Talking Trash: Oral Histories of Food In/Security from the Margins of a Dumpster

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in American Studies and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date Defended: Friday, December 2, 2011

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Date approved: December, 2, 2011

Abstract

This dissertation explores oral histories with dumpster divers of varying food security levels. The project draws from 15 oral history interviews selected from an 18-interview collection conducted between Spring 2008 and Summer 2010. Interviewees self-identified as divers; varied in economic, gender, sexual, and ethnic identity; and ranged in age from 18-64 years. To supplement this modest number of interviews, I also conducted 52 surveys in Summer 2010. I interview divers as theorists in their own right, and engage the specific ways in which the divers identify and construct their food choice actions in terms of individual food security and broader ecological implications of trash both as a food source and as an international residue of production, trade, consumption, and waste policy. This research raises inquiries into the gender, racial, and class dynamics of food policy, informal food economies, common pool resource usage, and embodied histories of public health and sanitation.

Topically, the chapters build from **Chapter 1**: "Dumpstering the American Way of Life"--a theoretical analysis of the space of the dumpster and its social and legally stigmatized margins framed within questions of ideal citizenship and consumption. **Chapter 2**: "Situating Food in the Dumpster" explores the possibilities of (re)imagining the dumpster-as-food-source within contexts of food in/security. **Chapter 3**: "On Twinkies, Chickpeas, and the 'Real' Food Paradigm" is an examination of the contemporary re-visitation and application of modernist food discourses as a means of constructing alternative food paradigms in the present. I trace a particularly gendered modernist history through to contemporary food movement literature constructing 'good' food and 'real' food including works by chef-activists and scholars such as Alice Waters, Michael Pollan, Carlo Petrini, Jamie Oliver, and Marion Nestle. **Chapter 4**: "Tackling Informality: The Dumpster as Public Health Threat" engages turn-of-the-century food specific public health measures in relation to a 'politics of clean' as it applies to the dumpster and extends to mechanisms of State control over other exemplary informal street food economies. By overlapping the oral narratives with research about food and waste policies, practices, and literature, I build an overall hypothesis. I begin by arguing that the interviews show there are broad spectrums of divers and diving narratives. Each chapter discusses varying diver experiences in relation to intertwined food, trash, and health related policies and paradigms in an attempt to thicken understandings of the dumpster and garbage as transnational material residue, as food source, and as a form of commons space.

Acknowledgements

There are so many people, too numerous to mention in totality, that I need thank for guidance and support over the course of this project. I here mention just a few, and extend silent appreciation to so many more.

I am especially grateful to my adviser and dissertation committee member mentors Dr. Sherrie Tucker--in whose 2008 American Studies Oral History Seminar this project was dreamed up in the first place--and Drs. Tanya Hart, Sheyda Jahanbani, and Phaedra Pezzullo, for years of advice, written commentary, and thoughtful feedback during exams and defenses. Thanks must also go to Dr. Ann Schofield for her thoughtful questions and comments during the final dissertation defense, and for her support and words of wisdom to a newbie in American Studies way back in 2007. You have all been incredible examples and mentors to me. Many, many thanks.

I extend my gratitude to the University of Kansas Hall Center for the Humanities, and Office of Research and Graduate Studies for crucial research funding that helped me to complete this research, as well as to attend conferences of particular import in my fields of inquiry. I am also thankful for the wonderful opportunity to participate in the 2010-11 Hall Center Graduate Student Research Colloquium, generating an atmosphere of research support and inquiry invaluable to my research process.

My sincere appreciation to the faculty and student editors at the University of Kansas American Studies Journal, who offered two years of professional training and steady work during my first years back in gradate school after a work hiatus.

Thanks to Dr. Elizabeth Yeager who has been a friend, confidant, and utterly irreplaceable writing partner and comrade in dissertation-ness; not to mention exams, defenses, teaching, and other related dynamics of this life in the academy. How could I have finished this without your support and your friendship?

