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The Foodpunk City: Advancing Portland's Food Security Through a Shared Ideology of Adaptation & Resistance

Nickolas Hash
Portland State University

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The Foodpunk City:

Advancing Portland's Food Security Through a Shared

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by

Nickolas Hash

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Thesis Committee:
Megan Horst, Chair
Joshua Eastin
Sybil Kelley
Jennifer Dill

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Abstract

Food injustice is a form of violence perpetrated by state and corporate actors against a constituency under their governing power, particularly impacting marginalized and impoverished communities. It denies individuals access to nutritious food, perpetuating cycles of poverty, inequality, physical health risks, and social exclusion. Grassroots movements have emerged to challenge dominant paradigms and advocate for food sovereignty, agroecology, and food anarchy. In Portland, the movement represents a nontraditional approach to food security that closely resembles the reactionary ideology of urban "punk" culture. Both groups prioritize community autonomy over food systems, sustainable agricultural practices, and resistance to oppressive structures that perpetuate inequality. Conforming closely with the human-urban relationship dynamics espoused by seminal urban philosophers like Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey, the Portland "Foodpunk" model demonstrates how a particular set of place and space-based urban dynamics drives an ideology to evolve into an effective set of community-empowering behaviors. The significance of this finding lies in its expansion of our current understanding of food security approaches, moving from a binary division to a spectral scale that more accurately represents the nuances and ideological variation between food security actors that have been shaped over time by their unique sets of circumstances.

By better understanding intersectional forms of oppression like food security and urban poverty more generally, the opportunities for holistic

responses are greatly increased. Public policy offers key opportunities to concentrate and compound social benefits by adopting lessons from sustainable food security movements like the Portland Foodpunk movement, Food Anarchy, and Agroecology-based socioeconomic structures more broadly. These movements advocate for community-driven solutions to address food insecurity, offering alternative relational structures to resource provision that challenge traditional charity paradigms and foster resilience in the face of collective challenges. By promoting sustainable food practices, equitable access to resources, and community empowerment, these movements represent opportunities for measurable improvements across the many intersections of equitable food security, environmental sustainability, and larger-scale economic resilience. Public policies that support these movements should include incentives for local food production, funding for community-led food initiatives, and regulatory reforms to promote food sovereignty and autonomy. Embracing these approaches thus leads to healthier and more resilient communities, reduced food waste, and greater food security for all.

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Section 1 - Introduction

      In a bid to concentrate wealth by way of ecological domination and extraction, humanity has cast the global biotic community into a race for survival against our own progress. While the world's compounding environmental and social crises plod faithfully on towards their climax points, the droning beat of neoliberalism folds any notion of redress neatly into the tired old marching lines of budgetary infeasibility. Any meaningful prevention at this point is a ship sailed and sunk. Evidence of this is bountiful, though it often exists in the language of academics, thus the perpetual victim of motivated interpretation. Despite the leviathan society faces, the activists, scholars, and public servants tasked with responding to these types of macro-scale social matters have little choice but to carry on their work in hopes of making any impact. As the severity of issues persist or increase, it is the duty of professionals in these worlds to develop more efficient and effective means of redress. As researchers, we must continue to plumb the depths of knowledge, deepening analysis frameworks to foster critical understandings of social issues, and push decision-makers to enact radical change in society.

      An area where radical change offers compounded benefits is the area of injustice and inequity in the modern food system; in short, *food injustice*. Food injustice manifests in myriad forms, representing acts of violence perpetrated by state and corporate actors against marginalized communities. These systemic cycles of oppression deny individuals access to nutritious food, perpetuating

poverty, inequality, health disparities, and social exclusion. From exploitative agricultural practices to discriminatory food distribution systems, food injustice's many forms exist to reinforce power dynamics that prioritize profit over people's lives. In response to these injustices, grassroots movements like sovereignty, agroecology, and food anarchy have arisen to challenge dominant paradigms and advocate for food security. These movements, each containing their own unique sets of ideals and practices, prioritize community control over food systems, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and resist oppressive structures that perpetuate inequality. By centering the agency of marginalized communities and emphasizing solidarity and mutual aid, these movements offer alternative visions for achieving food security and social justice.

Urban food security networks have traditionally been analyzed through the lens of a dichotomous framework, dividing approaches into philanthropic and revolutionary tracks. However, the following research study finds that the Portland food security network challenges this established paradigm by presenting a complex and multifaceted model that transcends the conventional dichotomy. The remainder of this article describes a qualitative, grounded theory based research process that seeks to understand the evolution of Portland's independent food security network, the successful adaptations produced by it, and the underlying socioeconomic, political, and cultural influences that have shaped it. Through a series of interviews and thematic analysis, this thesis explores the distinctive characteristics of the Portland food security network and its departure from traditional theoretical frameworks. The study sets out to better

understand how small-scale, independent food security organizations and individuals adapted to provide food under conditions of extended social unrest and the Covid-19 pandemic despite repeated claims of inadequate institutional support. What the findings reveal is a spectrum of intersecting identities and operational modes within Portland's food security network, reflecting the city's unique social and political landscape. While rooted in established theories, the Portland model demonstrates a natural evolution driven by the city's values of community empowerment, equity, and resilience in the face of systemic challenges.. The following background information provides necessary context on the intersecting movements, ideologies, and theoretical frameworks that have shaped the Portland independent food security model into what it is today.

Section 2 - Background & Literature Review

Intersecting Injustice: The Modern Food System

The concept of *intersectionality* is one philosophical approach growing in popularity across the academic and political spheres, lauded for its critical approach to the analysis of structural oppression and its resulting potential to produce comprehensive understandings of the mechanics that underlie the social experience (Collins, et al., 2021). With deeper understanding of social problems comes the potential for more comprehensive solutions to them that seek to address the contributing factors at their core. The intersectional lense's power comes from its adherence to holistic, justice-centered approaches to understanding and addressing intersections of structural oppression. Originally coined by Kimberly Crenshaw (1989), the term rooted in black feminism and critical theory refers to the interconnected and compounding forms of discrimination experienced by individuals who belong to multiple marginalized groups. It recognizes that oppression is not additive but rather multiplicative, meaning that the discrimination experienced by individuals at the intersection of multiple identities is more complex and profound than the sum of its parts (Carbado, 2013; Crenshaw, 1989). As a tool for understanding the social condition, intersectionality is highly useful because it examines the interconnectivity and systematic natures of injustice. For the same reasons, it is also an excellent tool for creating efficient and resilient policy outcomes (Martin, 2024). As the lens of intersectionality is increasingly applied to the analyses and

response plans for society's pressing issues, a few areas representing the greatest impact-potentials have emerged.

The concept of intersectionality is key to understanding the core unifying values shared among the sector of food injustice movements discussed in the remainder of this section. The modern capitalist food system is a leading contributor to ecological destruction and social injustice, making for a ripe set of *intersecting* opportunities through which to advance meaningful and efficient change (Koneswaran, 2008; Bristow, 2011; Houser & Stuart, 2021). The approaches and movements discussed below do not represent an exhaustive list encompassing all response structures to food injustice, but rather a more narrow subset that exist specifically to address intersectional forms of oppression through securing equitable access to safe and nutritious food. Providing a deeper understanding of the intersectional relationship between food injustice and structural oppression, this article focuses on groups, movements, and ideologies that are tailored to provide a direct response to intersectional oppression in Portland, Oregon.

In the current global socio-economic context, food has been largely reduced to another commodified tool of wealth concentration, no longer existing to feed people or create food-secure societies (Bakunin, 1972; Proudhon, 1876). This is evidenced by the economic threats of relocation and mass layoffs levied against the poor by large corporations, persistent food insecurity, and ever-increasing ecological damage associated with cash crops like wheat, soy,

and beef. Meanwhile governments fail to appropriately regulate - if not actively propping up - massive profit-driven food regimes (Henderson, et al., 2018, Feigin, et al., 2023). Instead, the reality of the modern food regulatory scheme reflects not a system ensuing safe and appropriate food to the populace, but one where governments court corporate "partnerships" by offering cushy tax breaks, cheap land or labor deals, generous subsidy policies, and violent enforcement of property laws. What Kass (2021) describes as the state, capital, and property trinity has come to dominate modern global sustenance provision, creating and reinforcing an inescapable quagmire of food oppression. With the state acting as both policy liaison and security force for corporate interests, the poor and hungry as well as those attempting to serve them are left in a position in which food cannot be accessed or provided without risking retaliation from the state..

The great irony of states holding a monopoly on violence (and subsequently, food) is that their entire point is to provide collective social security to begin with, and people don't feel secure when they're starving. People with the most need are then held to unrealistically high or unachievable social standards while forced to depend on an abusive and unpredictable system to feed them; a system that may just as likely physically harm them for needing support. This dilemma of the oppressed is a persistent aspect of food injustice and intersectionality. Mendez, et. al. (2019) describes how food and resource shortages not only result from social conflicts but also drive them, ultimately creating self-reinforcing conflict loops that prop up state's claims to "legitimate"

violence against the poor and impoverished. Meanwhile, people go hungry in the streets and in their homes.

In addition to the state's ability to enact force with impunity, social pathologizing of systemic issues (like lacking access to food and other resources) significantly compounds the difficulty for those navigating geographies of survival (Mitchell & Heynen, 2009) as a part of their daily lives. Amid her work as a philosophy researcher and author, Alexandra Plakias (2019) brings to the forefront several different forms of food injustice and the intersections shared with broader systemic modes of exploitation and oppression. Plakias (2019) describes the philosophical mechanics behind ingrained socialized values like puritanical cultural values, paternalism, and the resulting stigmas that shape institutional decisions affecting food production and regulation. By illuminating things like our modern reliance on processed and manufactured foods - a system where consumers lack equal access to knowledge about what they consume - she demonstrates more nuanced forms of epistemic food injustice. For example, information about a product's ingredients and manufacturing processes is often controlled by unreliable sources that will obscure, structurally placing individuals in a disadvantaged position of knowledge with regard to what they consume. This may seem trivial when contrasted with the harm potential of state violence, however Crenshaw (1989) and Carbado (2013) remind us that nuanced forms of oppression are typically not easily seen or identified, exponentially compounding more direct forms of violence.

Given the expansive nature of food injustice and its many overlapping synonymous terms, it's perhaps appropriate to provide a working definition for food injustice to anchor the discussion as we expand into a deeper investigation. Food injustice, as it should be becoming clear, is a massive umbrella under which competing and collaborative movements and ideologies reside. Bearing this in mind, it may be a more effective practice for this discussion to understand and define it in comparison to its opposite: *Food Justice*.

Looking to a leader in US food security research, Boston University (2023) defines food justice movements as: "…ensur[ing] universal access to nutritious, affordable, and culturally-appropriate food for all, while advocating for the well-being and safety of those involved in the food production process." Generally, the area of food security organizing that we are focused on can be described as united in their push to address disparities in food access for traditionally excluded communities through ecologically beneficial means. Intersectional food movements act in an effort to develop holistic solutions to hunger that bring together environmental and revolutionary social philosophies to push for radical advancements between humanity and the planet. A more detailed discussion of those particular movements and ideological structures is offered later in this section, but first let's briefly establish the extent to which hunger impacts society and the environment.

Food & Environmental Justice

Hunger is undoubtedly a socio-economic issue, though the impacts cannot be isolated from the greater natural environment they exist within. Cities and urban areas present the largest concentrations of resource demands, thus they present the greatest challenges to balancing human development with ecological limitations and ethical considerations. Fortunately, cities also present the greatest opportunities for resource efficiency because of the advantages inherent to urban density and vertical development (Keeley & Benton-Short, 2019). The resulting dialectic of extreme demand and extreme opportunity produces a mixed bag of environmental and social tradeoffs that humanity, so far, has fallen short of reconciling.

Exemplifying density tradeoffs, modern high-rise apartment buildings offer a range of benefits that stem from their large capacity for people to live, work and recreate within a single building. The resources needed to heat, cool, power, and plumb each unit are greatly reduced compared with single family homes (SFU's), and significantly less land is used per resident - compared with SFU's. Adding the benefits of technological efficiency, modern "smart city" planning schemes can significantly reduce the need for cars and other fossil fuel expenditures (Nieuwenhuijsen, 2021). Sundström, et al (2014) note land degradation around urban areas actually tends to decline with increasing local population density, thanks to vertically arranged living units and intensified use of the best agricultural soils. In contrast, drawbacks include things like increased noise and

air pollution, lack of access to a yard, garden, or nature. Space limitations and competition drives up cost of living and one's proximity to others can create privacy concerns and increased risk of crime or accidents.

The intersection of industrialized agriculture, urbanization, and food injustice underscores how broader environmental injustices disproportionately impact marginalized communities. Recent rapid urban and population growth has come at a significant environmental cost, leading to degradation of natural systems and throwing into question the sustainability of further development. Sundström, et al. (2014) notes that public policy and planning play hugely influential roles in matters such as land degradation and pollution, noting the importance of strong environmental land conservation systems. There is now even a growing interest in concepts like urban degrowth, which entails an equitable reduction of production and consumption patterns to enhance both human well-being and ecological conditions (Schneider, Kallis, & Martinez-Alier, 2010; Khmara & Kronenberg, 2023). However, the prevailing market-based approach favored by the United States and much of the world continues to disregard broader environmental concerns in favor of economic interests.

Since the onset of the industrial revolution, capitalist principles applied to food production have exacerbated environmental degradation, posing existential threats to agriculture itself. Land degradation, especially prevalent in the global South, undermines ecosystem functions vital for food production, exacerbating poverty and hunger in already vulnerable communities (Sundström, et al., 2014).

