

CHALLENGING CONVENTIONAL CONCEPTIONS OF FOOD
SOVEREIGNTY: HUERTO DE LA FAMILIA AND THE GLOBAL
FOOD SOVEREIGNTY MOVEMENT

by

ILSE STACKLIE-VOGT

A THESIS

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

May 2023

An Abstract of the Thesis of

Ilse Stacklie-Vogt for the degree of Bachelor of Arts
in the Department of Global Studies to be taken June 2023

Title: Challenging Conventional Conceptions of Food Sovereignty: Huerto de la Familia and the Global Food Sovereignty Movement

Approved: David Meek, Ph.D.
Primary Thesis Advisor

This thesis explores the relationship between the organic community garden nonprofit Huerto de la Familia (HDLF) and the global food sovereignty movement. Building from participatory action research as an intern with the organization for two years, I then conducted and discuss here a series of semi structured interviews with garden members and staff as well as a survey of 22 garden members regarding seed saving programming in order to understand to what extent HDLF is constitutive of the mainstream global food sovereignty movement. Drawing from a critical perspective of the food sovereignty movement, specifically the organization La Via Campesina, and its relationship to migrant farmworker communities and urban areas, I illuminate that in many ways this small urban nonprofit garden is constitutive of the global food sovereignty movement despite not being formally affiliated. Furthermore, I find that the aspects in which HDLF appears to fall short of the image of food sovereignty can also be viewed as openings towards a conception of food sovereignty that is more accessible to populations excluded from the mainstream movement.

Acknowledgements

This thesis has been in many ways the most difficult task I have ever attempted. I would never have been able to stick with such a long term and intimidating project without the support of countless professors, advisors, and friends. I'd like to thank Professor David Meek for introducing me to the exciting and evolving discipline of food sovereignty in his class sophomore year, Harper and Gatlin for cultivating my love for working outdoors in the garden during that same year and accepting my persistence in volunteering at Huerto and the Urban Farm even during Covid. Professor Stabile has been beyond generous in the giving of her time and support, from tears in office hours to celebrating victories—you are truly the best dean the honors college has ever seen. Thank you to Professor de Onís for the weekly check ins and for welcoming into your advising circle with open arms despite only meeting me during my final year.

I would also like to thank all my fellow honors college seniors who struggled through this crazy, transformative process of thesis writing alongside me. Thank you especially to Natty for all the rides, and to Kate for both talking me down when I got too anxious and for inspiring me with her own incredible food studies work and countless fun conversations about food and politics. Thanks Cas for finishing your thesis first and modeling how lovely and relaxing life is once it's done—I needed to see that.

And of course, I can never thank my wonderful coworkers and friends at Huerto. We've known each other for two years now and having this consistent community that has taught me so much and welcomed me back so many times as an intern means more than I can say. Thanks especially to Gatlin and Tim for being beyond supportive in my thesis work, it would be

impossible to celebrate you enough for all the support and advice and feedback you gave me solely out of the kindness of your hearts and interest in the work.

Finally, I would never have been able to do this without the generous funding of the Wayne Morse Scholars Program and the Center for Undergraduate Research and Engagement, which helped me compensate interview participants and pay for transcribing interviews. This project has truly been beyond anything I could ever have seen myself accomplishing and I would never have been able to do it without you all!

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Literature Review	12
The Mesoamerican Indigenous Diaspora in Oregon	12
Community Garden Literature	17
Food Sovereignty Discourse	24
Methods	35
People and Place/Site and Participants	35
PAR and Positionality	36
Relevant Scholarship	40
Interviews and Survey	41
Transcription and Analysis	42
Limitations	44
Analysis	45
PAR results	46
Project Experience	46
Organizational Structure	50
A Cultural Space	51
Interviews	53
Thematic Analysis	54
Additional Themes Added	59
A Note on Co-Occurrence	65
Seed Sovereignty Survey and Case Study	66
What is saved and why?	66
Relationships with home	67
Political or not?	69
A note on gender	70
Discussion	72
Conclusion and Further Thoughts	79
Appendices	81
Appendix A. Interview Questions	81
Introduccion	81
Descripción de la entrevista	81

Preguntas	82
Frases de Cierre	84
Appendix B. Google Survey Questions	84
Preguntas sobre el ahorro de semillas	84
Preguntas sobre el invernadero	85
Bibliography	86

List of Figures

Figure 2: Frequency of mentions of themes added throughout the analysis process for each interview	60
Figure 3: Table of co-occurrence of themes throughout interviews.	65
Figure 4: Table showing the primary reasons HDLF members believe seed saving benefits their households.	69
Figure 5: Graph of the percentage of HDLF members that consider themselves to be involved in a broader seed saving movement beyond the garden.	69

Introduction

The 1990s marked the formation of an unprecedented global peasant movement fighting against the imposition of neoliberal structures on agriculture. This enormous movement, composed of over 180 organizations around the world and representing over 80 countries is known as La Via Campesina (LVC). Since their formation, LVC has held conferences and mobilizations at the international level to bring rural peasants, indigenous people, and women in agriculture together to build a world in which neoliberal global trade policies play no role in agricultural production, and sustainable, local, indigenous led agroecological methods are the basis of our relationship with the land. To encapsulate this vision, LVC coined the term “food sovereignty” which food sovereignty expert Hannah Whitman says is “broadly defined as the right of nations and peoples to control their own food systems, including their own markets, production modes, food cultures and environments” (Whitman 2010, 2).

In 1999, 6 Latina women of immigrant backgrounds in Eugene Oregon began to tend a small communal garden plot. In 2004, the small garden plot expanded into an organic gardening program, Huerto de la Familia (HDLF), serving Latino immigrants across the city. Today, the program has expanded to seven garden locations with plans to create more, and serves over 180 individuals and families, and is a subsidiary of the larger social services nonprofit Centro Latino Americano (Herrera, 2022). HDLF’s website, slightly outdated and undergoing modifications, states that:

Huerto de la Familia offers Latino families a place to connect to their roots and the earth by growing their own organic food, as well as education in organic gardening, small scale farming, and small business creation. We build wide-ranging partnerships throughout Lane County in order to achieve our goals of increased health, cultural identity, leadership, and economic security for Latino families.

HDLF's programming has expanded beyond the provision of land to include workshops on cultural food preparation, engagement in statewide sustainable agriculture programming, beekeeping, small business training, and cultural events and social gatherings.

LVC's work takes place through international forums and an international planning committee (IPC) that advocates in spaces such as the United Nations (UN) and has achieved such victories such as the UN Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and the inclusion of food sovereignty in many countries' constitutions. On the contrary, HDLF's work takes place in a hyperlocal context, as a community garden organization based in just one city. However, HDLF necessarily engages in international food discourses by the "transborder" nature of its population (Stephen 2007) because most HDLF members were born into farming or ranch families in Mexico and Guatemala and didn't leave behind their familial connections with the land or their ancestral foodways when they moved to Eugene. I have worked with HDLF as an intern for two years now and have noticed many similarities between it and the global food sovereignty movement. These observations drove me to engage in a project of participatory action research, supplemented by qualitative interviews and literature review to investigate how this specific organization relates to the global food sovereignty movement. This exploration is driven by three guiding questions:

1. How does the seed saving project of an urban agroecology nonprofit serving immigrant communities in Eugene, Oregon (Huerto de la Familia) tie into the global food sovereignty movement?

2. What challenges does it face on the local scale to actualizing the ideals of the global food sovereignty movement?

3. What role does gender play in the organization and implementation of seed saving programming at Huerto de la Familia?

Investigating this relationship theoretically contributes to food sovereignty literature by helping shed light on the interface between local and global food sovereignty movements. I am strongly influenced by previous undergraduate theses that critically examine food sovereignty, such as Momo Wilms-Crowe's work on food sovereignty as embodied decolonial resistance in Puerto Rico (2020), as well as by my colleague and friend Timothy Herrera's recent dissertation on the impact of care work within HDLF on mitigating effects of Covid-19 and climate change for the Latino community. I hope to add to their conversations around the radical, feminist, and anticolonial potential around localized food activism.

As mentioned above, HDLF can inherently be described as global, international, or transborder when one considers the demographics of the garden. According to Herrera's fieldwork with HDLF, about 80% of gardeners identify as being from Mexico, and 5% from Guatemala. Of all the gardeners, only 13% were born in the U.S. (2022). This thesis will explore the inherent international-ness of these identities through an exploration of the Mesoamerican indigenous diaspora, changing borders, and how historical and current migrations influence the lived experience of these people today.

HDLF is an urban community garden, and the food sovereignty movement is broadly considered to be composed of rural peasants, landless workers, and small farmers. And yet, for a decade now more people around the globe have lived in urban areas than rural, a phenomenon unprecedented before 2007 (Lerner & Eakin, 2010). Devon G Peña, renowned Latino food studies theorist and activist anthropologist, criticizes LVC for not addressing the potential contributions of urban and peri-urban populations to food sovereignty in their 2001 *Principles of*

Food Sovereignty (2017, 24). He notes that increasing urbanization around the globe poses a "strategic problem" for LVC, and notes that it is often displaced rural and indigenous farmers that spearhead urban food activism.

I firmly agree with Peña's statement that, "The practical autonomy of place-based Mexican-origin and Mesoamerican diaspora communities relies on the culturally grounded exercise of self-governance, and this allows [them] to reclaim [their] seeds, agroecological traditions, foodways, and heritage cuisines" and that "This is occurring in rural and urban areas through the conscious enactment of heterotopias in community gardens, home kitchen gardens, and liberated kitchen spaces." He even argues that "true food sovereignty may come to rely on the practices, normative orientations, and relational knowledge of Indigenous farmers and other food-chain workers, including those who have been displaced from ordinary lands and are both transborder travelers and mobile placemakers" (24). For this reason, it is important to investigate the relationship between a local, urban, immigrant run nonprofit and the global food sovereignty movement, as the urban-rural interface of food sovereignty activism will only become more relevant as these immigration trends continue.

While I discuss broader aspects of HDLF's programming, I try to focus on its seed saving program. I chose to focus on seed saving because it fit well with my current work at the garden, where my fellowship had me involved in the creation of an autonomous greenhouse project complete with water autonomy (a rarity in a community garden) for culturally relevant plant cultivation and seed saving. Seed saving is one of the core elements of the global food sovereignty movement's platform, and I wanted to find out if people at my workplace felt connected to this broader movement, or if they were pursuing seed saving for other reasons, and whether they were all the same connected to the broader movement unconsciously.

This thesis begins with a literature review of Mexican and Guatemalan transborder histories, community garden literature, and the current debates surrounding food and seed sovereignty. It is particularly relevant to discuss what does and does not create the circumstances for radical action in a community garden. There are many discussions on food sovereignty to consider, such as the centrality of land and seeds, the urban-rural divide, what is meant by sovereignty, and critiques of the movement. After giving an overview of this literature, I discuss my methods, including participatory action research with a scholar activist perspective (particularly my work on HDLF's seed saving programming), qualitative data collection through interviews and surveys, and literature-based research. Next follows a brief overview of the results of my participatory based research: main themes observed while working with HDLF, common threads of ideas across interviews, and survey responses. I conclude with a discussion of my findings regarding the ways in which HDLF does and does not connect to the global food sovereignty movement.

Literature Review

The Mesoamerican Indigenous Diaspora in Oregon

The term Latino is a broad term coined in North America to refer to anyone with origins in a “Latin American” country, meaning the countries south of the United States that were largely former colonies of Spain. While useful in its colloquiality, some scholars criticize the term for its erasure of specificity, particularly the erasure of indigenous identities (Herrera 2022; Stephen 2007). The diverse and thriving indigenous identities across Central and South America are also rendered invisible with nation-state identifiers. For example, using the term “Mexican” hides the fact that over 60 different indigenous peoples live within the Mexican state, each with their own culture and language (“Telling the Entire Story of Mexico’s Indigenous People” n.d.). Scholar and HDLF member Timothy Herrera rejects labels of nationality because, “it erases the fact that historical people from the Americas regularly traveled, shared culture, and traded along seasonal migration paths for thousands of years” and does not acknowledge that “most families are part of transborder communities that span across various notions of borders such as nations, states, territories, immigration statuses, and rooted connections to Indigenous traditions, languages, practices, and worldviews” (Herrera 2022, 41). For this reason, some scholars prefer the term “Mesoamerican Indigenous communities in diaspora,” reflecting the inherently indigenous and transborder attributes of this community ((Herrera 2022; Stephen 2007).

I attempt to follow Stephen and Herrera’s terminology throughout this paper but use Latino where it makes sense colloquially. For example, the Seattle Times stated in a February 2022 issue that Latinos are now the largest minority group in the state of Oregon, representing 14% of the population. While most of these people are from Mexico, and Guatemala is also highly represented, the term Latino makes sense because it is formally used by data collection

agencies and encompasses all the different countries of origin of this group. There is increasingly a movement within the Spanish speaking world, and within gendered languages such as romance languages more broadly, to use gender inclusive terminology such as “Latinx” or “Latine” instead of the masculine form of the word, “Latino.” While I support such movements and utilize this terminology in my spoken Spanish, this paper uses the term Latino because it is most used term by HDLF garden members to describe themselves and is typically used in official statistics and reports to describe population data, which this paper discusses.

There is a historical reason for the significant representation of Mesoamerican Indigenous communities in diaspora in the state of Oregon. Mexico formerly included what is now the western U.S. all the way up to Oregon, and this territory was only ceded to the U.S. in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This left many Mexicans living in what was now the U.S. because the border had jumped right over them. In addition to shifting borders, labor relations between the U.S. and its neighbor Mexico have contributed to the large representation of people from Mexico in Oregon, particularly in the agricultural sector. Many scholars have written about the way in which the U.S. capitalist empire benefitted from California becoming an agricultural superpower, and that this was enabled by sourcing cheap labor from out of the country (González 2011). U.S. growers oppressed their externally sourced Mexican labor on racial grounds as well, thus keeping labor costs cheap and profitable through racial discrimination that continues to this day. Mario Jimenez-Sifuentez writes in his book *Of Forests and Fields* about the famous Bracero program, an agreement between the U.S. and Mexico that Mexico would supply farm labor to the U.S. during its shortage of male agricultural labor during WW2. Even after the end of this program, U.S. men showed a reluctance to return to the agricultural sector, largely because workers were exploited and not offered the same labor protections as other sectors of the

economy, again because these economic conditions helped grow an agricultural empire. Thus, the supply of cheaper labor from an ethnic minority continued, whether through Tejano migration or illegal immigration driven by U.S. interventionism (Sifuentez 2016; González 2011). These workers tended to gravitate towards Oregon and Washington where it was easier to organize for better working conditions than in more southern states such as Texas (Sifuentez 2016), leading to a large population of Mexican farmworkers in Oregon and Washington's forestry and berry picking industries, among other agricultural occupations.

In the case of Guatemala, another country highly represented in Oregon, the origins are more purely interventionist, as documented by journalist and author Juan Gonzalez's book *Harvest of Empire*. He explains that the U.S. corporation United Fruit Company as well as the International Railways of Central America were well established in Guatemala and very profitable for their U.S. owners, benefiting from the favor of the Guatemalan government that was at the time open to U.S. investment, even forcing Native people to work for U.S. corporations.

When later Guatemalan presidents attempted to get rid of vagrancy laws against Native people and pursue workers' rights and land reforms that would have bought back some of the U.S. corporation United Fruit Company's land (representing 72% of arable land, taken from indigenous people), the U.S. displaced the Guatemalan president with a coup. The U.S. then placed a dictator in power, Carlos Castillo Armas, and immediately recognized the Castillo government, which maintained its power through extreme violence, slaughtering and massacring indigenous people. As an extension of the violence, the U.S. accepted a shockingly low number of Guatemalan asylum seekers. The period that the Castillo government was in power is known as *La Violencia* (González 2011).

Many refugees of this reign of violence in the 1980s who settled in the greater Portland area (Stephen 2017), including labor camps in Woodburn, Gresham, Salem, and Springfield. Many of these refugees had been indigenous workers of the land and continued to take up jobs in the farm belt upon their arrival, showing the historical factors behind Guatemalan agricultural workers in Oregon to this day.

Juan Gonzalez writes about how this influx of immigration and labor is part of an empire building project by the U.S. His book, *Harvest of Empire*, lays out how the U.S. creates negative conditions in Latin American countries through interventionism and imperial neoliberal land grabs, creating an incoming labor force of refugees and displaced people who have no choice but to look to the U.S. for work. The U.S. then keeps this labor force cheap and oppressed through racialized policies and refusal to legalize the status of these migrants, thus denying them labor protections. This relates to Shelley Munshi's discussion of the U.S.-Mexico border as a recently invented colonial phenomenon. She questions the existence of the border itself, joining other scholars who note how the nation-state paradigm itself is a recent development that came into existence alongside capitalism and colonialism (Murphy 2018; Munshi 2021). The U.S.'s imposition and enforcement of its southern border is an integral part of its imperial strategy as described by Gonzalez. Thus, when Mesoamerican Indigenous communities in diaspora live successful, fulfilling transborder lives that move between, defy, and span across these borders, it is a significant resistance to U.S. imperialism and the reality it would impose upon them.

