

# Hands in the Soil: Experiential Education at the Urban Farm

by

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A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Environmental Studies  
and the Robert D. Clark Honors College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts

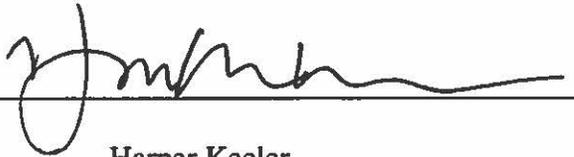
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## **An Abstract of the Thesis of**

Alexandra Ode for the degree of Bachelor of Arts  
in the Department of Environmental Studies to be taken September 2016.

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Approved: \_\_\_\_\_



Harper Keeler

This thesis serves to examine to current status of experiential education within institutions of higher education in the United States, focusing on the Urban Farm at the University of Oregon. It begins with an introduction to the project and an explanation of the personal relevance of this project in the author's academic experience. This is followed by a foundational look at experiential education and its role in university settings. After examining the learning side of the equation, attention turns to the University of Oregon Urban Farm itself, giving a history and overview of the program. This is followed by a quick glance at case studies of other student farming programs. These topics are then combined and the efficacy of the Urban Farm is measured by standards of experiential education. The study concludes with a look to the future of this program and place and provides suggestions for ensuring the success of the Urban Farm moving forward, understanding the importance of the Urban Farm an a potential antidote to current political and environmental crises.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Professor Keeler for introducing me to the Urban Farm, the place that changed the way I see the world and what I desire from education. Thank you for opening my eyes and my hands, tolerating my inane questions about plants and farming, and always bringing a chuckle to my day. Furthermore, thank you for your support and guidance in this project.

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A word of thanks is due to Katy Giombolini for enthusiastically agreeing to be a reader for my thesis. Thank you also for all the work you do to educate young farmers.

And of course, great gratitude goes, and will continue to go, to my parents, to Julia, and to Fugue, for offering support and words of sanity throughout this time. Thank you for encouraging my love of dirt, vegetables, and animals. Perhaps someday we will all put our hands in the soil together.

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## Introduction

### Impetus

On the first day of class in the spring term of 2016, the sun shines brightly on the collection of people gathered in the hay bale circle of the Urban Farm at the University of Oregon. From the center of the circle, Harper Keeler turns slowly, expounding upon the details of the class, how it works, what the expectations are. In classic syllabus-week fashion, he explains the grading requirements and the various projects the students will complete over the term. And then, with a twinkle in his eye, he dives into discussing the physical acts of farming and learning that transpire at the farm. This is the topic the students have been waiting for. “You can say that clay soil feels sticky but you don’t really know what that means until you try to bang it off a shovel ... It has to be hands-on. That’s why we are here. That’s why it’s fun.”<sup>1</sup> In this simple explanation, the parameters change. The students open their eyes to the realities of this place and this class. They crane their heads to look at various piles of soil residing around the farm, wondering if perhaps that one, or that, are the clay soil Harper refers to. In this simple anecdote, I was hooked. This explanation became the foundation of what would become my thesis—an exploration into the worlds of experiential education and the Urban Farm.

This paper seeks to examine the age-old, critical fields of agriculture and education. As these are both massive topics and extensively studied, I shall use a specific, localized lens relevant to my undergraduate experience at the University of

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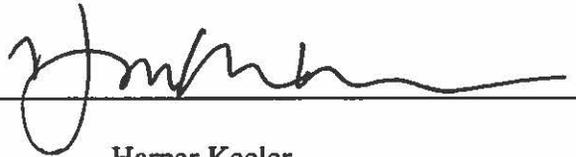
<sup>1</sup> Keeler, Harper. “Welcome to the Urban Farm.” Urban Farm, Eugene. 29, Mar. 2016. Verbal lecture.

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Oregon. Consequently, I am curious about the field of experiential education as practiced at the University of Oregon Urban Farm. In addition to secondhand research, my investigation is informed by my own experience in a number of different experiential education opportunities: Wildlands field studies program in Patagonia, Argentina, The Environmental Leadership Program at the University of Oregon, participation in the University of Oregon's Family and Human Services course titled Schoolhouse Garden—taking place at Edison Elementary School in Eugene, Oregon, and, of course, multiple terms spent at the University of Oregon Urban Farm.

My research is also informed by an academic concentration on food systems at the University of Oregon. This learning came via “Schoolhouse Garden” with landscape architect Lorri Nelson and Master Gardener Robyn Selover; “Urban Farm” with Professor Harper Keeler, “Sustainable Agriculture” with Professor Galen Martin; and “Civic Agriculture” with Professor Harper Keeler. Additional courses in Environmental Studies, such as “Global Environmental Issues” with Professor Derrick Hindery provided opportunity for further study in the field.

Through this myriad of experiential education and agricultural education opportunities, I became convinced of the importance and viability of both fields within today's academic setting. In fact, it felt challenging to craft an argument as to how these topics are not of the utmost importance. In the United States, considerable thought is being directed toward the efficacy of various methods of education and schooling today. In contrast to the educational systems of many other countries, American schools are plagued by dropouts, underperformance, intensive standardized testing, staggeringly low teacher wages, and too often, violence. In terms of food and farming, industrial

agriculture is destroying thousands of tons of precious topsoil each year while a significant portion of the world's population suffers from malnutrition. These problems affect people both on a massive scale as well as a personal scale and these problems threaten to worsen if they are not adequately addressed and proper measures are not taken. While experiencing a growing passion for these topics, I felt simultaneously dismayed by their relative lack of representation within academic institutions, particularly in reference to the field of agriculture. I worried that sustainable and civic agricultural practices may be falling out of popular discourse. This fall from grace bodes poorly for the future of independent existence and subsistence, as knowledge of how to grow one's food and how to teach our young is crucial to the creation of a better educated and more equitable society.

Professor Harper Keeler posits that it does not get much more intimate nor crucial than food. As physical beings, we rely on food to survive. Food quite literally creates us, nourishes us, and ensures our continued existence. Without food, we are nothing. Education exists in perhaps less explicit, but nearly equally important, terms. Learning is how our species gains traction in the world. It is how we know what to eat and how to procure food, among many other things. Learning is an imperative piece of the human existence. For these reasons, the intersection of education and food is exciting and promising. There seems to be no better way to investigate these topics than to explore the history and theory behind the Urban Farm, a place that has felt like home during my stint at the University of Oregon and a space that continues to inspire students every day.

## **A Note on Experiential Education**

Experiential Education, as explored in this work, is a form of teaching and learning that centers on the senses of the learner. It focuses primarily on the process of learning, rather than the actual knowledge imparted itself, although both pieces are crucial to the learning process. This form of learning can, and certainly does, take place in traditional linear models as can be found in a classical university classroom environment. Traditional teaching does in fact incorporate experiential education in that our senses are constantly involved in learning. A student does not simply turn off their sense of the world and of place when they enter into a classroom. Should they, it seems that learning would be highly ineffective. Furthermore, sensation and experience are always limited, and teaching students to use the imagination via reading and discussing is one way that traditional models utilize experience within a typical classroom environment. Where these fields differ is in the motivation behind the learning and teaching and the styles used. Experiential education, as discussed in the following sections, places significant concentration on crafting the experience of learning and works hard to incorporate a high number of sensations and practical opportunities into the curriculum and in this way, among others to follow, stands apart.

## **A Disclaimer: Regarding Traditional Education**

Experiential education has the potential to impact higher education for the better. This, however, requires a disclaimer. I do not posit that all traditional teaching models have failed, nor that they need to be removed. Instead, alternative education can be paired with the already existent and prevalent system in order to create a more balanced and effective teaching model. Traditional linear education is both entrenched

and ingrained in Western society. As such, it stands to reason that it is not under much threat of attack; this institution is not going anywhere anytime soon. Were the current academic and political climate different, this claim might be formulated much differently. As it currently stands, traditional linear academic models involving typical coursework and highly-structured lecture time within an artificial, constructed classroom will continue to be the mainstay for years to come. The traditional teaching model, however, is a site of ongoing contentions and has been for millennia. Today, a growing number of voices echo Dewey's call for reform. This is where experiential education enters the scene. Taken together, these two discrete approaches could create a more balanced, diverse, and wholesome learning experience for students.

Experiential education does not stand in direct opposition to traditional education but rather, works in conjunction with it. In fact, the goals of each are often the same. "Experiential education is conceptually consistent with the broadest goals of liberal education, aimed at assisting individuals in understanding complex problems in their historical, social, and economic context in dealing with this knowledge personally."<sup>2</sup> This is a key feature of the comparison between the two. In noting that the goals are uniform, at least on a macro level, it becomes clear that these two fields could operate in tandem. It is widely accepted that "experiential education can contribute to the general development of young people during the college years. Experiential education can also make an important contribution to general or liberal arts education."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Sexton, Robert F., Ungerer, Richard A., and National Institute of Education. *Rationales for Experiential Education*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, ERIC/higher Education Research Report ; 1975, No. 3, 1975. Print. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Sexton. 9.

In fact, those responsible for instruction within an institution often see this benefit. It may come as no surprise that “college educators find experiential learning a valuable adjunct to traditional instruction.”<sup>4</sup> This combination of learning and teaching styles has been tested and makes sense in addressing needs both within and without the theoretical classroom and university as a whole. As such, this paper should be used as a lens through which to explore a potential partnership between experiential education and traditional education, singing the praises of experiential programs while simultaneously acknowledging that a variety of educational models are necessary in order to create the most complete and diverse learning experience possible for students.

### **A Second Disclaimer: Regarding Privilege**

As is obvious by the format and title alone, this project comes from a position of wealth, status, and privilege. In many communities and for many citizens of this country, the material taught at the Urban Farm is daily knowledge and experience. The United States, and many societies worldwide, is segregated between people with access to higher education and people who must rely upon their physical toil for survival. This paper is written from the side of the former. Agriculture is a nearly ageless field, as humans have participated in this act for thousands of years. However, in today’s modern society, many individuals live removed from the land and from the act of farming. It is for this reason that an elective class such as Urban Farm can exist at all

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<sup>4</sup> Cantor, Jeffrey A., and ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. *Experiential Learning in Higher Education : Linking Classroom and Community*. Washington, DC: Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington U, 1997. Print. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report; 1995, No. 7. (iv)

iv.

and find success in providing new knowledge to its participants. Most of the students taking the class, and likely the bulk the of the student body of the university as a whole, have little to no experience with the content. Were the Urban Farm to be taught within a different context or among different participants, it would certainly need to take a different form in order to impart meaningful knowledge. The message of this reality is dire. The Urban Farm seeks to combat this separation. This approach is not perfect and the privilege must be discussed, however the importance of the program still stands, and furthermore, is likely enhanced by the reality that for so many Americans farming is crucial knowledge and daily action. The Urban Farm, in its small corner of the university, seeks to bridge this divide.

# Experiential Education

## History of Experiential Education

Experiential learning, as a practice, is as old as humankind. By our very nature as thinking bodies, we learn through our experiences. From our first days as infants, humans learn through touch, sound, taste, sight, and feel. We learn through our senses and our senses comprise our experience. Long before the creation of the first university, people were learning. Learning is a critical dimension of survival, not to mention growth. Humans lived and experienced and through these actions, they learned. As such, experiential learning is a core tenet of all living existence.

Experiential education, as a clearly defined field of learning, is much newer. In 1897, John Dewey theorized and critiqued the state of American education in his seminal essay “My Pedagogic Creed.”<sup>5</sup> He continued this line of thought for the rest of his life, publishing an extensive work on the subject matter in 1938 titled *Experience and Education*<sup>6</sup>. Inspired by this work, the field of experiential education has grown and expanded almost beyond comprehension. Today, experiential education is practiced globally and takes countless forms. The themes and various subsets of experiential education are numerous, speaking to the great disparity in the field. These themes also highlight the many priorities of the field, as evidenced by schools of learning such as service-learning, technical education, occupational education, outdoor learning, adventure education, etc. For the sake of this study, I focus primarily on the umbrella of

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<sup>5</sup> Dewey, John, and Dworkin, Martin S. *Dewey on Education : Selections*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia U, 1959. Print. Classics in Education ; No. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Dewey, John. *Experience and Education*. New York: Macmillan, Kappa Delta Pi Lecture Ser. 1938. Print.

experiential education. Subsets such as outdoor education and place-based learning models both offer relevant and interesting dimensions, however they are unfortunately outside the scope of this project. Where there is overlap between such models and experiential education in theory and practice, which is often, they too shall be discussed, albeit primarily only implicitly.

