

**Propagating Discourse: Community Gardener Motivations in the California Central Coast**

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### **Propagating Discourse: Community Gardener Motivations in the California Central Coast**

Community gardening has grown in popularity over the years. The practice has taken on a significant role in activism and food systems discourse in the contemporary United States. The academic community is split as to whether the practice empowers communities and stands in resistance to the hegemonic industrial food system, or if it simply aids in perpetuating neoliberal social and economic logics. Some scholars reject this dualism and assert that the community garden is both— that it is contradictory in the way it constitutes subjects. In this thesis project I hope to begin to shed light on the intricacies of this contradiction and complexity through an analysis of relevant literature and 187 gardener’s responses to a survey conducted at 20 California Central Coast community gardens about why they are motivated to participate. I find that patterns emerge among gardener motivations based on reported race, gender, and income. This suggests that demographic positionality is important in considering why individuals interact with the community garden and is in turn significant when interrogating the transformative potential of the site and its ultimate effect on food systems discourse.

Key words: Community Gardening, California

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## INTRODUCTION

### *What is a Community Garden?*

As stated by Ferris, Norman, and Sempik (2001), “what distinguishes a community garden from a private garden is the fact that it is in some sense a public garden in terms of ownership, access, and degree of democratic control” (p. 506). Ascribing a clear cut definition to community gardening is almost impossible, and ultimately not very helpful because “community” can mean many things. Community in this context implies that this type of gardening involves the coming together of multiple people, often with diverse motivations for participating. Community gardening in the contemporary moment is an international phenomenon and is practiced in both urban and rural areas. I focus on community gardening as a whole (as opposed to “urban agriculture”) because I draw from sites in both urban and rural locales. The practice is becoming increasingly popular as space becomes more urbanized, green space becomes more scarce, and as individual concern for sustainability, in the face of issues like climate change, grows.

Community gardening is a purposefully broad term to allow for the inclusion of the many different ways the sites can be organized and the many different groups that the space serves. To begin to classify some of these differences for the purpose of analysis, Ferris, Norman, and Sempik (2001) find that community gardens in the San Francisco Bay Area (that also commonly appear elsewhere) are: leisure gardens, child and school gardens, entrepreneurial gardens, crime diversion gardens, therapy gardens, pocket parks, ecological restoration gardens, and demonstration gardens (p. 561). Just as diverse is the site’s source of funding. For example, community gardens may be funded by private

organizations, local government, combined gardener contributions, church groups, charities, fundraisers, and more. For this project, I gathered a majority of data from leisure garden sites as well as one school garden. The gardens I focused on were funded privately, by the city, by contributions from gardeners, or by a church.

Community gardening in the USA is largely geared towards food production and recreation. In some communities, especially in urban areas like the California Bay Area and New York, where gardens were built on lots left vacant by the city, the garden becomes a site of political activism as residents reclaim the space. Most gardens provide land for communities to grow food crops as opposed to a focus on solely ornamental plants. However, the two are not exclusive as the garden most often acts as both a beautified communal gathering space, and as a hub for small scale agriculture. Some gardens keep chickens, bees, cats or other small farm animals.

Community gardens can be organized many different ways, one popular approach is that each gardener is assigned a plot of land, or 'bed', as was the case with the majority of gardens I visited. In some cases, gardeners tend the entirety of the land together. Individuals shape the space as they build trellises, hoop houses, raised beds, cages and other structures to personalize the garden and most effectively grow crops. Most community gardens have specific rules that gardeners must follow. For example, as in all of the gardens that I surveyed, gardeners are only permitted to use organic methods. Gardens are generally run democratically and usually have a 'garden manager' position to supposedly ensure that everything runs smoothly. In larger, city funded sites, this position is paid.

Community gardens are as diverse as the populations they serve because they exist to serve the community. Therefore, we must understand the space as entangled with the needs, attitudes, and values of the people who garden there. Thus this relation becomes complicated when entities like the city oversee the space, and arguably more direct when the garden has its origins in grassroots organization. The community garden is one of the few spaces left in this rapidly urbanizing and alienating society where members of a community can come together and democratically manage a space in accordance with their collective vision.

### *The Benefits of Community Gardening*

The benefits of community gardens to individual well-being and to sustainability are widely documented (Twiss et al., 2003; Armstrong, 2000; Holland, 2004). Draper and Freedman (2010) assert that “the varied purposes and benefits make it an ideal interventional strategy for community based practitioners” and that they are especially helpful because they can be used to “fulfill multiple goals within a given community” at once (p. 487).

Benefits are generally found in improvements in the general health and wellness of communities and individuals. In a review of literature examining benefits of gardens to individuals, Wakefield et al. (2007) summarize that benefits include improved access to nutritious fresh foods (Patel, 1991; Irvine et al., 1999; Dickinson et al., 2003; Twiss et al., 2003), increased physical activity (Armstrong, 2000; Dickinson et al., 2003; Twiss et al., 2003), improved mental health (Armstrong, 2000), community development through education and job skills (Fusco, 2001; Schmelzkopf, 2002; Holland, 2004), improved



safety in communities (Schmelzhopf, 1995; Ferris et al., 2001), increase in social capital (Hancock, 2001; Doyle and Krasny, 2001; Twiss et al., 2003), and improved local ecology and sustainability (Hancock, 2001; Schmelzkopf, 2002).

### *Theoretical Basis for the Transformative Potential of Community Gardens*

Marxist scholar Antonio Gramsci first theorized the essential role of ideas both in reinforcing dominant power structures and in mobilizing the masses towards dismantling the capitalist state. In his *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci expanded Karl Marx's conceptualization of class struggle as simply economic to include less visible forces that generate consent from the masses in participating in the very obviously unequal capitalist society. Gramsci introduces the concept of civil society as a structure that protects and bolsters the power of the state (Gramsci, 1971). He essentially illustrates the root of class power— hegemony, and how it is achieved through ideology. Gramsci asserts that ideology is "...a conception of the world that is implicitly manifested in art, in law, in economic activity and in all manifestations of individual and collective life" (Gramsci, 1971). Put more simply, Gramsci's ideology dictates what is the 'common sense' or status quo of a society. In characterizing ideology this way, Gramsci implies the malleability of class power and therefore introduces real, applicable, revolutionary praxis. Additionally, the idea of ideology as the force of collectivization of consciousness and a uniting actor among people (as it constitutes hegemony) opens up the potential for the employment of new strategies among anti-capitalist activists and leaders. The nature of hegemony and how it is rooted in part by ideology illuminates how individuals can be mobilized toward a common transformative goal and introduces a point from which

activists can subvert bourgeois power. One must begin with an understanding of Antonio Gramsci's work in order to effectively analyze the transformative potential of community gardens.

Louis Althusser's work, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, advances the theory of the State in a way that furthers our understanding of the functioning of ideology. Althusser (2006) names the ideological state apparatuses as the multiplicity of specialized institutions within society. He immediately dispels the misconception that repressive state apparatuses (RSAs) and ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) are distinct because of their existence in either the public or private realm (lines that Gramsci had already blurred in his discussion of hegemony). Private and State institutions can exist as either ISAs or RSAs—what matters is how they function. Althusser's theorization of ideology further suggests that even 'private' activities (like community gardening) can serve to reinforce the power of the State. Another important concept to take from Althusser is that ideology always exists in practice (Althusser, 2006). In other words, the ideas you have are made real through the things that you *do*. It is in this sense that analyzing a practice like community gardening can help us gain insight into ideology. Althusser's theory takes us further as it illustrates that ideology functions in such a way that interpellates individuals into subjects (Althusser, 2006). The ideology of a society functions to create subjects and is reflected in subject's practices and functions. This is how the community garden becomes conceivable of as a site of ideological production and subjectification of individuals as either neoliberal subjects or as subjects capable of transforming the hegemonic capitalist food system.

