# *Right Relationship with Agriculture*

**A** method of farming and structuring of food systems that is peaceful, mutually beneficial, and respectful. A goal to work towards that liberates people from corporate greed and protects the environment.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Consent

Reverence

Term developed by James Peacock, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
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# Roots



**I**ncludes both the physical structures that stabilize and nourish plants as well as the metaphorical connections between all life forms, our personal histories, and our societal origins. Perennial roots - deeper, stronger, more sustainable - are an excellent metaphor for imagining and creating different futures.

## Further readings

adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

## Related terms

Interdependence

Term developed by Adam Blachly, Fall 2019  
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# Saunter

A reclamation of the human experience and human coexistence with the world: sauntering is a time to see and to be and to reflect. As opposed to walking through our surroundings, to saunter is a spiritual act and elicits feelings of connection to what makes up our world. Sauntering introduces an option for a fundamental shift in the way we exist, and the respect and connection it can bring can lead to a greater sense of responsibility and stewardship for the land.

## Related Terms

Dialogue, Ensoulment, Homecoming  
and Reading the Land

## Further readings

Henry David Thoreau, "Walking"

Paul Fleischman, "Wonder: When and Why the World Appears Radiant"

Herbert Hensel, "Goethe, Science, and Sensory Experience"

Confucius, "The Great Learning"

Bill Vitek, "God or Nature: Desire and the Quest for Unity"

Gary Snyder, from *Practice of the Wild*

Alfred Whitehead, "Modes of Thought: Lecture 7: Nature Lifeless"

Term developed by Helene Rowland, Fall 2018  
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Middlebury College



# *Shift away from object thinking*

**A** shift away from the view of the world as distinct objects, even at the most basic level (the atom), and towards a more inclusive and interconnected view. To accomplish the goals of the Perennial Turn, we must accept that the world is too complex for reductionism of any sort to be adequate. This shift would include not only the way we look and walk through the world, but also a shift in the way we approach problems to include more diversity of ideas and ways of knowing, as well as consideration of needs beyond those of humans.

## Further readings

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

Alfred Whitehead, "Modes of Thought"

James Feibleman, "Defense of Ontology"

Robert Ulanowicz, *A Third Window*

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

Lynn Margulis' words in *Symbiotic Earth*

## Related terms

Intentional Adaptation, Fundamental Schematics,  
Interconnectedness, Interdependence, Symmathesy  
and Changeable Consciousness

Term developed by Alex White, Fall 2018  
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# Symmathy

An entity that forms over time through interaction and contextual mutual learning. A symmathy is an alternative to a “system,” acknowledging that this word connotes too much isolation and allows the emergence of interrelational junctions between systems. Systems rely on one another to function, the perfect example being the interrelations between different processes in an ecosystem. Like many other terms in the Perennial Turn glossary, accepting the interdependence of not only players in systems but of systems within greater “symmathesies” would allow for greater respect and stewardship of all parts of the Earth.


## Further readings

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

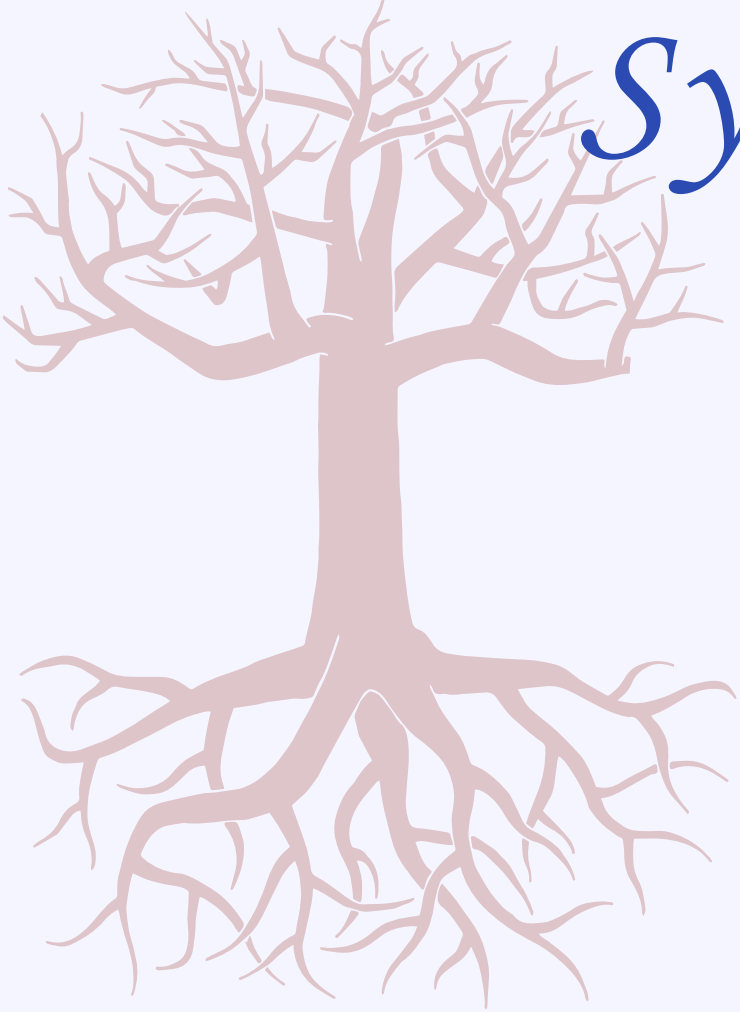
Alfred Whitehead, “Modes of Thought: Lecture 7: Nature Lifeless”

## Related terms

Interconnectedness, Interdependence, Autocatalysis/  
Autocatalytic Cycle, Multiary and Reciprocity



Term developed by Mimi Soule, Fall 2018  
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# Systems Thinking

Similar to other words in this Perennial Turn Glossary, systems thinking places an emphasis on the larger system in which events are taking place. This entry is slightly more tangible and stresses the importance of considering systems when making decisions whose effects may reach beyond their intended targets. Systems thinking allows for larger questions than the scientific method traditionally does, and includes considerations not only of the ecological world but cultural, ethical, and socio-ecological (and beyond) as well.