Thank you to numerous friends including: Madden, who listened patiently and hardly batted an eyelid as I raved about garbage, food politics and global flows. Thanks to Bob, my first friend in Kansas, for thousands of cups of tea and coffee, bowls upon bowls of heartening noodles, and friendly banter about food and agriculture in the US. Thanks to Jelks for being such a wonderful friend with a true knack for critical inquiry, banter, wit, and loads of laughter especially throughout early coursework at KU. Thank you to Keith for being a persistent researcher in his own right, who never failed to email me thoughtful materials, ask insightful questions, and cheer me on to boot! Thanks to Jessi Mellowfields, for answering my telephone calls in the first pace, for listening to me, schooling me in the ways of small-scale agriculture, and generally keeping me on track to completion!

To my parents and to my sister who have all encouraged, chided and cheered me on to be a writer from the time I was…well, for a long, long time. Your influence sits at the heart of this project.

To Lentil, for getting into a car and driving hundreds of miles to a strange new land called Kansas; for listening, debating, outlining, printing, scanning, reassuring, re-confirming, and arguing with me all over again as I wrestled the fragments of thought and tidbits of information that collided to become this project. You are my truest friend, confidant, and so much more.

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I came back with, like, a backpack full of trash food and I put it on the table, and everyone was asleep and my dad heard me coming in and he was like, 'oh, you went shopping?' and I was like, 'No this is all trash.' …The next day they [asked], 'What's going on?'… I told them that this is all trash; I didn't buy any of it. This is all stuff that's been thrown out. I never buy food. And they were just kind of like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa.[i]

Prologue

My memories involving the dumpster are multiple, but the earliest are all enveloped in the protection of my family's auction business. Those familiar with the inner workings of this kind of rural, Mid-western auction house know that there are multiple economies at work, inclusive of capital, trade, and gift. People purchase new and used things in the store during the week leading up to the sale, or during the auction, all of which the auctioneer sells on a commission basis. To supplement that income, goods are bought, found, made, or grown and re-sold again during a sale. My sister and I scrapped metal every week at the end of the auctions and stashed the money away for college, and whatever we didn't recycle we shared with other local metal-scrappers who had access to junkyards further afield. Items that did not sell at an auction were given away, bartered for other goods or labor, or resold. Rummage sale scores were re-sold in our own individual lots, or traded for things we needed or wanted. And, the things that we found in a dumpster or beside someone's trashcan were resold on Friday nights. Under the wing of the auction house, my scavenging habits were protected, admired, and encouraged. As a child scavenger, I was witty, resourceful, scrappy, and deemed a sure survivor. However, as an adult diver, my childhood experiences often chafe against the contemporary, taboo-laden encounters. Over the years, I have had to unravel and unlearn my childhood understanding of the dumpster as a protected and valued practical resource within new contexts of social ambiguity, criminality, and deviance. With every new story that I have heard from other divers, the more pronounced and apparent this dynamic has proven.

In May 2008 I was invited on a dumpstering expedition at KU in the midst of the mass migrational emptying of campus dorms and housing. Anyone who has experienced this 2-3 day post finals week frenzy, even distantly via newspaper accounts, understands the mountains of 'trash' being generated in a matter of hours. Even working as the world's pickiest diver, in a 10 minute scavenge of a single dorm major finds included at least 4 unopened reams of printing paper (I never buy paper because it's easily found); a handful of unused, lined notebooks; and a futon frame which I gifted to neighbors who had admired the very same futon at a downtown business just weeks prior. As we searched, objects and trash bags dropped from the sky like shooting stars, as students too busy cleaning their rooms to bring their trash down multiple flights of stairs simply pitched it out of dorm windows into the industrial dumpsters below.