In the context of food systems, it is important to bring up Karl Polanyi's concept of the "double movement" that might help to explain exactly how ideological shifts can prompt transformative societal change. Authors Holt-Giménez and A. Shattuck, and Nathan McClintock evoke Karl Polanyi's work *The Great Transformation* (1944) in their discussion of the corporate food regime to assess the transformative potential of alternative food movements (2011; 2014). Polanyi's concept is predicated on the idea that a capitalist market is not socially or environmentally sustainable. He argues that a capitalist society would eventually destroy itself and therefore is characterized by a "double movement" (Polanyi, 1944). The double movement entails the cyclical nature of market deregulation followed by state intervention prompted by social opposition and action. This double movement fits within Gramsci's conceptualization of hegemony, that power exists beyond the economic state, that a class can shift hegemony to contest the state and eventually achieve social reform (Polanyi, 1944).

### *Counter-Hegemonic Potential of Community Gardens*

To some scholars, community gardening has proven to have salient impact on the political subjectivity of participants. For instance, participation in the community garden may play a role in the development of democratic citizens (Glover et al., 2007). Additionally, Patricia Allen suggests that community gardens create the conditions for activism, and that the 'ethical consumerism' it controversially promotes can actually have a profound effect on one's consciousness (2008).

Activists and scholars alike agree that community gardens play a very important role in challenging the industrial capitalist agri-food system. Likewise, both scholars and

activists are confident in their counter-hegemonic potential. Galt, Gray, and Hurley (2014) offer hopeful insights into the transformative potential of community gardening as a subversive space. They recognize the enormous structural barriers that community gardeners face, but see the prospect for structural change in everyday practice, and emphasize the intersectional lens that members of these communities take, suggesting that they are working to subvert the “imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy” (Galt et al., 2014).

The community garden is a space where participants work together, share food, democratically make decisions, and shift their perceptions of capital itself (Hassanein, 2003). Even everyday practice can start to challenge capitalist and neoliberal notions of subjectivity and value. In the community garden, individuals shift their perception of property and ownership to something collective, and start to see themselves as producers rather than consumers (Hassanein, 2003; Barron 2015). Through this lens, the small incremental steps taken in community gardens seem very hopeful in their counter hegemonic potential, and to scholars like Hassanein are the only feasible, practical options presented at this time. The existence of such a subversive space reinforces the Gramscian idea that ideology and therefore class power is malleable. Such spaces offer marginalized peoples a chance at not only survival in the form of access to food, but to realizing that oppressive structures are not natural and immovable, and that self determination is possible through solidarity and collective action (Galt et al., 2014).

Community gardening, and more specifically the type of urban agriculture that occurs in community gardens makes crucial contributions to sustainable food systems discourse. The practice of growing one’s own food begins to dispel Marx’s notion of

commodity fetishism, that is the way in which the social relations embedded within a commodity are concealed. The community garden uncovers the process of production behind food, and reveals the social relation between farm worker (or gardener) and ultimate consumer. The community gardener's relationship to the food they eat becomes more complex than the grocery shopper's relation to the food they buy. When an individual grows their own food from amending the soil to harvesting, they almost inevitably gain a new appreciation and consciousness towards food in general.

### *Community Gardening and Neoliberalization*

David Harvey defines neoliberalism as, “a political economic philosophy that asserts the primacy of the market in attending to human needs and well being, and re-orientes the state towards the facilitation of market mechanisms” (2005). As the hegemonic political ideology of the United States, neoliberal ideologies have penetrated much of the fight against agribusiness. Scholars have heavily criticized grassroots movements for reflecting neoliberal ideologies like: 1. “Primacy of the market as a mechanism for addressing social and environmental ills” 2. “Privatization of regulatory functions previously reserved for the public sphere” 3. “Assertion of individual rights and responsibilities of citizen consumers” (Brown and Getz, 2006).

It is helpful to draw from the field of critical geography to unpack how neoliberalization affects space and, in turn, political imaginaries. Scholar Neil Brenner (2010) states that “Neoliberalization... reconstitutes the terrain of political-economic governance—and social struggle—in the urban region as a whole. (P. 104). He suggests that a “neoliberal utopia” is one governed by “unfettered competition and exchange” and

transforms “the dominant political imaginaries on which basis people understand the limits and possibilities of the urban experience” (P. 106). In this sense, community gardens become recognizable as generated by and in turn generative of neoliberal imaginaries.

Critics of community gardening focus on the way the space generates neoliberal ideals. They focus on the way that community gardening seems to equate “consumer choice” with freedom in individuals (Pudup, 2008). Put simply, the garden becomes a place where the burden for ensuring community wellbeing— like ensuring access to fresh produce— is put on the shoulders of the individual as opposed to the local, state, or federal government. Additionally, scholars argue that the fact that most community gardens rely on money generated outside of the public sector is problematic because it removes social responsibilities from the state (Guthman and Allen, 2006), and posits individuals as solely responsible for their situation and choices--i.e. if you are food insecure, just take charge and grow your own food at the community garden.

Furthermore, critics suggest that community gardens can be seen as a sort of roll-back neoliberalism where they act as “institutional forms that replace or fill in the gaps opened by state withdrawal from regulatory and safety net functions [that] define the neoliberalization process as much as the rollback” (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Brown and Getz, 2006). To some scholars, community gardens are seen as obstructing real transformative change because of their failure to truly subvert neoliberal hegemony, and their reproduction of neoliberal hegemony through the promotion of ideologies such as individual responsibility, and abandonment of the regulatory state (Guthman, 2008).

Scholars Joshua Sbicca and Kristin Reynolds expand the neoliberal critique of community gardens. They focus on the movement's failures to challenge racist and classist hierarchies, even when the actors themselves assert they are fighting for social justice. Sbicca's piece points to a case study of a farm on the San Diego-Mexico border, where farmers expressed concerns for migrant and undocumented farmworker justice, yet failed to advocate for them reinforcing boundaries and hierarchies, and ultimately obstructing social justice (2015). Depending on the region, community gardens sometimes operate as a form of urban greening which often, "comes at the expense of community stability and racial and economic diversity" (Wachsmuth et al., 2016). Reynolds research about representation and community gardening in New York supports this. She documents a case in which the black and Latinx community gardeners that originally made up a majority of the city's powerful movement were replaced by young white gardeners in a New York Magazine article documenting 'up and coming urban farmers' (2015). This racial disparity in representation only reinforces racial and class hierarchies no matter what work is happening in the actual garden. Additionally, scholars have documented evidence that community gardens contribute to gentrification and the relocation of gardeners of black and Latinx communities (Tissot, 2015). These studies complicate the space by illuminating its shortcomings. They serve to demonstrate the contradiction present in community gardening, and ultimately a gap between theory and praxis.