The high representation of the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora in the U.S. agricultural sector has significant implications on the health and safety of the diaspora community given the lack of labor protections and racially discriminatory practices. Pew Research Center study noted that in the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic alone, more than half of U.S. Latinos experienced

some form of discrimination. These types of discrimination included being called offensive names, being told to go back to their country, being unfairly stopped by police, or criticized for speaking Spanish in public (Noe-Bustamante 2021). The recent *Oregon Covid-19 Farmworker Study* (COFS) was a collaborative project between Oregon universities to collect data on the impact of Covid-19 on farmworkers. This comprehensive study found that farmworkers experience disproportionate stress from their jobs but lack access to mental health services. It also found that because of living and working circumstances and lack of insurance, there were more barriers to Covid-19 testing and care for farmworkers. Farmworkers also faced a significant loss of jobs and income due to the pandemic but were not made aware of the federal aid available to soften this blow. All of these factors were compounded in Oregon agricultural sector due to the heat domes that struck the state during the pandemic. Due to lack of worker protections or laws against working in the fields during extreme temperatures, farmworkers also experienced deadly working conditions during these heat domes, leading to numerous deaths and the health impacts of heat exposure and Covid-19 compounding together for farmworkers (“Farmworkers on the Front Line - Oregon Tilth” n.d.).

Additionally, Latinos in general are less likely to have postsecondary education, health insurance or prenatal care, and are incarcerated at twice the rate of white people. The average life of a farmworker is 48 years due to health factors such as exposure to extreme heat and wildfire smoke (Oregon Community Foundation 2016, Prison Policy Initiative 2015, Herrera 2021). All these disparities are significant barriers faced by the Latino population in the U.S., but these disparities only increase when viewed through the lens of indigeneity. The COFS noted that farmworkers speaking indigenous languages have even more difficulty accessing information and resources regarding the pandemic and recommended that more services be offered in

indigenous languages. The study found that “indigenous farmworkers lost more weeks and months of work, used supplemental food sources more, used shared transportation more, and worked for contractors more than non-indigenous farmworkers” (COFS 2021). Other scholars echo this call for more access to resources in indigenous languages (Stephen 2017), highlighting the importance of approaching the Latino community in Oregon through an intersectional lens inclusive of multiple transborder indigenous identities.

Community Garden Literature

Because this thesis touches not only on the food sovereignty activities of members of the Mesoamerican Indigenous Diaspora but, specifically how a particular community garden organization by and for this diaspora operates in regard to food sovereignty, it is also necessary to give an overview of the scholarship on community gardens. Community gardens are a mostly urban phenomenon, and they are becoming increasingly common as much of the world’s population partakes in a mass flooding of rural to urban locations (Lerner & Eakin).

Community gardens are integrally tied to debates around property and ownership within academic communities. Some scholars laud the transformative power of community gardens, writing that they challenge neoliberal conceptions of property by appropriating urban lands for uses other than their intended use, for example by growing gardens on city strips, rental property, or property zoned for development (A. Alkon and Guthman 2017). Many urban activists plant community gardens in abandoned or unused city areas without official authorization, as “development” objectives. These types of gardens are often eventually destroyed in the name of “development.”

Even community gardens that have permission from the state to use urban land can be repossessed at any moment, due to the ability of the liberal state to declare a state of exception

and take land away (Trauger 2017, 50). This has happened famously in the case of the South-Central Farm in LA, which operated up until 2006 through a partnership with the LA food bank, feeding over 350 families of Central American origin on over 14 acres of land, one of the largest urban farms in the U.S. Despite protests and the clear benefit being provided to the community by the farm, farmers were evicted, and the farm closed. This happened to HDLF in Eugene on a smaller scale in 2021, as HDLF operates through partnerships with various landowners, and one partner decided to use the land HDLF was gardening on for another purpose. Additionally, a new garden location that HDLF planned to open was pushed back a year due to the city giving HDLF incorrect information on the required permit for the land.

Some scholars argue that this lack of real ownership of the land and constant possibility of eviction merits the label of food justice more than food sovereignty (Herrera 2021). For example, Timothy Herrera writes about his work with HDLF as being aligned with food justice rather than food sovereignty because food sovereignty “revolves around communities being able to control all aspects of their foodways; the production, distribution, and consumption of food, and that idea is not realistic for many communities in the U.S.,” saying that “even though HDLF allows quite a bit of autonomy in how people use their garden plot, it does not equate to true food sovereignty” because of how garden members do not own their plots, must follow rules, and how often the entity the garden leases the land from can decide to repossess the land, as was the case with the South-Central Farm in L.A (Herrera 2021, 33). Herrera defines food justice as being “concerned with preventing food insecurity, improving working conditions for agricultural and food sectors, and promoting access to culturally relevant food” (32). Gabriel Valle defines food justice in his writing about Mesoamerican Indigenous kitchen gardens as a subset of environmental justice where “one of the principal goals of environmental justice was to create a

theoretical framework to understand how people struggle against the oppressive nature of social and political institutions” and “framing the movement as food justice, rather than environmental justice, [brings] direct attention to the way food affects our bodies, families, and communities” (42).

There are, however, scholars who consider urban community gardens to be a part of food sovereignty discourse in addition to food justice (Peña, Wittman, Juarez, Block et al, Mares add dates). Prominent food sovereignty scholars such as Hannah Wittman and Amy Trauger include discussions of “urban food sovereignty” in their writings (Hannah Wittman, Anneette Aurélie Desmarais, and Nettie Wiebe 2010). Many Mesoamerican Indigenous activists such as Rosalinda Guillen of Community 2 Community Development and Rufina Juarez of the L.A. South-Central Farm embrace food sovereignty as a framework for their activism because “each part of the food chain is a site of sovereignty or autonomy struggles” (2017, 235) and food sovereignty on the community level means community determination of production, consumption, and distribution (30).

Even when one considers how often urban community gardens are destroyed or re-appropriated by the state, some scholars still consider them to be sites of food sovereignty resistance because food sovereignty is centered around resisting and moving beyond the neoliberal framework of land ownership, rather than owning land for oneself. As long as there is a liberal state, it has the ability to appropriate land, and thus making secure landownership a criterion for food sovereignty would make it impossible to achieve. Amy Trauger notes in her discussion of community gardens how the Nyéléni Declaration on Food Sovereignty, a landmark defining document of the food sovereignty movement, stresses “that ‘access, ‘sharing’, and ‘rights to use’ are more central than owning or redistributing land” (Trauger 2017, 50). Teresa

Mares writes that the difference between food sovereignty and food security is the focus on “rights, control, and choice” (Mares 2019, 93). She notes that “the gardens [of the Latino farmworkers in her organization] are under their control, even if in a tenuous and often impermanent way, and even if the land is owned by their employer...Even in the most marginal of circumstances, the possibility for agency and autonomy exists” (186).

In this way, community gardens can be considered as part of the food sovereignty movement even though it is difficult to be “sovereign” over land in the same way that a liberal state is sovereign over land. Activists instead think of sovereignty in terms of autonomy of community decision making and asserting their right to use the land.

Others note the transformative power that comes from the fact that labor carried in community gardens is primarily oriented around joy, thus forging a new relationship with labor itself, which tends to be an exploitative experience under capitalism. Gabriel Valle notes how this is particularly true for many people of Mexican origin that he works with in the San Jose area, as migrants from Mexico are highly represented in the exploitative field of agricultural work, due to the historic factors discussed previously. As mentioned in the above section, the agricultural sector is exempt from typical U.S. labor laws and protections, making the relationship its workers have with labor even more violent. When someone working in this system cultivates a garden with the express purpose of health, sharing, and cultural joy, that transforms the person’s relationship with labor. Valle cites Bruno Gulli as saying that “when labor is freed from the manipulation of capital accumulation, it exists in its free and ‘natural’ but always ‘social’ state” (52), highlighting the generative, community building power of community gardens in this context.

This relates to another positive potential of community gardens highlighted in the literature—their potential to generate spaces of cultural affirmation and community for minority groups. Brandon Hoover notes that urban agriculture has “historical roots in black and/or Latino neighborhoods” (Hoover 2013, 109). There are many community garden organizations in urban Black neighborhoods that provide spaces to heal a relationship with the land that has often been ruptured due to a history of enslavement and forced agricultural labor (Block et al, McFarland) add years. Pancho McFarland documents his experience teaching young Black urban gardeners in Chicago, responding to one student’s comparison of the work with slavery by saying that “this work is the very opposite of slavery” because “having no self-determination is the very definition of slavery” and in this garden, the students collaboratively decided what healthy foods to plant, and maintained ownership over their labor and its outputs (Peña, 2019, 304).

In addition to urban gardens centered around healing the Black community, members of the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora are also trying to heal a ruptured relationship with the land through gardens centered around ethnic community. Timothy Herrera writes in his dissertation about how HDLF is a place in Eugene where its Mesoamerican Indigenous members enact “carework,” taking care of each other’s’ mental and physical health and enjoying a shared cultural space, something that is particularly important for a community whose mental and physical health has been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and wildfires (Herrera, 2021). Another example is the South-Central Farm in L.A., which before its removal was run by 350 migrant Indigenous *campesinos* from various countries south of the U.S., mainly Mexico. The farm supplied food to these 350 families and beyond, making a tangible difference in the health and food security of the Mesoamerican Indigenous community in the area in addition to being a space of cultural connection. Teresa Mares and Devon Peña offer a geographic theoretical

perspective on this, naming “auto-topographies” as when groups “culturally reinscribe public and personal spaces as a form of ‘self-telling through place shaping’. Gardeners recreate the familiar landscape of their homeland by planting and cultivating crops that are culturally significant” (2019, 46).

However, scholars also acknowledge some negative potentials of community gardens, one of which is to reproduce neoliberal tendencies by filling in the gaps of services the government should be providing. Mary Pudup writes that there is a “rise of gardens as organized projects specifically designed as spaces of neoliberal governmentality, that is, spaces in which gardening puts individuals in charge of their own adjustment(s) to economic restructuring and social dislocation through self-help technologies centered on personal contact with nature” (2006, 1228). Her perspective shows the negative side to what Herrera writes about as a positive, the fact that people who don’t get the services they need from the government can care from each other in community gardens. While building strong communities and alternative forms of communal governance in the face of oppressive systems is important, Pudup wants us to not exempt the government from its obligation to provide adequate food, health, and other services. More specifically, she writes about the “deploying of community gardens” as a “self-help technology,” showing that the difference between people autonomously choosing to garden for themselves and the top-down imposition of community gardens by others to avoid more radical solutions is an important one to make (1228).

Another potential negative aspect of community gardens highlighted in the literature is the way in which they reproduce white, elite food spaces. It’s true that community gardens can be sources of ethnic or cultural community and healing, but Brandon Hoover notes how this is not the most common situation. More frequently occurring is the imposition of “white spaces in

Black and Latino places” (2013, 109) due to the way in which urban agriculture is perceived as part of the elite, organic food movement (Alkon and Guthman 2017). Many food studies scholars note the way in which U.S. food activism tends to be consumer based, with organic or higher quality food products being sold at higher prices and in wealthier, whiter, neighborhoods (Alkon and Guthman 2017). This is true of community gardens as well which can be a symbol of belonging to a higher class that is often predominantly white. This is shown in Hoover’s analysis that 78% of urban agriculture participants surveyed in Denver, Colorado was white. It’s clear that despite the potential for communal healing among minority communities, community gardens also hold the potential to be exclusionary.

A frequently occurring theme in the literature around community gardens is the idea of these gardens as experiments in direct democracy and horizontal leadership organization. Christopher Yap writes about this regarding the urban community gardens he works with in Seville, Spain. Yap notes that, much like the way in which community gardens can either reproduce or challenge neoliberal structures, they can either reproduce hierarchical structures with their governing choices or create horizontal, democratic governing structures. One interesting dynamic of urban agriculture leadership is that it often tends to center female decision making (Yap 2019, Juarez 2017), although some scholars call for more research in this area (Herrera 2021). Yap argues that key factors in determining a community garden’s likelihood to be a horizontally organized system are the motivations of gardeners for joining, the method of communication between gardeners, and the spatial dynamics of the garden itself, such as if plots are shared or separate (2019).

Food Sovereignty Discourse

As noted above, community gardens can be considered by some to be a part of the discourse on food sovereignty. However, exactly what this role is rather unclear, as the food sovereignty has grown in popularity and scope, challenging scholars who attempt to define it. This section briefly explores the history and complexities of what food sovereignty is and might become.

The term food sovereignty was coined by the global peasant organization La Via Campesina (LVC) in 1996 at its second International Conference (Wittman 2010). LVC formed in 1994 in response to the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which treated agricultural trade like any other commodity in terms of trade laws, despite agriculture being a way of life and mode of survival for peasants around the world and food not being a commodity but a life sustaining substance.

LVC organized against the WTO and its neoliberal agriculture policies on the international level and continues to do so by mobilizing over 180 different organizations in over 80 countries representing peasants, smallholder farms, and indigenous agriculturalists, fisherfolk, and pastoralists. LVC gained renown on the global scale with their attendance of the World Food Summit in 1996. It was around this time that they also released their “11 Principles of Food Sovereignty” which help define their positions on food issues and clarify their definition of food sovereignty. In short, LVC defines food sovereignty as “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems” (La Via Campesina 1996), Nyéléni Declaration 2007). Amy Trauger describes LVC’s overall identity as being “the ‘international movement which defends...small-scale sustainable agriculture as a way to promote social justice

and dignity. It strongly opposes corporate driven agriculture and transnational companies that are destroying people and nature.” She adds that “LVC’s local affiliates work on a variety of campaigns, including anti-GMO activism, gender equity, and agrarian reform” (Trauger 2017, 5).

In addition to the WTO’s trade policy, LVC formed particularly in response to and opposition to the colonial policy of food dumping, cementing their position as in defense of indigenous agriculturalists of the Global South, who are often citizens of former European colonies, bear the brunt of continuing colonial food policies, and make up the majority of LVC’s membership. Food dumping is when countries, often in the Global North, overproduce certain agricultural commodities in surplus due to their extremely industrialized agriculture systems, commodities that other, smaller countries often in the Global South are already producing as sustenance foods. The richer countries then sell their surplus to the countries in the Global South at such cheap prices that local markets can’t compete, driving local and often indigenous farmers using sustainable methods out of business because they can’t compete with the prices. This is how many countries in the Global South, often former colonies, become dependent on the importation of staple foods from their former colonizers. This is enabled by WTO policies.

LVC engages in this action on the international stage through its International Planning Committee, hosting frequent international summits, and lobbying and protesting at the level of the United Nations (UN). One of their most famous international summits was held in Nyéléni, Mali in 2007, which resulted in the Nyéléni Declaration, another document that clarifies LVC’s idea of food sovereignty. One of LVC’s most significant victories was the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants in 2018.

Although LVC first coined the term food sovereignty and has the most wide reaching and global platform for food sovereignty activism, the term has become more broadly used and we can question whether one needs to be an official affiliate of LVC to be engaged in food sovereignty work. When food studies scholar Devon Peña critiques food sovereignty, his ideas center around LVC itself, suggesting that to some extent LVC remains the center of the food sovereignty world.

These foremost critiques of LVC are that it is too anthropocentric, buys into an idea of economic exceptionalism, over-embraces the Western human rights framework, and does not address the rapid urbanization of the planet through the displacement of small farmers. Peña writes that the concept of “universal human rights has been criticized as a ‘trojan horse’ of neoliberal design and ‘recolonization’ masquerading as respect for Indigenous Peoples” (Peña 2017, 10). This is because the Western human rights framework rests on the notion of the rights-bearing individual, and this very concept of the individual is antithetical to many indigenous philosophies, cosmologies, religions, and legal systems (Peña 2017). Prominent food sovereignty scholar Amy Trauger also acknowledges that “the nature of territorial state power and the juridical structures of the (neo)liberal state may mute the more radical aims of food sovereignty” (Trauger 2014), signaling that she also doubts LVC’s use of neoliberal structures to enforce its anti-neoliberal agenda. Peña’s critique of anthropocentrism similarly questions the radical-ness of LVC, highlighting LVC’s focus on the rights of humans to work the land as they choose, without regard for how those methods may affect the well-being of our non-human counterparts in the ecosystems involved. Other environmental scholars such as David Pellow echo this call for valuing the nonhuman world as much as humans in environmental activism if we are to take an

approach that is truly in the best interest of the planet and counter to the colonial, neoliberal paradigm.

While Peña's critiques food sovereignty and reifies LVC as the center of the movement, other scholars such as Amy Trauger point to the radical potential of the concept of food sovereignty and focus less on the role of LVC as a movement. She writes that food sovereignty is a "progressive rejection of modern liberal state sovereignty that draws on alternative notions of power, territory and economy to establish new modes of decision-making as well as generate new subjectivities." She also cites the Nyéléni Declaration to highlight how, in theory, food sovereignty includes a radical political and social transformation, "new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social and economic classes and generations" and new frameworks for economies and food production (Trauger 2014) In total, she describes it as an "ambitious redefinition of the political, the economic, the social, and the ecological in the global food system" that is "centered in the margins," with a postcapitalist vision centered in true autonomy and political sovereignty of peoples (Trauger 2014, 2).

The difference between these critiques and praise is that Peña is focusing on LVC as an emblem of the current food sovereignty movement and its current tactics, while Trauger discusses what food sovereignty could be, based on the ideas put forward by its proponents. Trauger acknowledges that food sovereignty's meaning is "contested," saying that this broad definition of food sovereignty "contains some potentially damning contradictions" and that the famous Nyéléni declaration contains "a lot for scholars to wrestle with" (Trauger 2017). While the food sovereignty movement has put forth an impressive vision of the world it wants to see, there is still much research to be done on defining what the movement is and where it is at.