### **Experiential Education’s Definition and Core Tenets**

Despite the variety of work on experiential education, the working analysis is fairly consistent and conclusive. Experiential education is defined as:

“Learning outside the normal classroom environment that has been planned prior to the experience. This ... includes internships, field experience, practicums, and cooperative education. The purpose of experiential education so defined is to reinforce learning that takes place in the classroom by permitting students to practice what they have learned, but it also can permit the student to work in areas that are unexplored in the classroom.”<sup>7</sup>

Contrary to some popular thought, experiential education is not happenstance nor unorganized. This is where experiential ‘learning’ and experiential ‘education’ should be considered separately. A critical piece of the definition of this field is that which speaks to its preconceived nature. Experiential education derives from “consciously arranged experiences that provide intersections between formal learning and working, service and leisure activities.”<sup>8</sup> These arranged, designed opportunities are where experiential education lives and thrives, and are absolutely intentional.

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<sup>7</sup> Sexton, Robert F., Ungerer, Richard A., and National Institute of Education. *Rationales for Experiential Education*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, ERIC/higher Education Research Report ; 1975, No. 3, 1975. Print. Foreword.

<sup>8</sup> Sexton. 40.

In addition to these foundational definitions, there are a number of core tenets of experiential education. These pillars form the basis of experiential education and speak to the importance of its existence. While specific wording and highlighting varies between theorists, the core is the same. Jeffrey A. Cantor, a director of technical education for the Virginia Community College System, sketches these elementary principles in the following excerpt from his book, *Experiential Learning in Higher Education: Linking Classroom and Community*:

“Six common features characterize the experiential components.

- First, they are learner-centered and student-directed;
- Second, they place emphasis on problem solving, discovery, and inquiry;
- Third, they emphasize practical applications of course content;
- Fourth, they focus on holistic understanding;
- Fifth, they are perception-based;
- And sixth the emphasis is on the heuristic process—learning about learning.”<sup>9</sup>

These common features can be found in most, if not all, successful experiential education models. Each characteristic in isolation would seem wise and beneficial as part of a program. Taken together, these pillars provide an argument for a drastically different kind of education, a learning experience that speaks to the reality of settings students will face after leaving the educational environment, a learning experience that prepares students for a variety of professional experiences, and most of all, a learning experience that places emphasis on the student’s existence within the larger context of

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<sup>9</sup> Cantor, Jeffrey A., and ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. *Experiential Learning in Higher Education : Linking Classroom and Community*. Washington, DC: Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington U, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report; 1995, No. 7, 1997. Print. 24.

community and society, building better informed, more well-rounded citizens. This is the purpose of experiential education.

### **Reported Benefits of Experiential Education**

The benefits of experiential education are immeasurable. The following section explores a mere sampling of the perceived abilities of experiential education. First, we begin with the students. Perhaps the most oft-quoted benefit of alternative education models is their reach. It has long been known that certain subsets of student populations struggle more than others in the traditional academic model. This can be for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: learning ability, first language, nutrition, family background, home life, school climate, learning style, health, and social needs. By offering a variety of learning paces, styles, and instruction, alternative education models are able to reach a broader student body. This is especially true of experiential education. One of the most visible benefits is that “experiential education is a way of reaching students who for any number of reasons are alienated from education in its traditional form, and for effectively reaching persons who have historically been left out of the postsecondary education process.”<sup>10</sup>

This form of learning can also serve to reinvigorate students who may have lost some of their previous academic fervor and success. So-called “burn out” is a common phenomenon across the board for schools. By offering a new pace of learning with new objectives, “experiential education can be a revitalizing force. This revitalization can

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<sup>10</sup> Sexton, Robert F., Ungerer, Richard A., and National Institute of Education. *Rationales for Experiential Education*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, ERIC/higher Education Research Report ; 1975, No. 3, 1975. Print. 4.

come through the interaction of humanistic reflection and active involvement, providing the student with a sensitivity and understanding for the human condition.”<sup>11</sup>

Additionally, this form of education often acts as a motivating force. Suddenly students are able to see the benefits of their study and apply them outside the classroom. Fast-paced, hands-on learning can also be fun and consequently inspire students to engage and participate in their own education. Students enrolled in experiential learning are also able to see the value of their new knowledge. By interacting with the information they are asked to digest, students gain greater clarity into how learning matters. “When learners understand the value of a certain knowledge or skill and are correspondingly excited about it, learning can take place.”<sup>12</sup>

By its nature of mandatory participation, students find themselves actively involved in creating their own learning opportunities. “Students are challenged to develop personal autonomy for their own learning and doing.”<sup>13</sup> While not a phenomenon unique to experiential education by any means, this is a crucial piece of its success as participation is a mandatory element of all such programs. This personal connection to learning has been found to be hugely successful in keeping students interested and passionate about their work. In fact, studies have shown that those who participate in experiential education programs either in secondary school or undergraduate work are more likely than their peers to further their education through

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<sup>11</sup> Sexton. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Sexton. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Sexton. 25.

graduate study.<sup>14</sup> Thus, not only does this system of learning draw students in for the time being, it could be assumed that it invigorates and inspires students well after their experiential learning course concludes.

Through experiential education, learners draw connections to other facets of learning and life. This is due both to its multidisciplinary nature as well as the physical impact of learning by doing. Multidisciplinarity is shown to be more effective in creating lasting knowledge. “Every time an individual experiences something that ‘connects’ with a previous experience, that experience will tend to ‘stick,’ and something will be learned.”<sup>15</sup> This multidisciplinary nature is similarly multifaceted. Experiential education oftentimes draws students from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. It also incorporates a variety of activities and physical demands on students. This assortment of actions only adds to the robust learning experience. Educational programs that possess “multiple sensory involvement via structured work activities have been proven [to be] highly successful.”<sup>16</sup>

Experiential education naturally builds this multiplicity into the curriculum by combining information learned perhaps through traditional methods (e.g. by reading a textbook or listening to a lecture) with hands-on application of the knowledge. This combination, the root of experiential education, has profound effects. Experiential educators understand that “for teaching to be truly effective, the student must be

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<sup>14</sup> Cantor, Jeffrey A., and ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. *Experiential Learning in Higher Education : Linking Classroom and Community*. Washington, DC: Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington U, 1997. Print. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report; 1995, No. 7. (iv)

<sup>15</sup> Cantor. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Cantor. 9.

motivated to connect the content of knowledge with the context of application, thus utilizing the ability of the thinking brain to solve problems and to assimilate that knowledge in a way that can be useful in new situations.”<sup>17</sup> Hands-on learning requires problem solving on a consistent basis. By acting in the physical world, students are essentially guaranteed to face problems and be forced to creatively problem-solve in the moment. Thinking in action is known to provide rich fodder for brain development and growth. In layman's terms, these scenarios are called “teachable moments.” While teachable moments arise regularly in life, they are not only managed in experiential education, but are created in order to facilitate richer learning. These teachable moments often pair beautifully with knowledge gained elsewhere, particularly in the classroom. Students are able to pair previous knowledge of the subject in particular, or of proper action as a citizen in general, with circumstances that arise in class and the result is fantastic. It is important to combine these forms of learning, as experience without adequate framing and knowledge without experience are equally dangerous in their simplified, unilateral natures. It is not simply enough to work in a field nor to study a field, to do both is the optimal action.

And of course, experiential education is key in creating well-balanced, capable students who can respond to a variety of problems as they arise, as well as work with a number of people and organizations on many different tasks. Occupational preparation programs are quick to inform that businesses today look for teamwork and leadership from their applicants. These skills are much more easily built in hands-on environments where working within teams is oftentimes the norm. “Working [and learning] in the

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<sup>17</sup> Cantor. 8.

field enables students to experience the problems and opportunities of communicating and negotiating” with a wide group of people.<sup>18</sup> These experiences relate directly to both the workforce and to functioning as a member of a given society. In these ways, experiential education offers great opportunity for success and aims to provide an unforgettable learning experience.

### **Experiential Education within the Framework of Higher Education**

For those who, like Dewey, call for an improvement of schooling within the United States and around the world, experiential education proffers the ability to aid in the reform of higher education. It can serve to benefit this institution by approaching education from different angles and constructing a more varied and complex approach to one of the most critical experiences in a person’s life. “Experiential education can be an important factor in changing academic institutions, especially as these institutions deal with the inability of the individual to have an impact on society and in educating persons for an increasingly mobile and urban society.”<sup>19</sup> Important changes in the past few decades, such as increasing urbanization and new job creation in technological fields, must be addressed and reflected in education systems. It stands to reason that as societies change, so too do the institutions tasked with educating members of society change. Experiential education is one such manner of altering the university, a process of growth and development as old as the university itself.

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<sup>18</sup> Cantor. 11.

<sup>19</sup> Sexton, Robert F., Ungerer, Richard A., and National Institute of Education. *Rationales for Experiential Education*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, ERIC/higher Education Research Report ; 1975, No. 3, 1975. Print. 4.

Part of the problem that experiential education desires to address is the individual nature of schooling; the individual, when seen as part of a group, is influenced primarily by competition instead of collaboration. “We have developed an education culture that emphasizes competitiveness among students—for entrance into the university, for scholarships, for graduate school, for honors, etc. . . . Yet we realize that the changing American workplaces require interpersonal skills and teamwork.”<sup>20</sup> While this comparison is perhaps ironic, as the American workplace is notoriously hierarchical and cutthroat, the point still stands that collaboration is needed in addition to competition. Because of its group-based, community-oriented nature, experiential education can be used to bridge this gap. This can be done through integrating elements of teamwork and group work into a classroom environment, encouraging students to solve problems in partnership instead of in opposition to each other. Logically, “an environment in which [students] must interact with one another and the community to apply their knowledge and skills” will be far more successful in fostering collaboration, an oft-desired skill in today’s society, than one that isolates students through exams and independent projects.<sup>21</sup>

While the ability to respond to a changing society is hugely important, the utility of bridging experiential education and traditional education does not stop there. It is easy to see that “the need for connectedness in education goes even deeper than the

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<sup>20</sup> Cantor, Jeffrey A., and ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. *Experiential Learning in Higher Education : Linking Classroom and Community*. Washington, DC: Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington U, 1997. Print. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report; 1995, No. 7. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Cantor. 11.

pressures of contemporary society or the demands of the workplace.”<sup>22</sup> Experiential education benefits all education by engaging with the learner, drawing connections, and changing the landscape of questioning and discovery. This school of thought does what many desire for students, which is described as “a wide array of learning opportunities that engage students in experiencing, creating, and solving real problems, using their own experiences and working with others.”<sup>23</sup> This, of course, is in addition to securing employment and making a living wage following graduation, practical albeit unromantic motivators.

Experiential education serves to round out the educational process and provide tangible results. This beneficial connection is made visible in the following statement:

“Theoretical study and critical thought are essential as sources of form, structure, and discipline. But in the absence of real acts with real consequences, the discipline is incomplete and the moral aspect of liberal education becomes as abstract and as remote from the practical as is metaphysics. This is where experiential education makes its most profound contribution to the liberal arts—and this is where the liberal arts need a healthy dose of real experience.”<sup>24</sup>

While perhaps this conceptualization of “real experience” constantly exists just beyond the horizon, a utopian idea not fully realized in any one school of thought, experiential education finds merit in reaching towards it. By bringing experience into the fold, experiential education serves to create a more appropriate and successful learning practice. The benefits are clear and as such, a lack of experiential education can be problematic for learning institutions. This is where the liberal arts sometimes fear

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<sup>22</sup> Parnell, Dale. "Cerebral Context." *Vocational Education Journal* 71.3 (1996): 18-21,50. Print. 19.

<sup>23</sup> Knapp, Clifford. *Just beyond the Classroom : Community Adventures for Interdisciplinary Learning*. Charleston, W. Va.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, 1996. Print. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Cantor, Jeffrey A., and ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. *Experiential Learning in Higher Education : Linking Classroom and Community*. Washington, DC: Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington U, 1997. Print. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report; 1995, No. 7. 36.

alternative education. “Experiential education potentially constitutes a fundamental challenge to the traditional definitions of knowledge and the historical arrangements of power on which the university operates.”<sup>25</sup> Anytime that such a fundamental challenge is made, as is the case when education is demonstrated to be incomplete and requiring change, the dominant institution will likely resist. This is a significant obstacle for experiential education but one that can be overcome through dialogue and partnership. If liberal arts institutions realize the benefit of collaboration, the fear of competition may be quelled.

### **Challenges Facing Experiential Education**

Despite its innumerable benefits, experiential education faces some significant obstacles, both externally and internally. Many of these challenges stem from popular misunderstandings of the field. Within institutions where a strong bond does not exist between experiential education and more formal, traditional learning programs, it can be difficult for alternative learning models to gain purchase. Lack of understanding makes it common for experiential education to be shrugged off and viewed as less fitting of a higher education experience. For this reason, it can be hard to create the opportunity for experiential educational programs within the pedagogical landscape.

Additionally, existing programs face challenges both in terms of content and in funding. There is significant pressure on most instructors, both experiential and otherwise, to “cover the material.”<sup>26</sup> This is not unique to higher education. In fact, many teachers as early as the elementary school level feel burdened by expectations

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<sup>25</sup> Cantor. 33.