*Relevance of Gardener Motivations-- My Intervention*

As community garden literature progresses, scholars are increasingly recognizing the nuance in the community garden's transformative potential (Barron, 2015; Allen, 2008; McClintock, 2014). Nathan McClintock was perhaps the first to suggest that scholarship should focus on the nuance of the community garden, as both neoliberal and radical critiques of the space are 'incomplete' alone. McClintock argues that both perspectives are incomplete because they are always biased toward their interpretation. He demonstrates that to approach a holistic understanding of urban agriculture, we must understand the movement in dialectic tension between neoliberal and radical tendencies. McClintock (2014) ultimately suggests that urban agriculture or community gardening is not radical or neoliberal, but *both* because they "operate in a co-productive manner" (P. 148). This gets back to Lefebvre's theorization of space (1991), and Polanyi's concept of 'double movement'. McClintock employs the theorization of the double movement to elucidate the rise of community gardening as a response to structural ills. This is helpful because it explains why community gardening functions through and within capitalist logic, and is more often reformist than transformative (McClintock, 2014). McClintock emphasizes the diversity of different movements for urban agriculture, contending that some initiatives are 'more neoliberal' and some are 'more radical' in strategy and execution. His distinction is unique because it does not fall into the trap of dualistic thinking that doesn't allow room for further theorization.

Scholars have begun to analyze specific community garden sites (instead of generalizing the community garden movement as a whole) to illuminate which aspects of community gardens are transformational, and which are obstructive in hopes of our ideal



society (Certomà, Tornaghi, 2015). There have been many case studies done on community gardens around the world. I frame my study this way to avoid over generalization. My project focuses on 21 community gardens in the California Central Coast region. I draw from 182 collected surveys to gather gardener demographics and motivations. I examined the data in the context of neoliberalization to assess if neoliberal ideals have in fact imbued the community garden, if the gardens have become spaces of counter hegemonic value, a *combination* of neoliberal and counter hegemonic ideals, or something else entirely. First I ask: Who participates in community gardens in the CA Central Coast? What motivates them to participate? Then, I examine if positionality affects why an individual chooses to garden by analyzing patterns that arise among motivation when compared to gardener reported race, gender, and income. Finally, I ask what these motivations point to in the larger context of food systems discourse. I aimed to be very specific in hopes of capturing the nuance, contradiction, and geographic specificity of the community garden phenomenon as it operates in the California Central Coast Region.

## METHODS

### *Field Work*

The study consisted of a gardener survey, analysis of food systems discourse and geographical data. Together with other researchers, I surveyed community gardeners at 20 gardens in the California Central Coast area (Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties). The lab chose the garden sites based on variation in vegetation complexity and perceived differences in landscapes surrounding the gardens (Quistberg et al., 2016). As a result, the gardens chosen produce a diverse sample of types of community gardens. They

represent gardens in low income rural areas like Watsonville, urban higher income communities like San Jose, and those in between. All of the sites required organic gardening techniques.

We visited each garden multiple times between June - October 2018 at various times during the week in attempt to ensure that the survey was not only completed by gardeners that had a specific time commitment or daily ritual (i.e. a 9am-5pm job). The goal of the field work was to complete 10 surveys at each site. Due to the variable numbers of gardeners at each site (some with over 100 participants and others with as few as 10 participants) we were able to survey more than 10 gardeners at some sites, and as few as 1 at others. Overall, we sampled 3.7%-63.3% of the total gardener population at the different sites. At the end of the field season, the lab had surveyed 187 gardeners.

The survey was comprised of both open and closed-ended questions and is included as an appendix (Appendix C). Closed-ended questions determined gardener demographics like age, gender, income, race, occupation, languages spoken, food security, and education. Open-ended questions determined gardener's practices and motivations for participation. I focused on motivations and demographic characteristics among the gardener population. Responses to two survey questions: "List 3 reasons why you garden." and "Has gardening had a positive impact on you or your family's well-being? If so, how?" were analyzed in depth.

### *Analysis*

After the field season was over I created a codebook based on my own conversations with gardeners to extrapolate potential patterns among all the motivation

and impact responses (Appendix A). I independently coded the data using my initial codebook and added codes as I analyzed the data more closely and trends emerged. I then compared the frequency of codes in the responses based on demographic variables - specifically race, gender, and income - to analyze if subject positionality affects why individuals are motivated to garden and the impact gardening has on them. Demographic information is never a complete picture of the intersections of an individual's identity and therefore positionality, but given the size of the sample this data provided enough information to initiate a deeper analysis into the site and its contradictions. When 'food' emerged as a very common theme among gardener motivations, I analyzed patterns among these responses more deeply by creating meta-codes (Appendix B). Survey responses were taken as coming out of a neoliberal organization of society where neoliberal ideology is potentially resisted or internalized by subjects (gardeners) and made visible through their motivation for participating in the community garden.

## RESULTS

### *Gardener Demographic and Characteristics*

Among 187 surveyed community gardeners, respondents were majority female (60%), white (52%), and educated, with 54% holding a bachelor's degree or higher. Age of the gardeners surveyed ranged from 22-91, with a median of 57. Respondents were also generally well off economically with 32% reporting an overall family income of >\$75,000 (n=57). Fewer gardeners (14%) reported an income under \$20,000 (n=24). To get a better picture of income distribution by region, gardeners in the northern region (San Jose) had 40% reporting income of \$75,000+, gardeners in the central region (Santa

Cruz, Aptos, Live Oak) had 21% reporting income of \$75,000+, and gardeners in the southern region (Monterey, Watsonville, Salinas) had 20% reporting income of \$75,000+. 100% of gardeners who chose to answer the question responded “yes”, gardening had a positive impact on them or their family’s well-being.