At the next stop, an all-female dorm, we simply walked into the construction sized dumpster, which had its northern side lowered for easy dumping from the back door of the dormitory. As we searched, some of the dorm dwellers became agitated and argued indignantly, "It is illegal to take things from the trash. If you don't get out of here we're calling the cops." And herein lies the Choose-Your-Own-Adventure crossroads. For many divers, this is the point of no return (to that dumpster anyway); the point at which they simply walk away to avoid confrontation, arrest, shouting, shoving, or as the anonymous author of the zine *Evasion* writes, "[being met] with scathing words, rage and violence. Memory fails to produce a single anecdote, just hundreds of insults, shoves, screams, threats, and police calls that all blur together."[ii] However, for me, as both a long-time diver and as a researcher, this particular moment is always highly stressful. The words "can't we all just get along" tend to melodramatically flit through my brain with sour undertones, as I weigh my knowledge of cultural stereotypes about divers--even feelings of fear and intimidation--with my own emotional responses. And, sometimes I *do*

choose to calmly talk to the person, although I generally don't go into detailed explanations of *California v. Greenwood* or constitutional limits surrounding trash and its underlying contentious public nature. Other times, I have simply maintained a safe physical distance, as most people do from me, and have desisted for the time being.

In either scenario, the frustration for both sides, I'm certain, can be suffocating. For many people, the diver is the parasite, the bad citizen, the 'homeless bum,' the deviant sticking their nose where it doesn't belong, in essence the 'problem'; not the person taking out the 'trash.' Often, the conversation surrounding the topics of legality and trash and emotional attachments to trash—in terms of both diver and dumper for that matter--quickly move into presumptions about who is a good citizen or a bad citizen, needy or financially secure, homeless or housed, deviant or straight-laced. Am I suggesting that the socially conflicted feelings so often expressed about diving and divers are always already wrong or ill-placed? No, not always--particularly when I consider common time-spatial contexts of many scavenging acts, such as an alleyway after dark or back-of-a-building bins. However, this project is about multiple oral histories with dumpster divers, from the one-time, to the occasional, to the regular diver. Thus, I should place my cards squarely on the table—in the pages that follow I explore the space of the dumpster and the act of diving by drawing upon these stories of divers to revisit trash--to remember it, sift through it, ponder it, and re-imagine its lifecycles in new socio-political contexts. I, like many others, am also a diver-scavenger-scrounger-recycler, but I am also an auctioneer's daughter. I grew up with a magnified relationship to the many lifecycles of objects. I grew up carefully learning about, reading stories on the surfaces, and tending to other people's *stuff*. I have carried, cleaned and polished, loaded, unloaded, smelled, sold, trash-binned, and even bon-fired when necessary. I have also navigated the cultural taboos associated with certain forms of material reuse.

[Ryan Owens, ABC News:] "What do you say to people who say, 'There you are on the street digging through trash, this is gross, this is disgusting?' [Madeleine:] 'Well, I'd say what's gross and disgusting is the fact that this food is being thrown out in the first place"[iii]

Introduction

Through the use of oral history interviews with dumpster divers in this dissertation, I argue that the dumpster is both a political and anxiety-ridden space, and as the opening epigrams suggest, diving is a means to differing ends, wherein hungry people procure food and/or entire sub-cultural *movements* like freeganism seek to challenge waste levels in the US.[iv] The use of trash as a resource, even a political tool, is a nuanced and varied reality, involving individuals and whole groups both with and without choices as to where, how, and if resources for survival are procured.