Sundström notes that 15% of global arable land has been "seriously" damaged by human activity and extreme natural events while 46% has been "moderately" damaged. Moreover, agriculture contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating climate change, which further threatens food security (Romero, et al.,2023). With projections indicating a substantial increase in food production demands by 2050 (Ashraf, J., & Javed, A., 2023), the current trajectory of industrial agriculture is unsustainable and exacerbates existing disparities, perpetuating environmental injustice. Marginalized communities, already bearing the brunt of economic and social inequalities, are disproportionately affected by these environmental challenges, amplifying food insecurity and widening existing disparities.

Urban Social Dynamics of Food Justice

It should now be coming into focus that food is not simply edible substances, food is a social process involving complex intersecting factors all with their own stories to be told. The story of hungry people living in cities is a story of exploitation and exclusion. The stories of struggling farmers and environmental destruction are stories of structural oppression and corporate domination. Kass (2022) and Parson (2020) make explicitly clear the challenges hungry individuals face in resisting the current food regime without risking violent repression, citing cases like San Francisco's years-long battle with the organization Food Not Bombs in the late 1980's and early 1990's. FNB

volunteers serving free food in San Francisco's public parks were subject to years of persecution by way of arrests, imprisonment, food confiscation, and predatory regulations that "validated" the violence coming from the state. Their motivation amounted to little more than optics politics, that is, the state's interest is in limiting the amount of poverty seen in public. Largely, visible poverty is a strong indicator of the state's failure to govern, providing a substantial motivation to hide what they cannot fix… or are unwilling to fix. Instead of supporting their own unhoused and impoverished citizens, they chose to incur huge expenses to deploy militarized police responses. This is further evidenced by the current wave of "sweep" policy enacted by cities including Portland, Oregon, which allow for the police to clear out encampments and ad-hoc shelters off sidewalks or any other public property.

Adherence to policies that place people's needs second to the economic machine will only further invite violent enforcement of capitalist enterprise, not serve to address any shortcomings in resource distribution. In fact, much of modern food injustice can be traced back to the long-standing relationship between capitalist resource privatization and land exclusion laws enforced by the state. Parson (2020) describes modern urban communities as being expected to act as "sanitized blocks of workers driven by market forces," rather than foster any genuine connection between individuals or groups. Such highly effective sanitization campaigns serve as a backdrop to the complex interplay between the urban individuals, food security, and state power, which for decades now has continually and successfully reproduced the conditions for capital to dominate

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every facet of urban life. Scharf, et al. (2019) provides further evidence to the positions advanced by Kass (2022) and Parson (2020), recognizing the growing sense of dispossession and exclusion felt by people living in cities. They find that urban non-elites describe a common desire for participation and influence in urban decision-making processes. As we will continue to discuss, food and urban life are inextricable from the intersectional forces of race, class, gender, and political-economic structures.

Demonstrating the connections to space, racialization, and capital accumulation, McClintock's (2018) concept of "Racial Capitalism" identifies how our modern economic structure relies on human difference and socio-spatial differentiation to exploit people and accumulate capital. By classifying groups of people based on racial or geographic characteristics, the capitalist power structure predetermines their value and treatment within the system. Thus, relegation of devalued populations to specific urban spaces through segregation tactics and violence plays a significant role in food injustice.

Before the U.S. was even a nation, settlers and colonists used the establishment of agriculture in "American" wildlands as a means of land domination, separating indigenous peoples from their traditional lands and land use practices. Settlers destroyed native food spaces to establish plantations and impose Euro-centric forms of agricultural organization, further reinforcing the exploitation of land and labor (Adhikari, 2015). To better understand how that history continues to shape contemporary urban food policy, McClintock's (2018)

draws a direct line between urban food injustice and the 'American' tradition of racial capitalism and class violence. By systematically perpetuating inequalities and limiting access to resources including nutritious food, the issues inherent to both impoverished communities and food injustice generally compound one another.

Similarly, but perhaps a bit further left on the political spectrum, the anarchist vein of research around urban spatial dynamics emphasizes the deep-rooted relationship between the State, capital interests, and property. The State, defined by its monopoly on violence and coercion within a defined territory, protects property to ensure a steady supply of capital through taxation. This capital is then used to strengthen the State's power through a cycle of capital accumulation, simultaneously waging a social war to domesticate individuals and landscapes in service of State power and capital. Civilianization - the incorporation of citizens into the State's bureaucracies and public services - functions as a perpetual counterinsurgency, suppressing alternatives to the State and capitalism (Kropotkin, 1927; Bakunin, 1953; Parson, 2020; Kass, 2022). Kass (2022) describes the state's monopoly on hunger as a central tool of state control and social warfare, harnessing neoliberal movements like the Green Revolution as tools of social war that exacerbate hunger and precarity.

Neoliberal policies serve to maintain the current power structure, exacerbating urban food insecurity while widening socioeconomic disparities. By pathologizing structural issues as individual failings, neoliberalism shifts blame

from systemic inequalities to individual responsibility, thereby obfuscating the power dynamics between oppressors and the oppressed. In stark contrast to classical liberalism's emphasis on individual freedom and government intervention to prevent harm, neoliberalism demonstrates a fundamental rejection of liberal governing principles. According to Mill's "harm principle" - a fundamental principle of liberalism - the legitimacy of the state lies in its ability to prevent harm to its citizens (Lieberman, 2012). However, under neoliberalism, privilege resides with the corporate class, so government intervention is not only *justified* in preventing harm to individuals, but also in safeguarding the interests of those corporations. Consequently, by prioritizing corporate interests over social welfare, neoliberal policies perpetuate economic inequality and undermine efforts to address urban food insecurity (Trauger, A. 2014; Parson, 2020; Kass, 2022).

Existing harmoniously alongside neoliberalism, revanchist policies seek revenge or reclamation; often targeting marginalized groups who are treated as "detriments" to public safety and order. As Parson (2020) frames it, states and private interests paradoxically frame marginalized groups like the unhoused as both rational actors seeking a free meal, while simultaneously too irrational to care for themselves. This effectively limits their autonomy and political participation, only further compounding the intersections of injustice. As was the case withFood Not Bombs in San Francisco, the visible nature of these marginalized communities in poverty ends up being weaponized by the state to garner public support for oppressive policies that exclude them from public space and much needed services (Parson, 2020; Pospěch, 2022).

Weaponizing space and optics doesn't end with targeting individuals or even organizations. Broad socioeconomic classes are weaponized against one another, often in service of some ideological rebuke to rational or ethical considerations (Bakunin, 1953; 1972; Kropotkin, 1927). This is most often accomplished by pathologizing and villainizing the people that use those services, much in the same way refugees, immigrants, and other marginalized out-groups are "othered." Othering is a social process in which an "in-group" like the political or corporate class target disempowered "out-groups" - symbolically and socially separating them from the in-group by casting them as "filthy", "impure", and even "animalistic" (Holslag, 2015). Propagating these kinds of dispersions and doubt towards social welfare programs preys upon the previously discussed moralistic values that are deeply ingrained in the U.S. cultural psyche (Plakias, 2019; de Souza, 2023; Carew, et al., 2024). The impact on public opinion ultimately deepens class-based ideological divisions on social welfare reflected as a tumultuous history of insufficient and unstable financial support structures for food security work.

Despite the precarity of their institutional support, emergency food and food security programs encompass a broad array of approaches including prepared different types of meal programs, distribution of groceries, larger-scale food warehousing operations, and food rescue activities. These programs aim to respond to poverty-driven food emergencies, ensuring that individuals lacking adequate resources can access meals (Poppendiek, 1994). Harmful stigmas, poverty stereotypes, and the use of othering are highly effective tools of

oppression that result in spatial organizations intended to exclude poor people from congregating in urban public spaces. Foley (1992) describes several distinct ways in which class-driven structural exclusion occurs in relation to food. One practice is the classification of food, which operates like a social ranking system assigning different levels of status to certain foods or certain methods of acquiring food. Something as simple as organic vs. non-organic, GMO vs. GMO-free, or even the markets you shop at can carry significant socio-cultural, economic, and symbolic implications. The distinction between high-status and low-status foods sheds light on how food can be stigmatized based on its perceived value and cultural connotations. When food stands in as a status symbol, people are then subject to parallel comparisons of their human value based on baseless designations that align with race, gender, and other identity biases far more than holding any true merit. Similarly, the social construction of "deserving vs. undeserving poor" stereotypes (Foley, 1992; Zatz, 2012) are a persistent challenge in the context of food security. organizing. These biases affect the fair distribution of resources and the treatment of recipients, scornfully minimizing and stigmatizing food seekers into "charity cases" instead of rightfully empowering them as people who deserve to eat.

Historical context can be helpful to understanding why we have food banks and how they arose to address immediate food needs arising from economic downturns. Food security work in the U.S. admittedly goes back much further than sixty years, but the first food banks and food pantries (as we now understand them in the US) started in the 1960's (Riediger, et al., 2022). A global

proliferation of food pantries and foodbank-style approaches followed closely

behind with national-level actors like Feeding America coming into the picture by

the mid 1970's. The 80's were an era marked by increasing wealth inequality,

health crises, and social benefit programs that were inadequate to meet the

needs of the growing financially insecure middle and lower classes (Foley, 1992;

Wolff, 1992, Diamond, 2016), indicating that food banks were here to stay.

As the world moved into the 1990s, neoliberal policy activism came to

dominate the American political sphere, leaving social service providers to face

dwindling financial resources while the demand for food was on the rise. Much of

the financial support for social welfare programs of the previous era were

dismantled by Clinton's federal "work-for-welfare" program and other similar

legislation (Waddan, 1998; Chapell, 2010). Many of the disaggregated programs

that had received financial support from the federal government were aggregated

and nationalized in the process, offering them a liferaft of financial support while

ultimately co-opting control of their organizations and support networks.

Emergency food programs, in contrast, were largely excluded from the federal

welfare nationalization trend, leaving them to fend for themselves in a politically

hostile environment. Variations and discrepancies in the distribution of benefits,

segregation of the poor, and lack of enforceable rights for clients were common

issues faced by food banks and their service recipients in this era (Poppendiek,

1994; van Esterik, 2005).

The contemporary resurgence of food banks in the United States grew amid the fallout from the housing market collapse and the subsequent global recession of 2007-2009 (Edwards, 2012). This economic downturn precipitated a sharp increase in food insecurity, disrupting a period of relative stability that had prevailed in the preceding years. While the previous decade had seen economic growth and reduced pressure on food security services, the recession-induced surge in food insecurity failed to return to pre-recession levels (Helms, et al., 2020; USAID, 2021). Insecurity was trending down in the years preceding the Trump era, though the gains were halted and then reversed due to extended social unrest and the subsequent onset of Covid-19 in 2020. This turn of events sustained demand for food assistance coincided with a growing scrutiny of neoliberal food systems, catalyzing a rapid growth of alternative food security movements. Discussed further in the following section of this chapter are the critical perspectives that underlie movements like urban farmers, gleaning, and other food rescue operations; movements that are gaining traction as an alternative to neoliberal sociopolitical systems (Edwards, 2012).

Food banks have long been the subject of considerable debate, with opinions divided into two main camps;: those advocating for their necessity and those contending they do more harm than good. Both critics and supporters recognize that philanthropic or "charity" approaches to food security, particularly within the confines of a neoliberal economic policy framework, often exacerbate food insecurity rather than alleviate it. At the heart of this critique is that philanthropic approaches are limited to targeting symptoms of poverty rather than

tackling its underlying causes (Poppendieck, 1994; 1998; Cloke, et al., 2017; Trauger, 2014; Kass, 2022). Setting aside concerns about waste reduction and the ethical implications of hunger within capitalist societies, food banks play a vital role in providing emergency food assistance to those facing immediate need and those who experience chronic barriers to food security.

However, even when food banks and other food security operations move beyond strict philanthropic models, they frequently struggle to escape the constraints of the nonprofit industrial complex that shackles them to profit-driven economic structures. Generally, philanthropic models of welfare aim to mitigate social problems, yet their dependence on the very market forces and organizational structures that contribute to these problems often limits their effectiveness. They become part of a cycle that addresses symptoms rather than causes, ensuring their own ongoing necessity but failing to promote the systemic change required to eradicate social ills (Poppendieck, 1994; 1998; Vitiello, et al., 2015; Cloke, et al., 2017).

On the opposite end of the spectrum lies the revolutionary model of food security, also known as the reform or justice model. Contrasting the philanthropic model, revolutionary approaches seek to fundamentally transform the current political and economic structures to prioritize social and environmental justice. Advocates of this model argue that working within capitalist and neoliberal frameworks only serves to reinforce these oppressive structures, leading them to conclude that these systems must be dismantled entirely and replaced with

equitable alternatives (Cloke, 2017; Diekmann, 2020, Guttman, 2021; Kass, 2022). Seminal social theorists such as Henri Lefebvre (1968; 2012) and David Harvey (2001; 2006; 2020) have long advanced the cyclical idea that urban space reflects the human interactions that take place there, and human interaction is then a product of the resulting urban space. The logical conclusion is that the people in the city hold an inherent right to that city; a right that's fundamental revolutionary social models.

Also referred to as reform or justice models, revolutionary approaches emphasize collective dignity, entitlement, accountability, and equity throughout food and social welfare systems. This model requires enforceable rights supported by fair and accountable legal systems. Furthermore, proponents of this model are often willing to outright defy existing laws and regulations if it means ensuring access to necessities such as meals for hungry families (Van Estrick, 2005; Edwards, 2006; Mitchell & Heynan, 2009; Mendez, et al., 2019; Parson, 2020; Jahnke & Liebe, 2021). In essence, the revolutionary model seeks not just immediate relief but structural and systemic changes aimed at addressing the fundamental inputs to cyclical poverty. By empowering individuals and advocating for policy reforms, this approach aims to tackle the root causes of food insecurity and create lasting change (Poppendieck, 1994; Foley, 1992; Kass, 2022; Jahnke & Liebe, 2021).