*Motivations for Gardening*

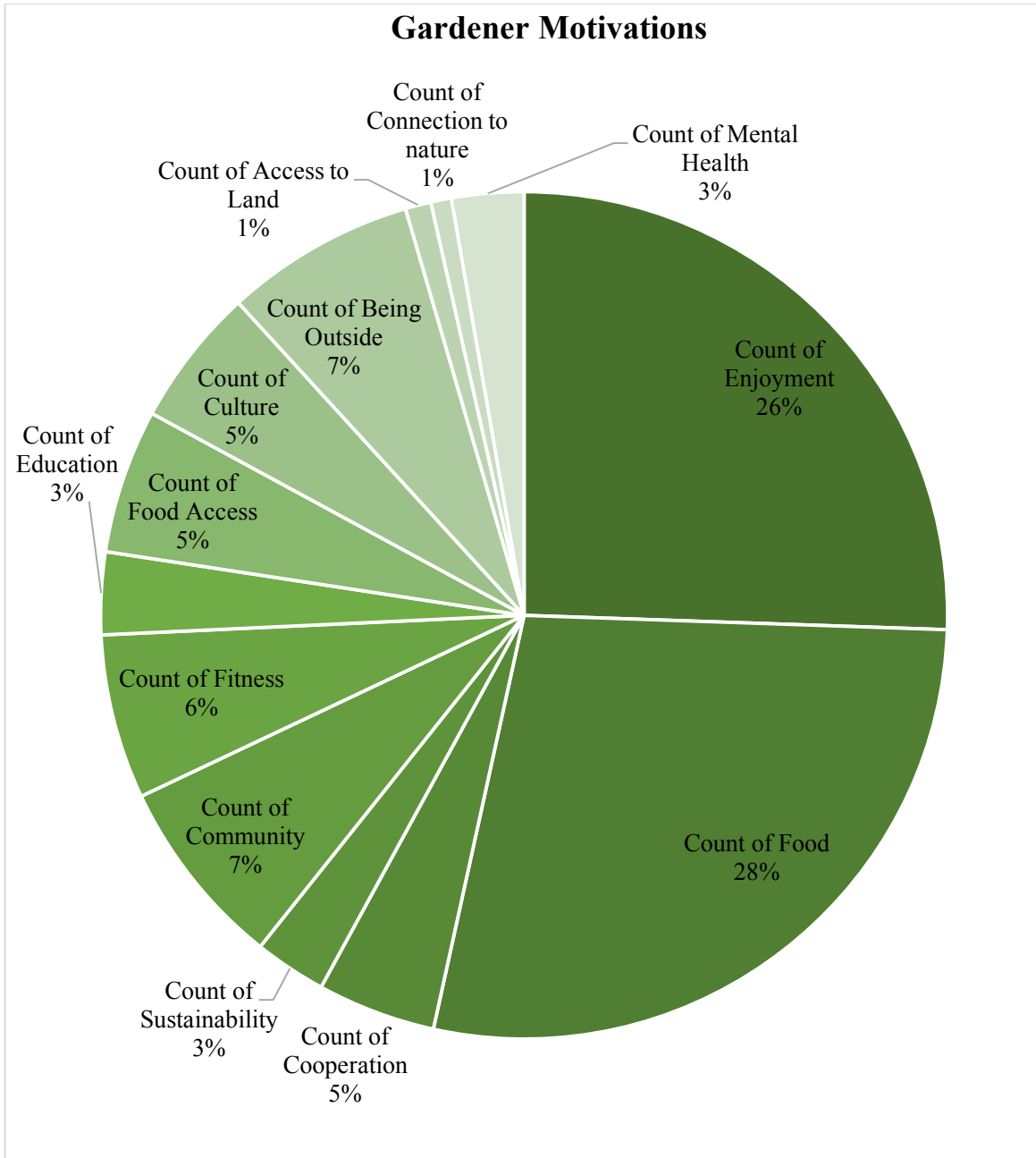


fig 1

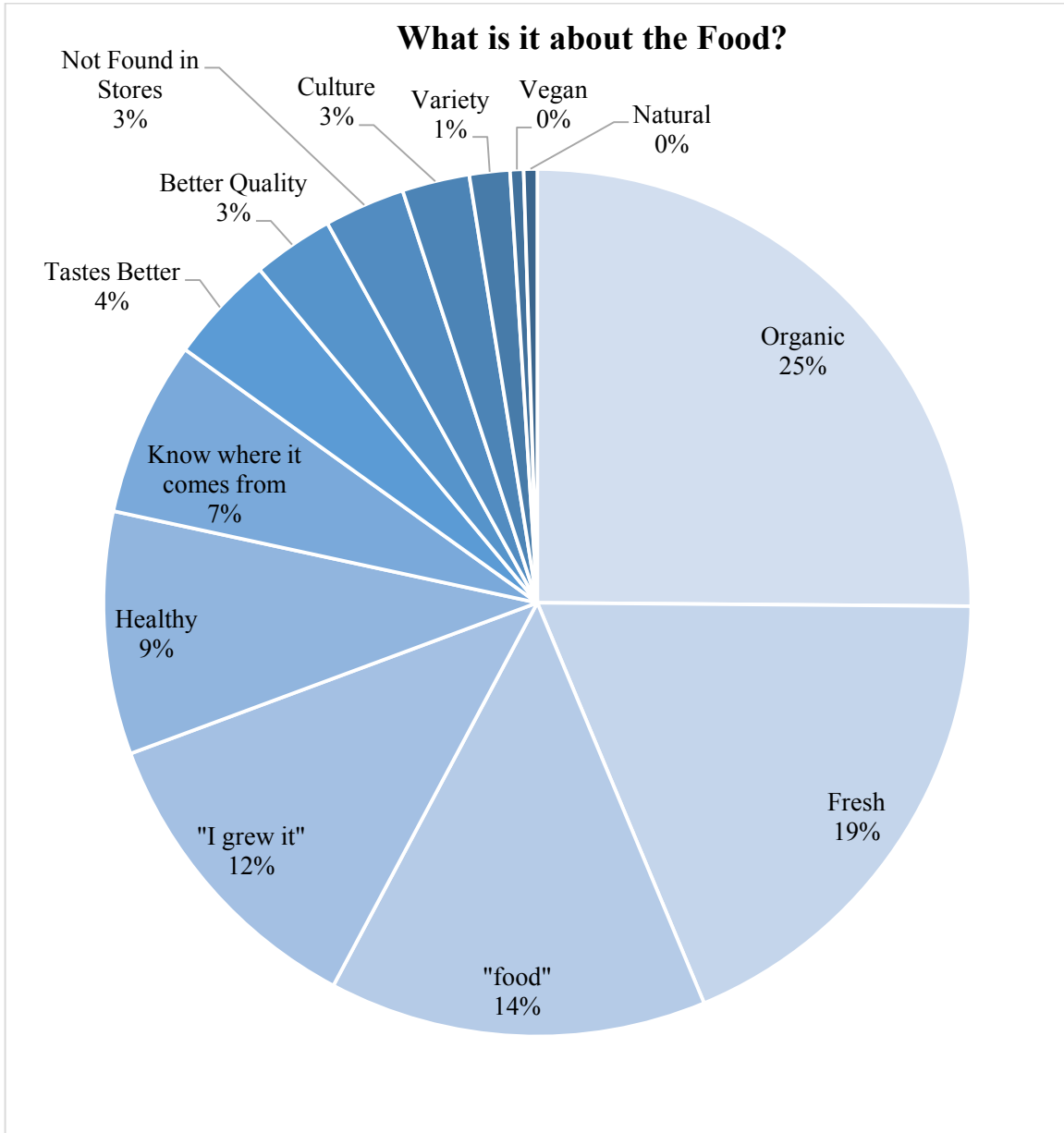


fig 2

Response analysis elucidated 13 main codes. The most common codes—enjoyment (26%) and food (28%)—accounted for 54% of all gardener motivations. Other responses in order of frequency of mention were: being outside (7%), community

(7%), fitness (6%), culture (5%), food access (5%), mental health (3%), education (3%), access to land (1%), and a connection to nature (1%) (figure 1).

Gardeners were asked to list three reasons why they garden. Most were motivated by enjoyment, stating that they “love the beauty of the garden”, that it is “exciting to take care of plants”, and most commonly, that they come to the garden to “relax”.

Gardeners were also incredibly motivated by food. If gardeners responded that they gardened because of food, they often elaborated that this was because the food was organic (25%), fresh (18%), they grew it themselves (11%), and it was healthy (9%). Additionally, gardeners, albeit fewer, also cited better quality, trustworthiness, and taste of food they grew in the gardens (figure 2).

Gardener motivations were characterized by codes:

Enjoyment: Gardener enjoys gardening as a whole. Makes general statements like “I like plants”, or “garden is beautiful”.

\*Food: The gardener generally enjoys eating food they grew, enjoys cooking and sharing food, emphasizes 'freshness' or 'organic', as well as food for health. Some gardeners very simply responded with only the word “food”.

\*Given the large number of responses coded ‘food’ I further analyzed this group for thematic patterns through meta-codes (in order of most popular to least): organic, fresh, “food”, “I grew it”, healthy, know where it comes from, tastes better, better quality, not found in stores, culture, variety, vegan, and natural. The complete code book for food motivations can be found below as appendix B.

Being Outside: Many of the gardeners stated that gardening was an activity that got them “out of the house”, and that it makes them happy to be outside “in nature”.

Community: Many gardeners were motivated by community. Many cited the “camaraderie of the community”, or that the garden is a place for them to socialize.

Responses were also motivated by socializing with the diverse communities that the gardens often represented, one gardener suggesting that his garden was “like the United Nations”.