<sup>26</sup> Cantor. 14.

placed upon them and their students by governing bodies; this reality exists across the board for educators. Many teachers feel limited in their ability to craft a unique curriculum and instead feel forced to teach material that can be measured via quantitative final exams and used to generate statistics. These pressures exist quite strongly within the field of experiential education as well. It is true that curricula is planned in advance, as follows the definition of experiential education, stating explicitly that these courses are premeditated and intentionally crafted. There is priority, however, on responding to teachable moments that occur unpredictably. While certain course-specific objectives surely shape each class, the emphasis of experiential education as a whole is on problem-solving, real-world experience, and individual participation. Sticking to a regimented course plan can be challenging when instructors deign to grasp valuable learning opportunities as they arise. This desire jeopardizes their ability to “teach to the test” and “cover the material.”<sup>27</sup> Instead, experiential educators often choose to foster organic learning opportunities and critical thinking abilities. While meritorious in ambition, this tendency of experiential education often creates skepticism within larger learning institutions.

Another significant challenge facing experiential education is that of resources. Because of the different nature of the courses, these classes often have different requirements. The prototypical American university is constructed to support prototypical classes. It is common practice for instructors to gain access to classrooms and technological equipment to host traditional classes. Students, as well, often already

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<sup>27</sup> Parnell, Dale. "Cerebral Context." *Vocational Education Journal* 71.3 (1996): 18-21,50. Print. 18.

possess the necessary materials for such classes. Experiential education classes stand apart in this nature. The experiential classroom is not a typical classroom but rather, a pre-existing space in another setting, regularly off-campus. Oftentimes, this classroom does not involve a typical classroom with four walls, desks, and chairs at all. The experiential classroom can exist anywhere and therein lies the beauty. Experiential education recognizes the ability and need to learn in a multitude of settings and styles and integrates this into its structure. However, such a varied structure poses logistical hurdles to organizations. Transporting students off-campus can provide greater cost to the university or department that houses the course. Providing materials also poses potential increased costs. As each experiential education class is different from one another, it is impossible to standardize resources the way that pencils and green books may be standardized for typical liberal arts classes.

Furthermore, due to the variable nature of the course, additional planning and preparation time is required. This cost is less visible than others oftentimes because instructors absorb the extra expenditure themselves. It is common that “the real costs of these programs go unnoticed due to the increased burdens carried by faculty in an attempt to deliver the kinds of educational experiences they fully realize their students need.”<sup>28</sup> Instructors working in this field usually do so because they are passionate about the content and eager to provide a unique learning opportunity for students. While impassioned instructors are a remarkable benefit of experiential education, it poses a challenge in that these leaders willingly take on extra costs, both in time and in resources, without explicitly stating such. While the majority of the onus falls on the

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<sup>28</sup> Cantor. 16.

instructors themselves, such actions can also be a burden to the larger institutions. This is particularly the case when instructors have other responsibilities to the university that are separate from their participation in experiential education programs. By giving extra time and energy to experiential education courses, instructors likely possess decreased ability to give of themselves elsewhere. This can become a problem within institutions that do not value the benefits of the experiential education but instead, prefer to highlight the opportunities provided by traditional learning models. Therefore the “missing link to successful cooperative education often is a systematic campus-wide scheme for compensating faculty.”<sup>29</sup> The lack of such an infrastructure is all too prevalent within academic institutions today.

While the aforementioned obstacles facing experiential education are significant and often impact programming, they can be abated. The primary necessity for overcoming such hurdles is greater partnership across departments and educational models. When given greater support, experiential education opportunities become less burdensome. Additionally, with increased operational ability, such programs are sure to witness increased benefits as well, benefits that reach far beyond the borders of the programs themselves. Those that argue that experiential education does not pair well with liberal arts education are limited in their suppositions. Proponents claim that “experiential learning is incompatible with more traditional learning only if the academy is incompatible with the society of which it is a part.”<sup>30</sup> Much progress can be made by crossing artificial boundaries and pairing diverse learning models, both within

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<sup>29</sup> Cantor. 17.

<sup>30</sup> Cantor. 19.

the university and without, in order to create richer learning experiences for students and teachers alike. This is the promise of experiential education. In the subsequent sections I shall explore one particular experiential education program—the University of Oregon Urban Farm.

## **The Urban Farm**

### **An Overview of the Urban Farm**

The Urban Farm is both a program and a place. These two components can be separated only artificially; the class is as dependent on the space as the space is on the class. Its physical dimensions serve as the outdoor classroom in which the academic program of the farm takes place. Students may register for the Urban Farm class as well as take a walking tour to visit the Urban Farm. While this linguistic overlap may be confusing at first, the shared naming begins to make great sense over time and eventually feels comfortable and proper. This symbiotic relationship is one of many that make the farm special.

Located across Franklin Boulevard from the majority of the University of Oregon campus, the Urban Farm occupies space in the northern fringe. However, despite its distance from iconic student spaces, such as the Memorial Quad in front of the Knight Library or the Erb Memorial Union amphitheater, the Urban Farm is far from 'removed' from campus life. The Millrace area in which it is housed is also home to many of the university art studios as well as campus operational buildings. Additionally, the farm occupies prime real estate between the heart of campus and the footbridge across the Willamette River leading to Autzen stadium, where students flock each fall to support the UO football team with fervor.

As a program, the Urban Farm teaches students from any number of academic disciplines how to grow food in an urban context. Class time revolves around student conversations investigating where food comes from, debates about the various forms of

agriculture, and most importantly, doing the physical work required to successfully farm. The lessons vary based on the season and instructor but the takeaways are often the same—that growing food is not only possible, but incredibly rewarding, that creating a relationship with one’s place is imperative for informed, sustainable living, and that being a part of a community is one of the joys of life. These are simply a sampling of the many lessons dealt at the Urban Farm.

After more than thirty years of existence, the Urban Farm continues to grow. Each academic year, upwards of 300 students register for the Urban Farm class and countless others come to work sessions to lend a hand and join in the harvest. Every term a handful of the best and brightest members of the Lane County sustainable agriculture scene join the instructing staff in helping young people learn about their foodsheds and about how to grow their own food. This food, when harvested, is returned to the students in gratitude of their contribution at the Urban Farm. Excess harvest, particularly an issue in summer months, is donated to local food banks. None of the produce grown on site is sold nor wasted. All production is organic. These are the roots of the Urban Farm.

### **The History of the Urban Farm**

The Urban Farm program at the University of Oregon dates back four decades. Over the decades it has changed to reflect the changing times and political climate, both within the University of Oregon and the larger community. At times, the program has faced significant challenges and even imperilment. But it has survived and to this day welcomes students into its bounteous green space, as the farm thrives now more than ever.

The Urban Farm grew from an idea crafted by Richard Britz in 1975.”<sup>31</sup> It began largely as a collective movement of students growing food on university land near the river. The Urban Farm was originally intended to operate as a test site for Richard Britz’ idea of the “Edible City.”<sup>32</sup> The concept of the Edible City was to redesign city blocks around a central farming area. Britz targeted the “surplus space available in a typical Eugene city block” and envisioned “city-block scale communities that conserved and/or created energy, minimized waste and utilized shared open space for food production.”<sup>33</sup> For diagrams and other sketches of Britz’ Edible City and the Urban Farm, please refer to Appendix 1. Because the land of the Urban Farm was comparable in size to the interior of a typical municipal block, the Urban Farm was selected as a test site for this model.

While Britz was the inventor behind the project, he could not go it alone. A motivated group of students surrounded him and together, the Urban Farm took shape. Over time, this work spurred the publishing of the Edible City Resource Manual in 1981 and the creation of the Edible City Resource Center. Despite the fall of The Edible City from the forefront of the food movement, these momentous steps in the development of urban farming continue to have ripple-effect in Eugene today. The Edible City Resource Center eventually morphed into the Willamette Farm and Food Coalition, a local nonprofit concerned with building a sustainable foodshed in Lane

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<sup>31</sup> Keeler, Harper. Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture. U of Oregon, 2011. Print. 50.

<sup>32</sup> Sayre, Laura., and Clark, Sean. Fields of Learning The Student Farm Movement in North America. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, Culture of the Land, 2011. Print. Page \_\_\_\_

<sup>33</sup> Keeler, Harper. Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture. U of Oregon, 2011. Print. 50.

County.<sup>34</sup> Britz was eventually denied tenure and his time at the farm came to an end. With the continued interest and work of dedicated students, the Urban Farm stayed afloat until it was adopted by Ann Bettman. Bettman brought an organizational hand to the program and together with the students, grew the program to new heights. Under her leadership, the Urban Farm as an organized university course came to be. Thus began the cycle of instructors, students, and change within the Urban Farm, coming and going with time but always leaving their trace on the place. Today, neither Bettman nor Britz' presence grace the farm but their work is visible everywhere and the farm thrives on.

The sailing has not always been smooth. The Urban Farm has, at times, faced great pushback from the university. Some of these disputes have imperiled the farm's entire future while others have jeopardized smaller portions of the program. The farm has come under threat from a number of development groups, including the Riverfront Research Park and PeaceHealth Medical Group.<sup>35</sup> These interests were eventually laid to rest, but not without struggle. The livestock component of the farm also disappeared over time. The rabbits and chickens that once provided free, in-situ fertilizer no longer walk the grounds due to campus regulations that deem them to be research subjects. Perhaps student desire for their return will win out and bring animals back in to further close the loop of production, cutting through bureaucratic red tape with an agricultural exemption. For now, however, this is also a loss incurred by the Urban Farm with the passage of time.

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<sup>34</sup> Landfood.org. Willamette Farm and Food Coalition. Web.

<sup>35</sup> Keeler, Harper. Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture. University of Oregon, 2011. Print. 53.

The physical space that the farm occupies has grown and changed over the years. A significant portion of the most valuable farmland was lost to the expansion of the UO woodshop in the 1980s.<sup>36</sup> This expansion not only took space from the Urban Farm but led to the destruction of thousands of cubic feet of class one soil—some of the best soil in the region. The farm absorbed this loss by expanding into the area to the northeast of the woodshop in what is called the “back forty.”<sup>37</sup> This move jeopardized the productivity of the farm with the loss of invaluable soil, but the back forty stands today as a testament to growing and rebuilding with available resources. Another challenge to space came with the construction of a large parking lot on the eastern edge of the farm. The construction of this asphalt parking space necessitated the removal of a number of fruit trees and once more, led to the loss of valuable soil as well as a number of prized fruit trees. An unintended benefit of this construction however, has been the creation of a warm microclimate on the border between the farm and the parking lot. This area is extremely productive for growing heat-desiring varieties as the expanse of asphalt produces an increased temperature in the immediate area year-round. Additionally, current farm leaders design to use this space to demonstrate the viability of growing fruit trees and other foodstuffs in border spaces. The university as well as the city of Eugene continue to regulate what is allowed near roads and parking lots and it is hopeful that the space between the Urban Farm and the student athlete parking lot can demonstrate the propensity of coexistence between such spaces.

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<sup>36</sup> Sayre, Laura., and Clark, Sean. *Fields of Learning The Student Farm Movement in North America*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, Culture of the Land, 2011. Print.

<sup>37</sup> Keeler, Harper. *Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture*. U of Oregon, 2011. Print. 54.

Perhaps the most positive change in land use at the Urban Farm was the acquisition of a second site in the spring of 2014. This site, colloquially referred to as “the Columbia site,” resides between Columbia Street and Columbia Alley, between 17th and 19th Avenues, just east of the University of Oregon. The university desired to create a transitional green space between university buildings and residential area. Residents of the eastern border of the University of Oregon have met recent expansion by the university into this area with growing concerns and vocalized dissent. As part of UO’s efforts to assuage these concerns, they transferred the management of the Columbia site to the Urban Farm in hopes of creating common space and shared community interest in the east campus area. After only two years in production, the Columbia site already possesses a strong agricultural aesthetic and draws local residents in to examine the tomatoes and fava beans that spring up out of what was once grass. Not only is the Columbia site effective in bridging camps between the university and the community, it is also crucial in creating more farming opportunities for students. Because there is more space in which to work, the program increased greatly-needed student enrollment opportunities following the acquisition of more land. This expansion speaks to the success and longevity of the Urban Farm program and bodes well for the future.

### **The Importance of Place at the Urban Farm**

As a place-based, experiential educational experience, the physical location of the Urban Farm is of the utmost importance. The work students do takes place, quite literally, in the dirt. This particular educational experience could occur nowhere else. Students learn about the Missoula Floods, massive geological events that transpired

during the last ice age, and connect these phenomena to the landscape of the Urban Farm. They learn about the flooding of the Willamette River and the way the river used to meander, cutting new paths through the land. In their heads, these pieces of history connect to the present-day, to the soil they plunge their arms into. Farming at the Urban Farm is an incredible exploration of place.