The philanthropic/revolutionary dichotomy represents a traditional dialectic in the understanding of food security structures; two conflicting sides of a binary

framework. While the former provides immediate but temporary relief, the latter advocates for transformative changes to address the systemic inequalities that perpetuate food insecurity. Layering the urban experience onto a complex web geography of poverty and hunger gives rise to an urban patchwork where individuals navigate a gauntlet of opportunities and impediments to fulfilling their basic daily needs. Mitchell and Heynan (2009) aptly characterize this urban struggle as the "geographies of survival," bringing forth how spatial relations and regulations not only dictate how people live but, in many ways, whether they survive at all. Within this landscape, food banks emerge as crucial components of the geography of survival, providing a lifeline for those grappling with houselessness and hunger in urban environments. However, as Peck and Tickell (2002) highlight, this landscape is fraught with widening wealth disparities, retreating state welfare functions, and escalating gentrification pressure. Consequently, essential support services face mounting threats of decreased funding, aging volunteer staff, and stringent regulations that create outlaws of those serving people in need (Mitchell & Heynan, 2009).

Mitchell and Heynan's insights weave disparate facets of desperate lives into a cohesive narrative that underscores survival through shared turmoil and community trauma-bonds. Concepts like geographies of survival and similar place-driven identities exert profound influences on urban space. A critical examination of existing research reveals how urban spaces shaped by neoliberal policies and gentrification impede marginalized communities' access to vital resources like food (Goličnik, 2005). Delving into the intersections of these

experiences uncovers a fundamental opposition between neoliberalism and spatial theories rooted in human rights. The duality of urban survival underscores the inherent conflict between the principles of food justice and the neoliberal urban landscape, illuminating the imperative to challenge prevailing power dynamics and establish rights-based spatial arrangements in urban environments that are not reflective of an individual's purchasing power.

Food Security & Anti-Hunger Movements

From the inception of the first true food banks to the emergence of multinational food sovereignty movements, the landscape of organizations combating food system injustices has undergone significant growth and evolution over the past four decades. This expansion, both in size and complexity, reflects shifts in demand, political climates, and our evolving understanding of the systemic issues at hand. Advocates within these movements stress the importance of recognizing the ethical and social implications of food choices, urging direct stakeholder involvement in reshaping our food system. Central to many of these efforts is a reorientation of the narrative surrounding food, from viewing it as a profit-driven industrial commodity to recognizing it as a fundamental human right. The reactionary food justice movements demanding broader shifts in institutional structures and seeking shifts in public perception arose in a co-evolution with the advances in food politics and academia in recent decades. These movements like food sovereignty, food anarchy, agroecology,

and "punk" food ideologies offer alternative frameworks for interacting with food systems and understanding food justice.

Food Insecurity in the United States

As a primer to discussing reactionary food security movements, we should contextualize the ongoing harms that they are *reacting to.* The most recent USDA statistics (Rabbit, et al., 2023) tracking national hunger demonstrate how pervasive the hunger issue truly is in the U.S., reporting approximately one in 8 households, or an estimated 44.2 million Americans, faced food insecurity in 2022,. An additional 11.7 million adults lived in households with very low food security, 7.3 million children lived in food-insecure households in which children - along with adults - were food insecure, and 783,000 children (1.1 percent of the Nation's children) lived in households in which one or more children experienced very low food security (Rabbitt, et al, 2023). That's roughly 12% of the entire US population who are without their basic nutrition needs being met. Within this, the prevalence of very low food security, characterized by regular meal-skipping or reduced intake due to financial constraints, was observed in one in 20 households, indicating a more severe form of deprivation.

Of particular concern is the disproportionate impact on minority households, especially those with children. According to Rabbitt et al. (2023), Black and Latinx households face food insecurity rates more than double that of White non-Latinx households (22.4% and 20.8% compared with 9.3%,

respectively). Geographic concentrations of food insecurity in the US also follow

demographic patterns, compounding the evidence of racially inequitable hunger

distribution. There is considerable variation between states with the South

emerging as the region with the highest prevalence of food insecurity - and the

West generally being the lowest; mirroring inequitable distributions of race, class,

poverty, and food insecurity across the US. It should be noted that, despite these

trends having been amplified by the Covid-19 pandemic, similar patterns of

poverty and food insecurity distribution existed long before the onset of the

lockdowns. Even in the years directly preceding Covid, predictably biased

concentrations of food insecurity was the long-standing status quo

(Coleman-Jensen, et al., 2020).

Trends in prevalence rates of food insecurity and very low food security in U.S. households, 2001–22

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.
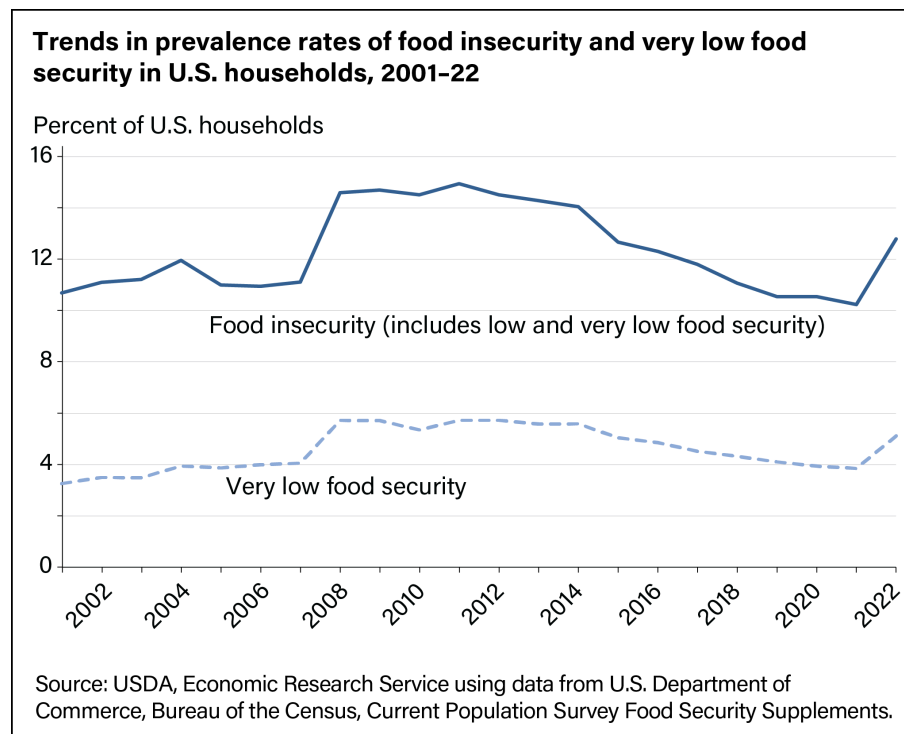
Figure 1 - *Trends in Prevalence Rates of Food Insecurity and Very Low Security in U.S. Households, 2001-22*

Prevalence of food insecurity, average 2020–22

Legend:
- Food insecurity above U.S. average
- Food insecurity near U.S. average (11.2 percent)
- Food insecurity below U.S. average

Note: States that are categorized as near U.S. average have prevalence rates not statistically significantly different from the U.S. average.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2020, 2021, and 2022 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.
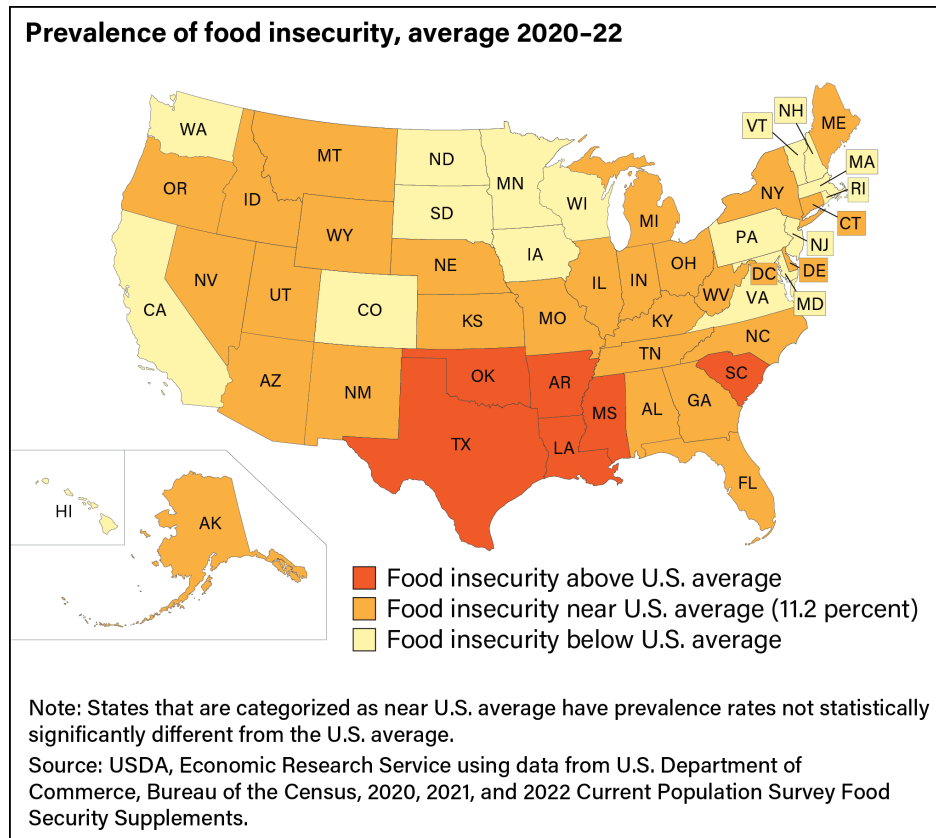
Figure 2 - *Prevalence of Food Insecurity, 2020-22*

Oregon's Food Insecurity

Turning to Oregon, a state that has struggled with hunger and food insecurity in comparison with it's West Coast neighbors, recent statistical analysis produced by the University of Oregon (Edwards & McElhaney, 2023) highlights a grim reality; 1 in 11 Oregonians were already grappling with food insecurity across the state prior to the pandemic. The food insecurity rate in Oregon for 2020-2022 stood at 11.2%, marking the reversal of a nearly decade-long downward trend prior to the pandemic. That translates to approximately 186,000 households affected, or roughly 463,000 individuals annually. While Oregon's

rates have historically surpassed the national average, the state had made
significant strides in reducing food insecurity from the historic highs witnessed
during the Great Recession to reach historic lows just before the pandemic.
However, since the onset of Covid and its economic repercussions the impacts
on specific groups has been varied. As it will be discussed further on, a number
of factors coalesced to keep food security stable for some folks. However, for a
number of marginalized communities, food insecurity rates surged to over 25% -
a staggering rate that's roughly 2.5 times the national average. Framing that in
terms of intersectionality, that equates to 1 in 4 individuals facing food insecurity
who already navigate a gauntlet of structural barriers to basic survival.

     Exacerbating these concentrations of hunger is the ongoing impact of
Oregon's ongoing housing-price crisis, which has not only doubled the average
number of hungry Oregonians in recent years but has - again - disproportionately
affected the state's most marginalized and impoverished areas. Notably, while
the disparity in food insecurity rates between renters and homeowners (21.4%
vs. 5.4%) can partially be attributed to higher poverty rates among renters,
renters remain significantly more vulnerable, irrespective of income, with a
disparity of at least 10 percentage points higher than homeowners (Edwards &
McElhaney, 2023). Lastly, education and income clearly play pivotal roles in
shaping Oregon's food insecurity rates. Over any given period, food insecurity
tends to decline with higher levels of education, with college-educated
Oregonians experiencing substantially lower rates compared to those without
high school diplomas. Pandemic-related food insecurity grew at alarming rates

among Oregonians lacking a bachelor's degree, particularly among those without high school diplomas, while it remained relatively stable for others, demonstrating shifts in the concentration of hunger throughout the covid pandemic (Edwards & McElhaney, 2023).