Trash is incredibly powerful *stuff*. It is the material resonance of all sorts of transnational dialectics of food, of labor, of resources--a resonance of who's producing, and who's consuming. Although the annual generation of garbage alone in the US is staggering at 388 billion tons produced, 64.1% of which is landfilled, this dissertation is particularly focused on the state of food excess and waste in the US—estimated by University of Arizona anthropologist Timothy Jones at somewhere between 40-50% of "overall food system" loss.[v] "[Jones'] study show[s] that American families are among the worst offenders—that an average family of four throws out $600 worth of good food every year, and that 14% of that is food that hasn't expired or even been packaged."[vi]

In sharp juxtaposition to the waste levels noted in these findings, the USDA suggests in a recent statistical release that in 2009 roughly 14.7% of US households, or upwards of "50.2 million people, including 16.2 million children" were food insecure,[vii] which means that individuals of a household experience "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate

and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways." The USDA's definition of food security excludes "resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies."[viii] In the chapters that follow, I address these actions, and place various stories from the dumpster—from its material edges and legal confines, community-identified borders and individualistic territories--in dialogue, to draw out the incredible breadth of multi-vocality, creative ingenuity, and theoretical complexity surrounding the dumpster as a sight and as a resource. Ultimately, I hypothesize that diving is neither solely indicative of poverty and/or homelessness, nor is it solely the stuff of counter-culturists seeking to fight 'the system.' On the contrary, the more I have placed myself in a position to listen carefully to the stories of dumpster divers, the more I have come to realize the socio-political complexities of diving in general, and diving as a food source more specifically. Throughout this project I use the terms trash, garbage, and waste as a means of addressing a broad array of materials and resources scavenged or salvaged by interviewees and other historical and contemporary actors.[ix] Interviewees most often utilized the terms dumpster diving, recycling, salvage, scavenging, or trashing, depending upon their age and the desired materials sought after.[x]

To date, a handful of scholarly texts and articles address the topic of dumpster diving in detailed analysis. Criminologist Jeff Ferrell, for instance, utilizes an auto-ethnographic approach to engage his experiences with trash and diving**.**[xi] Urban & Environmental Management scholars Ferne Edwards and David Mercer's article *Gleaning from Gluttony* situates diving in relation to ethical stances on waste within Australian sub-cultural communities such as anarcho-punk movements, freeganism, and the Food Not Bombs movement.[xii] Likewise, anthropologist Dylan Clark's article *The Raw and the Rotten* explores the punk cuisine ideologies of Seattle's Black

Cat Café.[xiii] American Studies/Food Studies scholar Warren Belasco explores digger histories in the context of US counter culture cuisines.[xiv] Author Laura Pritchett's edited collection of essays, *Going Green: True Tales from Gleaners, Scavengers, and Dumpster Divers* addresses first person, environmentally-oriented accounts of gleaning by way of three central themes: food, recyclables for the home, and gleaning as epistemology. Submissions for this collection include work from more than twenty authors.[xv] However, this project is particularly fueled by what Food Science & Nutrition scholars Nicole Eikenberry and Chery Smith's important article on diving in select low-income neighborhoods in Minnesota suggests, "There is a great deal of literature available on food security […] homelessness […] and the use of food assistance resources […]. However, information on the ways in which low-income people procure supplemental food, especially when such ways are socially unacceptable, is sparse."[xvi]

This project wrestles with these complex gaps in the current scholarship on food security and policies pertaining to food security, poverty, and government food commodities by conducting and analyzing oral histories about dumpster diving and trash that is food excess. My dissertation will extend the aforementioned literature on diving and sub-cultural movements, such as freeganism, and diving in a context of economic limits, poverty and/or homelessness. Thus, this project contextualizes multiple kinds of diving narratives within a framework of food in/security as both individual and group-based, socially and economically complex direct actions addressing new food paradigms in capitalist contexts. Moreover, I combine my understanding of the oral narratives with the literature of garbage and environmental effects of global waste; historical analyses of dirt; and the rise of public health and urban sanitation practices to complicate common understandings of what I refer to throughout this work as 'the social fabrics of trash.' To me, getting at these 'fabrics' are the ways in which I might best grapple with how

'dirt' is as much applied to specific people and places at different moments in time, as it is applied to material objects.