The expansion of the Urban Farm into its new annex site at Columbia Street provides further lessons in place. By farming at both sites, less than a mile apart, students learn how rich the soil at the original Urban Farm site is and how much location matters. Farther from the Willamette, the Columbia site is not a benefactor of the rich river deposition and therefore, the soil pales in comparison to the high-quality loam nearer to the river. Students learn of the struggles of growing in soil that is much wetter, does not drain effectively, and that requires higher inputs of compost and fertilizer. A great deal more effort goes into the preparation of the soil at the Columbia site, and yet the yield there is still oftentimes less productive than that of the parent site. The Columbia site also provides a different type of education about place in that it serves as an experimental transition space between large university buildings and small personal homes. The Urban Farm currently operates as an experiment in bridging gaps in communities and in building plans. By working here, students learn the importance of open spaces and witness community members walking through the garden, admiring the work and playing with their children in the straw bale circle. This is a clear example of space manipulation and place awareness in order to ease community tensions.

Place comes into play on a larger scale as well in terms of the actual planting. The Urban Farm is constrained by its climate. The varieties grown here are often

adapted by regional seed farmers for this particular microclimate. Students at the farm learn about growing seasons in the Pacific Northwest, about how to use greenhouses to start tomatoes that would freeze if planted outside in early spring, they learn about growing apples instead of oranges, etc. All of these experiences contribute to a unique sense of place and of the importance of place not only in farming, but in our everyday lives. Growing food in the rich flood-plain soil teaches students where they come from and how lucky the Urban Farm is to possess the land it does, and how valuable good land can be.

### **Curriculum at the Urban Farm**

The curriculum at the Urban Farm is variable. It changes with the seasons, the constraints on the program, the instructors, the students, the weather, etc. However, there are core tenets that remain throughout the years. The primary learning tool of the Urban Farm, year in and year out, is a course book called *The Urban Farm Reader*.<sup>38</sup> *The Urban Farm Reader*, originally created by Ann Bettman, is a compilation of writing and diagrams from a number of instructors from Urban Farm history as well as experts in the field of sustainable agriculture. For examples of content of *The Urban Farm Reader*, please consult Appendix 2. This is the primary reading required each term and, combined with the hands-on learning that occurs throughout the term, forms the basis of the final exam.

*The Urban Farm Reader*, while it grows and changes with the passing of time, exhibits core tenets of education at the Urban Farm. It begins with maps of the urban

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<sup>38</sup> Bettman, Ann, et al. *The Urban Farm Reader*. University of Oregon. 2016. Print.

farm, one graphical and one verbal. This introduction immediately introduces the reader to the importance of place. The verbal tour of the Urban Farm traces the history of the space, referring occasionally to spaces that no longer exist as described. Suddenly the Urban Farm takes on a rich history, students learn about the construction of the place, where it grew from, they come to recognize that each piece of the farm exists intentionally and with history. The reader combines a number of learning styles, integrating dense, scientific information with colloquial narratives. Written instructions to “reach down and feel the soil, run your fingers in the soil... this is what good soil feels like” are followed by detail-heavy descriptions of soil particle size, replete with charts and graphs.<sup>39</sup> This juxtaposition mimics the education style at the urban farm, combining first-hand, corporeal experience with theoretical knowledge acquired through reading or listening.

These sections are followed by sections on plant families and weeds. The Reader provides a comprehensive list of the uses of various plants and herbs for traditional medicinal remedies. Next succeeds a section on the history of the Urban Farm, with text taken directly from “Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture” written by Harper Keeler in 2011.<sup>40</sup> This sample of Keeler’s work is both grounding and exciting; it adds to the feeling that the Urban Farm is a collective effort, constantly changing and growing, and that it offers opportunity for those involved to intimately shape it.

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<sup>39</sup> Bettman, Ann, et al. *The Urban Farm Reader*. University of Oregon. 2016. Print. 6.

<sup>40</sup> Keeler, Harper. *Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture*. University of Oregon, 2011. Print.

The last section of *The Urban Farm Reader* is titled “Urban Farm Favorite Books.”<sup>41</sup> This resource encourages students to continue their learning in the field of agriculture, recognizing that the Urban Farm, while wonderfully eye-opening, is merely a jumping off point. What matters next is that students integrate the newly-acquired knowledge into their lives and that they continue to learn. The list of books provides students with pathways to grow and explore even after the class ends. This resource comes replete with instructor anecdotes, such as a story that employees at the UO Duck Store always claim that the Urban Farm bookshelves are the most interesting and most popular. Professor Keeler claims that “If you use a highlighter on Wendell Berry,” an American farmer and novelist whose nonfiction reads like poetry and whose name appears repeatedly on the booklist, “you will find yourself with pages of solid yellow.”<sup>42</sup> This yarns serves only to greater stir students’ fervor.

The non-written component of the curriculum is harder to grasp as it is of variable nature. Each term students are required to complete a number of projects, oftentimes including a community service portion, an exploration of “eating local,” and designing an urban farm component. Beyond these projects, the majority of the learning comes hands-on, during scheduled class time. During class sessions the material varies greatly, particularly depending on the season. However, it always speaks to the same foundation. Students engage in a number of agricultural tasks such as weeding, preparing beds, planting, transplanting, sorting seeds, making compost, farm maintenance tasks, harvesting, etc., students work both in teams and independently,

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<sup>41</sup>Bettman, Ann, et al. *The Urban Farm Reader*. University of Oregon. 2016. Print. 56.

<sup>42</sup> Keeler, Harper. “Musings on civic agriculture, the urban farm, and local food.” Urban Farm, Eugene. 2016. Verbal lecture.

instructors and experienced students give work demonstrations, students ask questions, and together the community grows its knowledge of organic, urban farming. These work sessions are imperative to knowledge acquisition at the Urban Farm. Learning through experience is far and away the largest component of the curriculum.

### **The Urban Farm in the Media**

Demonstrating its critical existence with the University of Oregon, the Urban Farm stars in a number of promotional videos, journalistic films, and personal testimonial pieces. Perhaps the most notable cameos occur during general University of Oregon advertisements titled “Be Bold: the University of Oregon” and “You Will: The University of Oregon.”<sup>4344</sup> These two videos are similar in content, production, and theme. They even utilize the same speaker to narrate the text. The videos have the air of advertisements for use during timeouts of televised football games. They are both approximately thirty seconds in length and are comprised of a montage of real-life video clips and photographs displaying a diversity of life and activity at the University of Oregon. Both preach a similar narrative—of the unique nature of the educational experience at the University of Oregon, of the emphasis on the student, of students stepping outside their comfort zones and out of the traditional classroom model, and of the global context of learning and education’s ability to change the world and its students. The medium is important to consider in that these are high-dollar, branding videos created by advertising firms who seek to exploit various dimensions of the university in order to sell it to prospective students and donors alike. However, the

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<sup>43</sup> UOregon. “Be Bold: the University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2010. Web.

<sup>44</sup> UOregon. “You Will: The University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2012. Web.

presence of the Urban Farm in the videos only further cements its importance to this place and its role in exciting and motivating students through its unique nature. The text of “Be Bold’ is as follows:

“Now is the time to be bold, to explore, to evolve. This is who you are: unconventional, exceptional. Own it. Be proud of it. Be open to adventure. So go ahead: create, contribute, learn, belong. This is real. This is now. This is how you change everything. This is the University of Oregon.”<sup>45</sup>

In similar vein, “You Will” offers these words of inspiration:

“Wake up. The future is upon us. Who will define it? Who will defend it? Who will explore it? Who will celebrate it? Who will change the world, and change themselves in the process? You will. This is the University of Oregon.”<sup>46</sup>

What is unique about these promotional videos is twofold. The first is the emphasis on the philosophies of experiential education. While perhaps unintentional, in attempting to be unique in opportunities offered, these videos reach clearly into the realm of alternative education. Instead of highlighting images of students studying in the library or sitting inside at desks, the shots are much more active and variable in nature. The words stand in conjunction with the images, reemphasizing the importance of leaving the classroom and embarking on adventure, on exploring the future, on the student as the guide of their own learning.

The second unique dimension of these advertisements is their portrayal of the Urban Farm. Certainly the Urban Farm is a beloved program to those involved intimately in its operation and classes. What is more awe-worthy is the importance of this program on a macro level within the University. With a short length of only thirty seconds, these videos certainly faced tough decisions of what to include to portray both

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<sup>45</sup> UOregon. “Be Bold: the University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2010. Web.

<sup>46</sup> UOregon. “You Will: The University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2012. Web.

the school and the message; the possibilities of images are nearly endless within such a vast public school. What is shocking, then, is that both “Be Bold” and “You Will” depict the Urban Farm. What’s more, the farm appears in “Be Bold” not once, but twice. Refer to figures 1-4 to see these illustrations.

Like all images in these montages, the farm references are ephemeral. In fact, it may take the viewer a couple viewings to notice the scenes at all. But once one does, they become difficult to forget. The first scene in “Be Bold” shows a male student peering into his hand, curiously prodding a handful of soil with his other hand as students around him lean in to look. A bed of flowers, bright reminders of spring, blur in the background. The text accompanying this moment? “This is real.”<sup>47</sup> The implication is obvious. Here a student literally gets his hands dirty and the University asserts that this is what it means to engage in real life and real education. The second clip is shorter, occurs in a blur among other images of student faces. It shows a smiling young woman holding the handle of a rake, its tines resting casually beside her face in the sunlight. Here the man’s voice says, “This is how you change everything.”<sup>48</sup> This reference, too, is clear. Farming has often been looked to as a way of changing communities and of remedying environmental problems. This potential is clear to the university as well, changing both the foodshed and education at the university.

The images in “You Will” are not overlaid by narration but instead come between the questions “Who will define it?” and “Who will defend it?”<sup>49</sup> This interjection seems fitting as two students dig into a garden bed side-by-side in an

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<sup>47</sup> UOregon. “Be Bold: the University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2010. Web. 0:21.

<sup>48</sup> UOregon. “Be Bold: the University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2010. Web. 0:25.

<sup>49</sup> UOregon. “You Will: The University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2012. Web. 0:07.

overcast drizzle. Immediately after, the shot changes. The students are no longer visible and all the viewer sees is a shovel plunging into dark, rich earth. The organization is such that it implies that these students will both define and defend the future through the same action—farming. While the moments are but brief, the scenes taken from these promotional videos speak volumes to the importance of the Urban Farm and the University of Oregon and of farming in harnessing students’ potential in changing the future for better.

Additionally exist a number of informational and journalistic videos about the Urban Farm.<sup>50,51,52,53,54,55,56</sup> These videos range in content and format. Some provide interviews with farm instructors, such as Professor Keeler. Others take the form of personal narrative of students who took the class years ago and are returning, or of those who are new to the experience. One video is formatted as a slideshow with pictures, attempting to explain what the Urban Farm program is and what makes it special. It is interesting to note that students in the journalism department, another experiential educational field, repeatedly use the Urban Farm as a backdrop for their projects, even students who have no prior connection to the space. All of these videos serve to demonstrate the importance and success of the Urban Farm within the University of Oregon community and the desire of its members to share the word about happenings at the Urban Farm.

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<sup>50</sup> Bryant, Amy, Nissa Gamboa, Becky Metrick & Kalie Wilburn. “The University of Oregon Urban Farm Community.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2011. Web.

<sup>51</sup> Emerald Media. “UO’s Urban Farm.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2012. Web.

<sup>52</sup> Emerald Media. “Urban Farm.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2014. Web.

<sup>53</sup> Hardy, Allie. “University of Oregon Urban Farm.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2013. Web.

<sup>54</sup> Haynes, Julia. “University of Oregon Urban Farm.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2013. Web.

<sup>55</sup> Haynes, Julia. “UO Urban Farm.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2013. Web.

<sup>56</sup> Sabrams950. “Urban Farm University of Oregon.” Online video clip. YouTube. 2011. Web.

An interesting addition to this team of Urban Farm based videos is a short video examining the UO day of service.<sup>57</sup> In it, a number of leaders are interviewed espousing the value of community service and volunteerism by college students. When the camera pans to the students actually doing the service, the viewer learns that the students are farming. There they stand, shovels in hand, in the rain, working together to improve their community spaces and help neighbors. It is likely that many of the students pictured have experience farming at the Urban Farm, but even if this is not the case, the value of possessing agricultural skills as well as teamwork skills and community motivation shines brightly. These videos, when taken together, demonstrate the importance of the Urban Farm, of experiential education at the University of Oregon, and also of students contributing to their communities by farming.