	2014-2016	2017-2019	2020-2022
Less than high school	26.1%	15.1%	25.9%
High school	19.1%	13.0%	14.8%
Associates	12.5%	12.0%	15.1%
Bachelor's	6.6%	5.0%	4.2%

Table 1 - *Oregon Food Insecurity by Educational Attainment*

Note - This table describes differences in food insecurity rates between groups with different levels of educational attainment in Oregon from 2014 to 2022 . From "Food Insecurity in Oregon During the COVID Public Health Emergency (2020-2022)," by M. Edwards & J. Mcelhaney, 2023, https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/2023-12/oregon_food_insecurity_rates_2020-20

Hispanic (any race)	17.8%
Black or multiracial including Black	16.8%
American Indian (A.I.) or multiracial include A.I.	20.9%
Asian or multiracial including Asian	4.1%
White, non-Hispanic	10.0%

Table 2 - *Oregon Food Insecurity by Race/Ethnicity*

Note - This table describes differences in food insecurity rates between groups with different levels of educational attainment in Oregon from 2014 to 2022 . From "Food Insecurity in Oregon During the COVID Public Health Emergency (2020-2022)," by M. Edwards & J. Mcelhaney, 2023, https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/2023-12/oregon_food_insecurity_rates_2020-20
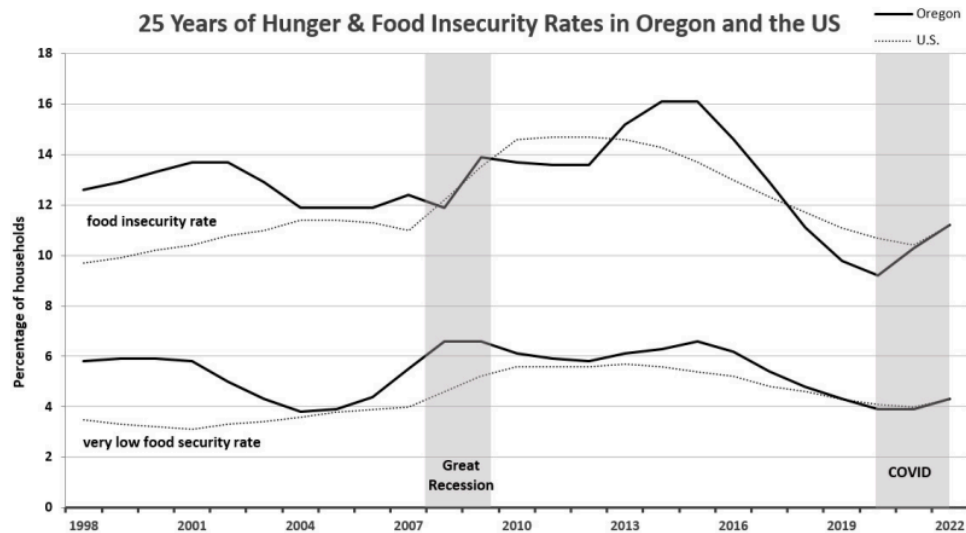
Figure 3 - *25 Years of Hunger and Food Insecurity Rates in Oregon and the US*

Note - This graph displays two levels of food insecurity rates (food insecurity and very low food security, respectively) between the US average and the state of Oregon from 1998 to 2022 . From "Food Insecurity in Oregon During the COVID Public Health Emergency (2020-2022)," by M. Edwards & J. Mcelhaney, 2023, https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/2023-12/oregon_food_insecurity_rates_2020-2022.pdf

Looking at recent statistical averages that indicate food insecurity grew less during the pandemic than initially anticipated, Edwards's (2021) work raises intriguing questions about the dynamics of food security during crisis periods. While it may seem that the problem was mitigated, closer examination suggests that the shifts in food insecurity concentrations obscure the true extent of the issue; a common pitfall when analyzing large geographical aggregates. Drawing from a recent European study (Warshawsky, 2023), patterns of "winners and losers" were observed throughout the pandemic without substantially changing the aggregated hunger rates. Washawsky's (2023) report describes a variety of organizations and movements across Europe experiencing significant boosts in

support while managing stable levels of demand, whereas others faced insurmountable challenges due to overwhelming demand outstripping available resources. Portland interviewees also report a notable surge in demand, particularly in lower-income working-class neighborhoods like St. Johns, Lents, Cully, and Woodlawn, wherein larger percentages of the residents are struggling to maintain financial stability or any kind of resource reserves (see discussion chapter for a more thorough dissection of this last point).

Speculatively, government support initiatives such as expanded SNAP benefits, increased unemployment benefits, and stimulus payments may have partially offset the impacts of the pandemic on individuals teetering on the edge of economic stability. However, it's important to acknowledge that, like in the European context, both support organizations and individuals experienced varying degrees of success and adversity, resulting in a complex landscape of winners and losers. Despite these nuances, Oregon continues to grapple with persistent and even escalating trends in food insecurity, underscoring the enduring challenges exacerbated by the pandemic. Furthermore, the outsized impact of the pandemic on rural communities compared to urban areas presents an additional layer of complexity that warrants further investigation. However, delving into this aspect falls beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, we transition our focus to examining the movements and initiatives that seek to address the systemic injustices underlying hunger, shedding light on alternative approaches to combating food insecurity in our communities.

Political Agroecology & Food System Decolonization

Political agroecology is not as much a singular movement or ideology as it is an economic structure and set of policies designed to advance the interests of ideologically aligned food security models. Defined broadly as the "ecology of the food system," agroecology aims to transform food systems toward sustainability by balancing ecological soundness, economic viability, and social justice (Peng, 2018; Mendez, et al., 2019; Jeanneret, et al., 2021). Agroecological approaches recognize that all the components of food systems are crucially interconnected, disqualifying unsustainable practices like monoculture farming and heavy chemicals due to detrimental effects on ecosystems and human health. Standing as an alternative to extractive and exploitative structures, agroecologists strive to develop localized human-scale food economies to combat those systems (Benkeblia, 2015; Peng, 2018; Mendez, et al., 2019; Jeanneret, et al., 2021).

This transformation requires changes across the entire food system, from seed and soil to the table. Agroecology integrates science, technology, and practice while emphasizing the importance of social justice. Advocates for agroecological political structures see it as crucial to reconnect people who grow food with those who consume it to achieve food security, food sovereignty, and community sustainability (Benkeblia, 2015; Mendez, et al., 2019; Jeanneret, et al., 2021). The relationship between those who grow food and those who eat it must be reconnected to honor the deep connection between culture and the

environment that created agriculture through holistic approaches that consider the entire food production process, from the seed and soil to the table.

Similar to political agroecology, Guttman's (2021) Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) framework proposes an alternative to GDP driven systems that inherently preclude human and ecological justice by incentivising predatory capitalist behavior. Instead, the SSE represents a possible counterbalance to the many drawbacks of the capitalist market economy and centralized state regulation. It underscores the need for a third force between the market and the state, focusing on the public interest and social justice. Guttman (2021) advances the principle of public commons and cooperatives to provide a means of collectively governing shared resources. Aligning closely with agroecology and similar food justice movements, SSE offers a framework for collective governance and mobilization of resources, emphasizing self-organization and community involvement that Guttman (2021) argues may present an effective non-capitalist socio-economic organization scheme.

The overarching insight to draw from movements like SSE and agroecology, as elucidated by Mendez et al. (2019), Guttman (2021), and others, is that agroecology transcends simplistic solutions. Rather, it embodies adaptable holistic methodologies that extend beyond ecological sustainability alone. Agroecology encompasses economic, environmental, and social justice considerations, reimagining food production systems and land stewardship to serve communities comprehensively. Central to its ethos is the promotion of

economically viable farming practices, particularly for small-scale and marginalized farmers, safeguarding their livelihoods while fostering deeper connections between society, local cultures, and the environment.

Moreover, emphasizing the participatory and political dimensions, agroecology underscores the vital role of political engagement and state institutions in shaping agroecosystems. Recognizing that sustainability is not solely dictated by physical and biological factors, SSE and agroecology have evolved to address existing power imbalances between corporate interests and citizens. Acknowledging the inherent incompatibility of the current system with long-term viability, the political branches of agroecology advocate for transformative changes in public policies and laws to realize food sovereignty. They assert that achieving sustainability and social justice necessitates active political participation and institutional reform, advocating for incremental policy changes while remaining prepared to support revolutionary action (Mendez et al., 2019).

Anarchy, Mutual Aid, and Food Sovereignty

Given the shared values among justice-seeking food movements, anarchism seems a natural choice as a framework for exploring the intellectual connective tissue between the various approaches to liberated urban food systems. Spanning from dumpster-diving "freegan" punks to highly organized agro-ecological socioeconomic systems, anarchist approaches center the

common social good while attempting to dismantle the buttress of power shared between the State, capital, and property rights. Anarchism as a theoretical framework questions the corporate-state paradigm and envisions a society where governments play a limited role - if any - in addressing social issues. It recognizes that structural wealth exclusion is at the root of capitalist exploitation and seeks to address poverty and economic injustice as facets of violence perpetrated by state policies.

Anarchist theory challenges conventional notions of state power, even departing from its more moderate and state-friendly cousins, communism and democratic socialism. By embracing the "lumpenproletariat," those considered to be society's most *impoverished and afflicted*, anarchism seeks to empower the outcasts that Marx and others dismiss. Bakunin (1953) and Kropotkin (1927), who many regard as the founders of formal anarchist theory, would argue that the lumpenproletariat amount to a great deal more than their negative stigmatic characterizations would suggest. Contrasting Marxist theory, Kropotkin (1927) and Bakunin (1953; 1972) believe that the lumpenproletariat embody a great potential to become a revolutionary force because they are driven by their desperation and lack of material wealth. Anarchist's radical approaches to cooperation, mutual aid, and equality aim to counter what Parson (2020) calls "the culture of death" prevalent in modern capitalist societies; envisioning a world without the violence of racism, sexism, homophobia, and capitalist coercion. They seek to rebuild social structures that empower egalitarian relationships, emphasizing widespread social welfare and ecological sustainability and

recognizing poverty as a form of structural violence. According to Portland local mutual-aid workers, their mission can be summed up in three words: "Solidarity Not Charity."

Drawing together the notions of urban food security and anarchist theory in a practical sense, sociopolitical models that utilize common pool resources, cooperatives, and mutual-aid have long held the potential to challenge and transform capitalist structures and broader public policy. These models emphasize community engagement, shared resource governance, and equitable distribution, aligning with the goal of ensuring access to adequate and affordable food for urban populations. In the context of addressing issues of food disparities, commons and cooperatives can substantially contribute to localized, community-driven solutions, potentially reducing food deserts and ensuring fair access to food.

A successful example of common pool resources management is Maine's crab fishery cooperatives, a shared-resource approach that works effectively through community and governmental collaboration (Guttman, 2021). This approach is rooted in collectively decided institutional arrangements, promoting adherence and buy-in. Additionally, commoning, wherein communities collectively govern and adapt the rules for managing shared resources, is seen as an essential aspect of societal transformation. Cooperatives - particularly those involving farmers - serve as a response to issues like food deserts and aim for sustainable social and economic justice. They emphasize associated labor,

workplace democracy, surplus distribution, and cooperation. The cooperative movement aims to challenge capital-centric production and distribution, often adopting democratized decision-making processes within the organization (Guttman, 2021). Cooperative urban food management systems represent a shift towards more inclusive and sustainable urban development, placing residents and communities at the forefront by advancing collective ownership and governance of food-related resources (Purcell, 2013; Scharf, et al., 2019; Kass, 2022).

Aligning closely with agroecological and mutual-aid premises, food sovereignty movements have emerged over recent years. Advocates bill the concepts as a step towards advancing localized food security through localized control of food systems. Food sovereignty also closely aligns with agroecological principles, emphasizing the right of communities to define their own food systems. By prioritizing localized food systems and abundant access ideology, food sovereignty structures seek to increase opportunities for community members to determine their own relationships with food (Plakias, 2019; Mendez et al., 2019). Food sovereignty movements are often seen as radical in nature, but that is coming from the far more radical perspective that social welfare is not a human right. Kass (2022) characterizes food sovereignty as a counter-hegemonic movement against corporate agribusiness control of the food system, advancing "radical agri-food democratization". By treating nutritious, sustainably produced, and culturally appropriate food as a basic human right, food sovereignty seeks to place control with those who produce, distribute, and

consume food in an effort to address structural inequalities in modern food systems.

Food anarchy, a more pointed and radical offshoot of the food sovereignty movement, directly implicates the corporate-state power apparatus as the true barrier to food justice. Termed by Kass (2022), food anarchists challenge all forms of food regime rule and domination, particularly "the State's monopoly on hunger". Kass describes the relationship between the state, corporate capitalism, and private property as a "trinity" that controls the food system and wields hunger as a tool of control. Food anarchy, in response, deploys revolutionary approaches to reclaiming control over the agri-food system, mobilizing against the monopoly on hunger. By advocating for a shift towards food anarchist principles, communities can challenge prevailing power dynamics and redefine their own food system. Much in the spirit of the classic "punk ethic," food anarchists celebrate their chaotic, illegible, and feral networks of revolt, care, and mutual aid to advance what they see as justice within the broader framework of food sovereignty.

McClintock's (2018) concepts of decolonizing the diet and fostering an Indigenous resurgence alongside broader ideologies like agroecology, food sovereignty, and food-punk. As they naturally congeal together, a means of resisting capitalist logics and asserting self-determination arises that challenges the boundaries of settler-state institutions. McClintock's decolonized approach to food security aligns with the values of anarchism and food anarchism,

emphasizing community empowerment, sustainable practices, and a reconnection to land-based traditions. Even more so, it underscores the necessity of regaining control over land as a fundamental aspect of decolonization.

Admittedly, decolonized food systems like agroecology, food sovereignty, and food anarchy may sound like concepts whose feasibility in the urban space could be difficult to imagine, though advocates discussed here cite a plethora of benefits to diverse populations provided by community owned and operated urban food systems, arguing that they and the policies that serve to uphold them are essential pieces in transforming the agrifood system (Grey & Patel, 2015; Mendez, et al., 2019, Kass, 2022).

Commonly proposed strategies to re-localizing food production and distribution include major increases to government funding and grants for urban farming, public land entitlements and land "adoption" programs for food production, publicly funded food forests and permaculture parks, emboldened support for food-based land rehabilitation programs (brownfield gardening), and enacting food sovereignty or food rights-based laws and policies to ensure that effective and just food security programs are enshrined as the law of the land (Grey & Patel, 2015; Mendez, et al., 2019; Scharf, 2019; Guttman, 2021; Kass, 2022). With political revolution unlikely in the U.S.'s near future, public policy must be shaped to support initiatives that facilitate such reconnections and empower communities to challenge the existing systemic inequalities and pursue

greater self-sufficiency and sustainability (Grey & Patel, 2015). Federal policies currently favoring industrial agriculture further evidence the need for reforms (Grey & Patel, 2015; McClintock, 2018; Mendez et al., 2019) that grant access to land and infrastructure for small-scale farmers and heavily regulate unjust economic and ecological practices.

Punk Ideology & Food

In the context of food justice, those living by punk food ethics represent a less organized - yet, pervasive - sector of food justice activism. The concept of punk cuisine is deeply rooted in the ideology of resistance to mainstream and corporate oppression within food systems. Their resistance-ideology is evident in dietary choices like vegetarianism, veganism, or "freeganism," which are seen as a way to challenge food-based oppression and commodification of human culture through food activism (Clark, 2004). In line with political agroecologist and anarchist thought, the punk diet and dietary value system reflect responses to colonial domination and commodification through corporate-controlled food systems (Debies-Carl, 2014; Bestley, et al., 2021). Clark's (2004) work describes punk food values as a collective rejection of industrialized food production and "monoculture", opting for more hands-on or DIY approaches to acquiring sustenance. Drawing on a more general critique of modern mainstream culture, punks argue that global capitalism promotes a narrow and hegemonic culture that symbolizes the loss of cultural and ecological specificity, upholding the idea of authenticity as a unifying theme in punk food values.