## Further readings

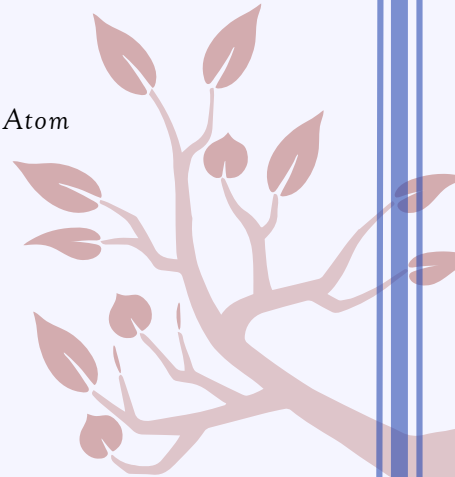
Dalai Lama, excerpts from *The Universe in a Single Atom*

Craig Holdrege, *Thinking Like a Plant*

## Related terms

Interconnectedness, Symmathesy and  
Fundamental Schematics

Term developed by Gabe Desmond, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
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# *The Turn Towards Sustainable Agriculture*

**A** long-term movement and shift in thinking and behavior towards farming practices that are sustained as much as possible by natural resources and human guidance. Sustainable agriculture contributes positively to ecosystem health, rather than destroying it. A right relationship with agriculture is both a goal of and a means to implementing this movement.

## Further readings

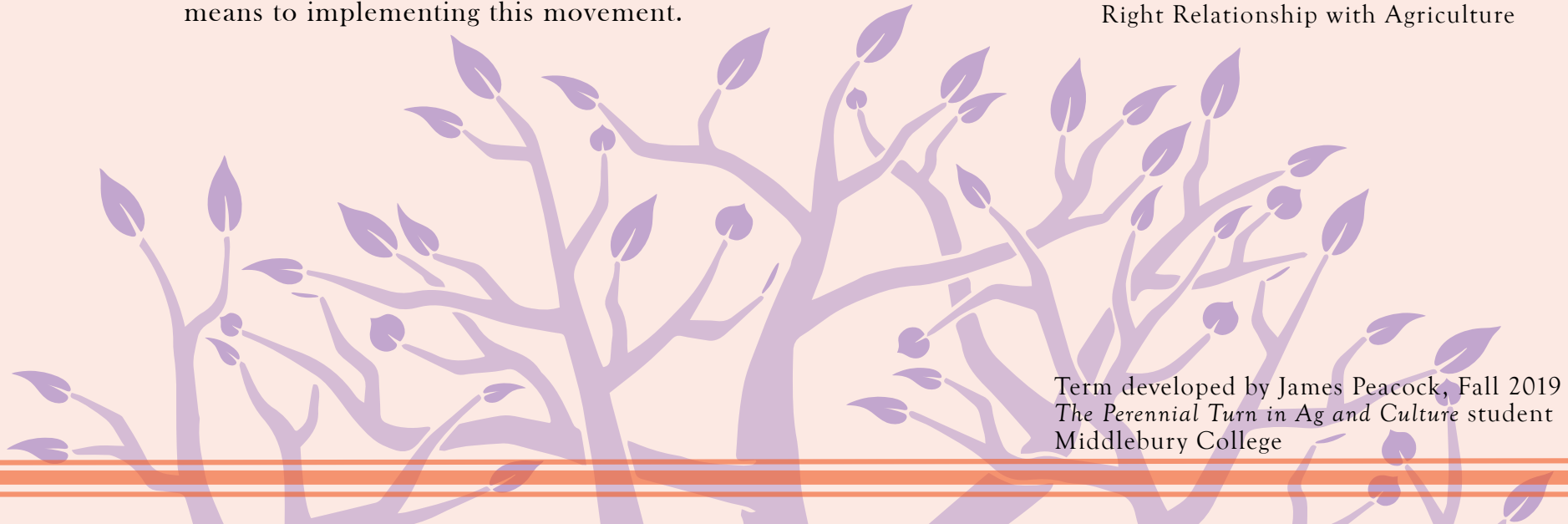
Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

## Related Terms

Reading the Land

Right Relationship with Agriculture

Term developed by James Peacock, Fall 2019  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College



# Thriveability



**T**he right and ability of all species to prosper in their evolutionary niche, without infringement of those rights. Thriveability can best be described as fundamental human rights without an anthropocentric mindset, an ideology that requires basic and fundamental rights for all living things. In practice, thriveability does not simply mean that all members of the earth have the right to live as they wish, but that the rights of all members should be respected and considered when making a decision on how to live. A human subscriber to thriveability should recognize their unique place as extremely powerful players on the globe and the power they have to recognize the fundamental rights of other beings.

## Further readings

Wes Jackson, *Nature as Measure*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Aldo Leopold, "What is a Weed?"

## Related terms

Fundamental Schematics, Restraining, and Ecological  
Worldview

Term developed by Alec Fleischer, Fall 2018  
*The Perennial Turn in Ag and Culture* student  
Middlebury College