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Travel to Santa Barbara in 1979, When the Seeds of the Green Economy Began to Take Root, With the Novel *Life: part-time*.

Victory Gardens. The Environmental Movement. Now: The Bank of the Farmers' Market.

SOLVANG, Calif. (July 28, 2020) — Robert M Gerson, a publishing design professional of more than 25 years, releases debut novel, *Life: part-time*. Publication date: August 25, 2020, from Folio & Forest Publishers, Solvang, California.

The novel *Life: part-time* unfolds during a cultural moment when the initial rise of alternative energy, sustainable living, and environmental awareness crossed paths with the arrival of the young, urban professional class. The novel follows Nicholas, a young author/illustrator who makes an impulsive job choice at the beginning of his career and struggles with the body and soul threatening consequences from his decision.

“*Life: part-time* takes place during a time that mirrors the world today. California in the 1970s was a seedbed for the development of new ideas about ecological living and alternative energy,” says author Robert M Gerson. “Responding to the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill, the environmental movement formed, promoting awareness of how a hyper-consumer lifestyle was destroying the environment. *Sound familiar?* Nicholas’s idea for a nature-based currency takes victory gardens, self-sufficient gardening, and sustainable living to a whole new level. The novel is a magical realism fable about the courage required to live a meaningful life, filled with supportive friendships that inspire creativity.”

Novel Summary: What if you had a once-in-a-lifetime idea that could help people live a meaningful, productive life, but did nothing with your idea? At the beginning of his career, Nicholas Affini, an author/illustrator, invents a nature-based currency while working on a children’s book about ecology. The global potential and power of his plant-based idea overwhelms him. He abandons his entrepreneurial future and spends the next two years consumed by his job as a marketing art director in the gadgets and gifts mail-order catalog business. That one simple choice unleashes a life-disrupting force around him. Nicholas encounters Paige Santrelle, an aspiring songwriter. Their chance meeting unlocks a creative connection nurtured by their shared passion for music and art. Paige attracts an enigmatic presence that seems to know everything about Nicholas and his internal struggles. She explores her connection to this mystifying being. During an endless California summer, Paige finds herself on a quest to reconnect Nicholas to his original gifts and life purpose, critical to his survival and future.

About the Author: Robert M Gerson, author, artist, and book designer, has created a diverse body of work for several publishers. He has designed and produced book series and individual titles ranging from an Ansel Adams photography collection to biographies and literary collections about Benjamin Franklin, Langston Hughes, Toni Morrison, Ray Bradbury, Alice Walker, and John Steinbeck. Robert is currently working on a novel titled *Tree Recordings*.

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