I situate my work methodologically within feminist oral historical practices, and theoretically at the intersection of the fields of Food Studies, Feminist Environmentalism, Environmental Justice and Public Health. In ultimate design and interdisciplinary theoretical approach, however, this project is indicative of Transnational American Studies discussions of consumption and global material culture flows.[xvii] Through these interdisciplinary intersections, this project addresses the following broad-based research inquiries: What are the possibilities *and* politics of trash and of the dumpster? How do local, state, and/or federal policies serve as deterrents to use of trash and the dumpster as sites of food and other resources? How do such policies surrounding trash and trash spaces work upon divers of differing socio-economic, racial, ethnic, and gender-based backgrounds? And finally, how might centering our attentions upon the possibilities, rather than the impossibilities—the enforced inaccessibility, public health deterrents, fines, privatization--of trash perhaps help the US re-consider the state of food in/security in this nation as well as our rituals of inaccessibility with regard to dumpsters, divers, and trash in general from the standpoint of those who continue to find value and resources in trash?[xviii]

As an interdisciplinary American Studies dissertation project, my work intervenes in the field by yoking food and environmental justice as core components at the forefront of American Studies research currently bridging the humanities and the sciences. As Phaedra Pezzullo argues in her analysis of work in cultural studies and current environmental research, this project takes seriously her call for expanded conceptualizations of environment, re-centers the dumpster within the context of environmental justice and agency as opposed to counter-cultural movement

analysis; thereby also expanding upon the current literature that addresses dumpster diving.[xix] Further, I wish to speak with material culture scholars of consumer history and citizenship such as Gary Cross, Matthew Hilton, and Lizabeth Cohen, to re-center trash and diving as transnational acts with transnational contexts and applications.

The project also intercedes in the field of Food Studies to situate diving in the midst of an extremely current literature of what 'real' food is and what 'good' food is. The recent influx of publications, documentaries, and political activisms dedicated to the politics of food, large-scale agri-business, organics, localism, and genetically modified crops all remain important contributions to the field; however, this dissertation addresses two missing, but fundamental, components of the US food movement in relation to diving, and that is that the project grapples with the economic divides that separate lifestyle changes and food in/security and it does so by directly engaging and listening to the voices of individuals experiencing varying degrees of food security.

Finally, this project takes the narratives and voices of divers quite seriously as theorists, environmentalists, activists, and broad-based movements attempting to think creatively and critically about consumption within late-capitalist contexts. Though this is not to say that I take each of the narratives to be indicative of a more 'accurate' truth, I do feel that in the face of social ambiguity, cultural taboo, and legal stigma, the space of the dumpster and diver narratives offer compelling insights and/or counter-narratives as yet fairly unexplored.

Paternalistic States of Mind

> Subordinate citizenship is not compatible with democracy. The relation of leaders to citizens under democratic norms ought to be one of equality, not in the sense of equal power but in the sense that citizens have an equal right and responsibility with leaders to make policy judgments, and thus that leaders entrusted with special powers should be held accountable to citizens. Institutions of due process, public procedure and record, organized opposition and criticism, and public review both enact and recognize equal citizenship. Trading them for protection puts us at the mercy of protectors.[xx]

While this project explores diving and divers within a multiplicity of social contexts and constructions, I wish to here explore the unifying thread of state paternalism that runs throughout the course of this dissertation. In her 2003 article "The Logic of Masculinist Protectionism: Reflections on the Current Security State," Iris Marion Young argues that paternal protectionism is at the heart of governance that conjures a persistent state of fear and impending danger in its citizens, calling for the benevolent, familial vigilantism of its citizens who are constructed as vulnerable and in need of protection.[xxi] Young suggests that this model generates self-surveillance and builds tolerance amongst citizens against state criticism in exchange for paternalistic state protection.