Cooperation: Gardeners were motivated by sharing their crops with their friends, family, students, or church. They also enjoyed working together towards a common goal in the gardens.

Fitness: Numerous gardeners were motivated by fitness. They stated that working in the garden keeps them moving and helps them get physical exercise.

Culture: Some gardeners are motivated by culture, expressing that the garden allows them to grow “plants from indigenous land”, that it reminds them of their “old country”, and that it helps them “avoid losing tradition”.

Food Security: Garden members of all backgrounds communicated that the garden helped them supplement their access to food. Some gardeners stated that they only eat the produce that comes from their garden, while others stated that they could only afford to eat organic if they grew it themselves.

Mental Health: Many gardeners are motivated by de-stressing, but some specifically cited mental health as the reason they garden. They expressed that being in nature is “therapy”. One stated that there is “no depression when you garden”.

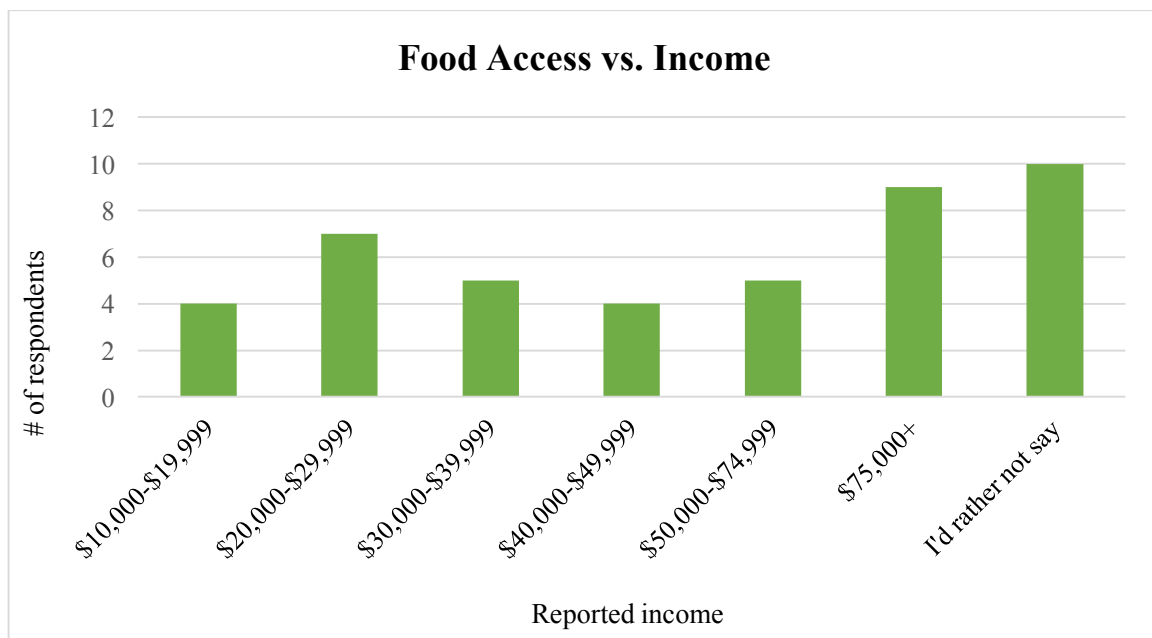
Education: Gardeners were also excited that the garden was a space for educating themselves or others. Many of these gardeners saw the garden as a space to teach their children or grandchildren about nature and where their food comes from.

Access to Land: Gardeners stated that the community garden was a space that wasn't "covered in concrete" and where they could "get out of their small apartment".

Connection to Nature: Some gardeners suggested that the garden was a space where they could spiritually "be one with nature".

The complete codebook for gardener motivations for this analysis can be found in the appendix of this project.

#### *Differences in Motivation based on Demographic*



*fig 3*



When motivations were analyzed together with demographics more patterns appeared. People of all demographics were most motivated by food and enjoyment, but the less commonly mentioned motivations differed among the groups. Gardeners that self-identified as Asian/Pacific Islander (n= 27) were motivated by community (14%), culture (7%), and education (8%). Those that self-identified as Black or African American (n= 4) were motivated by community (18%), being outside (18%) and food security (9%). Those that self-identified as white (n= 95) reported being outside (9%), fitness (7%), and community (7%). Gardeners that self-identified as Hispanic or Latino (n= 45) were motivated by food security (13%), culture (7%), and fitness (7%).

When analyzing motivations along gender, subjects identifying as women more often mentioned that they were motivated by community (69%), education (67%), and being outside (75%) compared with subjects identifying as men. Women were overall more representative of the entire gardener sample. The differences reflected in motivations as they are grouped by reported gender and race helps illuminate how positionality affects how an individual interacts with the space.

Effects of income on motivation were particularly interesting (figure 3). One would imagine those that reported smallest combined family income would report as being the most motivated by food access. However, 0% of those reporting an income of \$0-\$10,000 (n= 10) mentioned *food access* as a motivation, and instead their main motivation after the general suggestion of 'food' (not specifying their crops supplement food access) and enjoyment was fitness (50%). Those reporting income \$10,000-\$49,000 (n= 56) reported food access as a motivation (29%). Food access is not a major motivator in income bracket \$50,000+ (n= 81), instead community (22%) and being outside (20%)

become main motivating factors. Of those surveyed 40 individuals (or 21% of those surveyed, a significant portion of the sample) chose not to answer the question revealing their income level by responding “I’d rather not say”. This is important to consider because it lowers the overall sample size for this question, making it more difficult to draw quantitative conclusions about patterns that emerge from the income data.

## DISCUSSION

Gardeners were overall most motivated by food and enjoyment. All gardeners were positively impacted by their experience in the gardens. These results quite simply suggest that the benefits of community gardening are only available to those that are drawn to the space because it is enjoyable to them in some way. Additionally, findings demonstrate that those who participate in community gardening are positively impacted by the site or practice in some way, and that food production characterizes the type of gardening practiced in the California Central Coast region, rather than the explicit cultivation of social change.

I chose to sort survey data by demographic race, income, and gender to begin to understand how the community garden serves different groups and if the way a gardener is positioned in a society effects why they are motivated to participate. Analyzing the populations present in the community garden as they correlate with the gardeners’ motivations gives us insight into the multiple and varying ways that the community garden contributes to the wellbeing of individuals, and the ways the site might produce and reproduce neoliberal or transformational subjectivities.

I found many patterns among the data but I choose to focus in depth here on which proportions of gardeners of various income and race were motivated by food access because that specific motivation implies that the community garden is being used as an alternative food system. I also focus on how gender plays a role in the pedagogical

potential of the sites. Positing the community garden as an alternative to traditional systems of accessing food, or as an educational tool opens the space up as being used to analyze the effects of the neoliberalization of space in the context of food systems discourse.

### *Gardener Race*

After separating motivation data into race I found that non-white subjects were motivated by food access at a higher proportion than white subjects. This is significant because it suggests that community gardens in the CA Central Coast region play a role in supplementing food access for minority groups.

Most notably motivated by food access were individuals who reported themselves as Hispanic or Latino. To put these findings into context I analyzed the general population data of the areas in which we surveyed gardeners. Two of the large areas where gardeners were surveyed and responded they were Hispanic or Latino were Salinas and Watsonville, CA. Both cities are located in Monterey County. Monterey County, as a whole, is affluent and majority white ([SuburbanStats.org](http://SuburbanStats.org), 2018). However, both Salinas and Watsonville are majority Hispanic or Latino and most residents are employed by the agricultural industry that dominates the economy in the area ([SuburbanStats.org](http://SuburbanStats.org), 2018). Farmworkers in California often earn far less than minimum wage because of the seasonal nature of the agricultural industry (Martin and Costa, 2018). Our survey data demonstrates that individuals self-reporting as Hispanic and Latino also generally reported a lower combined family income than other gardeners.