Just flipping through the essays of *Mexican-Origin Food, Foodways, and Social Movements*, edited by Devon Peña, displays a diversity of perspectives on how to define food sovereignty simply within the confines of Mexican-origin food movements. Community to Community (C2C), a farmworker advocacy group from Washington State, defines food sovereignty as “the struggle to recenter the planet’s well-being in a manner clearly interwoven with our own prosperity,” and protecting air and water at all points of the food chain (235). Pancho McFarland writes in his essay on food sovereignty in urban Chicago that it is “the ability to determine how and what you eat” (2019, 304). Other scholars of the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora cite a difference between the way food sovereignty operates on a global versus local level. Rufina Juarez of the LA South-Central Farm writes that “It’s the right of every people to define their own agricultural and food policies” on the international level, but at the local level it is that “the community can determine the nature of food production as well as they manner of consumption and the modes of distribution” (2019, 30). One farmworker rights group says that “While food justice functions as the glue holding the movements together, food sovereignty is the goal that these movements are working towards,” citing the difference as being between access to culturally appropriate and sustainable food versus democratizing the food system and deciding one’s own food policies. Gabriel Valle argues that “food sovereignty moves beyond both food security and food justice because it focuses on the community right to produce for itself rather than continuing dependency on food aid. What sets food sovereignty apart... is the need to transcend the local” (56). It’s evident that food sovereignty has become so widely used that diverse activists all have different definitions.

While defining food sovereignty is clearly an ongoing and challenging task, Amy Trauger attempts to break the movement down into its main components in her book, *We Want*

Land to Live. She identifies the four main pillars of trying to create local forms of markets and oppose neoliberal international markets, access to and control over natural resources, sharing territories and land (again, in opposition to neoliberal conceptions of land), and pushing for agroecological and sustainable methods. She arrives at this conclusion based on examining the evolving documents and declaration of LVC over time, which she notes have shifted in their rhetoric from a nation-centric to people-centric description of food sovereignty goals.

Another necessary element of attempting to define food sovereignty beyond discussing its origins, criticisms, and core themes, is clarifying what the “sovereignty” in food sovereignty means. Political theorist De Benoist writes that sovereignty is typically interpreted as either the supreme authority of a ruling sovereign or document--such as a king, head of state, or constitution--or more broadly as who holds power and legitimate authority over a given issue among people (popular sovereignty) (De Benoist 1999). The idea of sovereignty has its origins in the creation of the nation-state, which co-evolved with neoliberalism as geographic conceptions of land morphed into viewing land as something parceled off into individual nations and enclosed in private property (Trauger 2017; Murphy 2018). Thus, the use of the term sovereignty might ring a bell of Peña’s criticism that it approaches too much the very neoliberal framework it is trying to undo. However, Trauger’s note of LVC’s shift away a nation-based rhetoric to a popular based one indicates that the movement is attempting to use the term sovereignty to describe something else. While Trauger notes that “the nature of territorial state power and the juridical structures of the (neo)liberal state may mute the more radical aims of food sovereignty” she also describes food sovereignty as a “progressive rejection of modern liberal state sovereignty” (2014), suggesting that food sovereignty may be using the same terminology as liberal state sovereignty but is proposing something new.

This embrace of the terminology of food sovereignty while rejecting the liberal nation state is nowhere better exemplified than among Native tribes in North America, whose very existence as autonomous political entities that predate and defy the nation-state system are antithetical to that liberalism. Despite their complicated legal and historical relationship to the state power of the U.S., there is a powerful movement for food sovereignty among indigenous people of North America, showing an alternate conception of sovereignty that is more autonomy based than liberal state sovereignty oriented. Elizabeth Hoover explores “how food sovereignty as a concept and method is being described and defined by Native American community farmers and gardeners” (Hoover 2017, 2). While Hoover also acknowledges the drawbacks to the rights-based framework and quotes American Indian critiques of the term food sovereignty such as Winona LaDuke, she sides more with De Benoist’s second definition of sovereignty, claiming that it has more to do with the people’s authority and autonomy, calling it a “right of the peoples” and using the word “peoples” in the plural rather than singular. This embrace of food sovereignty by indigenous peoples supports an alternate conception of sovereignty to that of the liberal state.

LVC includes many facets in its struggle to build political liberation and new food systems, including the rights of women farmers, indigenous people, and agroecological methods. Among these platforms though, LVC’s call for seed sovereignty is one of the most intense and relevant political fights in the food sovereignty world. Sharing seed is a social practice around the world that cultivates relationships between those involved in seed exchange and seed sovereignty is one of the aspects of food sovereignty that is typically thought to best incorporate gender dynamics. This is because throughout many cultures over time, women have been the keepers, savers, and choosers of seeds (Kerr 2013). Rachel Kerr describes seed sovereignty as

entailing “a people’s control over and knowledge of seed types, production and distribution” and being in opposition to the increased control over seeds by large corporations (Kerr 2013, 870).

Seed sovereignty is important because it is another way of controlling the means of production and of stepping outside of the industrial neoliberal paradigm, all objectives lauded by LVC and the food sovereignty movement. One key organization working to advance seed sovereignty is Navdanya, an “earth centric, women centric and farmer led movement for the protection of biological and cultural diversity” through seed saving and fighting for “seed as commons” (Navdanya 2022). Vandana Shiva, Navdanya’s founder, describes the commodification of seed as an inexcusable overreach of neoliberalism into what should be a sacred, living domain and has created over 150 community seed banks to combat this “biopiracy” (Navdanya 2022).

The liberal state also creates barriers to seed sovereignty due to the obstacles faced at its recently invented borders. Jeff Spurrier gives an overview in the *LA Times* of the cultivation of Chipilín in Los Angeles and the broader U.S. Spurrier references how Chipilín, a culturally important food to many of the Mesoamerican indigenous diaspora, is considered by the USDA to be an invasive plant. He details his own project studying immigrants and the plants they grow, pointing out that he had to get special approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to bring the plant over from El Salvador. His partners for this project grow some of the only Chipilín that can be found in the US. In this way, seed saving is an important way to preserve culture in the face of the erosion of indigenous culture that the liberal state creates with its borders (Spurrier 2012, Munshi 2021).

Another way in which seed sovereignty battles play out in the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora is within the country of Mexico and its struggle with transgenic crops and genetically

modified corn taking over its indigenous corn market. Adelita Sanvicente Tello and Araceli Carreón discuss how despite the coevolution of humans and corn in Mesoamerica, the Mexican seed industry is becoming increasingly privatized by foreign genetically modified seed companies such as Monsanto. They describe how seed sovereignty is integral to political and cultural sovereignty when they write:

Whenever a culture recognizes seeds are the reservoir of life and of history, we appreciate their ability to store nutrients, such as genetic information that enables the reproduction of most vegetables, and their ability to protect the history of our collective knowledge. The development of desirable characteristics in corn through observation, crossbreeding, protection, and the exchange and search for seeds by Indigenous farmers over the course of ten thousand years of agriculture is summarized in the characteristics of the seeds. They are the storehouses of our history: “This is an accumulation of tradition, of an accumulation of knowledge about how to work those seeds.” The knowledge contained in them, ultimately, is the product of an ancient collective effort of humanity, which has sought through the same process to flourish as a species...It is for this ability to encapsulate life, history, and knowledge that the seed has become the object around which the dispute over corn has focused” (316-317).

This quote from Tello and Carreón encapsulates why seed saving is so meaningful to indigenous communities, and why the “new colonialism of capital” that Vandana Shiva also calls “biopiracy” is such a threat to ecologies and indigenous communities alike. Tello and Carreón connect seed saving to colonialism when they say that:

the seeds contain a deep understanding of nature that fits into a system of thought and ultimately a worldview that involves a different relationship with nature. The appropriation of the seeds themselves leads to the expropriation and usufruct of this ancient knowledge of humanity (317).

To combat these affronts on indigenous and ecological knowledge systems, the food sovereignty movement is most certainly up front and confrontational in its tactics as a social movement. This can be seen in the array of global summits, movements, and protests enacted by their members. However, it is worth noting that this is perhaps not the only form food

sovereignty activism can take and it's possible that there are other groups who prefer less direct and overtly political forms of confrontation.

For example, although LVC releases regular statements in support of farmworkers, farmworkers themselves often report a desire to distance themselves from the political to avoid deportation or punishment due to their often-fluctuating legal status. Even one of the leadership members of the South-Central LA Farm, Rufina Juarez, mentions not wanting to be political until the removal of their farm absolutely forced the group to stand up and resist.

Although there is a long history of labor activism among the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora in the U.S., particularly in the realm of farm work, from the Bracero program to the United Farmworkers' Union, to PCUN in the present day, forms of resistance just as often took the form of cultural reclamation and the creation of spaces of joy, something less easily labeled as political (Sifuentez 2016). Many scholars write about a more "prefigurative" form of politics often favored by these workers, who instead create alternate realities of food sovereignty through their actions rather than overtly political movements (Mares 2019; Koensler 2020; Dale 2021).

Sophia Gradin and Paul Raekstad describe prefigurative politics as "planting the seeds of the society of the future in the soil of today's" in their book on prefigurative politics (2020). Prefigurative politics is a praxis-oriented approach to political change that leans more on directly enacting the change one wishes to see in the world than using traditional electoral or other political methods to achieve it. Historically, this idea that has come from anarchist, antiracist, feminist, intersectional, non-hierarchical organizers. Gradin and Raekstad write that, "One of the most prominent arguments for prefigurative politics is precisely that it can show you something that can't be properly explained through words alone: what free, equal, and democratic forms of social organization might really be like" (2020). Prefigurative politics makes "the personal...

political,” meaning that it extends beyond organizational structures to include daily actions. Gradin and Raekstad write that, “It is not only organizations that can be prefigurative; so too can broader organizational culture, social relations, and everyday practices” (31). Scholars such as Alexander Koensler and Teresa Mares have written about the applicability of this approach to food sovereignty work, both in Italy and in the case of Latino farmworkers in the U.S. Mares and Trauger highlight the “small, but significant acts of defiance, as well as...acts of kindness and love” that sustain food sovereignty (2019, 186). Mares writes about the significant daily implications of food sovereignty work among a community garden initiative of Latino immigrant farmworkers in Vermont that, while not outwardly political, is building more just worlds through food sovereignty (2019). These are all examples of an alternate approach to food sovereignty activism that utilizes the approach of prefigurative politics.

Methods

This work draws from multiple methodologies. My work is informed by Laura Pulido's work on scholar activism as well as the philosophy and methodology of participatory action research (PAR) (Wakeford 2019, Lawson et al 2015). I am also influenced by the idea of concept-as-method (Jackson & Mazzei 2023, Nxumalo 2021) and research questions as generative and worldbuilding. In my analytical approach I embrace grounded theory (Charmaz 2016) as my foundational guiding principle but also utilize the qualitative method of narrative and thematic analysis (Warren 2020). Kathy Charmaz describes grounded theory as "asking emergent critical questions throughout inquiry" and "taking a deeply reflexive stance" where "researchers to scrutinize their data, actions, and nascent analyses" (2017). I do this by adding emergent questions to my thematic analysis throughout the analysis process as ongoing interviews and conversations with HDLF members revealed previously unexpected themes. This framework of grounded theory also harmonizes with my other inspirations that conceive research as a subjective process that creates different realities and subjectivities through the actions of the researcher, effects which the researcher must be conscious of and responsible for (Pulido, Jackson & Mazzei 2023, Nxumalo 2021). I draw on Momo Wilms-Crowe's undergraduate research in Puerto Rico (2020) as an example in positionality and reciprocal relationships, as well as Timothy Herrera's 2021 dissertation "Covid, Climate Change, and Carework: Mesoamerican Diasporic Indigenous and Latino Communities in the Willamette Valley" as a blueprint for working with the organization HDLF.

People and Place/Site and Participants

My research took place across the seven different garden sites of HDLF, which are spread across Springfield and Eugene. Most of my work happened at the principal garden site,

the Churchill Garden, located behind Kennedy Middle School and Churchill High School in West Eugene. During my participatory action research, I also spent time at the Centro Latino Americano (CLA) office building on W 5th Avenue in Eugene, where HDLF has established an office since merging with CLA. I worked largely with the garden program assistant, Esme Manzo, and the garden coordinator, Elva Webster. My supervisor, who helped co-develop research and interview questions as well as being essential in interview contacts as scheduling, is Gatlin Fasone Alshuyukh the director of HDLF's organic garden program. I also developed relationships with many garden members, both casually and as part of the interview process. Most of these members describe themselves as Latino or Indigenous to Mesoamerica and migrated to Eugene a while ago. There is a strong convivial energy around the garden, with lots of kids and longtime family and friendship relationships among gardeners. There are also a few members who have immigrated from other areas, such as Eastern Europe or the Middle East.

PAR and Positionality

A main part of my methodology is participatory action research (PAR) as I continue in my capacity as an organic garden program intern at Huerto. Hal Lawson defines PAR in his 2015 book as “[enabling] democratic participation in real world problem solving by local stakeholders” and notes that it qualifies as research because “new knowledge and understanding are generated as local problem-solving proceeds” (10). While researchers have used this methodology in many contexts, it has gained popularity among critical and activist academics who recognize the academy as an inherently colonial structure because of how PAR redistributes power to local actors and involves the researcher contributing their labor and resources to further the goals of the local actors. Wakeford and Rodriguez position their description of PAR as a

methodological critique of the “academy” and “institutional” structures of knowledge production that have their origins in England’s colonial elite (2019).

Wakeford and Rodriguez also frame PAR in terms of key components of the methodology. They note that PAR rejects the assumption that researchers always know best and asks the questions “Who has relevant knowledge?” and “Who should have power?” They also note that PAR has the explicit intention of uplifting those often marginalized by the knowledge production process, and that PAR rejects the myth of neutrality (2019, 12). My goal was to apply these concepts to my research, continuing the tradition of using PAR in food activism settings (Wakeford & Rodriguez 2019). PAR is a particularly well-suited method to this project because the garden members hold so much more relevant knowledge than I do as an undergraduate researcher, and it was important to me to let their knowledge and needs guide the project as people with lived experience of food sovereignty struggles and transborder discourse, and decades more experience with sustainable agriculture techniques than I had. In this way I brought resources of the academy (such as fellowship funding for a water catchment system, my labor as a student intern, the publicity of having a thesis written on the organization, and survey data to help develop programming). At the same time, I tried my best to let HDLF determine the questions and direction of the project and for our thinking, talking, and working together to help us generate new knowledge around HDLF’s connection to global themes and food sovereignty, with my role being to then record the findings of our collective work.

As an organic garden program intern with HDLF, I spend 5-15 hours a week on maintenance of community garden spaces, assisting garden members in their plots, greenhouse upkeep, conducting crop and product research, supervising volunteers, and attending events, speaking Spanish, assisting with the design of garden programs, among other duties. My position

as an intern meant that I was exposed to organizational processes, leadership meetings, and the behind-the-scenes documentation of projects that had been years in the making. I experienced HDLF's network with similar organizations, and how it interacted with political institutions as a nonprofit. While engaging in this work, I kept a participant observation journal where I recorded my thoughts and reactions on my work in relation to the literature and ideas I am engaging for this thesis.

I have worked with HDLF on and off since January 2020. This is important to my research methods because in following the example of the scholar activist tradition, I prioritized relationship building over results across my methodology (Pulido 2008). Prior to beginning this research project, I already had a strong relationship with the garden staff from my past experience as an intern, and to an extent with the garden members as well. My current internship period with HDLF began in June 2022, and I began fieldwork in earnest in October 2022. During the summer of 2022, I prioritized relationship building among garden members, which meant taking Spanish courses at the University, going out of my way to talk to people, meet them, and practicing my Spanish at garden events.

My PAR work at the garden revolved around HDLF's food sovereignty work, and I focused on exploring the dynamics of HDLF's seed sovereignty programming by offering my labor in the areas I could be most helpful. I approached my work on seed saving, greenhouse management, and helping obtain funding for the greenhouse water catchment system with a curious mindset to observe what connections there may or may not be between this small organization and the larger food sovereignty movement, and I kept a journal of notes on my phone as well as a typed journal where I wrote about themes I experienced at work that intersected with what I read in the literature. As part of my internship, I was also able to travel

with HDLF members to statewide gatherings such as *El Dia del Agricultor* which brings together Latinos in agriculture from around the state to talk about sustainable farming and immigrant and farmworker rights. I also had the opportunity to engage in countless informal conversations with my coworkers and other garden members where I asked about their experience with themes such as gender roles in the garden, seed saving, and connecting to their country of origin through food. While these responses may not necessarily have been recorded, they nonetheless greatly informed my work. Drawing from the framework of grounded theory, I allowed findings and patterns to materialize on their own without having a pre-set pattern I was looking for within the experience.

A foundational element of scholar activism and PAR is the idea of reciprocity. My goal was for my research to be as useful as possible to my colleagues at Huerto. This part of my methodology involved co-developing interview and survey questions with my supervisors at the garden so that the questions I asked would also help get them the data they needed. Additionally, I acknowledge the publication of this thesis in a long form English essay is not accessible to my collaborators at the garden and interview subjects who may be interested in reading the work they contributed to in Spanish or experiencing the knowledge orally. For this reason, I will be creating either a small Spanish zine of this project's findings or a short oral presentation at the garden in Spanish, based on interest among staff and members.