Furthermore, Iris Marion Young argues that the paradigm of state protectionism plays upon common normative constructions of social acceptance or rejection such as that of the so-called 'good' woman versus 'bad' woman figure:

> A 'good' woman stands under the male protection of a father or husband, submits to his judgment about what is necessary for her protection, and remains loyal to him. A 'bad' woman is one who is unlucky enough not to have a man willing to protect her, or who refuses such protection by claiming the right to run her own life. In either case, the woman without a male protector is fair game for any man to dominate. There is a bargain implicit in the masculinity protector role: either submit to my governance or all the bad men out there are liable to approach you […] I have argued so far that the position of citizens and residents under a security state entails a similar bargain [...].[xxii]

Historian Rickie Solinger likewise discusses the construction of ir/responsible citizenship through analysis of the Welfare Queen icon and single motherhood. Solinger uses the term

"Welfare Queen" to discuss how the icon absorbs and reflects social, cultural, and political ambivalence—hostility—toward women in trouble […signifying] widespread hostility to poor mothers receiving public assistance money—and a determination to degrade these women by taking away their choices—from the mid-1960s onward."[xxiii] The racialized icon of the assistance-needy WQ centers upon an ever-building hostility of the inability to 'pull oneself up by their bootstraps' to become "legitimate consumers"[xxiv] via socially acceptable avenues, and "blocks our ability to imagine the social and economic forces that have created hardship, especially intractable poverty, [even food insecurity as USDA data suggests,] for millions of women and children in the United States."[xxv]

I would argue that the figure of the diver and the space of the dumpster similarly absorb social presumptions about legitimacy and 'ideal' citizenship, and in some cases work in tandem with other social identities of so-called dependency, protection, or even total independence, as is the case with divers who also receive disability services, WIC, low income and public housing assistance, VISION cards; or, on the opposite end of a spectrum of need, as would be the case with businesses that *receive* state protection such as the parameters outlined by the Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1996, created to diminish legal liability for donated food items for redistribution through recognized non-profit agencies.[xxvi] Thus, a discussion of diving necessitates an entwined discussion of the state mechanisms that likewise control the dumpster, the diver, and trash, specifically foodstuff, as transnational (at once highly controlled *and* ignored) material.

Discussions of legitimate versus illegitimate citizenship are often wrapped up in discourses centered on capital, purchasing power, and the availability of special resources; all discussions intrinsically linked to social normatives built upon race, class, gender, and sexuality

hierarchies of power and legitimacy. Though theoretically extending this debate is beyond the scope of this project, what I do want to suggest here is that political and social constructions of dependency, vulnerability, and protectionism play a central role in both stereotypes and the lived realities of many dumpster divers in terms of identity--as diver/scavenger/recycler, etc.--and also in terms of the refusal, inability, or otherwise experienced ambiguity with purchasing power as opposed to making use of what is pulled from the trash. Even as the socio-economic circumstances vary across diver spectrums of experience, those divers who do have resources or make use of their cultural capital and economic privileges all discuss the push of social and legal taboo at the margins of a dumpster. This is not to suggest that such experiences of socially applied deviance, or the grappling that inherently surfaces in discourses of 'good' or 'bad' citizenship, are or should ever be considered the same. Rather, the range and spectrums of narrative experience convey the extent to which cultural taboos about 'dirt' and 'cleanliness'--what I call the 'politics of clean'--are intrinsically linked to the legal and criminal controls over trash and trash spaces, and the tightly wound constrictions of 'ideal' citizenship and consumerism within a late capitalist society.

The constitutional parameters of the law and trash are just one case in point, though I will explore this point in much greater detail in Chapter 1. In the 1988 California Supreme Court case *California v. Greenwood*, the ruling claims, "The Fourth Amendment does not prohibit the warrantless search and seizure of garbage left for collection outside the curtilage of a home […and the law] turns upon the understanding of society as a whole that certain areas deserve the most scrupulous protection from government invasion. There is no such understanding with respect to garbage left for collection at the side of a public street." This ruling ultimately grants the right of the police force to use trash as a resource in criminal analysis and pursuit, in this

