

Dear Reviewer / Interviewer:

Most of us have thought about chucking it all — the job, the bills, and *the stuff*. All of it. But then what? In the galleys shared in hard copy to Julie via mail, *Dispatches from the Sweet Life: One Family, Five Acres, and a Community's Quest to Reinvent the World* (September 2018), William Powers actually does it, chronicling the trials and joys of a family striving to live sustainably off the work-and-spend treadmill in South America.

In his first book, *Twelve by Twelve*, Powers lived in an off-grid tiny house in rural North Carolina. In *New Slow City*, he and his wife, Melissa, inhabited a Manhattan micro-apartment in search of slow in the fastest city in the world. In *Dispatches from the Sweet Life*, the couple, with baby in tow, search for balance, humanity, and happiness in Suriqueta, Bolivia, a subtropical town where the Andes meets the Amazon. Suriqueta is also a Transition Town — a model community that aims to increase self-sufficiency to reduce the potential effects of peak oil, climate destruction, and economic instability.

Worldwide, about sixteen hundred Transition initiatives currently exist, part of a global Transition Network, in which local communities foster “glocal” low-carbon economies through alternative energy, local consumption, organic agriculture, and more.

Leaving behind America’s work-and-spend treadmill La Familia Powers embrace the potential of the Sweet Life (*vivir bien*) — the Bolivian idea that happiness is best achieved in deep community in balance with nature.

Initially, the young family discovers a blossoming Transition Town with a miniscule carbon footprint, organic farms, community work parties, and a pace of life reflected in its denizens’ longevity and happiness. They build an adobe house beside a prolific orchard and weave their lives into a creative community of Bolivians and foreigners.

But it isn’t long before tropical insects ravish their organic garden and invade their house. Carbon-neutral transition initiatives sputter. And North American-inspired capitalism — mines, malls, Big-Ag — extends its seductive tentacles, threatening Bolivia’s pioneering Law of Mother Earth and the very foundations of the Sweet Life.

Joining the battle is a motley crew of permaculturists, bio-builders, artists, beer brewers, earnest university students, creative businesspeople, and public officials who, against all odds, struggle to forge a Global South model of self-sufficiency and sustainable happiness.

Can one family overcome the obstacles to living a sustainable, happy life? Can a vulnerable town confront fast corporate globalization, defending a slow economy and community? Can the Bolivian nation, in the end, forge a workable alternative to inspire

an endangered planet? No matter the outcome, Powers delivers a timely, inspirational, and thought-provoking personal exploration of what sustainable living looks like.

WILLIAM POWERS has worked for more than a decade in development aid and conservation in Latin America, Africa, and North America. His work has appeared in the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, the *Atlantic* and many other publications. He is a senior fellow at the World Policy Institute and an adjunct faculty member at New York University. He speaks and writes widely as an expert on sustainable development. He lives in Bolivia. His website is www.WilliamPowersBooks.com.

It is my sincere hope you will consider letting your readers know about *Dispatches from the Sweet Life* via a review or mention in your publication. William (Bill) Powers is also available for interview, and I would be happy to make those arrangements. He will be touring stateside starting in early September and I can furnish you with that schedule. You can reach me at 415-884-2100 x15 or monique@newworldlibrary.com.

Sincerely,



Monique M. Muhlenkamp
Publicity Director

Dispatches from the Sweet Life:

One Family, Five Acres, and a Community's Quest to Reinvent the World

William Powers, author of *Twelve by Twelve*

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