Finally, I conclude this section of my methods on PAR and my position in the research and organization with a discussion of my own identity. I am a white, bisexual, English speaking, female Honors College student, descended from German immigrants a few generations back, and the child of two college educated parents. Some of these identities become more apparent in my work at Huerto than others, and it is my responsibility as a researcher to be aware of this.

Primarily, it is necessary to recognize that I am a white, English speaking, academic with U.S. citizenship in a Latino immigrant Spanish speaking space. While I cannot perfectly address the inherent inequities and colonial dynamics of being a white academic working in a community of color, remaining aware of my positionality means that I learned Spanish, prioritize my relationships with this community that have existed for a long time and will continue to exist for a long time after this thesis is completed, and that I try and take up less space in the planning and decision making process, while not simply giving extra work to HDLF. The long-term nature of my involvement with HDLF as an intern and community member provided enormous support in navigating these identities as it reduced my role as an outsider and meant that I've formed real and lasting friendships with people in the program that will only continue to grow as I stay in Eugene and volunteer with the program this upcoming year.

Relevant Scholarship

Beyond engaging in HDLF's work as an intern, having informal conversations, and taking notes, I also conducted a review of literature on Latino immigration in Oregon, community gardens, and food and seed sovereignty. The purpose of this stage in the research was to draw from many disciplines to paint a clear picture of the global and historical narratives that frame my work at HDLF, from the history that contextualizes the immigration stories of garden members to the global trends among community gardens and food sovereignty activists since those are both groups to which HDLF belongs. In addition to situating HDLF within broader contexts, the literature review process allowed me later compare themes in the literature to themes in the websites of HDLF and its partner organizations to understand conversely how HDLF positions itself in relation to the rest of the world.

Interviews and Survey

I supplemented the information gathered from participatory action research, observation, and literature review with eight semi structured interviews with a mix of garden staff and members. All interviews were conducted in Spanish, except for two with people whose first language was English. For interviews with participants who were only comfortable speaking Spanish, a garden staff member was present for help interpreting when there were gaps in my Spanish. Those participants who were comfortable understanding when I needed to express something in English but preferred to respond in Spanish and have most of the interview be in Spanish were interviewed without an interpreter.

The questions were developed for the interviews in conjunction with Gatlin Fasone Alshuykh, the organic garden program director of HDLF, and she also assisted with making sure that introductions to the interviews and recruitment texts were accessible and friendly to the members, who she knew better than I. Once we had a list of the final interview questions, they were translated into Spanish using DeepL online translator and then checked for readability and errors by Gatlin, who is fluent in Spanish. I wrote the recruitment text and put it through DeepL, and Gatlin checked the translation and recruited interview participants via text message. The recruitment plan was jointly decided with HDLF leadership, and the decisions were largely made based on the leadership's impression of how willing the participants would be, or if the organization was already putting a lot on their plate at that time.

The two interviews with staff members were not compensated as academic help is built into the internship contract. Garden members were paid in \$50 gift cards to a store of their choice as compensation for the interviews, which lasted between 30-45 minutes. The interviews were a mix of in person, at coffee shops or the HDLF's office, and over zoom. IRB-compliant consent

forms were provided, as well as copies of the questions in both English and Spanish for the participant to read over ahead of time. Consent was obtained either by signature, or orally depending on the preference of the participant. All interviews were recorded if the participant consented to it.

In addition to these extended interviews, a google form survey focused on seed saving was developed in collaboration with garden staff. HDLF staff added their own questions to the form to collect data that they were interested in, and HDLF staff translated the form into Spanish. Methods of distribution included approaching garden members while we were both working in the garden, sending the link to the google form out via mass text to garden members, putting up a QR code to the form at the “Juntas” (large events for each garden location for members to renew their contracts and get free seeds and fertilizer for the coming year), bringing QR code flyer to a meeting of the garden’s *comite de lideres*, and by asking interview participants if they would also be willing to fill out a short survey. People who completed the survey were offered a \$5 Starbucks gift card as compensation. 22 people filled out the survey in total. IRB approval was obtained for all interview and survey practices, consent forms, and data handling procedures. Participants were given the option to be referred to using pseudonyms in the final product if desired.

Transcription and Analysis

Interview transcription was carried out with the company DataGain, which provided a secure portal in which to upload audio files where they would only be seen by other invited members of the research team. Spanish audio was received as transcriptions translated into English.

Analysis of interviews was conducted using a three-pronged approach of narrative, thematic, and grounded theory analysis. I conducted a thematic analysis using the qualitative analysis software Dedoose. I identified themes that I felt were representative of food sovereignty based on my literature review, inspired in particular by Amy Trauger's analysis format in her book, *We Want Land to Live*, where she utilizes LVC documents to identify four main pillars of food sovereignty that she discusses: political autonomy, postcapitalist economies, sociocultural change, and new food production methods. This led me to my eight themes for my thematic analysis that I looked for in my interviews with HDLF staff and members: autonomy, access to culturally relevant and healthy food, anti-neoliberalism, seed sovereignty, production oriented, peasant centered, global in nature, and agroecological methods. I coded quotes in Dedoose that lined up with these themes and analyzed how frequently they occurred.

The grounded theory approach entered this analysis by creating new themes to code for as patterns appeared in the interview transcripts that I read. The new themes added that were not predetermined were: transborder, community, organization, barriers, opposition to the idea of being 'political', and organic. I also analyzed the frequency at which these themes occurred.

I brought narrative analysis approach to both methods, analyzing the way in which HDLF members and staff talked about their work compared to the mainstream narratives of food sovereignty that exist in the literature. I also incorporated this approach into my discussion of my observations from my PAR research.

For analysis of the google survey results, I provide a brief overview of the statistics collected on seed saving information and compared the results of the seed saving survey to the long form interview results. Overall, these results were primarily for the benefit of the organization and could benefit from further analysis in the future.

Limitations

One key limitation to this study was my command of Spanish, which while mostly functional, did not allow for the depth of communication that could have resulted in more robust and meaningful conversations. As noted by researchers Herrera and Stephen as well as the Covid-19 Oregon Farmworkers Survey, there is a serious lack of services in Mesoamerican indigenous languages and most services for the Mesoamerican indigenous diasporic population tend to be in Spanish, even when their target audience speaks an indigenous language rather than Spanish. This is true for HDLF's members, and so conducting work in Spanish and not indigenous languages is a limitation in this sense.

Following the theme of language, there is always a little bit of meaning lost in the translation process. This was minimized by using a transcription service that utilizes native speakers, as well as relying on HDLF staff who are fluent in both Spanish and English for assistance.

Finally, any ethnographic research project requires great care and attention to ethics, positionality, and relationships and while I attempted to cultivate a relationship-based approach to this research that made it as reciprocal as possible, the academic timelines and student burnout did still prove to be a limitation. My fatigue as an overworked student trying to meet deadlines led me to have less energy and be less present, patient, and openminded in relationships, or spend less time having conversations in Spanish or practicing Spanish, than I would have liked had I had more capacity. Had I had more time I feel I could have developed deeper and more meaningful friendships within the organization.

Analysis

The objective of this project was to shed light on three primary research questions. First, to what extent is the seed saving project of an urban agroecology nonprofit serving immigrant communities in Eugene, Oregon (HDLF) constitutive of the global food sovereignty movement? Secondly, what challenges does HDLF face in actualizing the ideals of the global food sovereignty movement? Finally, what role does gender play in the organization and implementation of seed saving programming at Huerto de la Familia? This section elaborates on the data collected through participatory action research (PAR), six qualitative interviews, and an online survey of 22 garden members in order to provide material with which to answer these questions later on in the discussion.

First, I analyze my experiences and observations as an intern with HDLF, reflecting on both a year of focused PAR research and my year of prior experience with the organization, utilizing my personal observations of HDLF's programming similarities and structural differences in relation to the global food sovereignty movement. Then, I present and analyze the results of six semi structured qualitative interviews. I utilize a three-pronged approach in analyzing these interviews that combines thematic, narrative, and grounded theory qualitative analysis approaches. Finally, I focus in on one of the identified themes, seed sovereignty, to present a case study of how one HDLF program is or is not constitutive of the global food sovereignty movement. In this section, I discuss the results of the survey. I conclude with a brief note on the question of gender, which was one of my original research questions that did not yield very clear results, which motivated me to compile all its brief mentions into one section.

PAR results

Project Experience

During my time working as an intern with HDLF, I engaged with one main project that encapsulated many values of LVC and the global food sovereignty movement. This project was the organization's programming for access to culturally relevant food through season extension and seed saving. Teresa Mares writes about how shorter growing seasons due to colder weather north of the U.S.-Mexico border is shared obstacle among the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora in cultivating culturally important foods, relating this to the food sovereignty work of her organization in Vermont. To help address this problem, HDLF constructed a large greenhouse that enabled members to cultivate plants native to Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and other South American countries that grow best in climates that stay hotter longer, and I assisted with this in my capacity as an intern. This relates to seed sovereignty because often what happens is members can grow these types of plants, often chiles, here in Oregon but the plant won't fully mature to the point where it has produced fully mature seeds that can be saved by the time the rainy season comes.

For this reason, we built a greenhouse that would allow members to grow their plants from various South American countries to full maturity, thus empowering them to save the seeds as well and keep the production of the culturally relevant foods going in a cycle. This also enabled starting seeds earlier in the season, so that HDLF can give out tomato, chili, and pepper starts to members in the spring. One issue though, was access to water for seedlings and plants in the greenhouse. Because HDLF does not own the land it uses and the garden site for the greenhouse is on the property of a high school, HDLF must follow the high school's water use rules where water is turned off in the winter. This normally doesn't cause problems because

rainfall is plentiful but as the greenhouse shelters plants from rain an alternative solution was needed.

I helped construct a second rainwater catchment tank for the organization, using funding from the University of Oregon's Just Fellows Institute and drawing on community partnerships with Grady's Barrels and Laura Allen from Greywater action to source and install materials. This firsthand project experience showed me the extent to which HDLF was investing in programming to ensure members had access to culturally relevant foods such as chiles, peppers, and tomatillos. This also showed how the organization's cultural food programming went hand in hand with seed sovereignty and climate justice actions. Because the foods members were trying to grow are not immediately available for purchase in Eugene, the greenhouse allowed them to save seeds to continue production. The water catchment tank did help power the greenhouse and increase autonomy, but it also addressed issues of climate change and droughts that have been hitting the state of Oregon in recent years because it significantly helps with conserving water.

Claiming autonomy over the natural resource of water is clearly in line with Amy Trauger's definition of the main pillars of food sovereignty (2017) and shows that HDLF is moving beyond the limitations imposed upon it by the owners of the land they use who engage in neoliberal privatization of water. This is reminiscent of how LVC writes in several of its public declarations, and Trauger echoes this, that the goal of food sovereignty is more than redistributing land but rather moving beyond this paradigm to a framework of sharing and non-ownership, which HDLF innovating ways to use the naturally available water shows.

I did experience challenges related to HDLF's greenhouse and seed programming as well. I was often tasked as an intern with researching information on how to grow certain plant

varieties from Mexico, Guatemala, or El Salvador, or how to source the seeds for specific plants that members wanted to grow in the garden. Often, I struggled to find places we could buy or source the plants in the U.S., either because the limited, capitalist, and monopolized economy that runs the agriculture system of the U.S. doesn't provide it, or because it was illegal for those seeds to be brought into the U.S. from other countries. This challenge shows the oppressive regime created by the imposition of the imperial nation state. Not only, as Juan Gonzalez writes in *Harvest of Empire*, does the imposition of the nation-state border further the U.S.'s imperialism by allowing for the illegalization of incoming migrant labor that the U.S. creates through violent interventions, but it serves a purpose in isolating and controlling that population through aspects such as the customs controls that block availability of traditional seed. This also relates to renowned seed saver and scholar Vandana Shiva's fight against the neoliberalization and commodification of seed, which is a living object, and she argues it should not be subject to the rules and regulations of neoliberalism. Trauger makes the same argument but broadens it to explain how often liberal state regulatory agencies make the purchase and consumption of more agroecologically produced food products illegal. When seen in this light, it's evident that the barriers faced by HDLF are part of larger struggles faced by the food sovereignty movement.

One response I experienced to this challenge was the expansion of HDLF's seed bank, or *banco de semillas*. Our garden program coordinator, one of three paid garden employees, was the primary person in charge of gathering, drying, and organizing all the seeds saved from communal plants and members. This bank of seeds was then kept in HDLF's central office, where members can come get seeds in addition to checking out books on food sovereignty and seed saving in a little library. There is also a bank of donated seeds in each garden where members can take what they need for free. HDLF has always prided itself on providing free

seeds to members, but during my time with the organization I witnessed a shift towards providing not only access to seeds, but access to seeds that the organization had saved itself, from plants that other members had brought from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, or other places. This effort was publicized at various events, such as the different *fiestas de la cosecha*, or harvest festivals. At one of these, a member brought out a bag of beans they had brought from El Salvador and talked for a long time about how excited they were to share with other members and add to the seed bank. HDLF itself saved the seeds of many communal plants in the garden such as papalo and Mexican sunflowers, thus setting an example for other members.

I also witnessed a culture of exchange around these seed saving efforts. For example, one garden member donated many chili plants to the organization, so that we could then work on saving their seeds and overwintering them. Another example of seed sharing was within HDLF's relationship with other organizations supporting the Mesoamerican Indigenous Diaspora in Oregon, such as the Capaces Leadership Institute and Adelante Mujeres. The Capaces Leadership Institute runs a farm called *La Finca de Anahuac* that is centered on growing ancestral foods of Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and is in Woodburn, Oregon. Two of our garden employees went to tour their farm, and they gave us seeds they had saved from their ancestral foods. This culture of collaboration and sharing appears often in seed sovereignty literature and helps build strong relationships of what Herrera calls "carework" in his dissertation on HDLF. This aspect of collective care further demonstrates the radical effects of HDLF as an organization in the way that members of the Mesoamerican Indigenous community in Eugene have created a space where culture is celebrated, thus employing Raekstad and Gradin's framework of prefigurative politics as a deliberate exploration of social changes by creating within the garden and its relationships the world they want to see. True to traditional

relationships with seed, this care for people also translates into care for plants and seeds through the sharing process, further relating HDLF to the food sovereignty movement through this care for the collective well-being of plants and people as interconnected within an agroecological framework.

Organizational Structure

One of the aspects of being a nonprofit that I perceived as one of HDLF's strengths in my PAR work was the inherent network of connections that is necessary to succeed as a nonprofit, as well as its horizontal leadership structure that is an excellent example of prefigurative politics in action. HDLF maintained strong relationships with the city of Eugene, with the organizations Capaces and Adelante Mujeres, helped plan and bring members to the statewide *Día del Agricultor*, and partnered with lots of different local small businesses run by Mesoamerican indigenous people in Eugene, such as food carts and folk dancing troupes for events. HDLF also maintains a strong connection with environmental advocacy groups in the area such as Beyond Toxics, the University of Oregon, and Oregon State University master gardener and extension services. Members of HDLF served on climate justice committees for the city and went to Salem to advocate for a bill that would expand SNAP (food stamp) benefits to all people regardless of documentation. Thus, even though HDLF did not explicitly name itself as a political organization, I observed many connections and relationships with more political organizations around Oregon, particularly in the way immigrants' rights organizations such as PCUN spoke at events HDLF attended, and how HDLF sent members to lobby for better food legislation in Salem.

This broad, rhizomatic network of relationships suggested two ways in which it connects HDLF to the food sovereignty movement. Firstly, it suggests that while HDLF may appear to be

a small, localized organization that is not an official affiliate of mainstream food sovereignty organization such as LVC, they have connections that extend far beyond the city of Eugene. Food sovereignty is fundamentally a collective, global movement, defined as “transcending the local” (Valle, 2017), and HDLF’s broad relationships bring it into the fold. Secondly, these relationships showcase how HDLF engages with what is described in the literature as prefigurative politics. Even though HDLF does not explicitly label itself as political, its members are working directly to create the political change they want to see, and that shows up in relationships and collaborations with more traditionally political organizations such as PCUN and the Capacities Leadership Program that engage in legal advocacy and coalition building.

I also witnessed this horizontal, weblike structure within HDLF itself. Members were often called upon as experts to give workshops rather than staff or outside agricultural experts, and decisions were made slowly and collectively. While this could be a little bit frustrating as an employee, it showed me how much different members’ input was valued in decision making. While the staff was very confident, they didn’t seem to view themselves as experts or superior in any way. There was also a leadership committee created during my time with HDLF, where leaders from each garden would meet and keep up to date on what was happening in each garden, make decisions, and implement additional community projects. This valorization of members’ traditional knowledge is also in line with the prefigurative politics framework because it prefigures a world in which indigenous knowledge is taken as seriously as agricultural knowledge from the Western academy.