case, for purposes of pinpointing narcotics trafficking, without obtaining a warrant as stipulated in the Fourth Amendment to the US Constitution.[xxvii] However, as the complex history of public health and sanitation measures in the United States tells us—a history which I will further explore in Chapter 2--the municipal differences and controls of trash on a state-to-state basis are multi-faceted. For instance, a city ordinance in Lawrence, Kansas cites that "It is unlawful and dangerous to remove any item from the trash that someone has set out for pickup."[xxviii] Thus, while constitutional law upholds that trash is inherently public once it reaches the dumpster or the curb, local laws may very well maintain otherwise under the auspices of public health, personal safety, or property law. Furthermore, as I explore in Chapters 2 & 4 of this project, localized municipal as well as state-level debates over public health and informal food economies similar to the dumpster-as-food-source play a central role in unraveling criminalized taboos about who and what is being taken from the trash, especially where food is involved.

Instances of property abandonment and public re-appropriation equally conjure similar discussions about legitimacy and citizenship.[xxix] Take, for instance, the situation surrounding the LA South Central Farmers. In Scott Hamilton's informative documentary on the 14 acre plot entitled *The Garden*, Hamilton holds a final telephone conversation with the developer who evicts the farmers and ultimately bulldozes the gardens--having at first offered the land for purchase at 16.3 million dollars, which the farmers actually managed to fundraise in a matter of weeks, and then refusing their funds--the developer, Richard Horowitz, states,

> Even if they raised a hundred million dollars this group could not buy this property. It's not about money. It's about I don't like their cause and I don't like their conduct, so there's no price that I would sell it to them for. Where does this kind of 'you owe me mentality end? And how good is that for America? Everybody says, 'you owe me.' Is this good for our country, where everybody is owed and nobody is obligated? I don't see it. What they should have said to the taxpayers of Los Angeles and to me is, 'This is a gracious country. Thank you

> very much for letting us have these gardens here. Thank you, thank you, thank you.[xxx]

The circumstances surrounding the land, its use, the multiple actors involved in its use, purchase, and destruction strike at a number of public health, sanitation, and environmental justice issues such as immigration, class status, food security, poverty, toxic dumping and political power dynamics. The question of 'appropriate' uses of public space plays a central role in how I come to envision trash as a commons resource, which I will situate in *Chapter 1*.

What I do want to emphasis here is the central role that notions of legitimacy and citizenship play in this scenario of the LA community gardens, which I would argue, stems from a long, tenuous history in the US of de-emphasizing the ways in which resources and social circumstances are not equally available or distributed.[xxxi] Rather, one's success is linked to hard work, dedication, and faith in the face of adversity. It is not my intention to poke fun at individual people's abilities to succeed at what it is they set their sights on achieving. However, I do here emphasize the myths of an equal social 'playing field,' equal access to resources to ensure 'success,' and the social scripting of 'good' citizenship centered in presumptions about both the inherent equality of resources and social power, and the increasing centrality of legitimate, dare I say even moralized, consumption as a necessary characteristic of 'good' citizenship, particularly with regard to food in this current historical moment.

Thinking about waste permits an engagement with the long, heated, and complex US history of public health and sanitation measures seated at the crossroads of scientific and technological exploration, labor history, immigration policy, and the gate-keeping of citizenship. Even just barely scratching the surface of public health and sanitation history reveals how progressive era civic reforms centered upon citizenship and consumption were swiftly interwoven into the rise of both path-breaking *and* paternalistic sanitation efforts and ideals of