Exemplifying that loss of diversity is the normalization of market food grown and processed thousands of miles away, creating endless identical reproductions of food products. Punks argue that this type of factory food system is not only unethical, but that it also contributes to a sense of alienation from historical and cultural connections to sustenance. Contemporary punks, largely identifying as anarchist, antiracist, and feminist, use food as a medium to challenge the status quo and contest power relations (Edwards, 2012; Jahnke & Liebe, 2021). Food choices then become a way to express their ideals and critique the dominant food culture they perceive as nutritionally deficient, commodified, and based on White-male domination. Punks are largely white people that understand the problem with witness and align with their marginalized neighbors. In turn, their cuisine serves as a tool for punks to remake themselves outside these power relations and aspire to a form of food that is free of commodification, pesticides, and exploited labor - food that is as raw and wild as possible, embodying their ideals of freedom, autonomy, and diversity (Clark, 2004; Debies-Carl, 2014, Bestley, et al., 2021).

Overall, the "punk" social identity represents a diverse and dynamic set of values and attitudes that prioritize individual freedom, social justice, creativity, and resistance to authority and oppression. While punk movements may differ in their specific focus and expressions, they share a common ethos of defiance and a commitment to building a more equitable and liberated world.There's a strong emphasis on advocating for individual autonomy and freedom, embracing a DIY ethos, which encourages self-sufficiency, creativity, and independence. This can

manifest in various ways, such as creating art, music, literature, or technology outside of traditional channels, or adopting sustainable and self-sustaining practices in daily life.

One fundamental approach to punk food ideology comes in the form of "freeganism." Freegans are individuals who reject the mainstream consumer culture and actively seek to reduce waste by salvaging discarded, yet edible, food. They often retrieve food from supermarket dumpsters, emphasizing personal judgment over expiration dates (Clark, 2004; Edwards, 2012; Jahnke & Liebe, 2021). Dumpster diving, which involves retrieving discarded yet edible items from waste dumpsters and trash bins, primarily focuses on food waste as the core injustice to address. Though, reclaiming discarded food doesn't just reduce waste; it is a form of protest. Dumpster diving and other food rescue practices are an assertion of identity outside the norms of mainstream consumerism, a set of practices that align with ethical eating and challenge the conventional understanding of what is deemed edible or valuable.

Similarly, the practice of "gleaning" involves gathering leftover crops from farmers' fields after they have been commercially harvested. In a broader sense, it extends to reclaiming discarded food from various sources including supermarkets who toss out an abundance and variety of usable products (Hoisington, et al., 2001; Marshman & Scott, 2019). Aligning with the broader goals of urban food sovereignty and community resilience, the development of alternative food acquisition methods by punk food activists has even

demonstrated global effectiveness in ensuring consistent food access even in challenging circumstances like a global pandemic (Anggawi, 2021).

Punk food ethics and their associated food-rescue tactics are seen as forms of resilience against food insecurity, reclaiming discarded food to supplement individuals' diets and reduce their reliance on the violence-laden capitalist food system (Clark, 2004; Edwards, 2012; Jahnke & Liebe, 2021). Returning to intersectionality and efficient response models, punk food reclamation tactics offer a plethora of potential benefits packed into a few simple acts of rebellion. While counter-hegemonic action and place-based politics underpin much of punk ideology, food waste and its ecological impacts are also critical components of freeganism and punk food ethics. Wasted food represents lost resources that could have been used to meet the nutritional needs of individuals and families struggling with food insecurity, and food-punks let little come between them and *rescuing* those resources (Edwards, 2006). Gleaning, dumpster diving, and otherwise reclaiming discarded foods represent a radical act for punks, challenging societal injustices and condemning wastefulness. By banking their survival on food that defies mainstream perceptions of what is considered acceptable, punk's simple existence stands as a challenge to modern capitalist food culture (Clark, 2004; Jahnke & Liebe, 2021).

Despite some food rescue acts being seen as controversial practices, the opportunities to address urban food security concerns, reduce food waste, and foster sustainable behaviors outweigh any concerns they may garner. Food

waste and urban food insecurity remain significant issues in the Western food cycle and food rescue activity offers opportunities to minimize waste, challenge societal norms around consumption, and uplift communities through food security (Hoisington, et al., 2001; Edwards, 2006; Marshman & Scott, 2019). The cascading effects of food rescue help food-punks cover a significant portion of their own (and others') food needs, resulting in more financial freedom by removing a significant monetary burden. Despite the potential legal implications of trespassing, vandalism, or theft, dumpster diving is seen as a means to raise awareness about environmental exploitation and societal waste. Food-punk activists aim to educate people about the extent of waste in society and its environmental impact. Janke and Liebe (2021) even find a high level of public support for diving, which they attribute to the perception of said acts as a form of lifestyle politics, where individuals attempt to effect social change through personal actions.

It should also be noted that not all gleaners and divers are necessarily punks, and not all punks glean or dive. The nature of not adhering to any strict sets of rules guarantees a variety of perspectives and approaches across the punk food ideological spectrum. The unifying theme is just that… a theme; a broader and looser set of values that includes a wide array of people from varying backgrounds, methodologies, and motivations bound by their mutual disapproval of a throwaway society. The shared ideology between these individuals and groups - the unwavering willingness to live food-punk values as their authentic truth - extends beyond the notions of individual identity, class

division, or formal organization to bind multi-demographic oppressed groups together under one big tent.

A final pertinent item that needs unpacking here is the wealth of cultural movements that have descended from punk culture alongside its more direct influence on civic activism. Punk rock music is the mother of punk culture, but since the inputs that led to its formation as a cultural identity continue to drive punk's evolution and the wide range of political art it spawns. Speculative "punk" literary movements are a tract of punk art and culture that's associated with measurable outcomes in reality.

The "Solarpunk" literary movement, in particular, serves as a compelling example of how fiction can inform actual social and physical development. By inspiring, educating, and empowering individuals to envision and work towards a more sustainable and equitable world, Solarpunk literature catalyzes conversations, drives innovation, and inspires positive change in both thought and action (Crosby, 2023; Gillam, 2023; Kroon, 2023). Solarpunk stories frequently depict societies that prioritize community cooperation, social justice, and equitable access to resources. By engaging with these speculative societies, Solarpunk authors prompt readers to explore alternative models of governance, economics, and social organization that prioritize human well-being and environmental sustainability (Crosby, 2023; Gillam, 2023). Preceded by similarly critical punk literary fields like Steampunk and Cyberpunk, Solarpunk provides another example of how punk culture is intimately entangled in urban culture and

spatial dynamics, demonstrating how the ideology directly, and indirectly feeds

into societies cultural feedback loop (Coenen, 2023; Crosby, 2023; Gillam, 2023).

Chapter Conclusion

The collection of intersecting social phenomena presented here

demonstrate the intricate connections between food, urban life, and structural

power relations within the bounds of narrative-driven spatial dynamic theories

proposed by seminal urban theorists like Henri Lefebvre (1968; 2012) and David

Harvey (2001; 2006; 2020). It emphasizes how food isn't merely sustenance but

a social process intertwined with exploitation, exclusion, and structural

oppression within urban spaces (Purcell, 2013; 2014). Drawing heavily on the

works of Poppendieck (1994; 1998), Parson (2020), Kass (2022), Van Estrick

(2005), this review of existing literature describes an existing food security

dichotomy and highlights the violence faced by marginalized communities in

resisting the dominant food regime; one which is perpetuated by capitalist

enterprises and state power. Exploring the work of Mclintock (2018), Purcell

(2013; 2014), Foley (1992) and Pospěch (2022), the concepts therein provide

additional layers of nuanced urban social dynamics like racial capitalism and food

system colonization, demonstrating the historical connections between

exploitation, spatial segregation, and food system injustice. The influence of

anarchist perspectives, including the critical concepts of revanchist policies and

collective resistance, further highlight the intersectional oppression marginalized

groups face through spatial exclusion and state violence (Kropotkin, 1927;

Harvey, 2001; 2006; 2020; Purcell, 2013; 2014; Parson, 2020; Kass, 2022). In response, a wave of justice-based organizing has emerged that presents a broad array of interests bound together by a shared ideology of resistance to violent state and global capitalist domination.

Section 3 - Methods & Procedures

Research Question

This study is intended to develop an underlying theory that explains how independent organizations and individuals fed Portland's food-insecure population over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic despite shortages of institutional support. To do so, the constructivist grounded theory methodological structure (Charmaz, 2017) was used, which involved collecting and critically analyzing personal experiential data from in-depth interviews with independent food security organizations and individuals. Grounded theory - more generally - is one of only a few research methods that are specifically designed to develop generalized theory from a systematic data analysis process, providing researchers with a rigorous methodological process that generates a theory grounded in the data itself (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: Vander Linden, 2023). This approach was chosen for its rigorous yet pragmatic take towards achieving a comprehensive understanding of stakeholders' perspectives and experiences. Procedurally, it follows an inductive qualitative analysis of in-person semi-structured interviews that an underlying explanatory theory is then derived from. As a widely used approach for qualitative social science data-collection and analysis, the intention of this methodology and grounded theory is to generate scientific theory derived from common patterns identified across numerous recounted human experiences within a given population. The resulting theory is "grounded" in the data provided by the interviewees themselves, not from preconceptions or speculations from an outside expert (Charmaz, 2017; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Sample Information

       The final subset of data is made up of 10 semi-structured interviews that were carried out with people that had firsthand knowledge and experience working among small independent food security organizations. The inclusion criteria was rather broad, being open to anyone that has worked directly for - or with - independent community food security organizations during and after the Covid-19 global pandemic. This included but was not limited to: grassroots organizations, mutual aid organizations, food banks (or similar), independent community churches or faith organizations, or non-incorporated individuals that carry out the same work on their own volition either independently or in some form of collaboration with others. The exclusion criteria describes a simple contrast to the above, excluding any potential participants that had not been directly involved in food security work during the last five years.

       The interviewees included a range of class, power, and social position; from people living in their cars or tents and distributing food to others in their encampments, to the pastors of churches and heads of organizations feeding entire communities. Several of the subjects were brought in through direct outreach or through connections to fellow academics in this field, the first of which were selected due to proximity to and accessibility by the researcher. The remaining interviewees were accessed by snowball type sampling connections made from prior interviews. Despite the limitations associated with a

smaller-scale study, the sample represented a broad spectrum of perspectives informed by an array of demographic, ethnic, and cultural experiences.

Data Collection Strategy

      The interviews were conducted in an open-ended, semi-structured, and iterative process that affirmed an accurate record of the subjects' feelings and perspectives. The sessions were recorded via audio recording or the built in recording functions of online tele-calling technologies (zoom, Google, etc). Following the constructivist approach to grounded theory, this process used "intensive interviews" with a prompted conversation where both the interviewer and the interviewee have the ability to "shift the conversation and follow hunches," that may draw out deeper truths from the conversation (Charmaz, 2006; Vander Linden, 2023). A set of questions intended to prompt the subjects to freely expand on their responses, conversations focused primarily on the stories of individuals and the organizations they support, working as a part of the anti-hunger network in Portland. The questions were designed to facilitate a deep and iterative exploration of how independent individuals and groups organize and operate. By better understanding and developing a general theory of their fundamental organizing principles, their approach to regulatory and operational barriers, and how they collectively adapted to the extreme pressures of extended social unrest and Covid-19. Inquiry on basic experiences and food security work history rolled into more specific and potentially revealing questions prompted by information volunteered by interviewees. For example, a question like "What

brought you to your work in food security?" elicited conversational responses that explored intent and ethics behind the work the interviewees do, identifying unifying themes across their experiences and highlighting structural issues that persistently impede progress towards a more food just society. The interview questions are available in Appendix A.

Data Analysis & Theory Development

The recorded data was first anonymized in accordance with pre-established privacy protection measures then subjected to a systematic inductive analysis. The analysis began with an open coding process that assessed the data for patternistic connections within each interview, between them, and to existing bodies of research and theory. The initial patterns that emerged from connections between key words, phrases, and ideas were distilled into a set of concept-based codes representing theoretically significant themes across the interview responses (Charmaz, 2017; Glaser, 1978; Vander Linden, 2023). As an additional step towards establishing credibility of the data, the coded responses and eventual memos were compared with established urban theory models as well as relevant local statical data in order to substantiate the claims made by interviewees. Once the focused codeset was established, an underlying theoretical connecting tissue began to emerge. That provided the basis for an explanatory framework that could be analyzed for its evidentiary support and then the longer-term implications for urban planning, theory, and policy.

The constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Vander Linden, 2023) was utilized in place of a more traditional sequenced data analysis, due to its key importance in the process of grounded theory generation. The main departure from a more traditional qualitative analysis being that my earlier interviews and initial open coding sessions informed the approach towards the latter interviews, offering insight and guidance on how to let the conversations flow, and offering a form of miniature hypotheses that could be "tested" through further interviews to validate or challenge my evolving concepts. Memos describing emergent themes, connections, and potential explanatory information were drafted and sorted into categories, ultimately generating more memos and keying in on deeper relationships and patterns between and among the categories. The memos were subsequently analyzed for the intersections they shared with existing urban studies and political science theoretical literature. Those connections and intersections were expanded upon to create the framework of the proposed theory underpinning the resiliency of Portland's independent food security network. Grounded theory's constant comparative method of analysis combines qualitative data collection, substantive coding processes, and systematic analysis to "generate theory that is integrated, close to the data, and expressed in a form clear enough for further testing" (Bowen, 2008; Vander Linden, 2023), the resulting conclusions are thus drawn from a substantive and rigorous process that achieved (at least in part) theoretical saturation within the resource and time constraints typical of a graduate thesis

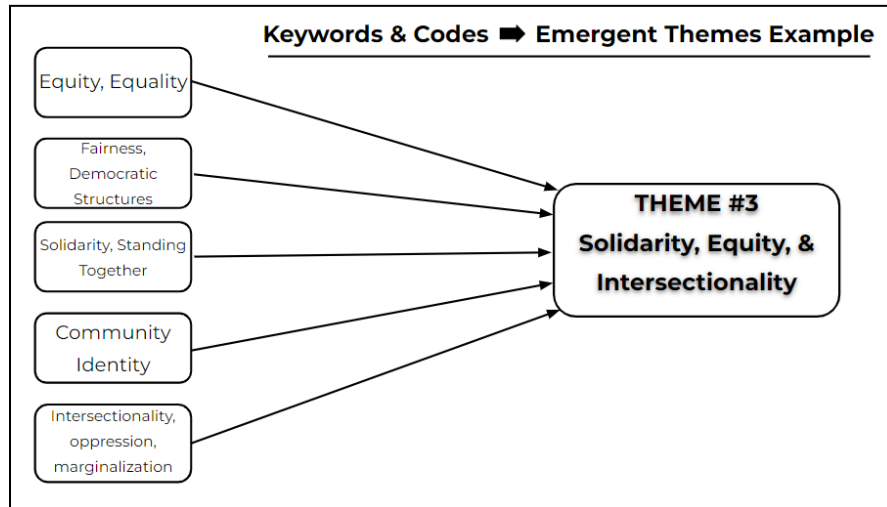project. The following diagram illustrates how keywords and coded phrases are grouped into emergent themes.

Figure 4 - *Keyword Codes and Emergent Themes Example*

Researcher Positionality & Limitations

In grounded theory and most qualitative study more generally, disclosing researcher positionality is essential to maintain research integrity and provide context to the motivations to carry out the work. Given the reality of limited objectivity in qualitative design, biases in sample selection, question structure, and other unintended shortcomings may persist. With those things in mind, this research study was designed and carried out by a mixed-race, cis-gender man who is a first generation public university student that works in urban food security and policy advocacy in Portland, OR. This research was done in acknowledgement of my intimate attachments to the cultural worlds I seek to shine an academic light upon. The potential bias in the sampling method combined with the resource limitations present the possibility of an "echo

chamber" type bias in the responses, though it also presents an opportunity to define the specific demographic or cultural subset from a greater aggregation. In an attempt to compensate for this issue within the means of the researcher's capacity, the subjects that were selected represent a substantially diverse population that includes a variety of backgrounds and experiences. By diversifying the small sample size to such a great extent the greatest generalizability of the conclusions can be substantiated, though it's not lost on the author that additional interviews would significantly strengthen - and potentially modify the findings of - any analysis or conclusions posed.

Section 4 - Findings & Discussion

Findings

Portland serves as a poignant example of how reactionary cultural movements have been adopted into and subsequently evolved the modern food security system. Historically known for its progressive values and countercultural ethos, Portland has long embraced counterculture movements that align with resistance to state oppression as integral parts of its social fabric, evidenced by the generations of punks, anarchists, feminists, hippies, hipsters, and the myriad other counter-culturalists who've gravitated to it over the last hundred years or so. These ideologies reject traditional philanthropic approaches to food security, recognizing them as perpetuating systemic injustices rather than addressing root causes. The Portland food security network reflects a synthesis of these response movements commonly bound by their commitment to community empowerment, equity, and resilience.

However, Portland's journey towards food justice has not been without challenges. State and corporate actors continue to wield absolute power and influence over *official* resource streams, imposing bureaucratic & regulatory barriers that restrict access to resources and operational activity, effectively hamstringing grassroots initiatives. Organizations like the Oregon Food Bank (OFB) exemplify the tensions between top-down approaches and community-driven solutions, highlighting the need for greater accountability and transparency within the food security sector. The Covid-19 pandemic has further

underscored the importance of resilient and adaptive food systems, prompting Portland's food security network to innovate and evolve in response to increased demand and shifting priorities. While temporary adaptations were necessitated by the crisis, many have become permanent fixtures, demonstrating the network's capacity for resilience and innovation in the face of adversity. By adopting and adapting the values central to liberal counterculture movements, Portland has positioned itself as a leader in the fight for food justice, offering valuable lessons for communities across the US striving to build more equitable and sustainable food systems that fight back against state and corporate food hegemony.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic served as a catalyst for organizational adaptation and innovation within the Portland food security network. While temporary adaptations were necessitated by the crisis, many have become permanent fixtures, leading to increased capacity, safety, and community engagement. Overall, the Portland food security network represents a departure from traditional dichotomous frameworks, embodying a "food punk" ethic characterized by a commitment to social justice, equality, and resistance to institutional oppression. By challenging existing paradigms and embracing innovative approaches, the Portland model expands our understanding of urban food security and offers valuable insights for future research and policy development.

The Portland "Foodpunk" Model

Portland is - at its core - a city that revels in its rough edges, and that has been true since its early days. Decades of political experimentation driven by arts and culture-focused urban communities has cultivated an environment where a collective indifference to social status-quos is woven into the social fabric of the city – in a word, Portland is punk and it always has been. The punk social identity, which underpins cultural and artistic movements like punk music, political visual art and "zines", and speculative literary movements Cyberpunk, Steampunk, and Solarpunk, is characterized by a set of values and attitudes that challenge mainstream norms and power structures. Each punk subculture often has a unique set of manifestations and interests, there are several common narratives that unite them. The independent sector of the Portland food network not only embodies similar sets of values to what has been established as 'punk', but also reflects similar material outcomes produced by the mechanics of socially-defined shared identities. Both the punk ethos and the independent food security network in Portland are structurally infused with anti-authoritarian and counter-hegemonic ideology, placing a great deal of value on social justice, equality, and resistance to institutional oppression.

Not only does Portland embody punk ideology and culture in a variety of manner, the product of that influence is an approach to urban food security that fails to fit within the existing food security dialectic. The results of this analysis challenge and expand our current theoretical understandings of urban food

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security dynamics. Looking at Portland and its longstanding history of charitable social values and political agitation, organizations representing both sides of the traditional food security framework exist and persist within PDX. However, the significance of the Portland model is in its pragmatic hybridization of charitable food security models, revolutionary models, and "punk" ideology that results in a resilient and adaptable food security network. Philanthropic models provide services while feeding back into institutional power and structural injustices; revolutionary models provide services while actively seeking to tear institutional power down. Portland *Foodpunks*, in contrast, provide food security to their local communities *despite* institutional power, by putting their mission, their values, and the relationships they've developed to achieve that mission above all other concerns.

Portland's independent food security network demonstrates how food security and social justice movements evolve and tailor themselves to persist under unique sets of conditions. Deemed "The Foodpunk Model, Portland's independent food security network transcends the philanthropy/revolutionary dichotomy by centering people and food in the mission and faltering to no boundary that obstructs that mission. It places importance on individuals and their needs, moving beyond being solely motivated by charity or justice. The following discussion will provide a bit more insight into the common themes found across interview responses, the thematic parallels with the Punk ethos, and how this unique blend of cultural influences has empowered Portland's independent food security movement to provide stable sources of nutrition even through a

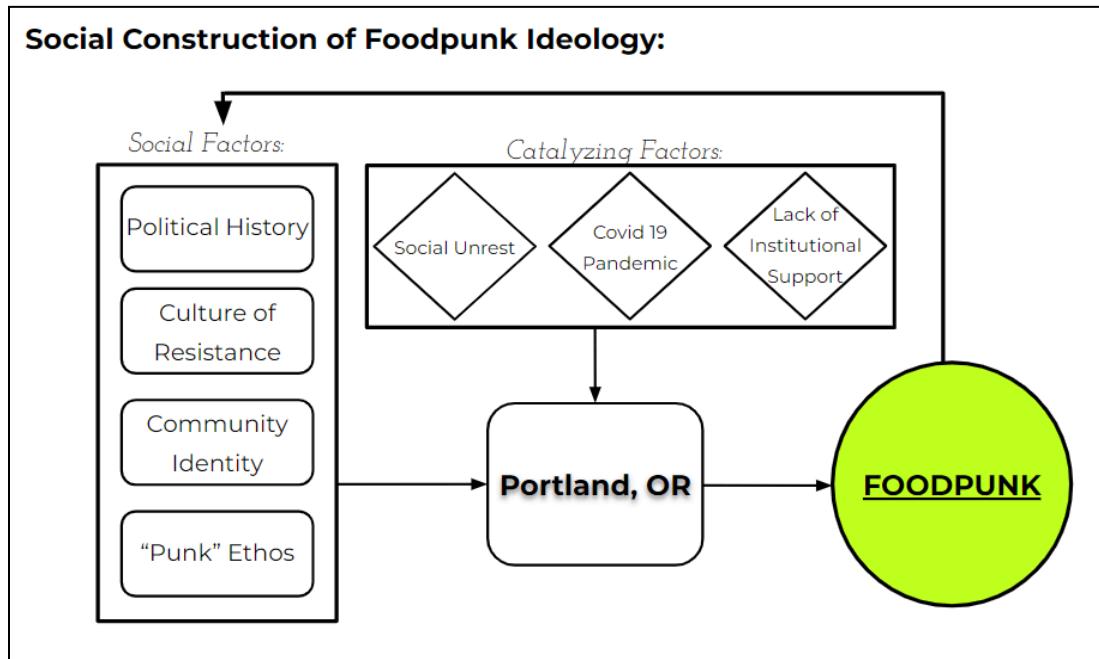global pandemic. The following diagram illustrates the proposed social construction of the Foodpunk model.

Figure 5 - *The Social Construction of Foodpunk Ideology*

Portland Before & After Covid

The COVID-19 pandemic serves as a catalyst for organizational adaptation and innovation. Food insecurity spiked during the global pandemic and previous gains were lost. Despite the sudden exponential increase in demand, food security organizations overcame a gauntlet of regulatory barriers and lack of institutional support to meet that need. Further, a common issue discussed was that many recipients of food services also struggle with a broader variety of financial, health, and other social issues that are not being addressed and end up spilling over onto these organizations that are not prepared or

resources to respond to them. This demonstrates the anarchist political theory of dual power as well as the interconnectivity of oppression under poverty. Despite the ultimate stress test, Portland's food security network demonstrated a variety of resilient adaptations, doubling down on their commitment to serving the community in a time of crisis. The veil of government competence has been lifted throughout the pandemic experience and that has driven many new people to social welfare activism. The community now comes first in their mind. The necessity of community outweighs personal interest to a far greater degree than existed before.

Because of factors like rapid consumer inflation, the drawback of increased pandemic-era SNAP benefits, and increased awareness of food security organizing, demand on Portland's independent food security organizations has but marginally decreased, failing to return to pre-pandemic levels. This has led to a permanent adoption of adaptations originally necessitated by the pandemic spike. Reasons provided by interviewees include the cessation of government cash payments and expanded food benefits, increased post-covid unemployment, increased knowledge of food security services, wage stagnation amid severe inflation, and general fallout from the impacts of covid lockdowns on society and the economy.

In a bittersweet turn of events, many of the pandemic-era adaptations ended up as permanent modes of operation because they proved beneficial regardless of whether pandemic conditions persisted or not. It's true that

trade-offs were typical and had to be thoughtfully considered and balanced, e.g.,

orgs increased service capacity and safety by creating drive-thru food dispersal

systems in exchange loss of choice and community interaction. Across the food

security network existing relationships emboldened while new partnerships

proliferated from grassroots activists to commercial food sources. The intense

need associated with the covid lockdown period resulted in an improved financial

landscape, increases in food resources and dispersal methods, and decreases in

waste for independent food actors in Portland.

Discussion

The interviews provided a range of thematic patterns that both align with

established bodies of social theory, while at the same time, define Portland's food

security network as distinct from the classic food security dichotomy. Like the

ideologies and movements highlighted in the earlier section of this article, the

final themes presented here contain a significant degree of supporting

interconnectivity and intersectionality in relation to one another. The four key

themes distilled from the interviews begin with the interconnectivity between food

rescue, redistribution, and sustainability, which addresses immediate food needs

by means that support broader environmental goals and socio-ecological

sustainability. Community self-determinism, dignity, and autonomy emerge as

guiding principles, reflecting a commitment to empowering individuals and

communities. Intersectionality and equity are central themes, highlighting the

importance of dismantling oppressive systems and prioritizing marginalized

communities in the work that they do, actively seeking to not repeat the same mistakes that drive food insecurity to begin with. Grassroots organizing and the critique of existing food security structures play a crucial role in shaping the Portland model, with individuals and organizations advocating for systemic change and challenging power dynamics.

However, governmental and organizational obstacles pose significant challenges to the effective operation of food security initiatives in Portland, leading to a reevaluation of traditional approaches and the adoption of innovative strategies. Shared among the discussed ideologies and the thematic patterns of the interview responses is a refutation of authoritarianism in all its forms, whether it be government control, corporate dominance, or societal norms that oppress or constrain individuals. The following themes represent not only repeating patterns among the interviewees, but the values that underlie those patterns and drive the resulting responses.

Theme #1: Food Rescue, Redistribution & Sustainability

Drawing on a few of the most common emergent sub-themes, a strong emphasis was identified on rescuing food that would otherwise go to waste and redistributing it to those in need. Reflecting a shared commitment to reducing food waste and addressing food insecurity, the interviewees consistently described their indifference to the barriers they face getting food to their communities. No existing fences, locks, security guards, nor rule or law will stop

the Portland food rescuers. In several responses, a gamified attitude towards

food rescue was alluded to in a playful acknowledgement of the risks their tactics

present. Those barriers are often seen as puzzles to solve, or challenges to

overcome more-so than any type of true deterrent to liberating wasted food.