A Cultural Space

Finally, it was clear in my participant observations that HDLF fulfilled a critical role as a cultural space that valorized the Mesoamerican indigenous diaspora community in Eugene. One

of the key functions of the organization, in addition to providing access to land, seeds, and a Spanish-language orientation on organic gardening, is hosting different events that bring the garden members together throughout the year. I attended events such as the *Día del Agricultor*, the harvest parties for each garden, workshops on pollinators and beekeeping, fruit tree pruning, greenhouse seed starting, folk dance parties, native pollinator identification walks, and more. These events were a chance for members to be around a Spanish speaking community, party, and learn from each other. Given that scholars agree community gardens have the potential to either radically defy white supremacy and neoliberalism, or enforce those same racial and neoliberal dynamics, it's significant that HDLF is one of the gardens that goes above and beyond to create a welcoming cultural space for a specific community that receives targeted discrimination from white supremacist structures. Many of these events also touch upon essential elements of food sovereignty, particularly agroecological methods. HDLF has recently increased the number of workshops on beekeeping and pollinator health, one way in which they are actively pursuing agroecological methods. Additionally, HDLF's approach to gardening is labeled "organic" but it goes beyond the large scale, neoliberal organic labeling criticized in the literature (A. H. Alkon and Norgaard 2009). Agroecological methods used and taught at events include dry farming, using ladybugs and other beneficial insects for pest control, no till farming, companion planting, and more.

HDLF's strong community allows the garden members to care for each other and access services in a way they otherwise might not. Garden member and scholar Timothy Herrera writes about this as informal carework, where the community garden space helps address the difficulties in mental health faced by many members. Because HDLF is part of a larger nonprofit, Centro Latino Americano (CLA), CLA's services are often advertised to HDLF members, services

which include help with substance abuse, citizenship tests, driver's licenses, English classes, vaccine clinics, and more. Additionally, I also assisted with childcare at many events, and it quickly became apparent that childcare was another essential way HDLF built community, both by involving children in the process of growing food and by providing accessible events so that families who couldn't afford childcare could still attend. These observations are reminiscent of the perspective Pudup presents in saying that sometimes community gardens contribute to neoliberalism rather than challenge it by providing services the government should be providing. This is certainly an important critique to consider and is likely true to an extent, However, in the case of HDLF and many other community gardens for specific ethnic or racial communities, there is substantial evidence that the state is actively harming rather than supporting these communities, and investing in a space outside of the state can also be perceived as a radical move to build a more autonomous space, as well as in the case of HDLF a valorization of transborder indigenous cultures that inherently defy the liberal state paradigm.

Interviews

I conducted 6, semi-directive interviews of roughly 45 minutes each. Two of the interviews were conducted in English and the other four were conducted in Spanish. Qualitative analysis of these interviews follows a three-pronged approach. First, I this section will discuss a thematic analysis of the interviews based on predetermined themes identified as constituting food sovereignty, based on literature. Secondly, I take a grounded theory approach by analyzing the interviews through the lens of themes that arose over the course of the interviews and were not predetermined. Finally, a narrative analysis approach is used throughout both sections to both highlight the stories told within the interviews and understand how garden members are talking about the themes in question.

Thematic Analysis

	Autonomy	culturally relevant /healthy food	Anti neoliberal	Seed sovereignty	Production oriented	Peasant centered	Global	Agroecological methods
1	5	3	1	5	4	1	3	2
2	8	6	1	2	6	2	2	1
3	10	7	6	0	3	7	1	0
4	5	4	1	1	2	1	3	2
5	1	3	5	1	1	1	0	3
6	7	1	4	9	1	2	3	2
Totals	36	24	18	18	17	14	12	10

Figure 1: Frequency of mentions of each theme in each of the six interviews.

The theme of autonomy occurred the most frequently, with 36 mentions across interviews. This is significant as autonomy is a key component of food sovereignty, and even if the term food sovereignty isn't explicitly mentioned by members, the unanimous focus on autonomy suggests a focus on food sovereignty that uses less academic terminology. The garden program director underlined this idea of autonomy as linked to the Mesoamerican indigenous diaspora:

A lot of them are coming from these rural communities. Imagine, like the amount of choice that your parents had on the farm, like you had a lot of say, and then you moved here and you had not very much at all. And I think even though it's a small garden plot, I think it has an impact on people's spirit.

This speaks to the importance of autonomy to the emotional health of the Mesoamerican indigenous immigrant community at HDLF and reminds us that food sovereignty is also about protecting cultural autonomy, and this agricultural autonomy at HDLF is supportive of members' cultures. HDLF's garden director also linked this autonomy to rural land movements in our conversation when she said that many members have "had a garden plot for many years, maybe 16 years, maybe 18 years. And that's become like it was theirs. And that's potentially the closest they'll get to owning farmland for the rest of their life." This shows how autonomy goes beyond personal choice to be a symbol of land ownership and sovereignty over territory.

Access to healthy and culturally relevant food was the theme that appeared the second most in interviews. Mentions ranged from participants talking excitedly about squashes or hibiscus that they brought from their hometown to grow in the garden, to increasing their options for foods beyond what is offered to them by grocery stores.

This relates to the anti-neoliberal theme that occurred frequently as well across the board in interviews. All interview participants touched on this theme, many by mentioning that they didn't want to conform to the options presented to them by grocery stores. One member even broadened the discussion to the global scale and referenced the effects of food dumping, saying:

Something also I was wondering why the United States is sending corn to Guatemala if we have enough, and here in the United States the farmers receive a subsidy from the government to continue planting, although there is not so much need, and they send it to Latin American countries, but they are taking away the opportunity for the national farmer to sell their product.

This is important because anti-neoliberalism is a key tenet of the food sovereignty movement, which was created in opposition to WTO global trade policies. As Pudup mentions, not all community gardens manage to create alternative food systems in opposition to neoliberal structures and often end up reproducing them instead. Thus, it is significant that a criticism of these systems and big agri-business corporations like Monsanto was frequent across all interviews.

Seed Sovereignty was a theme discussed with equal frequency as anti-neoliberalism, which makes sense given the recent focus on seed saving programming at HDLF. One garden staff member discussed this focus on seed saving in our interview:

A lot of people are already doing it but there are a lot of people that don't know it or simply didn't do it before but probably the more we invite people from the garden to do it, more bigger our seed bank will be in the future. If there are two or three seeds, taking it, drying it and labeling it so our only job is to join them to distribute them, and not the job of doing it. This is the idea, do it, we join it and we distribute it between us.

This shows the role of the garden organization and the staff in pushing members to engage in more seed saving, and to do it collectively even when several individuals already do it separately. This is reminiscent of the work of scholars such as Vandana Shiva who write about and enact global seed banks in opposition to the neoliberal effort to control and commodify seeds. This further suggests HDLF as engaging with the same opposition to the neoliberal food system as LVC, but with a prefigurative approach.

The theme of a focus on production occurred with reasonable frequency as well, mentioned at least once in every interview. This shows a similarity between this HDLF and the global food sovereignty movement which has a primary focus of peasant control over food production, and also suggests that a production focus does not necessarily have to exist only in rural movements. The garden program manager touched on this theme as well in our interview, saying that she has always wanted “everybody to have two plots and we’re pretty close to that. While its investment of time and energy, obviously at two plots, it’s less of a hobby garden and more of an impact, like your harvest is really impactful.” This underscores the idea that urban areas can also be impactful parts of the food sovereignty movement focused on production, as Peña calls for in his criticisms.

The theme of peasants also came up about once in each interview, usually when participants introduced themselves and told their stories of how they were related to agriculture, with most participants recounting that they had grown up on farms or ranches in Mexico or Guatemala. This was verified by the garden program director in our interview, with her describing about 90% of garden members as coming from farming communities, saying that “The vast majority of our program members come from small farming communities. There are some people that come from small towns, but if you go back one or two generations, either their

parents or their grandparents, everybody had farming experience.” This statement, plus the fact that every interview participant identified themselves as having a history of peasant identity before immigrating shows that the food sovereignty struggle for peasant control over food production extends into urban areas with the increased blurring of urban-rural boundaries as well as increasing migration of peasants from rural to urban areas (Lerner and Eakin 2011). This matches with numerous pieces of literature that valorize the small kitchen gardens of displaced *campesinos* as food sovereignty and suggests that Peña’s critique of LVC not incorporated enough urban areas might be addressed by broadening the consideration of food sovereignty to include organizations such as HDLF.

Global and agroecology were the two final themes mentioned with slightly less frequency than the others but were still mentioned on average about once in each interview. Many participants mentioned the global theme in discussions of how, now that they were involved in agriculture, when they traveled to places such as Chile or Japan they would discuss and compare local agricultural practices in the countries they visited. One member said the garden itself had allowed her to meet people from many different countries. Most of the agroecological discussions were mentions of HDLF’s strong focus on Spanish language beekeeping education, a program which has grown in recent years. One member underscored the association of beekeeping to an agroecological, systems-based approach when she said:

It is great, because these little bugs are so important in the chain of life, as important as human beings are, why? Well, because they have the sensitivity to be able to capture poisons from the air, from plants faster than we human beings do, then, also to be able to pollinate the food that we human beings and animals consume, they are necessary, they are extremely important. Knowing that they are in danger of extinction terrifies me, because it is as if we were cutting the chain of life, that is what I have learned in this course that you have given.

Here, the member connects knowledge about the role of bees in agriculture and the ecosystems to the opportunities HDLF provides, saying she learned it in the course the organization offered.

Additionally, her focus on how bees do many agricultural tasks better than humans underscores the agroecological and non-anthropocentric philosophy which views humans as only one part in a successful agricultural system.

Each of these themes represents a component of the global food sovereignty movement when it is broken down into parts, as modeled by Amy Trauger's analytical process in *We Want Land to Live*. Key differences between Trauger's categories and my own are that I use the category "autonomy" rather than "political autonomy," which was immensely helpful given the fact that HDLF members are hesitant to identify themselves as political. I also separate her category of "agroecological production methods" into two categories of "agroecological methods" and "production focused" because there is so much debate within food studies literature on alternative food approaches that are consumer oriented and thus end up reproducing neoliberal tendencies by accepting the market framework (A. Alkon and Guthman 2017; Guptill, Copelton, and Lucal 2017).

Using Gradin & Raekstad's framework of prefigurative politics, it is evident that HDLF is in many ways putting food sovereignty values into action, even if they are not an official member organization of LVC, and don't formally identify themselves as a food sovereignty organization. Amy Trauger writes that food sovereignty is "about how people have rights to produce food and not just rights to consume (some) food" (Trauger 2017, 30). The fact that HDLF members talked so much about autonomy and the production focus of the organization shows that HDLF's work moves beyond simple food security and into the sovereignty domain.

Additionally, the frequency with which members mentioned opposition to neoliberal economies shows that, again when viewed through the prefigurative framework, they are building a space outside of that paradigm where they get to choose what they eat rather than the

markets, and where seeds are free and exchanged among members. When we consider Trauger's citation of the Nyéléni Declaration as positioning LVC as moving beyond a land ownership framework, it seems reasonable to push back against Herrera's decision to not study HDLF through a food sovereignty framework because members don't own the land they are on and must follow many rules. HDLF is challenging the same neoliberal state that the food sovereignty movement is ideally working against because it's creating a world within its garden boundaries that is actively critical of and functioning in a different way than the dominant market system. Although Herrera is correct that the landowners can repossess HDLF land at any moment, this is the case for any state apparatus, even if you are a landowner, which Trauger describes in her explanation of the "state of exception" that liberal nation states use to exercise absolute sovereignty and power over their territories. For example, the landless workers movement, or MST, in Brazil is a famous member of LVC and the food sovereignty movement and they work by occupying land that is not legally theirs to claim their right to farming land in a more direct way. While HDLF members don't necessarily say, "I am a member of the food sovereignty movement," they are essentially expressing a very similar mentality of, "I know which foods are important for me to eat and grow in my culture, and I'm going to grow those foods, whether I own land or not because I want to define for myself what I eat and how I grow it because that's a fundamental human need." In this way HDLF is in line with the food sovereignty movement because it is creating a collaborative, community space in opposition to the dominant perception as land as something to be owned.

Additional Themes Added

One of the reasons certain themes didn't appear very much was that members talked about a very similar subject instead, which then gave rise to the creation of a theme coded into

the analysis, following grounded theory principles. One example of this is how members tended to mention the global theme about once in each interview, but touched on the theme of transborder repeatedly, leading to it becoming a separate category. Below are the number of appearances for the themes added during the analysis process. The following analysis will leave out the discussion of the organic category, as it was only mentioned three times. The organic category was simply created as a subset of agroecology to show how some members focused specifically on organic practices rather than agroecological methods more broadly.

	transborder	community	organization	barriers	"I'm not political"	organic
1	4	7	1	4	1	0
2	9	6	5	2	3	0
3	10	11	14	9	0	0
4	2	3	0	0	0	0
5	5	2	0	0	1	1
6	5	5	0	0	5	2
Totals	35	34	20	15	10	3

Figure 2: Frequency of mentions of themes added throughout the analysis process for each interview.

The theme of transborder appeared with almost as much frequency as the predetermined theme of autonomy. This theme was added to describe what scholar Lynn Stephen calls “transborder lives” (2017), encapsulating a life spanning two countries, either through a coming and going, or relational ties that spanned the border. This is significant given the fact that the pre-determined theme of global did not appear with a lot of frequency, but the transborder theme did as many members discussed how their very identities and lives didn’t fit within the borders imposed by the liberal nation-state. One member recounted her transborder experience with saving culturally relevant seeds, saying:

Okay, even when I go there I am trying to put seeds in my bag...I am not bringing kilos but five, six, ten the most. But this time, for example, the Hibiscus, dry Hibiscus, they allow you to bring them. Okay? And inside that Hibiscus I found a flower full of seeds so now, the seed of Hibiscus I have is from that flower, the Hibiscus I brought.

This is reminiscent of Shelley's and Murphey's reminder that the border is a recent geographic construction of the liberal nation-state. If prefigurative politics is "the deliberate experimental implementation of desired future social relations and practices in the here and now" and counts the personal as the political, then the fact that HDLF members are personally not allowing the liberal state borders to contain them or their gardening practices, and that they continue to bring traditional foods and plants across the border despite the limits and obstacles customs might place on them, shows a prefigurative approach to food sovereignty. This is because HDLF members challenge the neoliberal state and its borders by their very existence, joy, and practices as Mesoamerican Indigenous people. The frequent appearance of the transborder theme in interviews also shows how HDLF spans much further beyond Eugene than appears at first glance, essential to consider if we accept Valle's idea that "what sets food sovereignty apart...is the need to transcend the local" (56).

Community was another theme that came up often enough, with 34 mentions, to merit the creation of a separate code. This is not necessarily surprising, given that HDLF is a community garden, but discussions with members around this theme went beyond simple connections and touched on the element of community as a cultural space, as well as community with the nonhuman world, such as in the following quote:

The garden is very important at the community level because we can socialize with more people there, something important for us immigrants who arrived and don't know anything, and then, being able to speak with people of our own language, is important, then, the family orchard conceives us.

Here we can see the importance of community for supporting and sustaining the well-being of the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora community in Eugene, as well as the notion that they themselves are “conceived” by the garden, showing how the relationship with the earth goes both ways. This is significant given Peña and Pellow’s ideas of going beyond anthropocentrism as being central to true food sovereignty work. It also speaks to the ongoing theme of a prefigurative political approach, building a world with its own values sustained outside the liberal state model between community members.

Organization was another theme that came up through the grounded theory process of observing what came up in interviews organically. The category of organization refers to the conversations about the structuring of HDLF, which is relevant to its relationship to the food sovereignty movement because HDLF maintains a significantly different structure than that of LVC, functioning as a nonprofit, which comes with its own particular benefits and limitations. It also refers to the ways in which HDLF members discussed how the organization’s programming helps it enact food sovereignty values. For example, the garden director discussed her explicit focus on horizontal leadership and members teaching members for workshops:

When I started working here, we invited people from OSU or outside experts to teach classes. And there's still space for that, of course, because being an expert, you put a lot of time and energy into becoming an expert or whatever your field is. But we have shifted, I haven't invited outside folks for a while now because we have changed to more of a popular education model. We ask people what they are interested in learning about and then we learn about it together. And we empower our program members to become the teachers.

This indicates how HDLF’s specific organizational choices, such as a member-led leadership committee and a popular education model end up being constitutive of food sovereignty in that they empower members to take on leadership roles and share traditional knowledge rather than depending on outside experts. This again speaks to Gradin and Raekstad’s approach to

prefigurative politics as being deliberate experimentation of the social relations one wants to see in the world.

With the discussion of organizational choices, however, comes organizational challenges. This also showed up enough as a theme to merit its own separate code, with programming barriers mentioned twice on average in each interview. Common barriers to HDLF realizing its goals seemed to be funding, time, autonomy over land, weather, or customs policy. One garden member lamented the fact that the garden is, for better or for worse, something people do in their free time and pretty much everyone except for the three full time staff has a day job:

To practice greenhouse things is very good but it requires other education and experience level, time, and so it doesn't allow us to practice it a lot or putting it a lot of effort. Why? Because we don't have time. So, it is not because we are not interested, it is because that the hours of the day are not enough.

Other barriers noted included getting plants from hot weather climates to adapt to Oregon cold and rain and shorter seasons, having garden plots be reappropriated by the city, as well as the need for more staff (a common challenge faced by nonprofits).

Finally, the category of apolitical was added to account for the number of times in interviews where members identified themselves as not political, then proceeded to make a statement that the interviewer considered to be political, particularly when viewed through the “the personal is political” (Paul Raekstad and Sophia Siao Gradin 2020) lens. Thus, this category encapsulates not a lack of the political but rather a rejection of the label. One member offered a potential explanation for this aversion to the political among interview participants and garden members:

I believe that the Huerto cannot get involved in political issues, nor even mention the word politics... many members do it because they are interested and enjoy it but they're not interested in politics, and many came out of politics, and many are undocumented, and don't want to know or do anything to do with politics.