### **The Urban Farm in Academia**

In the introduction to her book *Fields of Learning: The student farm movement in North America*, Laura Sayre claims that “If the current student farm movement is to continue to flourish ... it will do so by engaging in an active public and scholarly discussion of the means and ends of experiential food system education within university and college curricula.”<sup>58</sup> The Urban Farm movement in particular and university gardening programs in general require attention and conversation in order to solidify their existence within the academic landscape. The Urban Farm’s mention in a

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<sup>57</sup> UOregon. “See How UO Students Give Back” Online video clip. YouTube. 2016. Web.

<sup>58</sup> Sayre, Laura., and Clark, Sean. *Fields of Learning The Student Farm Movement in North America*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, Culture of the Land, 2011. Print. 5.

number of academic works in the past half decade bode well for its increased visibility and the potential longevity of the program.

In 2011, then interim director Harper Keeler published and defended a significant master's thesis titled "Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture."<sup>59</sup> In this critical work, Keeler explores the history of agriculture in the field of Landscape Architecture, as it is in this department that the Urban Farm is housed. He follows this with a thorough analysis of David Orr's six foundations for ecological education as well as an exploration of the tenets of classical place-based education. Finally, he tells the story of the Urban Farm and its rich history, using David Orr's six principles to examine with what success the Urban Farm meets the goals of place-based, experiential education. He contrasts this with other Landscape Architecture courses, such as "Design-Build" and the "Plants" sequence, finding that The Urban Farm more successfully meets the full spectrum of goals of Orr's ecological education.<sup>60</sup> This seminal work gained great notoriety for the Urban Farm, seeking to further cement its place within the institution of higher learning at the University of Oregon.

The Urban Farm climbed another notch the same year with the publication of the aforementioned *Fields of Learning*.<sup>61</sup> This book serves as the most comprehensive examination of university farms in the United States and Canada that exists to date. The project began with an attempt to compile a list of every university or college possessing

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<sup>59</sup> Keeler, Harper. *Considering the Urban Farm Program and the Role of Place-Based Experiential Education in the Pedagogy of Landscape Architecture*. University of Oregon, 2011. Print.

<sup>60</sup> Keeler. 16.

<sup>61</sup> Sayre, Laura., and Clark, Sean. *Fields of Learning The Student Farm Movement in North America*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, Culture of the Land, 2011. Print.

an educational farm in the early 2000s as part of the “Farming for Credit” resource maintained by the Rodale Institute, a “nonprofit dedicated to pioneering organic farming through research and outreach since 1947.”<sup>62</sup> This project grew to reach its final product, a full-blown book exploring the status of university farming programs in the United States, in 2011. Of the fifteen case studies explored in *Fields of Learning*, the Urban Farm is listed fifth chronologically, in the portion detailing the “Back to the Land” farms, or what Keeler fondly calls “the cool guys.”<sup>63</sup> The Urban Farm section, written primarily by previous Urban Farm instructor Ann Bettman, chronicles the history of the farm in the most detail available in written form to this day, followed by pieces detailing the various actors present at the farm, culminating with excerpts written by Landscape Architects and farmers Harper Keeler and Renee Wilkinson.

It is the hope and desire of this work that this, too, can add to the academic portfolio accumulating in favor of the Urban Farm. It is likely that in coming years more and more will be done to study such programs. If academic discourse is imperative for the survival of alternative education programs, one can be sure that the number of studies in such fields will only continue to increase in coming years.

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<sup>62</sup> Sayre, Laura. “Farming for Credit.” *Rodale Institute*. Web.

<sup>63</sup> Keeler, Harper. “Musings on civic agriculture, the urban farm, and local food.” Urban Farm, Eugene. 2016.

## Case Studies

### *Fields of Learning*

The work *Fields of Learning: the student farm movement in North America* is ground-breaking in providing information about student farms in the United States. Sayre sees benefit in this publication in that, “Taken as a whole, the essays in the collection illuminate the persistent obstacles as well as the remarkable triumphs of student farming over the past century and more.”<sup>64</sup> Prior to the publication of this work, individual university farms lacked information about other farms. Most of what was known existed only as hearsay and suppositions. Compiling information in a publication creates far greater access and opportunity for farms to learn from one another and grow a stronger movement.

Each case study provided weaves a different tale of its inception, progression, and functionality. This uniqueness is unsurprising in such a field, as each farm developed largely independently of others, in response to unique circumstances, and following the whims of those guiding the farm from groundbreaking day onward. These differences speak to the variety of successes in the field as well as the ability of university farms to address a number of different issues and respond to varying needs. In fact, claims Sayre, “The deep diversity ... within the goals and interests of student farming is, ultimately, one of its greatest strengths.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Sayre, Laura., and Clark, Sean. *Fields of Learning The Student Farm Movement in North America*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, Culture of the Land, 2011. Print. 26.

<sup>65</sup> Sayre. 17.

With these differences in mind, it is interesting to examine other similar programs within North America. Even in the company of fourteen other successful and notable campus farming programs, the Urban Farm stands out. The Urban Farm is unique from these other programs in a number of ways. The first is that it is the only known program of its kind housed within a university's Landscape Architecture department. At the University of Oregon, it is hard to picture the Urban Farm residing within any other department; here space, place, and design are critical to the idea behind the Urban Farm and its everyday operation.

Surely the Landscape Architecture department is major influencer of the artistic design of the Urban Farm. This space is known for its soul-calming beauty and the refreshment it provides to weary, concrete-bound students. What's more, the Landscape Architecture department has been crucial in defending the existence of the Urban Farm and aiding in its battles against infringing interests.

Another difference is the lack of marketing program within the Urban Farm. As Sayre demonstrates, it is common for colleges to pair an agriculture program with a business program so that students learn both how to grow produce and how to market it.<sup>66</sup> This approach, while certainly relevant in the larger span of organic farming, often means that students spend less time physically growing the produce and more time in the library crunching numbers.

This split priority limits student access to the hands-on learning aspect of the course and would likely lead to more limited knowledge of growing organic vegetables,

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<sup>66</sup> Sayre, Laura, and Clark, Sean. *Fields of Learning The Student Farm Movement in North America*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, Culture of the Land, 2011. Print

a primary goal of the Urban Farm. Certainly these differences stem from intentional decisions on the part of the Urban Farm directional staff and speak to the priorities and uniqueness of this Eugene program.

## **The Urban Farm within the Framework of Experiential Education**

Connections between experiential education and the University of Oregon Urban Farm are clear and far-reaching. The Urban Farm is a clear prototype of experiential education. In fact, looking at the first portion of the previously provided definition alone indicates a clear match between this style of teaching and learning and this particular program. The Urban Farm satisfies the motive of “learning outside the normal classroom environment” in spades.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, the Urban Farm, while considered both a sacred space and an outdoor classroom, is certainly not a “normal classroom environment.”<sup>68</sup> The definition of experiential education is a bit of a looser fit when referring to internships, but only slightly. While the Urban Farm does not deliberately manage internships, many students have used it as an opportunity to explore such options. Furthermore, field experience and cooperative education are the name of the game at the Urban Farm. Finally, the Urban Farm is crucial in creating an environment in which students step into areas otherwise “unexplored in the [traditional] classroom.”<sup>69</sup> This last point is perhaps the greatest success of the Urban Farm. Not only does it provide students with a new learning environment, it also creates new content. In the blending of these new dimensions, the Urban Farm uses experiential education to become something entirely unique.

The Urban Farm meets most criteria and goals provided by experiential education theorists and proponents. Harper Keeler demonstrated in his master's thesis

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<sup>67</sup> Sexton, Robert F., Ungerer, Richard A., and National Institute of Education. *Rationales for Experiential Education*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, ERIC/higher Education Research Report ; 1975, No. 3, 1975. Print. Foreword.

<sup>68</sup> Sexton. Foreword.

<sup>69</sup> Sexton. Foreword.

that the Urban Farm compares quite favorably against other UO Landscape Architecture teaching when analyzed following David Orr's six principles of ecological literacy education. The same holds true for any number of principles. For example, one list provides the six common features of experiential education as being "learner-oriented and directed, emphasizing problem solving and inquiry, encouraging practical applications of learned content, focusing on holistic understanding, [being] perception-based, and centering on the heuristic process."<sup>70</sup> Observation of a single class period at the Urban Farm would certainly exhibit all of these characteristics, likely often in unison and with repetition.

At the Urban Farm, participation on the part of the learner is key. Learning transpires through the body, working in tandem with other bodies, stimulating the mind. In any given setting at the farm, students must choose what task they wish to execute, devise the proper way to do so, consider the action within its larger context, and oftentimes work with other students or instructors to complete the task. This process drives home the messages of experiential education, leaving a lasting impact on the student.

The unique space of the Urban Farm also contributes to its success within the field of experiential education. Upon entering the gate of the farm, visitors immediately sense that they occupy a new and different space than what exists outside the walls. The rich biodiversity spills over the edges of raised beds and crawls out from behind fences.

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<sup>70</sup> Cantor, Jeffrey A., and ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education. *Experiential Learning in Higher Education : Linking Classroom and Community*. Washington, DC: Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington U, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report; 1995, No. 7, 1997. Print. 24.

This place is alive. It is impossible to be in such a setting and not feel the brain begin to churn. The eye does not know where to focus, finding rich and intriguing sites every time it lands. One of the most common conversations on the first day of class begin with “what plant is that?” or, “can you eat that?” This process of inquiry continues not only through the last day of the term, but on into a student’s everyday life and bleeds into their future. The Urban Farm, by mere merit of its nature, draws students in and asks to be tended. In responding, students learn lessons and gain experiences they will not soon forget.

## **The Future of Experiential Education at the Urban Farm**

The past four decades posed many threats to the existence and development of the Urban Farm; this trend is likely to continue. As the university continues to grow and expand, all proximal land will be considered as viable for new uses, some uses likely not yet imagined. While the farm can likely rely upon its designation as a sacred space to ward off development, further cementation of the program is key. The farm originated as an experimental design and continues to be such. Every year new strides are made and the use of the land and the program shift slightly. This can work to the benefit of the future of the Urban Farm insofar as these changes continue to be growth-oriented and demonstrate positive results.

A number of positive trends offer hope for the future of the program. Successes of green space transition zones as experimentally implemented at the Columbia site will be key in acquiring more land for use by the Urban Farm. The current vision is to extend the Columbia greenway a number of blocks to the east, creating a long strip of public garden space that is well-tended and welcoming to neighbors. These productive walkways will stretch for blocks, operating as a passageway for residents and a gathering place for students. The produce gifted to students each term is another clear success of the program. The Urban Farm may up its ante in coming years by donating fresh produce to the food pantry opening on campus in fall of 2016. This is one further way that the farm brings added benefit to the University of Oregon. Additionally, the Urban Farm may continue to stand out for its benefaction to the larger Lane County community through students' contribution to a number of causes through volunteer hours. Urban Farm students are required to complete a number of hours off-site, within

the community, and at the Urban Farm itself. This service strengthens community bonds and creates a favorable image of the university for local citizens.

The Urban Farm also works with the University of Oregon to create a rich learning environment for students. As evidenced by the UO promotional videos, growing food is becoming an integral part of student experience at the university. Experiential education serves to motivate students as well as open doors to students who have historically been disadvantaged. The Urban Farm is no exception to these patterns. As such, experience at the Urban Farm is likely to bring students into the fold, inspiring and encouraging them to become actively engaged in their university experience. Participation in the Urban Farm certainly bolsters interest in classes such as Sustainable Agriculture, Civic Agriculture, Schoolhouse Garden, and the like. Furthermore, student interest in the Urban Farm conceivably contributed to the inception of both the groundbreaking minor and a graduate concentration in Food Studies. These programs set the university apart in a time when American colleges race to compete in originality, working to create their own brands, enticing new students and potential donors alike.

The Urban Farm, however, could benefit from greater support from the University of Oregon itself. The farm is no stranger to the challenges of experiential education. Operation of this program requires great energy and commitment. This is evident in the cycle of directors visible since its inception. Experiential educators know quite well that planning for such a course of study takes great time and effort and in classic style, the leaders of the farm feel this burden upon their shoulders. The Urban Farm, like so many experiential educational opportunities, exists on the sweat and tears

of those in charge. The Urban Farm is not a typical class nor classroom. The farm possesses great needs, needs that change with the seasons and can skyrocket at any moment depending on a number of factors. Farming is an arduous occupation in its own right and when paired with the demands of teaching, the burden grows to great proportions. Those in charge of the Urban Farm must be on call to address environmental emergencies and look after the crops when students cannot. Were it not for these dedicated educators and farmers, the Urban Farm would certainly cease to exist.

Greater recognition and compensation is a clear necessity. Greater monetary support would allow instructors to create a Graduate Teaching Fellowship at the farm, a position that many programs and departments already reap the benefits of. Increased funding could also decrease the need for the additional student course fund of \$35 that each student pays upon registering for the course, although most students do leave the farm with at least that much value in produce each term. Perhaps most importantly, increased financial means would allow for the hiring of a farm manager. This person would be tasked with overseeing the daily management of the farm, duties that currently fall to the director and instructors, staff working within the confines of teaching budgets, both fiscally and temporally. Persons with agricultural background understand that the management of a farm is a large task in and of itself and the fact that this responsibility falls on the instructional staff, while it does serve as a testament to their commitment and passion, is shocking and misplaced.