Community gardens frequented by a majority Hispanic or Latino participants were primarily focused on larger scale culturally specific food production than other gardens. They grew mainly tomatoes, tomatillos, onions, peppers of different varieties, and corn. Hispanic or Latino individuals responded at similar rates to Asian/Pacific Islander respondents as being motivated by culture. Asian/Pacific Islander respondents

also suggested they grew culturally specific crops like medicinal herbs. Survey questions solicited responses from different gardeners that included “being able to grow plants from indigenous land (Oaxaca)” that they could “grow culturally appropriate food”, that the gardener was “able to grow produce that are not in the super market”, or that the gardener does not “want to lose my habits and ways from the original land”.

Given this context, I think it is safe to say that Hispanic or Latino survey respondents in the CA Central Coast are more motivated by food access than other groups because of cultural affinity and occupational familiarity with agriculture, a lack of access to culturally appropriate foods in mainstream supermarkets, and financial barriers to fresh produce.

### *Gardener Income*

Income data collected from the surveys was puzzling at first glance. I expected that gardeners with low incomes would be more motivated by food access, but encountered that those in the lowest income group were relatively less motivated by food access than those in the highest income category. Gardeners reporting an income of \$75,000+ were the most motivated by food access, whereas no gardeners reporting an income of \$0-\$10,000 were motivated by food access. There is a dip in the chart from \$30,000-\$74,999 (figure 3). Gardeners reporting income of \$20,000-\$29,999 and \$75,000+ were most motivated by access to food.

A lack of food access motivation for those in the lowest income bracket may be because these gardeners receive financial support from other sources. I analyzed the respondents more closely to get a better understanding of their situation in order to make sense of the contradiction. For instance, two gardeners reporting an income of \$0-\$10,000 were students. This means that they likely receive money in the form of loans, scholarships, or from their family. Six gardeners reporting \$0-\$10,000 were retired. This also means that they likely receive money from a source other than a salary, for example,

a retirement fund or savings account. Of the two gardeners left reporting income of under \$10,000, one was unemployed and the other worked in health services. These low-income gardeners could be receiving SNAP benefits that other, slightly higher income gardeners do not qualify for. Overall, those reporting income of \$0-\$10,000 were most motivated by enjoyment or socializing in the gardens, as opposed to food access like I initially expected.

Those reporting income of \$20,000-\$29,999 were second most motivated by food access. This income falls below the 2018 federal poverty line for a family of 4 or 5 (Healthcare.gov). However, many of these gardeners did not have large families and were instead retired, students, or single. These individuals may see food access as a noteworthy part of their practice because their crops make a significant impact on their total food consumption as single, students, or retired persons.

Gardeners earning an income of \$75,000+ were the most motivated by access to food. These gardeners were primarily located in San Jose community gardens, a majority affluent, white city ([SuburbanStats.org](http://SuburbanStats.org), 2018). Gardeners surveyed in the San Jose region were most likely to have an income of \$75,000+. From my experience interacting with these gardeners, they were very dedicated to gardening. Their plots were usually very well developed and optimized for food production. Gardening in San Jose was a serious hobby for many of the individuals and as a result the San Jose community gardens were very large, well funded, and organized. A higher income might mean that a gardener is more likely to have access to supplementary materials like small composting systems or special soil amendments and fertilizers that ultimately increase food production and in turn the gardener's overall contribution to their own food consumption.

Growing a significant amount of food that makes a worthwhile impact on one's overall food consumption in a community garden plot requires dedication, time, and resources. This may explain why community gardeners with lower overall income are less motivated by food access. Gardeners with lower income may have less access to

fertilizers and supplementary materials to optimize food production, supplement access to food through different avenues like SNAP benefits, or have access to funds that aren't traditionally reported as 'income'. In conclusion, my findings suggest that income is not a straightforward predictor of which individuals supplement their access to food through community gardening as one might initially assume.

### *Gardener Gender*

Gardeners self-identifying as women on surveys (n= 85) were more motivated by being outside (75%), community (69%), and education (67%), whereas gardeners self-identifying as men (n= 57) were more motivated by food access (71%), culture (65%), and fitness (58%). While analyzing the responses, the most salient difference between the two groups that I found was seen in who was motivated by education. Survey responses demonstrate that many of the women reporting they were motivated by education saw gardening as an activity for the whole family, citing the importance of the community and being outside as part of the educational process. Women's motivations seem to reflect their position in society as a whole. Women in the patriarchal USA generally fulfill the familial role of primary caretaker. Large parts of the care-taking role involve raising children and cooking. I suggest that community gardening combines the two through food. Additionally, gardens provide a safe communal green space through which both parents and children come to benefit because of the community gardens' ability to serve multiple needs simultaneously. Women gardeners brought their children to the garden to experience "nature" and most women respondents communicated that they use the space to "teach where food comes from".

Women who garden in the CA Central Coast seem to see the space as a valuable educational tool that some might consider to have transformative impact on food systems. Many scholars and activists concerned with food justice cite the de-fetishizing of the food commodity as an important part of transforming the industrial capitalist food (Galt et al.,

2014). Other scholars assert the danger of encouraging ‘ethical consumerism’, and demonstrate that such an activism “only adds a new layer of commodity fetishism that masks the harms of capitalism by convincing society that the harms of capitalism can be rehabilitated with the commodity form itself” (Gunderson, 2013).

Women gardeners also seem to use the community garden to de-alienate their children’s or grandchildren’s relationship to food (intentionally or not) through involving children in the process of growing food, seed to harvest. This has a contradictory impact on food systems discourse given what perspective one chooses to take. When analyzing the community garden as an alternative ‘market’ for accessing food the transformative potential of the site becomes easily co-opted by neoliberal logic of consumer choice taking precedent over sincere social justice. Conversely, if one examines the pedagogical effect of the garden as restoring an individual’s meaningful un-alienated relationship to food, the transformative potential of the site becomes more promising. The value of the prevalence of the educative aspect of the community garden is contradictory, as scholars like McClintock originally suggested. An evaluation of the effects of this sort of education must be assessed at an individual level if meaningful conclusions are to be made. Overall, my findings suggest that a woman’s social position generally posits her at the forefront of the pedagogical characteristic of community gardening.

#### *What about the Food?*

Food was a major motivating factor for all groups, and the second most motivating factor of the population overall (28%). Most gardeners that were motivated by food were concerned with the fact that the food was organic (25%), fresh (19%), and that they grew it themselves (12%). Some gardeners simply responded “food” (14%) when surveyed. I omitted this response in my detailed discussion because of its vagueness. All gardens in which the survey was conducted require production methods in alignment with organic practices, so it makes sense as to why it was the most popular reason behind

being motivated by food. Gardeners responding “organic” did not elaborate on which aspect of ‘organic’ they were motivated by (i.e. mentioning a specific organic practice, or that they liked that it was chemical free or sustainable). Given the vagueness of the gardeners’ responses I chose to assess the implications of and value ascribed to the term ‘organic’ by investigating the discursive history of ‘organic’ in regards to food systems in hopes to better understand what the gardeners meant, and what this motivation might mean in the context of analyzing the political salience of community gardens.