Through the lens of prefigurative politics and a politics of joy and worldbuilding, just doing something because you enjoy it *is* political when you're part of a community that is discriminated against and marginalized. However, this member is talking about the traditional use of the word politics, and she rightly points out that it can be triggering for many undocumented migrants because "Many...don't want to expose themselves...They had a hard time getting to the country, and they are afraid that one day when they apply to become residents, the U.S. government will investigate." Despite not having been anticipated, this theme appeared across interviews and merits reflection on what is political. Many scholars have applied prefigurative politics to community garden and food sovereignty work (Koesnler, Wilms-Crowe), and Teresa Mares also writes about the specific situation of Latino immigrants being often "hidden" politically and thus employing more prefigurative methods of food sovereignty resistance (2019). The frequency with which members rejected the political category in interviews confirms that this is a preferred framework for HDLF's work as well. This suggests an alternate lens through which to view HDLF's political action, not by saying that political action doesn't exist but that it is adapted to, as one member stated, a more "under the table" framework that better fits the experience of this migrant community/

Overall, the grounded theory approach was helpful because it revealed themes within the interview data that I had not thought to look for. From the transborder nature of the very lives of HDLF members, to the way the organization is set up in a member-led format that valorizes indigenous knowledge, these interview themes showed many similarities with the food sovereignty movement, and underscored the way in which HDLF approaches these themes from a more prefigurative angle rather than through traditional politics.

A Note on Co-Occurrence

Looking at the co-occurrence of themes coded for can help better understand the ways in which the appearance of different themes is related to HDLF’s connection to the food sovereignty movement. The figure below shows co-occurrence between different themes coded for.

	cultural									seed			
	food	agroeco	anti neolib	Autonomy	Global	transbord	apolitical	peasant	Production	sov	barriers	community	organization
cultural food	0	1	4	8	0	10	2	3	7	4	3	7	3
agroeco	1	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
organic	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti neolib	4	3	0	8	1	5	1	5	3	4	3	2	1
Autonomy	8	1	8	0	2	8	4	5	15	3	4	9	6
Global	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	5	2
transbord	10	0	5	8	0	0	3	9	5	7	3	6	3
apolitical	2	0	1	4	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
peasant	3	0	5	5	2	9	1	0	3	1	1	3	1
production	7	1	3	15	1	5	1	3	0	5	1	5	1
seed sov	4	0	4	3	0	7	0	1	5	0	2	1	0
barriers	3	0	3	4	0	3	0	1	1	2	0	3	3
community	7	1	2	9	5	6	1	3	5	1	3	0	9
organization	3	1	1	6	2	3	1	1	1	0	3	9	0

Figure 3: Table of co-occurrence of themes throughout interviews.

The themes of access to culturally relevant food and transborder often appeared together, as well as production and autonomy. This shows the relationship between transborder communities often being the ones that need that access to culturally relevant and healthy food, both because of their disproportionate difficulty accessing healthy food and because a transborder diaspora will necessarily be looking to access foods that maintain ancestral connections to cultures left behind. The co-occurrence of production and autonomy helps us to understand the two themes as part of the struggle for autonomy over production exemplified by the food sovereignty movement.

Autonomy and access to culturally relevant/healthy food also appeared together with frequency, as well as autonomy and anti-neoliberalism, autonomy and community, and autonomy and transborder. It’s interesting that autonomy co-occurred with so many different themes, suggesting that garden members are gardening with HDLF to increase their autonomy

over many different areas of their life. Taking this approach suggests that members are looking to increase their autonomy over their means of producing food, the food they have access to, autonomy to not engage in systems of neoliberal agriculture, the autonomy to live transborder lives and cultivate food in a transborder framework in the face of oppression and suggests that members acknowledge the ways in which community helps create this autonomy for them.

Seed Sovereignty Survey and Case Study

In addition to Participatory Action Research (PAR) and semi-directive interviews, 22 garden members were surveyed regarding their seed saving practices. This survey focuses in on one of the themes identified in the interview stage: seed sovereignty. Questions in the survey covered topics such as what seeds members saved and why, their satisfaction with HDLF's support for seed saving practices, their use of the greenhouse at the Churchill Garden location, and their gendered and community perception of seeds.

What is saved and why?

Respondents mentioned saving many different types of seeds, with the most common mentions being chiles, squash, corn, beans, and jitomates, all of which are important cultural foods for the Mesoamerican indigenous diaspora. Many other plants were mentioned, from kale to epazote, to flowers and herbs. Over 30 different plants were mentioned in total that members saved seeds from. Members by and large gave similar reasons for their choice of seeds to save, saying they picked plant varieties that they liked the most and ate the most often. Members cited the predictability of saving what they already knew how to save, varieties that they already knew they liked the taste of. Other reasons mentioned included that those were the plants they received seeds for from Mexico, they were the plants they grew up eating or were plants that were beneficial to humans and the planet. The responses given for why members save the seeds they

do are reminiscent of their responses in the interviews when describing why they garden: autonomy. If we accept autonomy as an essential element of food sovereignty (Trauger, 2017), this shows how HDLF's extensive and growing seed saving program is yet another way in which it is constitutive of the global food sovereignty movement.

Relationships with home

Respondents to the survey also discussed whether their methods of conserving seeds was the same as the traditional methods practiced in their country of origin, as well as how they obtained culturally important seeds to save from their community or country of origin.

Most respondents said they continued to save seeds in the same way they had in their country or community of origin, showing how ancestral agricultural methods and knowledge is maintained within the garden at HDLF. Some members said no, the method of seed saving was not the same, and one member noted that this difference was because their home community was in a tropical location whereas Oregon was much colder and wetter. Others said they only started saving seeds once they came to the U.S. or Oregon.

The most common responses for how members obtained seeds from their country of origin was friends and family sending the seeds, bringing them back from Mexico (or other countries) themselves, or HDLF providing them. These responses underline the transborder nature of the members' lives, who are often traveling to and from their home countries and staying in contact with family members who can send them seeds. It also shows the important role HDLF plays as an organization in facilitating the availability of culturally relevant seeds and seed saving support, that members cited it as one of the primary ways they obtain seeds from their home countries. Other methods of obtaining seeds listed were buying them or exchanging seeds with others. A few members said they did not acquire seeds from their country of origin.

All of this information shows how HDLF, despite not pitching itself as an explicitly political organization, is doing very similar work to activists such as Vandana Shiva and seed savers in LVC.

Political or not?

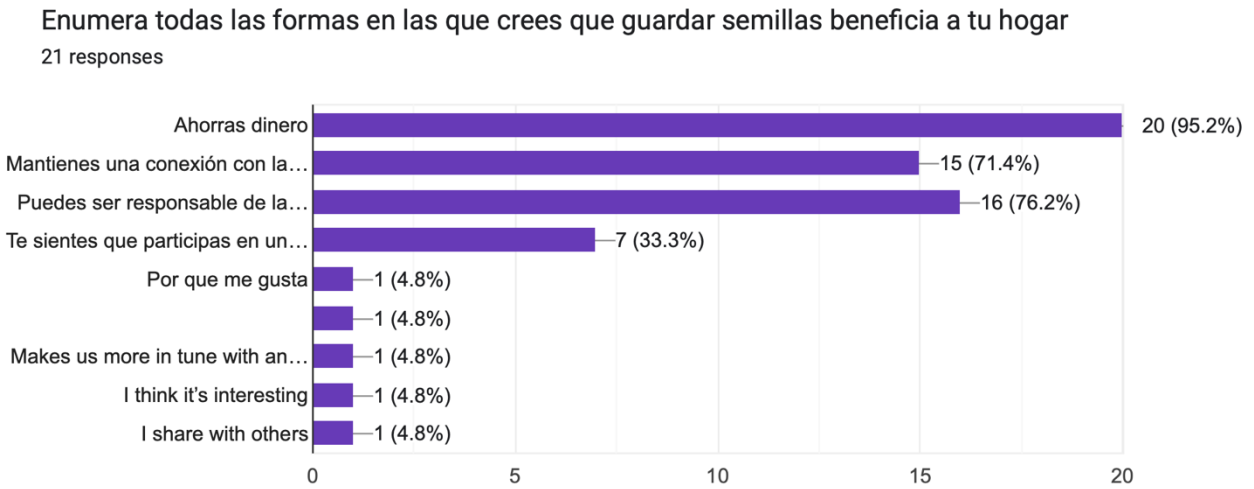


Figure 4: Table showing the primary reasons HDLF members believe seed saving benefits their households.

¿Sientes que tus actividades de conservación de semillas están conectadas a un movimiento global más amplio de conservadores de semillas? Puedes usar el opción "other" para explicarlo si quieres.

21 respuestas

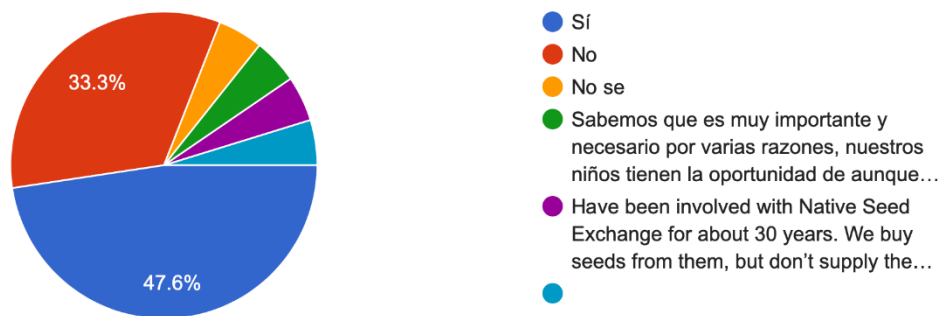


Figure 5: Graph of the percentage of HDLF members that consider themselves to be involved in a broader seed saving movement beyond the garden.

The seed saving survey built upon the discourse in the interview stage around what is political. When asked what they considered to be the principal benefits of seed saving for their household the most common response was saving money, with 20 responses. 15 and 16

people, respectively, said that saving seeds helped them maintain a connection with far away family and be responsible for their own food production, reminiscent of the themes of transborder and autonomy which have consistently appeared throughout the study. The fourth most popular response, with seven people saying it was true for them, was feeling like they were participating in a politically significant act. Thus, about one third of survey respondents viewed seed saving as a political act, in addition to an act that helped them save money and stay connected to their family. This is interesting given the members did not generally like labeling growing food as political during the interviews. Similarly, when asked directly if they felt that seed saving connected them to a global movement of seed savers, 50% of survey respondents said yes, while 30% said no. This is interesting and suggests that perhaps when the subject is narrowed to seeds, a topic which has a lot of publicity around GMO efforts and large corporations, it made more sense to describe seed saving as political even though general questions about if the Huerto is political are more likely to be cut off. This adds a helpful nuance to how HDLF is political in many ways despite not preferring the label and shows an intentionality among members in their prefigurative political work with seed saving.

A note on gender

One of the original research questions for this project inquired after the role gender played in the organization and implementation of seed saving programming at HDLF. This question was developed because women's rights is an important tenet of the food sovereignty movement, specifically values women's knowledge around seed saving, which is often gendered (Bezner Kerr 2013) and because Timothy Herrera called for more research on gender roles within HDLF in his dissertation (2021). Although questions about gender were featured in both the interviews and survey, responses were mixed and inconclusive. While my PAR research led

to observations of women in leadership roles, and thus women implementing the seed saving programming, most interview participants said that they sometimes noticed gender roles in the garden, but not in a particularly strong or significant way. Some people said that sometimes men would tell the women what to plant within a family, but sometimes they wouldn't. Some said the work was absolutely equal, and some discussed how growing up in Mexico there were gendered roles in agriculture where men did most of the planting and women did more cooking but that changed when they got to the U.S. Similarly, the seed saving survey had mixed results when members were asked if seed saving was a gendered responsibility. 54% of respondents said that seed saving was equally shared between men and women, while 22% of respondents said it was mostly women who did the work, and 9% said only women did the work. This ambiguity either suggests that gender does not play a very large role in the garden's programming, or that it merits further, more focused research.

Discussion

The guiding research questions of this project were as follows: In what ways is the seed saving nonprofit of an urban agroecology nonprofit serving the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora in Eugene, Oregon (HDLF) constitutive of the global food sovereignty movement? What challenges does HDLF face to actualizing the ideals of the global food sovereignty movement? And finally, what role does gender play in the organization and implementation of seed saving programming at HDLF? As discussed in the end of the analysis, the findings regarding the third question on gender were not concrete or clear enough to make any substantial claims. Thus, the majority of this section will be devoted to answering the first two research questions.

Although the original research question centered specifically on the way HDLF's seed saving programming was constitutive of the global food sovereignty movement, the findings indicate more broadly the relationship between HDLF as a whole to the global food sovereignty movement, while also providing information specific to the seed saving programming. Overall, this study found that HDLF and the global food sovereignty movement share many commonalities, despite appearing different on the surface. At first glance, LVC appears as the face of the global food sovereignty movement and is characterized by acting on the U.N. stage, mobilizing peasants from around the world for international conferences, and generally focusing on giving back control of the nation-state's agricultural policy to its rural peasant farmers, with a particular focus on women and Indigenous peoples' rights, and agroecological methods. HDLF may appear different at first glance due to its urban placement, much smaller size, lack of advocacy on the global or UN level, and the fact that it is not recognized by LVC as a member organization (it is both too small and does not explicitly name food sovereignty or politics in its

mission). Its apparent lack of an explicit political agenda to return land to agricultural workers also makes it appear at first glance “simply” a community garden working to provide food security to a specific community.

However, this study found many commonalities between HDLF and the mainstream global food sovereignty movement. A strong focus on seed saving and protecting ancestral seed systems in the face of neoliberal encroachment is one of those commonalities that was focused on in depth in this study. Other common points included a focus on autonomy, the organization being made up of people who were born to peasant/farmworker families, engaging experiences and politics across more than one country, opposition to neoliberalism, a focus on food production and not only on adequate production and food security but culturally relevant food produced through agroecological methods. Further common points include the support of women through their involvement in leadership positions, and a strong support of indigenous agriculturalists.

In fact, the only main differences that seem to remain between HDLF and the food sovereignty movement after examining these hidden similarities are HDLF’s urban location, its lack of an explicit political agenda, and the fact that it is not formally associated with LVC. Some scholars worry that the term food sovereignty has started to lose meaning from its original coinage by LVC as the term is now loosely applied to many forms of food activism (Trauger 2017). However, there are some merits to the term’s usage expanding beyond its original conception by LVC, particularly as concerns groups that have more particular circumstances and need to adapt the term to fit their needs, such as Native tribes in North America have done. They in particular have rejected the nation-state framework implied in the term “sovereignty” and adapted their struggle to preserve first foods and tribal sovereignty to their unique legal

framework. Indeed “sovereignty” can and has been interpreted as a people’s sovereignty, or autonomy rather than that of a nation-state despite its origins in that realm.

HDLF has so much in common with the global food sovereignty movement, that this seems to be a case of a group adapting the food sovereignty struggle to suit a particular need that is not being met by LVC and its mainstream movement—that of the inclusion of migrant farmworkers who may have been displaced into urban areas, as well as those who are less comfortable with overtly political methods. The fact that LVC and the mainstream food sovereignty movement don’t meet all food sovereignty needs is evident in critiques such as that of Devon Peña (2017). These particularities that HDLF addresses are in fact mentioned by Peña in his critique: there is a growing urbanization around the world and that urbanization is largely composed of farmworkers and peasants that have been dispelled from their lands due to imperial and neoliberal encroachment and policies.

We see this with HDLF and the writings of Juan Gonzalez in *Harvest of Empire*, how U.S. imperial policy is pushing migrants across the border from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and further South. Interviews with HDLF members and staff showed the majority composition of the organization’s members to have origins in peasant families south of the U.S.-Mexico border. As the garden director stated in our interview, this is “potentially the closest they’ll get to owning farmland for the rest of their life” and since the U.S. is “not going to have an agricultural revolution at this time [HDLF is] an adaptation to a global trend.” This is essential, to have space for displaced or migrant peasants to continue their connection to agriculture, the land, and indigenous practices to the best of their ability.

This demographic makeup of HDLF as constituted of immigrants and many people who may have different documentation statuses, helps explain why the organization might not be so

overtly political as LVC. This is more in line with an approach of prefigurative politics, which many scholars have written about in relation to immigrant and other heavily policed communities who might understandably have an aversion to the classic, openly political, manifestation type of politics. HDLF fills this gap by offering a space that validates Indigenous identity and presence, a place where people can speak Spanish and spend time with people of similar immigrant backgrounds, something many participants mentioned in interviews. HDLF offers a space where members can continue or start to grow their own food using ancestral methods and nourishes these cultures through practices such as having members teach each other at workshops, rather than bringing in outside experts. This aspect of living out the future you wish to create is precisely in line with prefigurative politics, and many scholars have written about the successes of other immigrant groups to politics through this route.

As previously mentioned, HDLF is not formally connected to the mainstream global food sovereignty movement through membership with LVC. However, HDLF is still constitutive of the movement in the aspects discussed above. There are those who think so many people use the term food sovereignty so that it becomes an empty term, but I believe the benefits of HDLF's disconnection from the movement outweigh the risks of watering down this term.