If the farm continues to expand, which is a hope of both the Urban Farm itself and the university in regards to the eastern edge of campus, more instructors will need

to be brought on. More instructors would allow for more students to register for the Urban Farm course. As it currently stands, online registration for Urban Farm classes often closes within hours of opening, limiting participation to a few hundred upperclassmen and students within the Honors College each year. Were more spaces made available, students from a greater range of ages and backgrounds could partake in the Urban Farm course, thus spurring ongoing interest and participation in the farm for their remaining years of college, as opposed to the jump in enthusiasm for graduating seniors alone, students who will soon leave the university. These younger students, if granted access, could continue their education through enrollment in other similar classes within the university, following their newfound passions into a variety of classes and programs, enriching the UO in the process. If experiential education motivates and inspires students, as it so demonstrably does at the Urban Farm, the greatest importance is to open up access to more students and ensure that the program as a whole has the necessary support and resources to continue providing this opportunity.

The Urban Farm makes waves, but it could make more. While this program is highly successful given its resources and support, the ceiling still stands far in the distance. As evidenced by its presence in Laura Sayre's book *Fields of Learning: The student farm movement in North America*, the Urban Farm is a place of great importance and prestige. It is shameful that students may graduate from the University of Oregon without ever having stepped foot on the farm. The Urban Farm should serve as a greater focal point for the university and receive preeminent recognition for its exponential successes. This heightened visibility will serve to grow the program even further, pushing the farm's importance ever higher.

## Conclusion

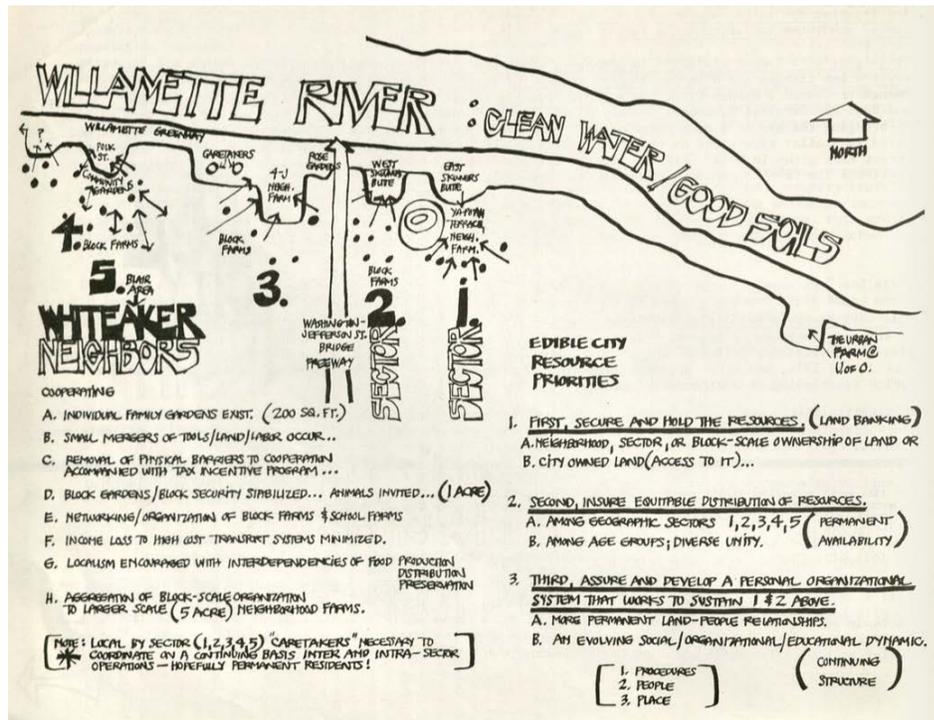
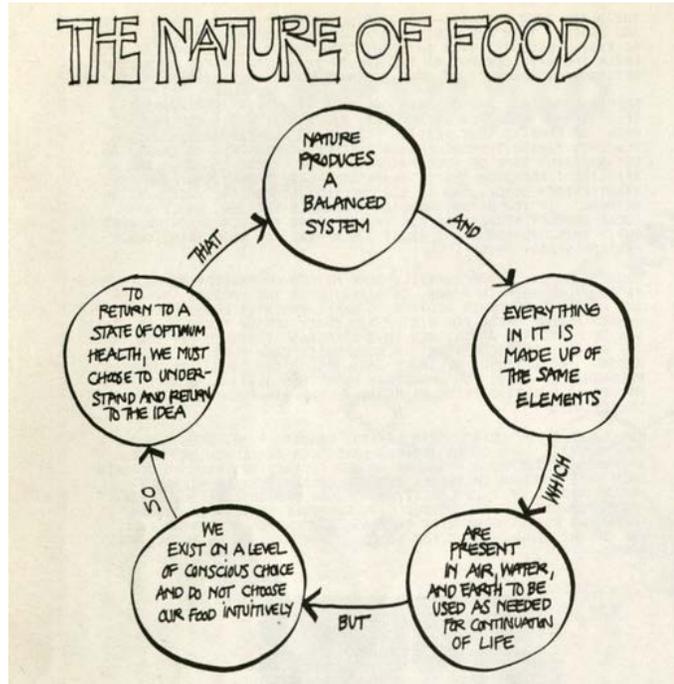
The current trends of food politics and climate change give reason to believe that food and farming will remain vital in popular culture for decades to come. As industrial farming degrades soil, it will become only more necessary to rely upon organic farming and small-scale methods. This “back to the land” movement needs a boost, as the United States Department of Agriculture 2012 Census of Agriculture presents continued downward trends of both number of farms in operation and percentage of women farming, as well as increased average age of farm operator.<sup>71</sup> There is no mistaking that agricultural production in the United States stands on a precipice and that changes must be made. The Urban Farm, an original effort of the back to the land movement in Eugene, is no stranger to these changes. Instead, it will stand at the forefront of change, leading other universities in food production and experiential education. This critical position within the larger political landscape should be celebrated and protected. The Urban Farm has so much to offer. Given proper support from the university and assuming ongoing successes within the program, experiential education at the Urban Farm promises to continue to inspire students and even push the horizon of learning through the growing of food at the University of Oregon.

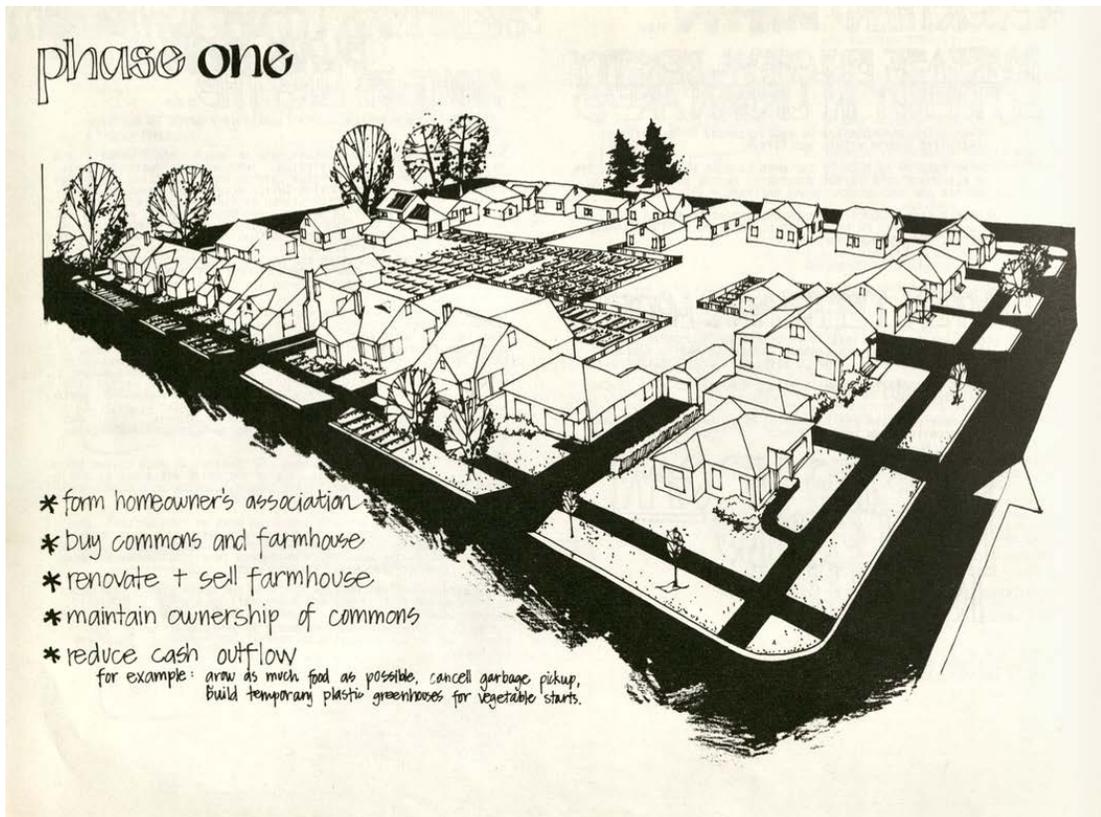
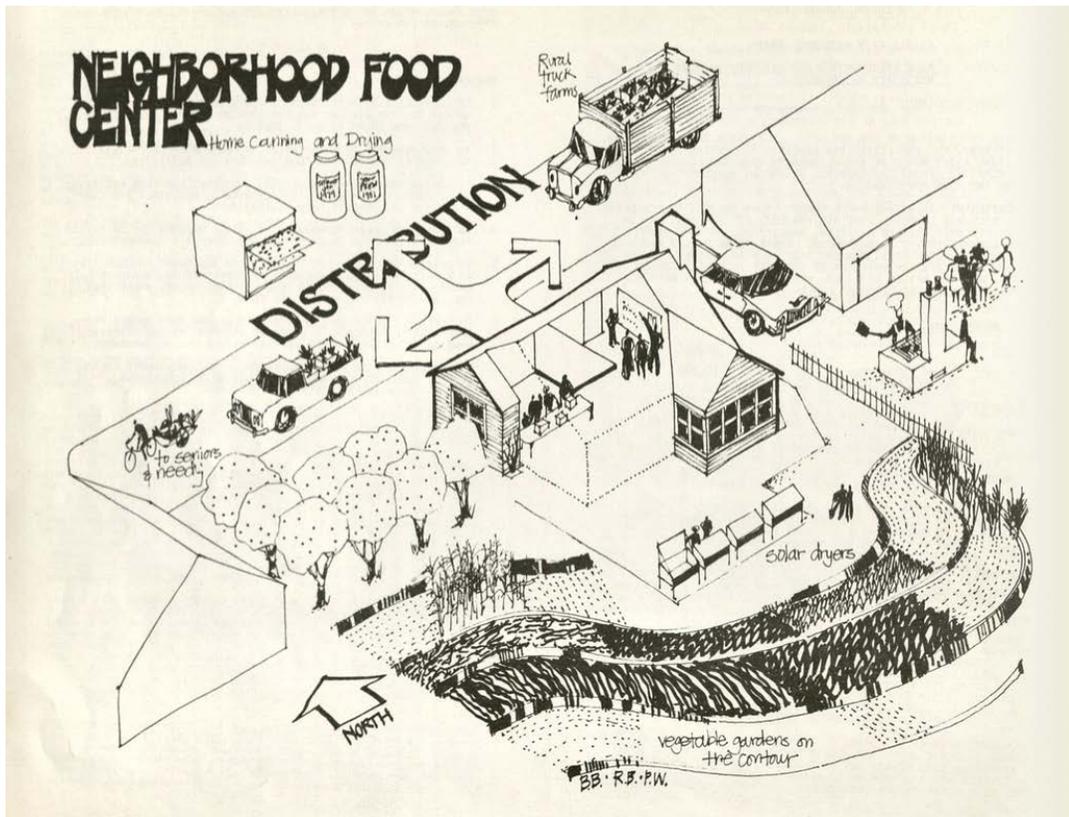
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<sup>71</sup> 2012 Census Highlights. *Census of Agriculture*. United States Department of Agriculture. 2015. Web.