"*I'm not about to watch a pallet full of food get dumped into the trash because a grocery store needs to make space.*" and "*The food isn't even bad, it's just not selling fast enough so they throw it away, it's insanity!*" were a few of the responses that were echoed over.

And that's not to say that all food and resource acquisition in Portland is

adversarial. Quite to the contrary, the interviewees report going to great lengths

to foster connections with both local and commercial food sources, seeking

partnerships with small independent food operations as well as institutional

actors. Working with institutions may sound contradictory to the punk ethos but

Portland Foodpunks value pragmatism and understand how to maintain strict

boundaries that distance them from any critical dependence on corporations or

governmental support. Most commonly, respondents reported that the most

effective partnerships they engaged in tended to be the ones developed between

themselves and fellow mutual aid groups or similarly positioned food security

organizers. In other words, the most effective collaboration took place between

groups of Foodpunk oriented organizations.

"*I'm no different than they are if I let something go to waste because I'm hung up on some principal. Sometimes you just have to do what you have to do to feed people, and I feel like we've struck a pretty good balance with our*

commercial partners... We would just go somewhere else if they were to ask us for things outside our comfort zone. It wouldn't be the first time or the last."

"*I don't really care who I have to schmooze or what I have to say to get the food, getting the food is what matters. I'll happily make up paperwork or food reports or whatever, it's all just table-dressing anyways, nobody really checks that stuff.*"

The "food-rescue" approach has been praised for its multifaceted benefits, feeding people while also addressing the environmental implications of food waste and aligning food security efforts with broader environmental goals. Interviewees commonly acknowledged that saving a meal from the trash isn't just about providing one meal or feeding one person. It involves justifying all the input resources used to create, store, and transport that food, ensuring meals for those facing intersectional oppression, diverting organic resources back into their natural cycles, and responsibly dealing with the packaging and waste products.

"*Throwing away a box of packaged salads throws away all the natural resources, labor, fuel, and everything else that went into making this. It's packaged in plastic that's going to last a million years… all because they didn't sell fast enough. It makes me angry.*"

"*Throwaway products make a throwaway society. Throwaway society means throwaway people, and that's not something I'm willing to let happen in my community. I'll stop it one dumpster at a time if that's what it takes.*"

Additionally, food rescue offers the personal satisfaction of reclaiming a small measure of control from institutions that perpetuate violence through the control of sustenance. Similar to the dumpster divers and other radical food

rescuers discussed earlier, Portland interviewees report a largely favorable public outlook on their work - with some exception. There were even cases reported about public support pressuring institutional actors to reconsider their handling of food waste, leading to more socially and environmentally beneficial practices in collaboration with the local food security network.

Portland Foodpunks understand that they cannot make a sustainable world on their own, but they do see their work as moving Portland towards something closer-resembling a sustainable city. They do not see food security as a service to be utilized only in an emergency; instead, the common outlook is more aligned with empowering individuals to have more control of their precious few resources by reducing food-based financial burdens for anyone that could better utilize their income on other priorities. Any reduction in personal burden is an increase in autonomy and control; a benefit that multiplies when those needs can be fulfilled by what would otherwise be wasted at the expense of the producer. Their views on sustainable food systems largely reflect the ideology of the food sovereignty movement, advocating for a replacement of commodified food systems with agro-ecological type food economies supplemented through local production via community gardens, food commons, and other urban agriculture formats.

"Every meal we recover is a small win for us against the massive broken system we are trying to repair."

"Fresh food should be readily available for everyone at little to no cost. It should be growing on every building top and every yard and every city park and

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really just everywhere. The world will be a really different place when food is no longer a question for anyone."

"*We have so much green space and wasted potential in this city. We are blessed with a climate where we can basically grow anything and we really ought to be.*"

Theme #2: Community Self-Determinism, Dignity, & Autonomy

Another set of interconnected ideas commonly described in the interviews

described a strong interest in reducing stigma and the feeling of dependence for

food security seekers in the community. The interconnectivity between

self-deterministic, dignity, and autonomy-focused responses led these to be

grouped together into a cohesive theme. By deploying methods that reframe the

relationship between food and consumers, Portland Foodpunks provide nutrition

to their community, regardless of any individual's circumstances, without

stigmatizing their patrons and stripping them of their privacy.

"*It's not charity to the hungry when we treat food as a human right. We want to change the conversation from a person 'in need' to a person eating because they deserve to.*"

"*I have an 80 year old mother, a disabled sister, and a 5 year old child that I want to share a better world with. That means leading by example and teaching my kids how to build their community through acts of kindness.*"

In addition to trying to reduce stigma by reframing the community's

relationship to food and food security, they also help folks retain their autonomy

and privacy by not requiring any kind of personal information reporting in

exchange for services. In the words of one organizer…

"We do not ask questions. Not one. We don't wanna increase barriers to accessing food by asking stupid questions about proof of poverty, or income, or any of that sort of thing…"

"It's not charity, we facilitate free grocery stores because there is an abundance of food and no reason it shouldn't be eaten by people who want to eat it."

By reducing barriers to food access, the concurrent practices are supported resulting in a synergistic impact on community food security. For most of the organizations that were interviewed, if you need food, you get food. A lack of identification, information sharing, sobriety, or any other impediments the more moralistic sectors of the foodsec deem necessary for someone to get fed. There's a shared commitment to providing food with dignity and respect, recognizing the inherent worth and agency of individuals accessing food assistance. Food systems under institutional control are seen as an offensive injustice to Portland food security workers.

"I refuse to work within a system of human value ranked on a scale of ability to produce labor or money… And on the flip side of that, nobody should be more or less valued based on their degree of need."

Interviewees unanimously expressed a desire to uplift their communities through access to quality food. It was expressed -nearly unprompted - in every single interview. Portland Foodpunks see food as a means to build stronger community bonds and improve overall well-being.

"People and communities should be empowered by food, not burdened by it."

"If everyone in my neighborhood didn't have a monthly food bill, I'd love to see what that would allow them to do or how much collective stress that would take off all those people. Even the ones that can afford it without any issue. We all deserve the freedom of food security."

Their experiences providing food for communities in need have led them to revere movements like food sovereignty or agroecology and their underlying value system. It's a nearly universal motivating ideology that their work must be moving our community towards food sovereignty goals or they feel that they are failing in their mission. Contrary to the classic dichotomy of meeting needs or entirely revolutionizing the social food structure, Portland puts the people first, centering community empowerment through organized support and mutual aid.

"Our organization is based on mutual-aid and structured to promote food sovereignty."

"I mean, I love the work I do but I would love to not have to do it… or to live in a world where I could feed people by choice, not so that I, myself can survive."

Theme #3: Solidarity, Equity, & Intersectionality

Like the first two themes, the third theme is constructed of several interconnected sub-themes that emerged together through repeated invocation of them in concert with one another. Interviewees highlighted the intersectional nature of food insecurity and how they structure their work to increase equitable access to food resources. A strong desire persists to dismantle oppressive systems and prioritize marginalized communities, giving people a sense of

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solidarity between food security providers and their patrons. Organizations and individuals alike work outside of socially constructed class restraints to address food insecurity and support vulnerable populations.

> *"I'm much closer to being homeless than I am to buying a house, so who am I to judge anyone else in my community? In Portland, food insecure people feed food insecure people."*

> *"I'm not going to judge anyone for wanting food. Life is tough right now and most of us are only one small crisis away from being out on the street ourselves. If I wasn't able to feed myself through the organization, I'd be even closer."*

Increasing equity for all community members is another highly valued ideal that came up consistently throughout the conversations. In ten interviews, the word "equity" was mentioned several hundred times, making it one of the most commonly stated words in the entire study process. Equity for Foodpunks means doing everything we can to meet people where they are regardless of their situation.To them, that means delivering food to people that can't transport it themselves or cannot leave their location for some reason. It means expanding their reach and cultural knowledge, not creating arbitrary limitations to feeding people, and empowering them with access and knowledge to help provide for themselves in more self-sufficient ways, thus reducing the demand for food security and helping to move Portland towards food sovereignty.

> *"Everyone should have an equal right to food… and not just what we have to give them. They deserve fresh, nutritious, culturally appropriate food."*

"Our services require no qualifiers. If people want to eat, we will give them food."

Intersectionality, as we have discussed, can cut in both directions. Benefit "stacking" was repeatedly alluded to in the responses. Stacking provides efficient responses to multiple forms of oppression or addresses many barriers at once, and allows for Foodpunks to make an outsized impact with limited resources. The tougher angle to square is that many folks facing intersectional oppression require more support than most independent food security organizations can provide. There is a sect of service recipients that are experiencing things like food insecurity as a result of greater issues with mental or physical health which cannot be overcome by simply offering them food. Interviewees are largely empathetic towards these situations but are ill equipped to respond, leaving them stuck in a scenario where they become a "band aid" on a wound that requires professional medical care, quite literally at times. These more complex issues require structural changes that the Portland Food network cannot address on their own, and while they are fully aware of…even lamenting these conditions, they also refuse to be swayed in their commitment to do everything in their power to respond anyways.

"Our organization runs on a shoestring budget, but that really just means that all of our focus is on doing things that are effective on multiple fronts."

"The last thing we want is to try to make things better for people at the cost of these people in other ways, and I think we've mostly figured out how to accomplish that with our operational structure."

Theme #4: Grassroots Organizing & Critique of Existing Food Security Structures

Community centered organizing plays a crucial role in Portland's local food security initiatives, with individuals dedicating significant time and energy to support their communities. Respondents felt that grassroots efforts are powerful mechanisms for effecting change. Many see food security as intertwined with broader poverty and social justice issues, advocating for greater systemic change and a fundamental shift in power dynamics that perpetuate inequities. One of the most unanimous agreements across all the interviews was their strong critiques of existing food distribution systems, particularly regarding their inefficiencies, inequities, and predatory practices that extend beyond the commercial realm and into the larger-scale nonprofit food security actors and governmental programs. Organizations and individuals alike express frustration with bureaucratic hurdles and systemic barriers imposed by the state and state-sanctioned organizations that interviewees see as more performative than effective, yet that's what ends up securing government and foundation grant funding. They believe that optics outweighed action when it comes to acquiring traditional forms of financial support. It should be mentioned that a lack of institutional support would be a recurring theme if not for the fact that most of the interview responses treat that as an expectation or a given", more so than any kind of new or pressing information.

"*We know much isn't going to change as it is, so we're pretty much just holding out until capitalism breaks down enough for people to really start abandoning it. It's not great but I do think Covid helped kickstart that process for a lot of us.*"

"*I'd never thought of food security before Covid, but it is now my permanent foreseeable life. First year of Covid, I started a food pantry on my porch. By year two I had a box-truck on 'free loan'... and was driving entire loads from Portland to supply [small towns] as far as rural Nevada, where food banks don't exist. Mutual aid is what fed those people, not government agencies.*"

"*The work I do is entirely rooted in supporting this community and developing a more honest sense of place for everyone in it.*"

The Oregon Food Bank (OFB) is a non-profit food security organization that coordinates the distribution of foodstuffs and financial support throughout greater Oregon. Respondents, both partners and independents, unanimously describe OFB as leveraging their monopoly on state and corporate grant funding to force foodsec actors in Oregon under their control. Despite having no actual regulatory power bestowed upon them by the state, Portland's foodsec orgs describe OFB as an enforcement agency that has no accountability to the smaller food orgs in the state, and often use predatory tactics and defacto reductions of support to leverage regulatory compliance. In essence, the Portland Foodpunks see the OFB - the largest and most well-funded food security nonprofit in Oregon - as weaponizing human hunger against grassroots food security organizations as an enforcement mechanism for laws they don't have the authority to enforce. This all takes place under the veneer of avoiding "legal liabilities." According to the OFB, the "equitably distribute food and financial

support to their partners across the state," yet interviewees consistently report them picking and choosing winners and losers; all while using hungry Oregonians as collateral.

"They literally pick winners and losers. [OFB] overstocks their chosen distribution partners beyond their ability to store [the food], so those places end up giving it away in bulk to anyone who will take it, while at the same time [OFB] is providing nothing to other partners or even making them buy the food."

"[OFB] pushes their labor costs onto small volunteer-based organizations like our's while using our reporting to get millions of dollars in state and gov and private grants. It feels like they're stealing from us."

"They [OFB] offer no guaranteed level of support for the organizations who do jump through their hoops. It really just comes down to whether they like us or not. It doesn't make any sense."

Respondents feel that institutional actors like the state government and OFB - as they are currently situated - are greater obstacles than benefits to food security work in Portland. That did not improve due to covid. There is no official food governance body at the city or state level, creating a power vacuum that OFB ends up filling with the financial support of the USDA and Feeding America. Relations with partners are reported to be burdensome and often abusive, where the benefits of volunteer organizations generate financial and public support that does not get redistributed to said orgs. Gatekeeping the financial support flows creates a very unstable "feast or famine" environment for organizations depending on that support, leading many to abandon those relationships entirely and working more subversively outside of the institutional lanes.

"I realized the limiting factor to a food sovereign world is capitalism. Average working people don't even have time to cook for themselves, how are they supposed to have any control over their own food?"

"OFB is a bully big brother. Our relationship became strained, so [our] leadership outright refuses to partner with them now. We've found ways to work around them.."

"They just keep asking for more and more to meet compliance and offer nothing substantial in return. The one time we pushed back on them, we got audited within days and then audited by the Oregon Health Department the very next week. We had never been audited outside of our licensing renewals before we spoke up."