One key aspect to consider, however, is the fact that in none of our interviews did members prefer to use the term food sovereignty to talk about their work. Through the process of thematic analysis, many common themes were identified between the food sovereignty movement and the work of HDLF members, but garden members themselves didn't use the word on a daily basis. When asked if they were familiar with the term food sovereignty, many would say they had heard it before and knew what it meant, and they supposed that HDLF's work was related to it because HDLF empowered them to grow what they wanted to, but they thought it

was too fancy of a term to use in their daily life. Frantz Fanon wrote in *The Wretched of the Earth* that often when trying to relate across different groups of people in a revolution it is not a question of a mismatch of values but of language. He argues it's important not to hold too tightly to formal or academic language to describe revolutionary ideas and argues for the practicality of using common language to describe academic issues, because once you phrase things in the terms people understand them, you will likely find yourselves on the same side. Thus, I am not making an argument for HDLF to start using the terminology of food sovereignty in its day-to-day operations, to become more politicized, or to join LVC as a member organization. Rather, this paper calls for those of us who do use the more academized vocabulary of food sovereignty to recognize the ways in which valuable alternative forms of food sovereignty work can happen outside of mainstream actions and labels.

Regarding HDLF's seed saving programming, one interesting finding was that members seemed to feel more politicized regarding seed saving than about growing food in general, based on survey responses. However, this could simply be because the survey had a larger sample size than the interviews. The seed saving programming is constitutive of the global food sovereignty movement in that it exemplifies the anticapitalist dimension of the organization and nourishes and sustains Mesoamerican Indigenous cultures by providing access to plant varieties that cannot otherwise be found within supermarkets in area, or even bought at all within the country.

In regard to the second research question on barriers to HDLF implementing the ideals of the global food sovereignty movement, several barriers were identified. Members and staff deal with very different weather when trying to grow ancestral and culturally relevant foods as they are often trying to grow plants accustomed to a tropical climate in Oregon's milder, rainier climate. This is perhaps a challenge unique to HDLF and not as common in the mainstream food

sovereignty movement because typically proponents of food sovereignty thus far have been advocating for growing their traditional foods on the land they have historically been grown on. HDLF's member population being composed of immigrants and people from displaced farming families adds a different element.

Another barrier identified to HDLF actualizing food sovereignty goals is the constraints of operating within a nonprofit. A need for more staff was identified, and the organization does rely on outside funding as well. Additionally, being a nonprofit means that the land HDLF operates on is not under HDLF's control, which some scholars have argued negates the possibility of food sovereignty, as land ownership is not a possibility (Herrera 2021). This has led to a couple instances where land access was revoked by the community partner, or where intended land use plans were not able to be completed. This is similar to the barrier identified by staff members that although HDLF might have big dreams and lots of ideas about how to improve their programming, at the end of the day all of the members have full time jobs and children, and so there is a certain limit to the time they can put into the garden as opposed to if they were full time farmers.

Additional barriers include access to the culturally relevant foods that HDLF is trying to provide. This was a barrier that I encountered through my PAR when tasked with sourcing seeds from certain Guatemalan plants, for example. The existence of a colonially imposed border and concurrent customs laws can make it difficult for HDLF to source the seeds members are looking for. Overall, however, this is not the biggest barrier and members and staff at HDLF find their way around this obstacle.

While these barriers could be perceived as ways in which HDLF struggles to stack up the global or mainstream food sovereignty movement, they are also indicative of the ways HDLF

expands the food sovereignty movement into new spaces. For example, despite the constraints of its urban location (members not able to dedicate all their time to farming, lack of land ownership, etc), the fact remains that HDLF is creating access to food sovereignty for displaced farmworkers in an urban space, which is a very valuable addition to the global food sovereignty movement. While HDLF seems to face barriers to being as openly political as the mainstream food sovereignty movement due to the demographic it serves, this can also be read as a positive aspect in that HDLF then opens up an inclusive space within food sovereignty movements that is welcoming of those who still want to envision and create a better future for food systems, but for various reasons do not desire or do not feel comfortable openly politicizing it.

Overall, this case study with HDLF demonstrates the need for an expansion of our understanding of food sovereignty, perhaps not only tying it to the movement of LVC, but understanding how other organizations, ones even as small as HDLF, are constitutive of this larger movement is important in strengthening the global food sovereignty movement. This even addresses some of the critiques of food sovereignty, such as its lack of inclusion of urban areas where many peasants have migrated to. Additionally, including independent organizations in our definition of food sovereignty works to resolve the critique of LVC being so large that it cannot account for many of its member organizations actions, which may or may not be in line with its values. Finally, the prefigurative politics of HDLF, often preferred by migrants and groups with painful histories with official politics, could propose an useful alternative to the human rights framework that has been criticized by scholars for embracing colonial paradigms. Perhaps this prefigurative method, while not overtly political in that there is not a lot of protests happening, or government action, allows space for non-western and indigenous methods of being to grow and flourish.

Conclusion and Further Thoughts

What lessons can be drawn from HDLF in the context of the movement for food sovereignty? Firstly, it becomes clear that it is not necessary to be formally affiliated with LVC or formally pursuing food sovereignty work for food sovereignty to be a central tenet of a group's work. In fact, this expansiveness is beneficial in the sense that it opens up pathways for food sovereignty beyond limitations of LVC and the mainstream food sovereignty movement. In the case of HDLF, this means welcoming members of the Mesoamerican Indigenous diaspora who do not currently live in rural areas or hold land, but who come from farming families and/or want to maintain a connection with their ancestral foods and cultivate autonomy and a healthy relationship with the land. In the case of HDLF, it also means embracing a less openly political environment and taking a more prefigurative-oriented approach to food sovereignty work.

For HDLF, expanding the food sovereignty movement into new spaces also means not necessarily using the term food sovereignty, which is an academic term that doesn't fit with the daily lived experience and terminology used by HDLF's members. Most members I talked to had heard of the term, but only in an academic context or in conversation once or twice and it wasn't necessarily a part of their daily vocabulary. Thus, it could be helpful to deconstruct food sovereignty as a concept into some of its core elements and talk about those. Discussions over autonomy and access to culturally relevant and healthy food were very productive and frequent with members, and conversations that deal with such essential elements of food sovereignty should not be discounted because of a difference in vocabulary.

If this is the case, does attempting to define and delineate the food sovereignty movement have much purpose to it? Why does the term food sovereignty still matter? Although LVC originally coined the term, it's clear that it has spread beyond the movement and is now used by

many groups unaffiliated with LVC, sometimes with similar intentions and sometimes to describe something very different from the origins of the term. This work with HDLF shows the benefit of letting the movement naturally beyond and into these new frontiers, even as it runs the risk of becoming a vague and confusing term. The benefits of adapting to specific localized circumstances outweigh the risks of irrelevance. This study sets forward a potential framework for understanding the idea of food sovereignty by breaking it down into its sub-components as well. Despite the multitude of uses of the term, food sovereignty remains clearly an idea centered on control over the way one produces one's food, production through agroecological methods, and respect for the entwinement food and culture in these policies, particularly in relation to indigenous people and women. As many food studies scholars have written, this can be on the level of international policy within the nation-state framework, where the term originated, or it can be on the level of community autonomy, which is increasingly the case. HDLF falls into this latter category, clearly bringing together displaced peasant communities within the city of Eugene to claim control over how and what they produce, and the methods by which they do so.

Appendices

Appendix A. Interview Questions

Introduccion

Hola muchas gracias por reunirte con nosotros para hacer una entrevista sobre tu experiencia en el huerto hoy. En los últimos dos años he trabajado como voluntaria en el huerto, como pasantía, lo que significa que he apoyado al personal en una serie de proyectos, además, he realizado cursos relacionados con este trabajo voluntario.

He ayudado los empleos en el jardín, con el cuidado de las plantas en el invernadero, áreas de la comunidad, la parcela de los niños, cuidado de niños, ayudando con los voluntarios, el apoyo de eventos, y la investigación en la computadora y estoy emocionado de escuchar directamente de los jardineros acerca de sus experiencias con Huerto para mi proyecto final.

Estoy estudiando Estudios Globales, Francés, Español, y Estudios de Alimentos en la Universidad y esta entrevista es una parte de mi trabajo de investigación final y el proyecto, mi tesis, para graduarme.

Descripción de la entrevista

Voy a hacerte preguntas sobre tu experiencia personal en el programa, y hablar contigo sobre cómo eso podría conectarse a un movimiento más amplio relacionado con la "soberanía alimentaria" en general (que explicaré más adelante lo que quiero decir en este contexto con eso), pero más práctica o directamente cómo guardar semillas, cultivar y tener acceso a alimentos tradicionales, y cultivar con métodos orgánicos en este programa podría vincularse a un contexto más amplio.

Esta entrevista/conversación durará unos 30-45 minutos. ¿Le parece bien que le cite en el proyecto sin utilizar su nombre? Voy a grabar la entrevista usando mi teléfono, para que pueda hacer un seguimiento de todo lo que se dice, pero sólo voy a mantener esto para mis notas y no compartirlo con nadie. No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas a las preguntas, sólo te pido que compartas tus pensamientos o experiencias,

Después, como agradecimiento, la universidad dará a todos los participantes una tarjeta regalo de 50 dólares para el lugar de su elección, como agradecimiento por tomarse el tiempo. Si estás interesado en ver el producto final puedes ponerte en contacto conmigo por teléfono o mensaje en 503-593-3969. El proyecto final estará escrito en inglés, pero voy a intentar hacer una versión más pequeña en español, como un pequeño libro o una presentación oral en español/inglés si los jardineros están interesados.

Preguntas

1. ¿Puedes contarme un poco sobre ti cómo por qué cultivadas en el Huerto, desde cuándo tienes tu parcela, o alguna otra información?
2. ¿Fuera del huerto estás contratado como trabajador en el sistema alimentario, por ejemplo en el campo, empacadoras, o procesadoras?
3. ¿Consideras que cultivar alimentos es un acto político? ¿En qué sentido?
4. ¿Has oído hablar del término soberanía alimentaria? En caso afirmativo, ¿dónde has oído utilizar el término?
5. ¿No? No hay problema, yo defino la soberanía alimentaria como "El derecho de los pueblos o países a decidir qué alimentos producen, cómo los producen y qué hacen con ellos de una manera ecológica y culturalmente apropiada" y el movimiento mundial por la soberanía alimentaria como "El conjunto de más de 180 organizaciones campesinas de

muchos países del mundo que luchan por esta causa de diferentes maneras, a menudo en la ONU, o en grandes encuentros". La Vía Campesina es ese gran grupo del que forman parte todas estas organizaciones".

6. ¿Ha oído hablar de los términos justicia alimentaria o justicia medioambiental? En caso afirmativo, ¿dónde ha oído utilizar el término?
7. ¿No? No hay problema, defino la justicia alimentaria como "el trabajo que busca prevenir la inseguridad alimentaria, mejorar las condiciones laborales de los sectores agrícola y alimentario, y promover el acceso a alimentos culturalmente relevantes" y la justicia medioambiental como "la idea de que todo el mundo tiene derecho a estar en buena relación con el medio que le rodea, y a estar igualmente protegido de los daños medioambientales".
8. ¿Crees que Huerto se compromete con la soberanía alimentaria, la justicia alimentaria o la justicia medioambiental?
9. ¿Crees que Huerto está relacionado con el movimiento global por la soberanía alimentaria? En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo?
10. ¿Cuáles son las similitudes y diferencias?
11. ¿A qué retos se enfrenta Huerto en relación con la soberanía alimentaria?
12. ¿Crees que tu trabajo aquí te conecta con temas que son más amplios que aquí en Eugene?
13. ¿Has asistido a algún viaje o evento como el día del agricultor, apicultura, o con Adelante mujeres?
14. ¿Qué has aprendido?
15. ¿Te ha hecho reflexionar sobre temas más amplios que aquí en Eugene?

16. ¿Notas roles de género en el huerto?
17. ¿Conoces a alguien que haya tenido que mudarse a causa de la sequía, los cambios de temperatura o las tormentas que han dificultado la continuación de su vida, ya sea como agricultor o de otro modo?
18. ¿Conoces a alguien que haya tenido que mudarse porque las grandes empresas se han apropiado de tierras que antes cultivaban pequeños agricultores?
19. ¿Cultivas plantas que procedan de lugares donde viviste o que tengan un significado cultural para ti? ¿Por qué crees que es importante?

Frases de Cierre

1. ¿Quieres enfatizar algo de lo que has dicho?
2. ¿Quieres saber algo del proyecto una vez finalizado?
3. ¿Quieres añadir algo más?
4. ¿Para qué tienda le gustaría recibir una tarjeta regalo de 50 dólares?
5. ¿Cómo desea recibirlo (por correo, recogida en el jardín, por mensaje)?
6. ¿Le gustaría rellenar un breve formulario en línea? Recibirás una segunda tarjeta regalo de 5 \$ para Starbucks.

Appendix B. Google Survey Questions

Preguntas sobre el ahorro de semillas

1. ¿Tú o alguien de tu familia guardáis semillas?
2. ¿Para qué plantas guardas semillas?

3. ¿Quién es el responsable en tu familia? ¿Observas alguna diferencia entre los sexos a la hora de guardar semillas?
4. ¿Por qué es importante para ti guardar semillas?
5. ¿Guardar semillas te ayuda a conectar con familiares o comunidades que están lejos?
6. ¿Guardar semillas te ayuda a gastar menos dinero o a ser más autosuficiente en la producción de alimentos?
7. ¿Qué opinas de las semillas transgénicas o de empresas como Monsanto que intentan patentar las semillas? ¿Sabes mucho sobre esto?
8. ¿Sabías qué Huerto ofrece ayudas para guardar semillas? Si es así, ¿has accedido a él? ¿Qué te facilita más utilizar este tipo de apoyo?
9. ¿Has asistido a eventos de conservación de semillas con Huerto en el pasado? ¿A cuáles?
10. ¿En cuál aprendiste más?
11. ¿Qué tipo de eventos o programas de conservación de semillas te gustaría tener?
12. ¿Cómo la conservación de semillas conecta a Huerto con el movimiento de soberanía alimentaria?

Preguntas sobre el invernadero

1. ¿Utilizas el invernadero?
2. En caso afirmativo, ¿para qué lo usas?
3. Si pudieras cambiar o añadir algo al invernadero, ¿qué sería?

Bibliography

- AB. “2023 | January News Wrap: Updates from La Via Campesina Members Worldwide! : Via Campesina.” Via Campesina English, February 2, 2023. ([Alkon and Guthman 2017](#)).
- Adelante Mujeres. “Adelante Mujeres.” Accessed January 24, 2023.
<https://es.adelantemujeres.org>.
- Alain de Benoist. “What Is Sovereignty?,” n.d.
- Alecia Y Jackson and Lisa A Mazzei. *Thinking With Theory in Qualitative Research*. Second. London and New York: Routledge, 2023.
- Alkon, Alison, and Julie Guthman. *The New Food Activism: Opposition, Cooperation, and Collective Action*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017.
<https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520965652>.
- “Anahuac - CAPACES Leadership Institute.” Accessed January 24, 2023.
<https://capacesleadership.org/anahuac/>.
- Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith. “Introduction.” In *Theorizing Native Studies*, 39. Duke University Press, 2014.
- Ayres, Jeffrey, and Michael J. Bosia. “Beyond Global Summitry: Food Sovereignty as Localized Resistance to Globalization.” *Globalizations* 8, no. 1 (2011): 47–63.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2011.544203>.
- Batalova, Jeanne Batalova Raquel Rosenbloom and Jeanne. “Mexican Immigrants in the United States.” migrationpolicy.org, October 12, 2022.
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/mexican-immigrants-united-states>.
- Bernard, H. Russell. “Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology.” Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications, 1988.

- Bezner Kerr, Rachel. "Seed Struggles and Food Sovereignty in Northern Malawi." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 40, no. 5 (2013): 867–97.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2013.848428>.
- Block, Daniel R., Noel Chávez, Erika Allen, and Dinah Ramirez. "Food Sovereignty, Urban Food Access, and Food Activism: Contemplating the Connections through Examples from Chicago." *Agriculture and Human Values* 29, no. 2 (2012): 203–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-011-9336-8>.
- Carlisle, Liz. "Critical Agrarianism." *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems* 29, no. 2 (2014): 135–45. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742170512000427>.
- Carney, Megan A. "Teresa M. Mares, Life on the Other Border: Farmworkers and Food Justice in Vermont." *Anthropological Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (January 1, 2020): 1651–54.
- CAROLINE ANN DEZENDORF. "AGRICULTURE, DIET, AND EMPOWERMENT: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY GARDENS IN IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF OREGON'S URBAN LATINO COMMUNITY," n.d.
https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/13289/Dezendorf_oregon_0171N_10720.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.
- "Centro Latino Americano – Sirviendo a Nuestra Comunidad Desde 1972." Accessed January 24, 2023. <https://centrolatinoamericano.org/>.
- Claeys, Priscilla. "Food Sovereignty and the Recognition of New Rights for Peasants at the UN: A Critical Overview of La Via Campesina's Rights Claims over the Last 20 Years." *Globalizations* 12, no. 4 (2015): 452–65. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2014.957929>.
- Clapp, Jennifer. "Food Security and Food Sovereignty: Getting Past the Binary." *Dialogues in Human Geography* 4, no. 2 (2014): 206–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820614537159>.

Dale, Bryan. "Food Sovereignty and Agroecology Praxis in a Capitalist Setting: The Need for a Radical Pedagogy." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 0, no. 0 (September 23, 2021): 1–28.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2021.1971653>.