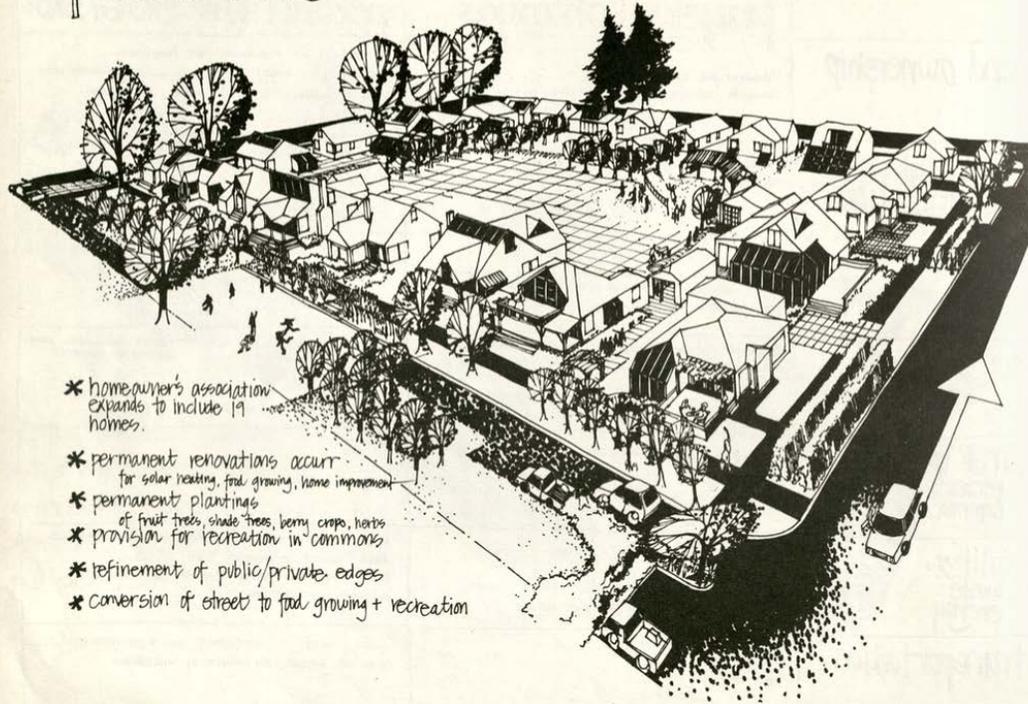
# Appendix 1

## Excerpts from *The Edible City Resource Manual*





## phase two

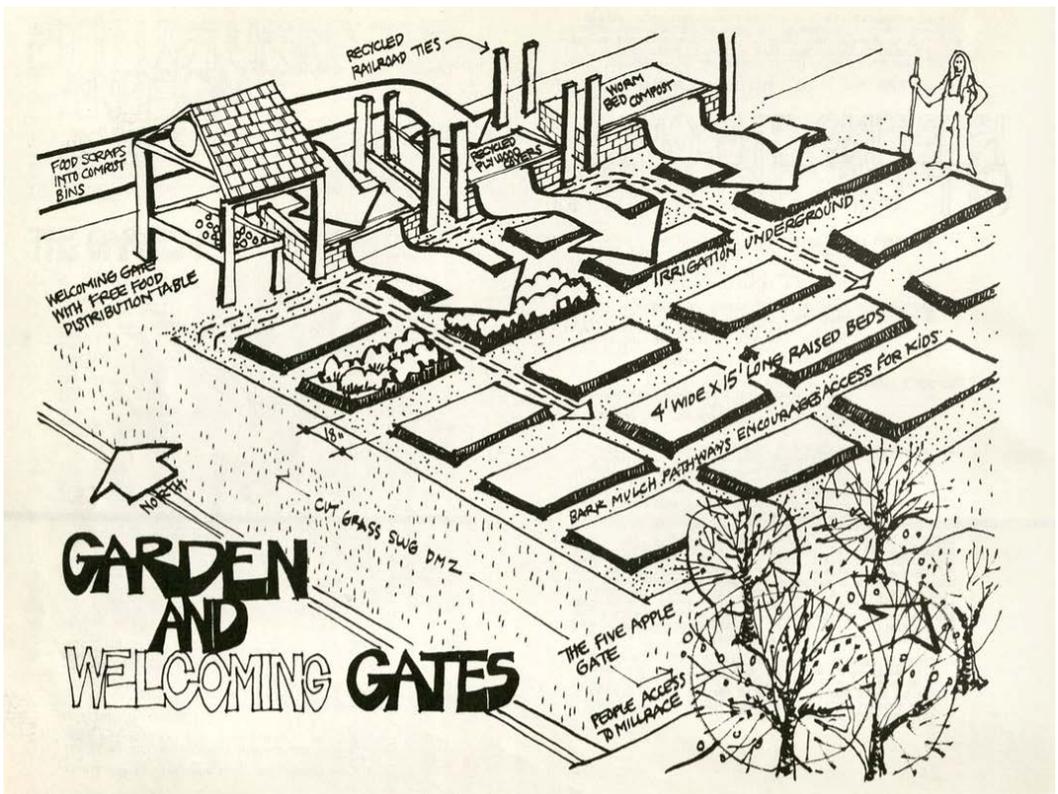
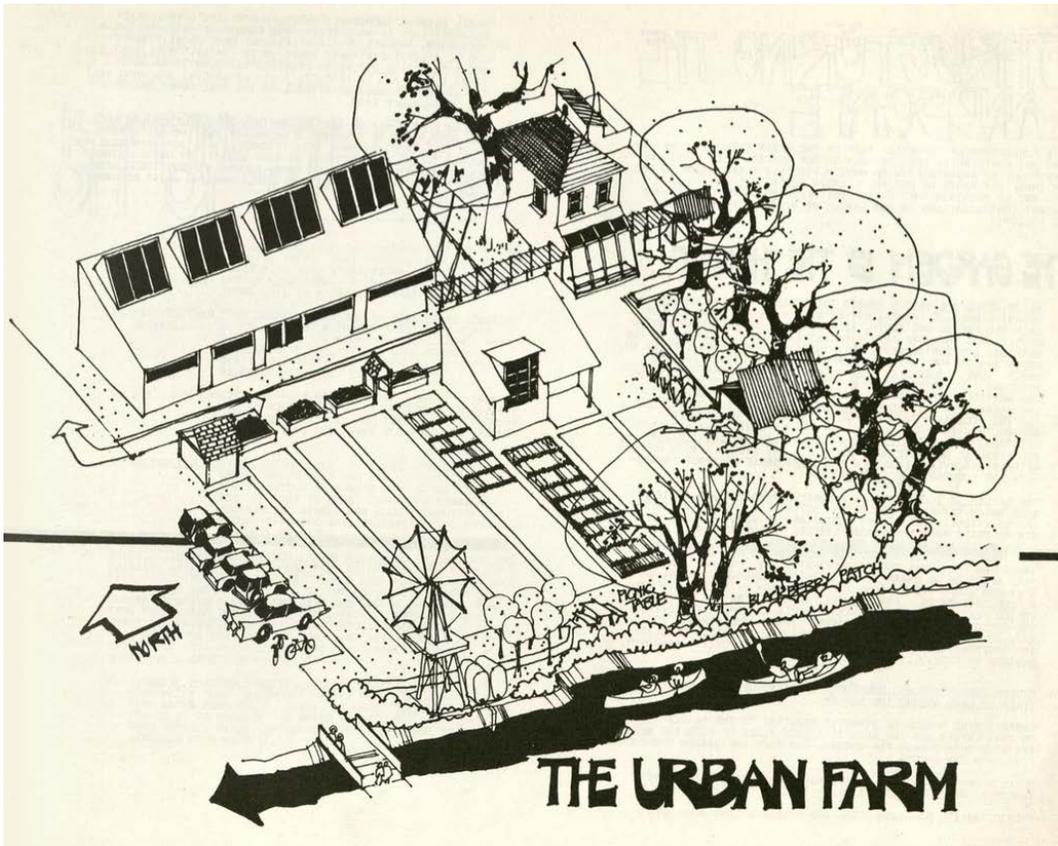


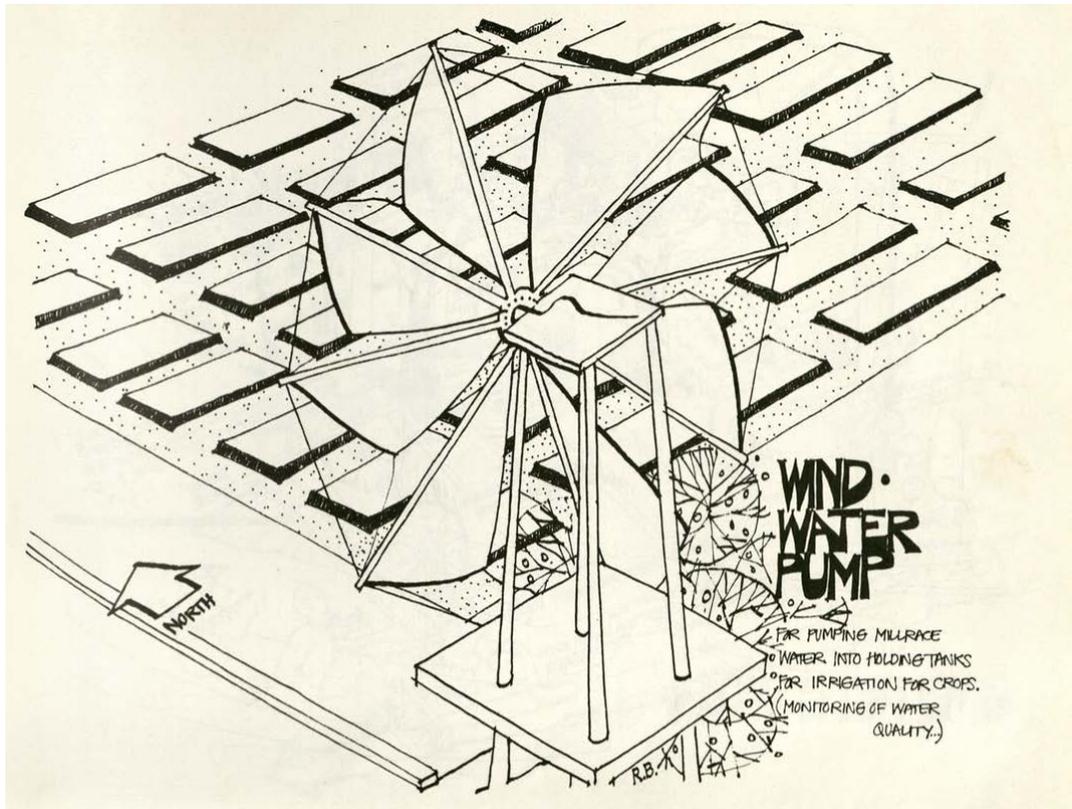
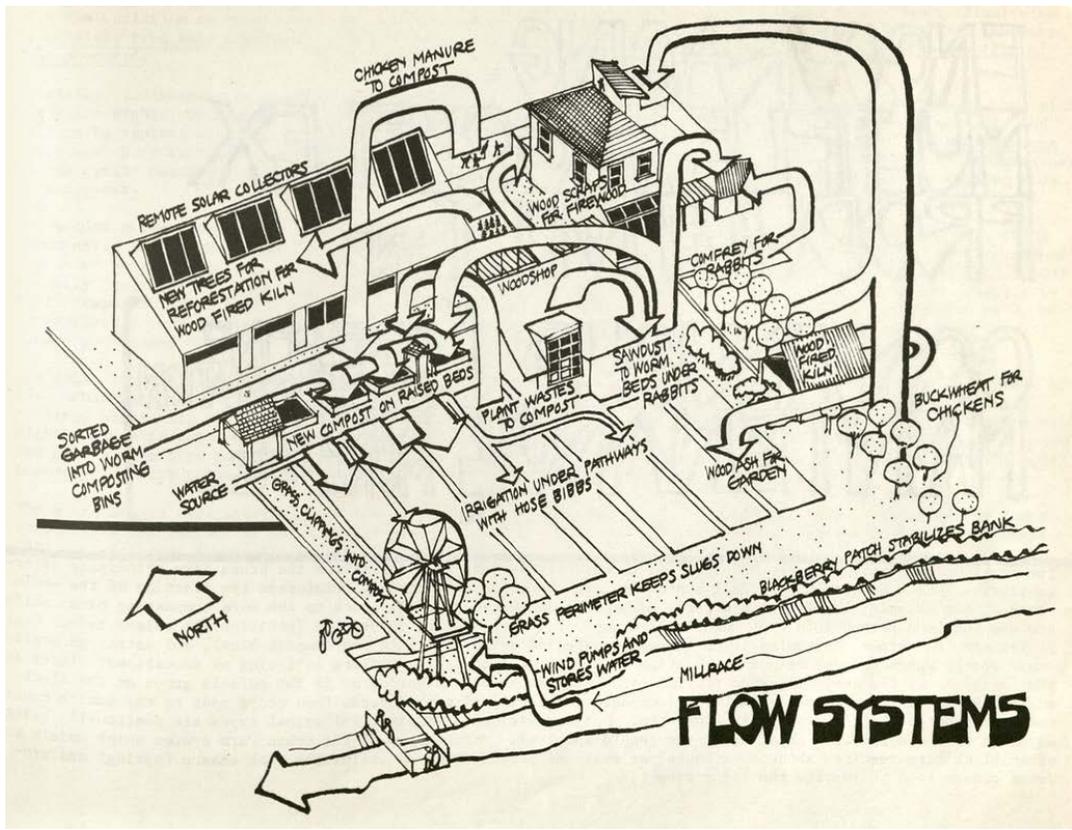
- \* homeowner's association expands to include 19 homes.
- \* permanent renovations occur for solar heating, food growing, home improvement
- \* permanent plantings of fruit trees, shade trees, berry crops, herbs
- \* provision for recreation in commons
- \* refinement of public/private edges
- \* conversion of streets to food growing + recreation

## phase three



- \* complete on-site waste utilization
- \* near-complete production of electricity for block through photovoltaic collectors
- \* creation of on-site employment for residents.