Section 5 - Conclusions

As they abandon top-down approaches and advance community-driven solutions, Portland Foodpunk organizations have begun to adopt alternative models of food procurement and distribution that break from the rank and file of the current state/non-profit relationship structures. Portland's independent food security network is responding to food system corporatization by creating horizontally structured organizations that directly source their food, working outside of traditional institutional systems. By deploying various forms of rescue tactics, innovative partnership development processes, and at times working outside the strict rule of law, Portland food security organizers challenge traditional charity paradigms and demonstrate a successful alternative to ensuring basic food security.

Portland's independent foodsec network embodies core values of punk culture and subsequent movements, earning it the moniker "Foodpunk." Portland's commitment to becoming a food just city mirrors the punk values of anti-capitalism, anti-fascism, anti-racism, and community connection among others. Such principles are deeply entangled in both the words and actions of local food security actors.

Foodpunk's evolutionary tract aligns itself within Portland's long standing history of punk ideology - and socially progressive identity-based movements more generally. Going even further back, Oregon as a whole is largely adherent to a libertarian influenced political identity that promotes self sufficiency and

anti-authoritarian community values, making it ripe for the adoption of a social-libertarian cultural identity like anarchism or the punk movements. The overlap between these ideologies contributes to independent organizations' ability to adapt and survive with little formal support. Much of the city's food organizers adopted these types values amid the onset of Covid, generating a ground swell of community support that jump-started material support streams before adaptations were adopted. Portlanders saw an opportunity to assume their right to their city and they acted on it.

This study set out to better understand how small-scale, independent food security organizations and individuals adapted to provide food under conditions of extended social unrest and the Covid-19 pandemic, despite repeated claims of inadequate institutional support. Further, it sought to understand the experiences of the people carrying out that work in an attempt to determine if unifying themes could be identified to uncover an explanatory shared narrative of space and place. What resulted is a glimpse into a set of subcultures and their underlying mechanics that have melded together into a powerful group ideology; the result of which ultimately led to the provision of hundreds of thousands of meals to hungry Oregonians. The Portland independent food security network embodies a Foodpunk ethic characterized by a commitment to social justice, equality, and resistance to institutional oppression. This shared narrative drives action, policy, and urban dynamics, reflecting a set of values collectively attributed to punk culture.

What this thesis has deemed "Foodpunk" is a shared ideology that helps fuel much of Portland's smaller food organization. This impacts how they form, operate, and adapt to challenges. These ideologically driven operational design elements ultimately prepared Foodpunk organizations to survive throughout the pandemic - including the extended period of social unrest leading up to it. The responses from independent food security orgs espoused a number of commonalities with punk's attitudes towards food, particularly when it comes to community empowerment-focused organizing principles and an anti-corporatist views regarding who controls the calories. In both punk ideology and Portland food security organizing, institutional power structures are seen as the cause of the problem, not the solution.

At the heart of Foodpunk and greater punk ideologies in general lie sets of values that require behavior and tactical approaches to the world that continuously represent and reinforce them. The self reinforcing act of embodying punk values is the fundamental core value of this ideology; that is what makes Portland's foodsec punk, and that is what makes punk - *punk*. In short, Philanthropic models provide a social service while supporting the institutional power that created and perpetuated the problem; revolutionaries provide services while attempting to tear that power structure down; Portland Foodpunks provide services *despite* institutional power by putting their mission, their values, and the people in their communities above all other concerns.

The observable results of this shared value system are significant. Despite

the varied nature of the organizations, a consistent pattern of advocacy and impact emerges. It not only shapes local policy but also influences urban dynamics, demonstrating the powerful role of collective action rooted in a common ideology. Drawing a parallel to the Solarpunk movement, Portland's food ideology operates similarly with respect to their speculative ideological natures. Collective narratives around food security in Portland drive positive change by fostering a sense of community and shared purpose.

Despite the extreme stress test that the covid era presented, institutional support was not a make or break factor over the course of the pandemic for this sect of organizations because they already operate with little or contentious support from large bodies like state and federal government agencies, Oregon Food Bank, and Feeding America. Because of that history, the primary challenges presented by Covid centered around the logistics and scaling required to meet rapidly increasing food needs; not so much from a lack of food. Both partners and non-partner interviewees reported OFB to be a greater barrier than support, though that was the case long before any pandemics loomed. A lack of material support is the existing status quo, even for those willing to endure the burdens associated with maintaining OFB "partner" status, so much of the dependence that may be expected is already being preempted at all times. For these reasons, the OFB is seen as largely antithetical to food security and food autonomy because it is indistinguishable from a government agency or a corporate entity in how they operate and how they wield power.

By harnessing the immediate wave of local community support, Portland's independent foodsec orgs adapted quickly to severe increases in food insecurity in a landscape of resource instability. Ultimately, many of the tactics that were developed and adopted have become permanent modes of operation, as post-covid food insecurity rates are still very high. Through the community partnerships that had in-part already existed, but were expanded and galvanized in response to Covid, Portland food security orgs rapidly developed the operational framework to provide and continue providing community support at near-pandemic levels regardless of whether OFB or the state supports them in any material way. Many of those organizations actually report that they would better serve their communities without the additional barriers placed on them by regulations and by self-interjections from the OFB.

The Foodpunk mode of operation is largely informed by structural anarchism and libertarian socialism, although it deviates notably in balancing pragmatism with strict ideology. Anarchists maintain stringent revolutionary intentions and end goals, constraining their tactics significantly. Portland Foodpunks share similar objectives, albeit on a smaller, more community-driven and subversive scale, seeking resilience to withstand the oppressive system rather than wholly rewriting it. A subdued pessimism towards systemic change persists, leading to a focus on thriving despite the system's burdens, a goal they have largely achieved.

The state operates under a structure that permits grassroots organizations to provide social benefits, which should be the state's responsibility. However, once these organizations begin to challenge the state's dominance, the state employs its monopoly on violence to suppress any perceived threats. This well-documented concept, known as an execution of dual power, is a classic social suppression tactic. The state allows these organizations to expend themselves and what little resources they have in an effort to reduce the burdens of poverty; all the while co-opting that work as their own to further their own financial security, regulatory power, and public image. It's carried out to maintain state power monopolies at the expense of community organizing, not because the government or their partners are in a position of resource scarcity. In response to questioning or challenging that power structure independent organizations can expect to be "punished."

From an urban policy development perspective, the pressing need for redress lies in the abusive dynamic between small independent food security providers and the institutional bodies meant to support them. It is imperative that policy, and perhaps more crucially, its enforcement, ensures equitable support for these individuals and organizations in their food security endeavors. Material support should be mandated to be fairly provided by institutional bodies tasked with food security, such as Oregon Food bank, Feeding America, and the ODA/USDA. Legal and policy mechanisms must be established to hold accountable those who control resource allocation, imposing real repercussions for those in power and providing genuine protections for those in need. If the

future of urban food policy hopes to offer a more equitable food landscape, it must reevaluate land use policies, promote equitable access to resources, and foster self-sufficiency through initiatives that reconnect communities to land and indigenous food practices.

This research demonstrates how independent food security organizations adapt to surmount barriers and sustain their communities. Shared community narratives contribute to collective identities, profoundly influencing urban operations and crisis responses. Identities promoting community empowerment and self-reliance reshape a community's interactions with social dynamics, fostering enduring, sustainable modes of urban development. The normalization of operating on the fringes has equipped social welfare groups to navigate the pandemic's challenges, as they were accustomed to functioning with minimal support. COVID-19 served as a stress test, prompting both temporary and permanent adaptations. Despite obstacles and scant government assistance, organizations responded to the pandemic's demands, fulfilling needs as they arose.

These findings present a nuanced expansion of the prevailing food security dichotomy. Broadening this research model to encompass more organizations in Portland and beyond could contribute to a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of contemporary urban food security frameworks. Facilitating mutual exchange of ideas, both locally and across diverse geographic and political contexts, has the potential to catalyze further adaptations and

advancements in urban food security models, facilitating the development of robust modern systems and the formulation of relevant policy structures to sustain them. A parallel investigation into the institutional realm would offer valuable insight from within the institutional apparatus, although such an endeavor is hindered by bureaucratic obstacles, public relations maneuvers, self-serving narratives, and the complexity of large institutions. Achieving a comprehensive understanding would necessitate a holistic approach, which may prove elusive given the aforementioned challenges. The Foodpunk model exemplifies an implicit embrace of urban spatial dynamics as elucidated by Henri LeFebvre and David Harvey's "The Right to the City" framework, underscoring the model's integration into urban landscapes and the theoretical underpinnings supporting it.

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Appendix A - Interview Script & Prompts

"I'd like to start by thanking you for your time and willingness to participate in this research study pertaining to your personal experiences working within the food security system over the Covid-19 pandemic. My name is Nickolas Hash and I am a graduate student at PSU - working under the guidance of my advisor Dr. Megan Horst - and I am conducting this research to better understand the relationships between people/organizations working to provide food security and the state & governmental power apparatus(es) that they work within. With respect to providing full transparency, I will also disclose that this research is taking place as part of thesis requirements necessary to complete my graduate program. This is a recorded open-ended interview consisting of around 20 questions. It should take approximately 45-60 minutes and you may respond to the questions in any way you want (including refusal). We will defer to the full consent agreement for any questions or clarity on privacy and protection matters, but just as a quick reminder: this interview is fully voluntary and you have the right to discontinue your participation at any time, refuse to respond to any questions within, and have any data collected from you removed from the study at any time without any kind of repercussions or consequences in any way. Any and all information you provide will be treated as confidential and held in private by only myself on a secure digital drive. Any and all information provided will be privatized and encoded with pseudonyms in order to further protect your privacy and to prevent anything you share from creating any kind of consequences from doing so. If you consent to this process and these procedures, we may proceed with the interview."

1. **Personal work & organizational structure.** *Describe yourself and your work.*

    a. Are you speaking today on behalf of yourself and your own experience or representing an organization?

    b. **Organizations:**

        i. Is the organization registered in some way such as 501c3 (non-profit) or 501c4 (political advocacy) or some other official designation like that?

ii. When did you start doing this work? Did you organize in response to Covid19 conditions? *(Feel free to share any history on the organization or how it came to exist and why.)*

iii. How does the organization make decisions? Is someone in charge *(hierarchical)* or is it more of a collective and/or democratic process *(horizontal)*?

iv. Where do your food products or supplies come from? Are they bought or donated or provided in some other way?

v. Does the organization pay workers, all volunteer based, or some of both? *(Please explain, if willing.)*

vi. What are the sources of the organization's financial base? *(Governmental grants, foundation grants, donations, etc…)*

vii. Is the organization independent or an extension of an existing network or organization, such as a church, religious entity, or some type of official agency?

viii. Is the organization still operating and do they intend to continue operating long term? What changes have been or will be adopted *(compared with operating under Covid19 conditions)* in order for the organization to do so?

ix. If the organization already existed and did not organize in response to Covid19, what are some major changes in how you operated once Covid19 became the operational reality in early 2020?

x. What is your organization's greatest success in light of operating during Covid19 and what experiences or lessons *(if any)* will guide your work going forward?

c. **Personal Experiences:**

i. Do you work independently, as part of a network, and/or as part of a food security organization of some type?

ii. Do you have an "official" role or title? *(e.g. volunteer, delivery driver, manager, organizer, etc..)*

    iii.   What would you describe as your role in food security type work, and what does your work involve?

    iv.   How much time do you spend doing this type of work? Is it full time, part time, etc?

    v.   Did you begin this work in response to Covid19 or are there other reasons? *(Feel free to describe how you got into food security work and what drives you to continue)*

    vi.   Did the conditions, limitations, opportunities, etc. of your work change due to the onset of Covid19?

    vii.   Have the conditions changed more recently as society has gone back to "business as usual?"

    viii.   Are there now significant post-covid changes in how you interact with this work that will *(likely)* be permanent adaptations?

2. **Personal and/or organizational guiding principles**. *The intentional or stated principled stance such as some political, ethical, or moral imperative that structures, constrains, and/or liberates in some way the work you do.*

    a. What is your mission or goal of your work, or that of the organization?

    b. What is that stance(s) and how does it guide the work you and/or the organization does?

    c. If not, do you mind sharing your reasoning, or do you know if there is any reasoning behind that decision for the organization?

    d. How did you and/or the organization come to the decision of organizing and working under these guiding principles?

    e. Have you come up against any social, political, or legal barriers in response to the organization's ethical/political stances or the work it

carries out under them?

3. **Personal or organizational stance on policy, regulation, and governmental actors.**

    a. Will you describe your and/or the organization's relationship or interactions *(if any)* with governmental actors, *(local, state, and/or federal)*.

    b. Will you describe your and/or the organization's relationship or interactions with larger organizations and governmental partners *(if any)* tasked with food security *(such as The Oregon Food Bank and similar organizations)*?

    c. How would you describe the type(s) and amount(s) of support you receive (if any) from governmental agencies?

    d. What (if any) licenses, registrations, and or operating policies are you subject to complying with or maintaining? Are there costs associated with doing so?

    e. Are there any major barriers you see as preventing your work with respect to state agencies, regulatory regimes, or existing policies? *(Feel free to describe the issue as well as your experiences and/or opinions on how to reduce those barriers)*

    f. Do you and/or the organization comply with all relevant state and federal regulations pertaining to your organization or its work? What is the rationale behind doing so or not doing so?

    g. In practice, do you and/or the organization prioritize the mission of feeding people over the risk of running afoul of legal measures that may obstruct it?

        i. If yes, what does that look like in practice? What kind of repercussions *(if any)* have you had to deal with due to this and how did you deal with those situations?

        ii. If not, please feel free to expand on anything not covered in the questions above.

4. **Final thoughts…**

a. Given the subject matter we've discussed in the questions above, is there anything you feel wasn't fully covered that you feel is important to include?
(This could include personal experiences, stories from other individuals, personal opinions, concerns, rants, griefs, celebrations, lessons learned, etc.)