Sustainable food systems discourse in California emphasizes organic agriculture. To understand the significance of this fact one must understand that California’s food system is largely dependent on an industrialized mode of production and temporary marginalized farm labor. From the supply side of food systems, the workers receive low wages, experience food and housing insecurity, and are often vulnerable due to their immigration status (Allen, Fitz-Simmons, Goodman, Warner, 2003). The industrialized farm is also highly dependent on pesticides, which eventually became a big issue for the consumers.

An analysis of the organic movement in the United States has power in demonstrating how ideology affects the success or failure of alternative food systems practices. In her paper on “Critical Agrarianism”, Liz Carlisle documents the ideological roots of the Organics movement in the popular American notion of the ‘agrarian’. She outlines the knowledges that came together to influence how the American people came to conceptualize of nature and farming. She points to theorists like John Locke and Thomas Jefferson to capture how agrarianism is intimately connected to property and Christianity, and therefore capitalism. She suggests that for Locke, “the improvement of land through agriculture is man’s god-given duty” (2). Additionally, she goes on to state how Jefferson muses about the yeoman farmer as America’s “bed rock” for “morality and



democracy” (2). Through this analysis we can start to see the attitudes that went on to shape the organic movement. Carlisle suggests that these ideas were what prompted the later ‘back to the land’ movement that responded to the threat to agrarianism posed by the accelerating industrialization of agriculture. She illustrates that those participating in the movement were concerned about protecting the basis for American citizenship (land tenure—in which only white men could own property), and democracy itself. The movement also worked to romanticize farming as a simple, moral, noble work, and tried to conserve that idea as it came under the threat of modernity. I assert that the problem with this ‘return to the land’ is the fierce protection of a system that was never just in the first place. Through the historical discursive construction of ideology, attitudes of nature and farming and therefore agriculture and food have ultimately become entangled with discourses and institutions of white supremacy, settler colonialism, and capitalist exploitation of land.

The modern organics movement finds its roots in an ideology that romanticizes the white yeoman farmer and American democracy. Scholars, Cindy Brown and Christy Getz conclude that organic certification as a social cause ultimately inscribes neoliberal thinking and undermines farmworker representation because it reproduces the idea that the market is the mechanism for addressing societal ills, privatizes regulatory functions previously enacted at the state level, and asserts the ultimate responsibility of the consumer (2006). They suggest that this reinforcement of neoliberalism constrains the realm of possibility for real transformative change within food systems (2006). The Organics movement was very obviously co-opted by market forces in a way that totally deluded whichever goals, whether for sustainability or social justice, that activists had.

A discussion of the organic movement contextualizes how “organic” came to be a motivating factor among those participating in community gardens specifically located in

the CA Central Coast region, and what is potentially at stake when gardeners responded that 'organic' was a main motivation for their participation. This history solidifies the significance of the fact that most community gardeners in this study were motivated by organic food. The fact that gardeners were mainly motivated by the organic nature of the food they were growing, as opposed to a characteristic like affordability surprised me. My research suggests that one must consider the discursive history of a term like 'organic' in order to assess the trajectory of community gardening and its effects on food systems discourse.

Gardeners also referenced that the food was fresh, and that they grew it themselves. Freshness is often ascribed to food to add marketable value. Freshness and place of origin are major factors in consumer's decision to purchase produce (Govindasamy et al., 2002). Freshness and knowledge of origin are an added value because in the context of the massive scale of the industrial agricultural system produce often takes weeks, months, or even years to reach the consumer in the supermarket. Consumer expectations of produce in markets reflects the reason individuals are motivated by food in the context of the community garden. Moreover, survey responses suggest that community gardeners' expectations of the food crop they harvest mirrors consumer expectations of valuable produce in the supermarket. There is nothing more 'fresh' than picking the produce you grew yourself, and the community garden makes that possible for the individual. It is hard to say definitively if individuals internalize the marketable values ascribed to food, or if those desirable values predicated the market.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis asserts the importance of food in California Central Coast Community gardens, and in effect, community gardening's impact on food systems discourse. I found that an incredibly diverse population of individuals participate in community gardening in the California Central Coast Region and that the practice is primarily motivated by enjoyment and food. This study also establishes that the community garden site undeniably had positive effects on individuals surveyed. Furthermore, and most notably, I assert that generalizable, broad statements about the transformative potential of community gardening cannot be made. I suggest that instead, researchers should assess community gardens through a lens that considers regional, individual, and discursive contexts.

Scholars and activists alike argue for and against the transformative potential of the space. When asked generally about their 3 main motivations for gardening and how the site has positively impacted them, community gardeners that took part in this study seemed to be far less concerned with the political implications of their activities. Results may have been different had I specifically interrogated gardeners' political stance with questions more inviting of political responses or responses about community engagement. Nevertheless, I found that the community garden is ultimately a site where individuals imagine a food system together based on their specific and diverse motivations and then materialize it. It therefore has political salience and is crucial to the study of food systems and sustainability discourse moving forward. I establish that patterns do in fact emerge among gardener motivations based on reported race, gender, and income. Hence, I conclude that different communities have different needs, and the

ways that an individual is situated in regard to the industrial food system affects those needs and in turn how the community garden operates.

This project ultimately suggests that we cannot imagine an alternative food system from one perspective, and that it is not worthwhile to make dualistic assumptions about community gardening (i.e. transformative vs. neoliberal). I can reasonably state that this study demonstrates that survey responses do not always follow the patterns one might expect, and that these unexpected responses are illuminating of how the site operates when considered in context. My findings support McClintock's assessment that the site "operate[s] in a co-productive manner" perpetuating both neoliberal and counter hegemonic tendencies, and I elaborate that these tendencies are dependent on the nuances of regional specificity in regards to a community's needs, histories, and discursively constructed values, as well as gardener's individual positionality (McClintock, 2014). Without a deep assessment of these factors, researchers will fail to acknowledge the complexity of communities and how they choose to organize themselves in accordance with their needs as contained within their realm of possibility. Research declaring community gardens as either neoliberal or transformative fails to truly tell us anything meaningful about the site, and instead suggests more about the researchers own biases. I cannot deny that my study overwhelmingly demonstrates the benefits of community gardens, but I do not aim to suggest that critiques of the site's production of neoliberal ideals are to be discounted, as they to point the fact that community gardens are in fact situated within neoliberal industrial capitalism and are therefore inevitably and undeniably imbued by those same logics.

Further research regarding community gardening should consider subject positionality, regional geography, history, and discursive context in order to best assess how the site produces and reproduces attitudes that might influence food systems and individual's consciousness. Researchers must understand that gardeners exist as subjects outside of the community garden and that this ultimately plays a part in determining how a garden will operate as a 'more neoliberal' or 'more radical' site. In addition, gardeners overwhelmingly suggested that community gardening is a positive experience that contributes to their wellbeing, and I believe that this should not be overlooked. Further research should be done concerning the political implications of recreation and enjoyment as it plays into food systems and environmentalism discourse, given that enjoyment was the main motivating factor across all groups. Overall, I found that the community gardening phenomenon is a compelling case regarding the complexities and contradictions of agency in the context of neoliberal capitalism. It is a site that warrants further sociological exploration because of the way that the practice materializes discourse and constitutes subjects in regards to food systems and environmentalism, both increasingly pertinent issues as climate change and general environmental degradation threaten the future of humankind.