# AN URBAN BLOCK FARM PROTOTYPE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON URBAN FARM

OUTLINED BELOW ARE THE PRINCIPLES WE HAVE USED OVER ABOUT A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD OF TIME. THESE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING OUR GOALS OF COMMUNITY BUILDING, USE OF LOCALLY APPROPRIATE PLANTS AND MATERIALS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DEMONSTRATION OF MAXIMUM FOOD PRODUCTION OF UNDERUTILIZED URBAN LAND. WITH THE LAND RELEASED TO THE DEVELOPING URBAN FARM PROGRAM BY THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND ALLIED ARTS, AND WITH THE SPECIAL SUPPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, WE HAVE GRADUALLY TRANSFORMED THIS 1-1/2 ACRES FROM BELIEVED TO A UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE. IT SHOULD BE ESPECIALLY NOTED, THAT THROUGH FIVE YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT, OUR TOTAL CASH OUTLAY HAS BEEN WELL UNDER \$2,000, EXCLUDING LABOR...

## SUCCESSFUL PRINCIPLES HAVE BEEN:

### 1. STRUCTURING THE LANDSCAPE..

1. MAINTAINING THE GARDEN AS THE HEART.
2. KEEPING THE CARS OFF THE LAND.
3. WELCOMING PEOPLE BY PLANTING AND BUILDING GATES, SUCH AS OUR "LIVE APPLE GATE AND OUR "WIND-WATER PUMP".
4. ORGANIZING THE MATERIAL AND ENERGY FLOW SYSTEMS.

### 2. ENCOURAGING MULTIPLE AND COMPLEX PRODUCTIVITY AND CONTINUOUS MAINTENANCE

- BY:
1. WORKING TOWARD A BROAD AGE MIXTURE OF KIDS, TEENS, ADULTS AND SENIORS WORKING TOGETHER.
  2. DEVELOPING A BROAD RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND WORK TASKS.
  3. VARYING THE PLANT TYPES TO INCLUDE TREES FOR MOOD, TREES FOR FOOD, SHRUBS FOR FLOWERS, SHRUBS FOR FOOD, AND PLANTS OF GREAT DIVERSITY INCLUDING HERBS AND DYES, AS WELL AS VEGETABLE CROPS MOST SUITED TO THE NORTHWEST.
  4. SLOWING DOWN AND TAKING CARE...
  5. UTILIZING CHINESE RAISED BED GARDENING.
  6. GROWING YEAR 'ROUND.
  7. PROVIDING ORGANIZED LEADERSHIP AND WORKING TOGETHER.

### 3. MANAGING ORGANIC "WASTE" AND REGENERATING THE SOIL... BY:

1. RECYCLING "ORABAGIO'S" PAYLOAD.
2. DEVELOPING COMPOSTING METHODS BY TRIAL AND ERROR.
3. USING EARTHWORMS FOR COMPOSTING.

### 4. UTILIZING LOCAL NATURAL RESOURCES.. BY:

1. DEVELOPING THE POTTERY KILN
2. WORKING WITH LOCAL WOOD.



### 5. PLANTING SYMBOLICALLY.. BY:

1. REMEMBERING THE BEAUTY OF FLOWERS.
2. REMEMBERING THE BEAUTY OF OUR FRIENDS.
3. PREPARING FOR TOMORROW'S HARVEST.

### 6. MAXIMIZING SOLAR GAIN AND STORAGE..... BY:

1. BUILDING A CHEAP ATTACHED SOLAR GREENHOUSE.
2. URBAN FARMING IN SOLAR GREENHOUSES.
3. ENCOURAGING SOLAR GREENHOUSES FOR WHITEAKER NEIGHBORHOOD.

### 7. NURTURING OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ANIMALS..... BY:

1. RAISING CHICKENS.
2. RAISING RABBITS.

### 8. MAINTAINING NATIVE PLANTS AND LOCAL NATURAL RESOURCES BY:

1. REPLANTING WHAT WE BURN OR CUT: THE NATIVE PLANT NURSERY.
2. PRESERVING OUR BLACKBERRIES.
3. MONITORING OUR WATER QUALITY.

### 9. SHARING TOOLS AND BOOKS.. BY:

1. HOUSING THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES CENTER.
2. MAINTAINING A COMMUNITY TOOL LIBRARY.

## Appendix 2

### Excerpts from *The Urban Farm Reader*

#### *The Urban Farm Reader*

The Urban Farm Reader is an amalgamation of information that we think is important. Originally conceived, written and compiled by Urban Farm Director Ann Bettman, the reader continues to evolve as a reflection of the program. Much like the Urban Farm Program itself, the Reader is very much a product of the many people who have been teaching here over the years who all owe a huge debt of gratitude to Ann. (*Harper Keeler*)

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## *Welcome to The Urban Farm*

The Urban Farm is a program and a place at the University of Oregon. For over 38 years, the Urban Farm has been growing both in scope and in the ground, as an outdoor university classroom where students learn to grow their own food organically and sustainably.

To work

To honor work

To work together

To work with soil

To work with plants

To recognize food crops and weeds

To become familiar with various approaches of organic gardening

To plant seeds and transplants

To harvest- what, when and how

To make good compost

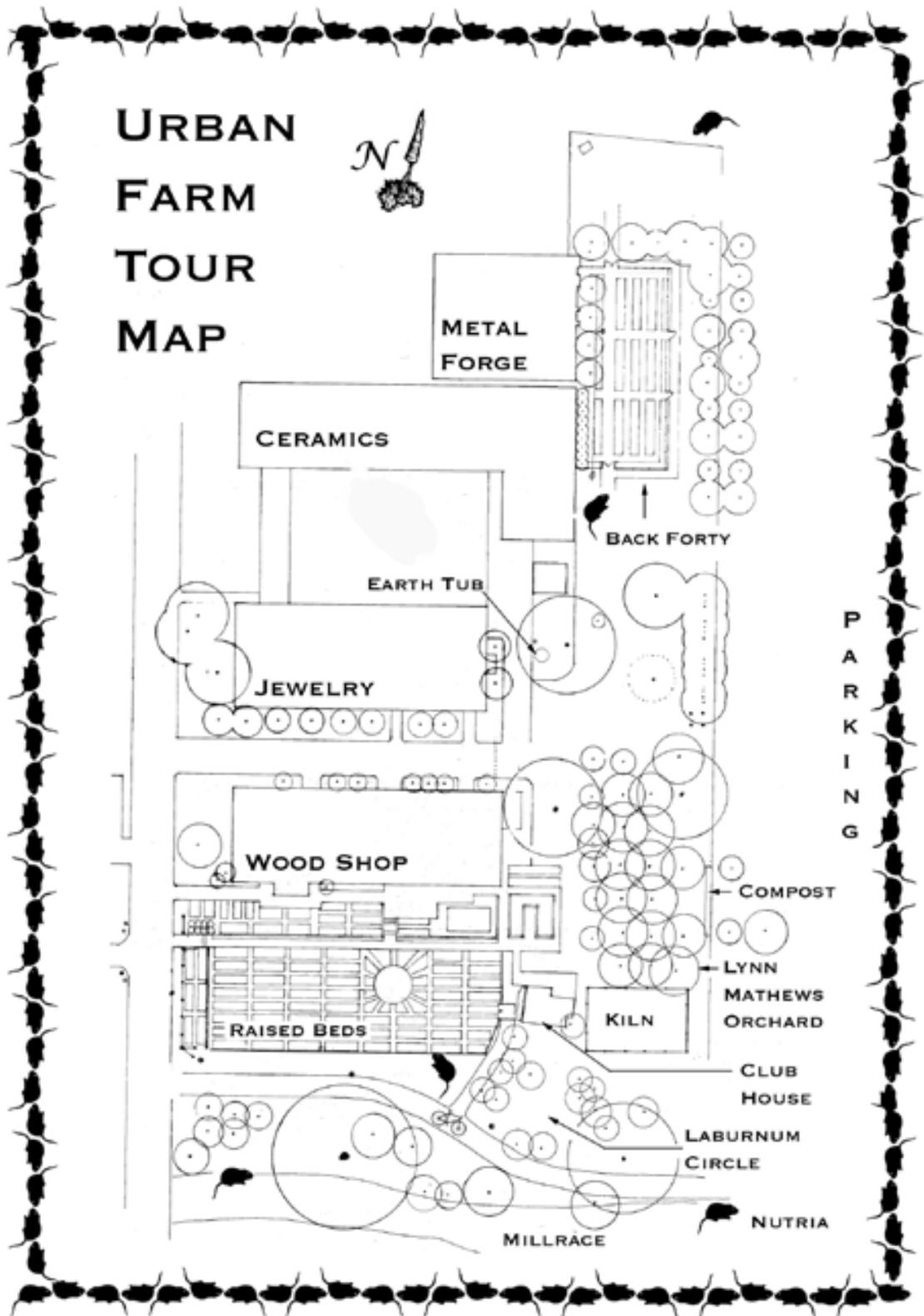
To prepare the food they have grown

To support local farmers in the Willamette Valley

To become knowledgeable intelligent consumers

"Eating is an agricultural act." (Wendell Berry)





### *Urban Farm Favorite Books*

Most of the titles on the Urban Farm book list can be found at the bookstore.

#### *Agrarian Societal Issues*

The Gift of Good Land- Wendell Berry  
The Unsettling of America- Wendell Berry  
What Are People For?- Wendell Berry  
Bringing it to the Table- Wendell Berry  
New Roots of Agriculture- Wes Jackson  
Becoming Native to This Place- Wes Jackson  
Epitaph for a Peach- Mas Masumoto  
The Contrary Farmer- Gene Logsdon  
The Grapes of Wrath- John Steinbeck

#### *Ecology / Nature of Plants*

A Sand County Almanac- Aldo Leopold  
Silent Spring- Rachel Carson  
Living Downstream- Sandra Steingraber  
Our Stolen Future- Colborn, Dumanoski and Myers  
Restoring the Earth- Kenny Ausubel  
A Green History of the World- Clive Punting  
Dirt, The Ecstatic Skin of the Earth- William Bryant Logan  
Botany of Desire- Michael Pollan  
Planting Noah's Garden- Sara Stein  
One Straw Revolution or The Road Back to Nature- Masanobu Fukuoka  
The Organic Front- JL Rodale

#### *Back to the Land*

Enduring Seeds- Gary Nabhan  
Living The Good Life- Helen and Scott  
Nearing Noah's Garden- Sara Stein  
Family Farming- Marty Strange Second Nature- Michael Pollan  
Animal, Vegetable, Miracle- Barbara Kingsolver

#### *Food Issues / Urban Agriculture*

Food Rules, An Eater's Manual- Michael Pollan  
The Omnivore's Dilemma- Michael Pollan  
On Good Land- Michael Ableman  
Farm City- Novella Carpenter  
City Bountiful, a Century of Community Gardening in America- Laura Lawson

Greening Cities, Growing Communities: Learning from Seattle's Urban Community  
Gardens- Jeffery Hou, Julie Johnson, Laura Lawson  
Civic Agriculture- Thomas Lyson  
Public Produce- Darrin Nordahl  
Together at the Table- Patricia Allen  
Coming Home to Eat- Gary Nabhan

## Appendix 3

### Figures



Figure 1: First photo capture from University of Oregon promotional video “Be Bold.”

This image depicts Travis Bott carefully examining a handful of soil while other students look on. A bed of flowers is out of focus in the background.



Figure 2: Second photo capture from “Be Bold”.

This image shows a smiling Jordan Chesnut holding a rake, garlic, and a dandelion, against another agricultural backdrop.



Figure 3: First photo capture from University of Oregon promotional video “You Will.”

In this image, students dig side by side in a bed while a third person stands just outside the frame. A bed of onions grows robustly in the background.



Figure 4: Second photo capture from “You Will.”

This is an overhead view, likely of the previously pictured students, actively digging into soil to remove weeds.

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