

## PROFESSOR OF SCROUNGE - JEFF FERRELL PAPER EDIT - VIDEO DADS

oil, gas, cattle and cars ... theres a lot of red meat out there, there are a lot of 8 lane freeways, theres a lot of oil and gas money floating around in fort worth ... but, you have to be careful, every place is also another place.

i've been a dumpster diver in the same set of neighborhoods for almost 15 years, and my goal is to build relationships with people, and let them know that i'm there to salvage goods not to look through information, that i'm there to leave the dumpster cleaner than i found it.

what i find is very little of it is actually trash... really most of it is plastic, packing material, boxes, lots of discarded clothes, uh. food, some edible some not. a great amount of food goes to waste.

one thing i've learned over the, gosh decades now, of scrounging now is not to look for anything in particular. because a, you'll generally be disappointed, and b it'll blind you to what actually , the potential is. ... and so what that leads me to look for, is scrap metal that can be recycled and make a little money for me if possible, but also clothes, uh, kitchen, kitchen ware, tools, bedding, anything that anybody can use, at the homeless shelter or at a thrift store, or at the food pantry, so looking for edible food that can be salvaged.

i find that, scrounging and living with what i find, and living simply and learning to live off of less than others, joyful, pleasurable, and affirming. it also is hard work ...but maybe there are ways, to live your life, in a way that gives you joy and pleasure, and excitement, while getting something done, and while also maybe confronting the issues that need to be confronted...

the danger that comes from scrounging i find to be almost entirely legal. once you master the art of avoiding, foul smelling trash, and learning not to rip open bags full of glass, after that its not that dangerous. ... well the danger is really from security guards and police officers ... partly because in american society in the last few decades, we have become increasingly aggressive in terms of our laws that regulate and criminalize the homeless and people on the margins.

i'm in academia for a couple reasons, one is that i wanted to always learn more about how to understand the world i lived in, and to be more critical and thoughtful about the

everyday life i lived, but also i really cared about trying to pass some of that on to students, and get them to think creatively and critically.

i really don't believe in lecturing students with my beliefs. i believe in getting them to think, and open up ... they know something might be missing, when life has been mostly shopping malls, and, and private schools, and this sort of thing. so, i hope i at least let them see the possibility of other ways of thinking, and other ways of living.

i think it does require a willingness to sort of take things into your own hands. a willingness to, to, directly engage with your problems, without asking a psychiatrist, a police officer, a professor, for permission or that much advice.

**don't look at me as though i'm the one who's figured it out, i've just figured out one way doing it, but theres a thousand other people doing it too.**

i've always been careful not to assume that my politics are somehow more sophisticated than other people just because i have gone to school, or thought about it a little more. ... they might not articulate it in the same way that you or i would, but theres often a sense of, of self motivation, self survival, not bowing down to authority, not selling yourself short. i find a lot of dignity on the streets, and a lot of sense of commitment community.