Desmarais, Annette A. "The Via Campesina: Peasant Women on the Frontiers of Food Sovereignty." *Canadian Woman Studies* 23, no. 1 (2003): 140-.

Facebook, Twitter, Show more sharing options, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Email, Copy Link URL Copied!, and Print. "Grow Your Own Chipilín for Tamales, Pupusas." *Los Angeles Times*, June 20, 2012. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/blogs/la-at-home/story/2012-06-20/grow-your-own-chipilin-for-tamales-pupusas>.

"Farmworkers on the Front Line - Oregon Tilth." Accessed February 26, 2023.

<https://tilth.org/stories/farmworkers-on-the-front-line/>.

Farquhar, Stephanie, Nargess Shadbeh, Julie Samples, Santiago Ventura, and Nancy Goff.

"Occupational Conditions and Well-Being of Indigenous Farmworkers." *American Journal of Public Health* 98, no. 11 (November 2008): 1956.

<https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2007.124271>.

Feagan, Robert. "The Place of Food: Mapping out the 'Local' in Local Food Systems." *Progress in Human Geography* 31, no. 1 (2007): 23–42.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132507073527>.

Fernandez, Inara C. "CONTROL AND CONTINUITY: SUSTAINABILITY, LAND RIGHTS, AND THE POLITICS OF FOOD IN GUATEMALA," n.d., 141.

Gabriel R. Valle. "Chapter 3 Food Values: Urban Kitchen Gardens and Working-Class

Subjectivity." In *Mexican-Origin Foods, Foodways, and Social Movements: Decolonial*

- Perspectives*, 2nd ed., 41–62. University of Arkansas Press Food and Foodways Series.
University of Arkansas Press, n.d. Accessed October 24, 2022.
- Gonzales-Berry, Erlinda. *Mexicanos in Oregon: Their Stories, Their Lives*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2010.
- Gonzalez, Carmen G. “Racial Capitalism, Climate Justice, and Climate Displacement.” SSRN Scholarly Paper. Rochester, NY, January 14, 2020.
<https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3626490>.
- González, Juan. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*. Revised edition. New York: Penguin Books, 2011.
- Graeber, David. *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2004. https://alliance-uoregon.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma99900454246601852&context=L&vid=01ALLIANCE_UO:UO&lang=en&search_scope=Everything&adapter=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Rollup&query=any,contains,David%20graeber&offset=0.
- Greenwood, Shannon. “MAJORITY OF LATINOS SAY SKIN COLOR IMPACTS OPPORTUNITY IN AMERICA AND SHAPES DAILY LIFE.” *Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project* (blog), November 4, 2021.
<https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2021/11/04/half-of-u-s-latinos-experienced-some-form-of-discrimination-during-the-first-year-of-the-pandemic/>.
- Grey, Sam, and Raj Patel. “Food Sovereignty as Decolonization: Some Contributions from Indigenous Movements to Food System and Development Politics.” *Agriculture and*

- Human Values* 32, no. 3 (September 2015): 431–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-014-9548-9>.
- Guardians of Diversity: International Climate Exchange in the Potato Park, Peru*, 2014.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLI2KySC9-U>.
- Guptill, Amy Elizabeth, Denise A. Copelton, and Betsy Lucal. *Food & Society: Principles and Paradoxes*. Second edition., 2nd edition. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.
- Hannah Wittman, Annette Aurélie Desmarais, and Nettie Wiebe, eds. *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature, and Community*. Canada: Fernwood Publishing, 2010.
- Herrera, Timothy. “Covid, Climate Change, and Carework: Mesoamerican Diasporic Indigenous and Latino Communities in the Willamette Valley,” October 4, 2022.
<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/27544>.
- Heynen, Nik, Hilda E. Kurtz, and Amy Trauger. “Food Justice, Hunger and the City.” *Geography Compass* 6, no. 5 (2012): 304–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2012.00486.x>.
- Hoover, Brandon. “White Spaces in Black and Latino Places: Urban Agriculture and Food Sovereignty.” *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 3, no. 4 (2013): 109–15. <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2013.034.014>.
- Hoover, Elizabeth. ““You Can’t Say You’re Sovereign If You Can’t Feed Yourself”: Defining and Enacting Food Sovereignty in American Indian Community Gardening.” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 41, no. 3 (2017): 31–70.
<https://doi.org/10.17953/aicrj.41.3.hoover>.

Hovorka, A., Henk de Zeeuw, and M. Njenga. *Women Feeding Cities: Mainstreaming Gender in Urban Agriculture and Food Security*. CTA / Practical Action, 2009.

<https://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/81070>.

How Community Gardens Preserve Culture and Grow Hope. | Marissa Zarate | TEDxUOregon, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bB6jtGylsI>.

“Huerto de La Familia.” Accessed January 24, 2023. <https://huertodelafamilia.org/>.

Indigenous Mexico. “Telling the Entire Story of Mexico’s Indigenous People.” Accessed February 1, 2023. <https://indigenoumexico.org/>.

“Indigenous Research Methods: A Systematic Review - ProQuest.” Accessed July 7, 2022. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/2eae1e704af8223671bd4c9c6bce7cb1/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=1996357>.

Jansen, Derek. “Qualitative Data Analysis Methods: Top 6 + Examples.” *Grad Coach* (blog), May 23, 2020. <https://gradcoach.com/qualitative-data-analysis-methods/>.

Jarosz, Lucy. “Comparing Food Security and Food Sovereignty Discourses.” *Dialogues in Human Geography* 4, no. 2 (2014): 168–81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820614537161>.

Karma R Chávez. *Queer Migration Politics*. University of Illinois, 2013.

Kloppenburg, Jack. “Re-Purposing the Master’s Tools: The Open Source Seed Initiative and the Struggle for Seed Sovereignty.” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 41, no. 6 (November 2, 2014): 1225–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2013.875897>.

———. “Seeds, Sovereignty, and the Vía Campesina: Plants, Property, and the Promise of Open Source Biology,” January 1, 2008.

Koensler, Alexander. “PREFIGURATIVE POLITICS IN PRACTICE: CONCRETE UTOPIAS IN ITALY’S FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ACTIVISM*.” *Mobilization: An International*

Quarterly 25, no. 1 (March 31, 2020): 133–50. <https://doi.org/10.17813/1086-671-25-1-133>.

Kyle Whyte. “Food Sovereignty, Justice and Indigenous Peoples: An Essay on Settler Colonialism and Collective Continuance.” *Oxford Handbook on Food Ethics*, 2017.

Laura Pulido. “FAQs Frequently (Un)Asked Questions about Being a Scholar Activist.” In *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*, 341–66. Berkeley, UNITED STATES: University of California Press, 2008.
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uoregon/detail.action?docID=470852>.

Lawson, Hal A., James Caringi, Loretta Pyles, Janine Jurkowski, and Christine Bozlak. *Participatory Action Research*. New York, UNITED STATES: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2015.
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uoregon/detail.action?docID=1876221>.

Lerner, Amy M., and Kirsten Appendini. “Dimensions of Peri-Urban Maize Production in the Toluca-Atlacomulco Valley, Mexico.” *Journal of Latin American Geography* 10, no. 2 (2011): 87–106. <https://doi.org/10.1353/lag.2011.0033>.

LERNER, AMY M., and HALLIE EAKIN. “An Obsolete Dichotomy? Rethinking the Rural-Urban Interface in Terms of Food Security and Production in the Global South.” *The Geographical Journal* 177, no. 4 (2011): 311–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4959.2010.00394.x>.

Lindlof, Thomas R. “Qualitative Communication Research Methods.” Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2002.

López, Ronald W. “Harvest of Empire: The Untold Story of Latinos in America by Peter Getzels and Eduardo López (Dirs.)” *Latino Studies* 12, no. 1 (2014): 145–47.

<https://doi.org/10.1057/lst.2014.16>.

Loudiyi, Salma. “The Food Sovereignty Project: Advancing Theory and Practices.” *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 2018.

<https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2018.082.011>.

Ludington, Charles, and Matthew Morse Booker. *Food Fights: How History Matters to Contemporary Food Debates*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

Lynn Stephen. “Guatemalan Immigration to Oregon: Indigenous Transborder Communities.” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 118, no. 4 (2017): 554.

<https://doi.org/10.5403/oregonhistq.118.4.0554>.

mabelmedina. “Don’t Give up the International Seed Treaty to the New Genetic Biopiracy! : Via Campesina.” Via Campesina English, November 19, 2019.

<https://viacampesina.org/en/dont-give-up-the-international-seed-treaty-to-the-new-genetic-biopiracy/>.

Manning, Jennifer. “Becoming a Decolonial Feminist Ethnographer: Addressing the Complexities of Positionality and Representation.” *Management Learning* 49, no. 3 (July 1, 2018): 311–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507617745275>.

Mares, Teresa M. *Life on the Other Border: Farmworkers and Food Justice in Vermont*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2019.

“Mexico - IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.” Accessed May 12, 2023.

<https://www.iwgia.org/en/mexico.html#>.

“Milestones: 1830–1860 - Office of the Historian.” Accessed February 26, 2023.

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1830-1860/texas-annexation>.

Munshi, Sherally. “Unsettling the Border.” *UCLA Law Review* 67, no. 6 (2021): 1720–.

“Navdanya.” Accessed November 8, 2022. <https://www.navdanya.org/>.

Ndabezinhle. “La Via Campesina Political Declaration: 30 Years of Collective Struggle, Hope and Solidarity : Via Campesina.” Via Campesina English, April 15, 2022.

<https://viacampesina.org/en/la-via-campesina-political-declaration-30-years-of-collective-struggle-hope-and-solidarity/>.

Norgaard, Kari Marie. “Karuk Traditional Ecological Knowledge and the Need for Knowledge Sovereignty.” North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative Tribal Climate Change Initiative on Knowledge Sovereignty. Karus Tribe Department of Natural Resources: North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative, 2014.

<https://pages.uoregon.edu/norgaard/pdf/Karuk-TEK-and-the-Need-for-Knowledge-Sovereignty-Norgaard-2014.pdf>.

Nxumalo, Fikile. “Disrupting Anti-Blackness in Early Childhood Qualitative Inquiry: Thinking With Black Refusal and Black Futurity.” *Qualitative Inquiry* 27, no. 10 (December 2021): 1191–99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778004211021810>.

“Nye’ Le’ Ni Declaration on Food Sovereignty.” *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, February 27, 2007, 673–76.

“Participatory Action Research | Participatory Methods.” Accessed December 4, 2022.

<https://www.participatorymethods.org/glossary/participatory-action-research>.

Participatory Action Research: Practitioners, organizers, and communities. “About PAR,” 2023.

participatoryactionresearch.sites.carleton.edu.

- Patel, Rajeev C. “Food Sovereignty: Power, Gender, and the Right to Food.” *PLoS Medicine* 9, no. 6 (2012): e1001223–e1001223. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001223>.
- Paul Raekstad and Sophia Siao Gradin. *Prefigurative Politics: Building Tomorrow Today*. Polity Press, 2020.
- “PCUN | Pineros y Campesinos Unidos Del Noroeste.” Accessed January 24, 2023. <https://pcun.org/>.
- Pellow, David N. *What Is Critical Environmental Justice?* Cambridge, UK ; Polity Press, 2018.
- Peña, Devon G. “Chapter 1 Autonomía and Food Sovereignty: Decolonization across the Food Chain.” In *Mexican-Origin Foods, Foodways, and Social Movements: Decolonial Perspectives*, 2nd ed., 5–26. University of Arkansas Press Food and Foodways Series. University of Arkansas Press, 2017.
- Peña, Devon G., Luz Calvo, and Pancho McFarland, eds. *Mexican-Origin Foods, Foodways, and Social Movements: Decolonial Perspectives*. 2nd ed. University of Arkansas Press Food and Foodways Series. University of Arkansas Press, 2017.
- Pierrick. “Food Sovereignty : Via Campesina.” Via Campesina English, January 15, 2003. <https://viacampesina.org/en/food-sovereignty/>.
- Pudup, Mary Beth. “It Takes a Garden: Cultivating Citizen-Subjects in Organized Garden Projects.” *Geoforum* 39, no. 3 (2008): 1228–40. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2007.06.012>.
- Rosset, Peter. “Food Sovereignty and the Contemporary Food Crisis.” *Development* 51, no. 4 (December 2008): 460–63. <https://doi.org/10.1057/dev.2008.48>.

- Rosset, Peter M., and Maria Elena Martínez-Torres. “Rural Social Movements and Agroecology: Context, Theory, and Process.” *Ecology and Society* 17, no. 3 (2012): 17–17.
<https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-05000-170317>.
- Rufina Juárez. “Chapter 2 Indigenous Women in the Food Sovereignty Movement: Lessons from the South Central Farm.” In *Mexican-Origin Foods, Foodways, and Social Movements: Decolonial Perspectives*, 2nd ed., 27–40. University of Arkansas Press Food and Foodways Series. University of Arkansas Press, 2017.
- Sbicca, Joshua. “Food Labor, Economic Inequality, and the Imperfect Politics of Process in the Alternative Food Movement.” *Agriculture and Human Values* 32, no. 4 (December 1, 2015): 675–87. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-015-9582-2>.
- “Seed Saving and Seed Sovereignty.” *First Nations Development Institute*, n.d.
www.firstnations.org.
- SHEPARD, BENJAMIN. “Community Gardens, Convivial Spaces, and the Seeds of a Radical Democratic Counterpublic.” In *Democracy, States, and the Struggle for Social Justice*. Routledge, 2009.
- Sifuentez, Mario Jimenez. *Of Forests and Fields: Mexican Labor in the Pacific Northwest*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2016.
- Skahill, Madi. “How Mo’Beta Green Is Seeding Change in Denver Neighborhoods.” 5280, August 2, 2021. <https://www.5280.com/how-mobetta-green-is-seeding-change-in-denver-neighborhoods/>.
- Slocum, Rachel. “Race in the Study of Food.” *Progress in Human Geography* 35, no. 3 (2011): 303–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132510378335>.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. “Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples.”
London: Zed Books, 2012.

“Sovereignty | Definition, Characteristics, Types, History, & Facts | Britannica.” Accessed
November 6, 2022. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/sovereignty>.

Stephen, Lynn. *Transborder Lives: Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon*.
Duke University Press, 2007. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1131bvd>.

———. “Vulnerabilities and Collective Care: Indigenous Guatemalan and Mexican
Farmworkers in Diaspora Confronting COVID-19 in the Western United States,” n.d.

———. *Women and Social Movements in Latin America: Power from Below*. University of
Texas Press, 1997.

Storey, David. *A Research Agenda for Territory and Territoriality*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward
Elgar Publishing Limited, 2019.

“The Power of Constructivist Grounded Theory for Critical Inquiry - Kathy Charmaz, 2017.”
Accessed March 11, 2023. [https://journals-sagepub-
com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/doi/full/10.1177/1077800416657105](https://journals-sagepub-com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/doi/full/10.1177/1077800416657105).

Tom Wakeford and Javier Sanchez Rodriguez. *Participatory Action Research: Towards a More
Fruitful Knowledge*. University of Bristol, 2019.
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330352617_Participatory_action_research_tow
ards_a_more_fruitful_knowledge](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330352617_Participatory_action_research_towards_a_more_fruitful_knowledge).

Trauger, Amy. “Toward a Political Geography of Food Sovereignty: Transforming Territory,
Exchange and Power in the Liberal Sovereign State.” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 41,
no. 6 (November 2, 2014): 1131–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2014.937339>.

———. *We Want Land to Live: Making Political Space for Food Sovereignty*. Geographies of Justice and Social Transformation 33. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2017.

United Nations Population Fund. “Urbanization.” Accessed February 13, 2023.

<https://www.unfpa.org/urbanization>.

Vargas, Deborah R., Nancy Raquel Mirabal, and Lawrence M. La Fountain-Stokes. *Keywords for Latina/o Studies*. Keywords Ser. New York: University Press, 2017.

Via Campesina English. “La Via Campesina | International Peasants’ Movement.” Accessed February 13, 2023. <https://viacampesina.org/en/>.

Wezel, A., S. Bellon, T. Doré, C. Francis, D. Vallod, and C. David. “Agroecology as a Science, a Movement and a Practice. A Review.” *Agronomy for Sustainable Development* 29, no. 4 (2009): 503–15. <https://doi.org/10.1051/agro/2009004>.

“What the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Actually Says – Race, Politics, Justice,” July 12, 2017. <https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc/racepoliticsjustice/2017/07/12/what-the-treaty-of-guadalupe-actually-says/>.

Wiebe, Nettie, Annette Aurélie Desmarais, and Hannah Wittman. “Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature & Community.” Halifax: Fernwood, 2010.

Wilms-Crowe, Momo Wilms. “‘Desde Abajo, Como Semilla’: Puerto Rican Food Sovereignty as Embodied Decolonial Resistance,” 2020. <https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/25828>.

Wilson, Amanda DiVito. “Beyond Alternative: Exploring the Potential for Autonomous Food Spaces.” *Antipode* 45, no. 3 (2013): 719–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2012.01020.x>.

Wittman, Hannah, Annette Desmarais, and Nettie Wiebe. “The Origins & Potential of Food Sovereignty,” n.d.

Yap, Christopher. “Self-Organisation in Urban Community Gardens: Autogestion, Motivations, and the Role of Communication.” *Sustainability* 11, no. 9 (January 2019): 2659.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/su11092659>.