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## APPENDIX A: Gardener Motivations Codebook

Code:	Descriptor:
Fitness	Garden for physical or mental fitness
Cooperation	Gardener wants to work together with neighbors and friends, mentions helping others/the community/neighbors
Food	Generally enjoys eating food they grew, enjoys cooking and sharing food, emphasize 'freshness' or 'organic', food for health
Sustainability/agro ecology	Mentions concerns about the environment or corporate food system
Community	Wants to be part of a group, gardens to socialize
Education	Enjoys learning about gardening/nature, or enjoys teaching others. Teaches kids about food/gardening/nature
Enjoyment	Generally, enjoys gardening as a whole. 'I like plants', thinks garden is beautiful
Food Access	Supplements own food security with food for the garden. Mentions cost and/or accessibility of produce.
Culture	Gardens to grow culturally specific foods, Foods those they cannot find in the store, farming/gardening is a cultural or family practice.
Being outside	Mention love of the outdoors/nature, being away from work or other everyday tasks, or just "being outside"
Access to land	Mentions living in apartment, not having a yard, or not being able to access a green space otherwise
Connection to Nature	Mentions feeling connected to nature.
Mental Health	Gardens for mental and emotional health.

## APPENDIX B: Food Motivations Codebook

Code:	Descriptor:
Natural	mentions food is 'natural' or that it comes from the earth
Vegan	specifies that the food is grown because they follow a vegan diet
Variety	gardener emphasizes variety in crops they can grow and access
Culture	states that growing food is a part of their culture, or they are able to access culturally specific foods through the garden
Not Found in Stores	gardener mentions being able to grow crops that they cannot purchase in stores
Better Quality	emphasizes crops better quality as compared to the supermarket
Tastes Better	emphasizes crops specifically better taste as compared to the supermarket
Know where it comes from	gardener suggests the food is more trustworthy because they grew it
Healthy	suggest crops are healthy addition to their diet
"I grew it"	gardener specifically states that the food is best because they grew it themselves
"food"	gardener responds with only the word "food"
Fresh	gardener mentions being able to pick the food that day and eat it, or simply the word "fresh"
Organic	Gardener mentions food is "organic"

## APPENDIX C: Complete Gardener Survey

**Gardener Survey - UC Santa Cruz Research Project - 2017**

Through this survey, we would like to know more about your interest in participating in a community garden, your gardening techniques, your diet, your access to varied food, and basic demographic features. We are aware that some information in this survey may be sensitive, and we want to assure you that all information you provide will remain completely **confidential** and will be used exclusively for the purpose of this study. This survey is completely **voluntary**; please feel free to skip any questions or to stop at any time. **Thank you for your time!**

1. Garden Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many family members do you live with?
- 0       4-6       10+
- 1-3       7-10
5. How many other people do you live with?
- 0       4-6       10+
- 1-3       7-10
6. How many people in your family (including you) are?:
- Women over 18 \_\_\_\_\_
- Men over 18 \_\_\_\_\_
- Girls 0-18 years old \_\_\_\_\_
- Boys 0-18 years old \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is your gender?
- Male
- Female
8. What is the ethnicity of your family (mark all that apply)?:
- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Other
- Undetermined
9. What is the national origin of you or your parents, if not U.S.A.?
10. Is there a language other than English spoken at your home?:
- Yes
- No
- If so**, what language(s)?: \_\_\_\_\_
11. How far away do you live from the garden?:
- <1 mile       5-10 miles
- 1-5 miles       > 10 miles
12. What are the primary sources of employment for you and other members of your immediate family (mark all that apply)?:
- Agriculture
- Gardening
- Construction
- Sales
- Domestic Service
- Education
- Legal Services
- Health Services
- Office Administration
- Technological Services
- Restaurant/Food Service
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (employment type)
13. What is the average annual income earned in your immediate family?:
- \$0-\$10,000
- \$10,000-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$29,999
- \$30,000-\$39,999
- \$40,000-\$49,000
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000+
- I'd rather not say
14. What is your highest level of completed education?
- No formal schooling
- Elementary school
- Middle school
- Some high school
- High school graduate
- Trade/technical/vocational training
- Some college
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree

15. How long have you been gardening? \_\_\_\_ years

16. List three reasons why you garden?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

17. How many hours per week do you spend at this garden?

18. Which crops do you grow in your garden?

- |                                       |                                    |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tomato       | <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatillo | <input type="checkbox"/> Beans      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corn         | <input type="checkbox"/> Amaranth  | <input type="checkbox"/> Artichoke  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arugula      | <input type="checkbox"/> Asparagus | <input type="checkbox"/> Beet       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bitter melon | <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrot       | <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumber  | <input type="checkbox"/> Eggplant   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kale         | <input type="checkbox"/> Leek      | <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mustard      | <input type="checkbox"/> Parsnip   | <input type="checkbox"/> Peppers    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potato       | <input type="checkbox"/> Squash    | <input type="checkbox"/> Chard      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basil        | <input type="checkbox"/> Dill      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cilantro   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oregano      | <input type="checkbox"/> Garlic    | <input type="checkbox"/> Thyme      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mint         | <input type="checkbox"/> Lavender  | <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberry |

List other crops you grow:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

19. Which flowers or ornamentals do you grow in your garden?

- |                                    |                                     |                                    |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dahlia    | <input type="checkbox"/> Borage     | <input type="checkbox"/> Iris      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calendula | <input type="checkbox"/> Nasturtium | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunflower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zinnia    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cosmos     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rose      |

List other ornamentals you grow:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

20. Do you have problems with pests or diseases in your garden?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**If yes**, which of the following methods do you use to protect your crops from pests or diseases (mark all that apply)?

- Hand remove pests
- Organic, purchased sprays
- Homemade sprays
- Pesticides
- Release ladybugs
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Do you add any soil amendments in your garden?

- Yes
- No

**If so**, what do you add?

- Fertilizer
- Compost
- Manure
- Worm castings
- Blood meal
- Cover crop
- Mulch
- Other

22. Where do you get soil amendments you add (mark all that apply)?:

- Purchase
- From other gardeners
- From garden management
- Make it yourself
- Other

23. Who taught you how to garden or farm?

- Family member
- Friend
- Self-taught
- Workshop/Class
- Other gardeners
- Other

24. How many pounds of fruits, vegetables, and herbs to you harvest from your garden every week during summer (May-October)?

- 0 lbs
- 1-5 lbs
- 6-10 lbs
- 11-20 lbs
- 20 lbs+
- Don't know

The next six questions are standard questions developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

*The following are several statements that people have made about their food situation. For these statements, please indicate whether the statement was often true, sometimes true, or never true (for you/your household) in the last 12 months:*

- 25. "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more."
  - Often true
  - Sometimes true
  - Never true
  - Don't know
  
- 26. "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals"
  - Often true
  - Sometimes true
  - Never true
  - Don't know
  
- 27. In the last 12 months, since last (name of current month), did (you/ or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know

- If so**, how often did this happen?
- Almost every month
  - Some months but not every month
  - Only for 1 or 2 months
  - Don't know

- 28. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know

- 29. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know

- 30. Has a doctor ever told you that you are at risk or have any of the following?:
  - Diabetes
  - Cancer
  - Asthma
  - Cardiac Disease
  - Hypertension
  - Obesity
  - Other persistent health problems

- 31. Has gardening had a positive impact on you or your family's well-being?
  - Yes
  - No

**If so**, how?

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**Thank you for your participation!**

**For Researcher Use Only:**

Survey given by: \_\_\_\_\_

How was the survey administered?

- Read out loud by researcher
- Read out loud by other gardener
- Filled out by gardener on their own