cleanliness. With the late nineteenth century discovery of bacteria, for instance, public health officials moved away from a miasmatic, i.e. environmental, approach to disease and embraced the notion of germ theory as central to controlled disease and public health.[xxxii] Historan Martin Melosi argues, "In the wake of the bacteriological revolution of the late nineteenth century, many professionals in the health field came to regard environmental sanitation as an inconsequential means of combating disease […] They placed their faith instead on germ theory of disease transmittal, which led to the establishment of bacteriological laboratories and the widespread use of inoculation and immunization to eradicate communicable diseases."[xxxiii] This change also resulted in the development and public dependency upon a field of public health and sanitation workers with specific scientific and technological expertise. But, as Melosi notes, "The significance of the civic dimension of refuse reform did not lie principally in efforts to devise new collection and disposal programs or in the writing of new ordinances. The institutionalization and bureaucratization of refuse management placed responsibility for the former directly on the public works and engineering departments […] The major impact of *civic reform* was educational: It publicized and popularized a new environmental ethic of cleanliness and efficiency […]."[xxxiv]

In a similar fashion, historian Susan Strasser puts forth that the social terrain of reuse and recycling shifted at this time to incorporate specialized workers in charge of recycling for industrial reuse, "the very distribution system that brought manufactured goods to consumers took recyclable materials back to factories. By the end of the century, this two-way trade had given way to specialized wholesalers and waste dealers—a separate, highly organized trade built on the foundation of industrial waste, supplemented by scraps collected from scavenging children and the poorest of the poor. For the first time in human history, disposal became

separated from production, consumption and use."[xxxv] Beyond the organizations of recycling systems themselves, Strasser suggests that the very idea of disposal and reuse became associated with specialized rather than local knowledge systems, "Ever-increasing amounts of trash demanded complex systems and huge investments in sophisticated equipment, promoting the notion among citizens that refuse was a technical concern, the province of experts who would take care of whatever problems trash presented."[xxxvi] Overall then, even the broader history of sanitation measures in the US reveals simultaneous paternalistic and expert-oriented practices, wherein public health and safety are dependant upon people expertly trained in waste removal or the bacteriological—the unseen; and those citizens identified as "good citizens" rally around cleanliness as an environmental ethic and moral code; or, as Foucault puts it, "The imperative of health: at once the duty of each and the objective of all."[xxxvii]

Feminist Environmentalism: Transnationalizing the Dumpster

I theoretically and methodologically frame my understanding of the transnationality and transnational reverberations of trash within feminist environmentalist thought. I am particularly dependant upon Noel Sturgeon's analytical approach, which argues for what she calls a "global feminist environmental justice analysis" situated as "an intersectional approach (seeing at all times an interactive relationship among inequalities of gender, race, sexuality, class, and nation) and revealing connections between social inequalities and environmental problems to uncover the systems of power that continue to generate the complex problems we face."[xxxviii] Sturgeon ultimately yokes this analytical approach to a broader umbrella term that she coins "contemporary radical environmentalisms" which situate "in various ways that there is a relationship between social inequalities and environmental problems."[xxxix] I see feminist

environmentalism as a particularly useful lens for the various chapter topics in this dissertation because of its historical dedication to exploring global environmental and social justice topics as relational and inter-connected to both human and non-human existences, such as seeds, water, wildlife, trees, domesticated animals, insects, soil, etc.; as well as other inter-locking social inequalities.[xl]

Because my research centers upon places and spaces of trash and surplus wastes, the theoretical underpinnings of feminist environmentalism are critical to engaging the cultural memory and materiality of trash—the who, what, where of production, consumption, and processes of 'rejection.' The field also offers a crucial lens for engaging food excess and food in/security because such scholars and activists have consistently demanded that both humans and their environments be considered mutually active agents of production, consumption, and environmental stewardship, as opposed to passive retainers of environmental degradations.[xli] Given the field's rapidly changing, highly debated history from early eco-feminist, or perhaps more spiritually infused beginnings, to current trans-nationalized environmental justice focus and critical insights into queering environmental discourses, a feminist environmental lens offers critical insight into human interconnections to environments.

Rather than completely ignore the troubling theoretical divides between eco-feminism and environmental feminism, or to another extreme, continue to dwell on the long standing arguments pro or anti-eco-feminism, author Joni Seager suggests that understanding such divides serves as a reminder of the diverse ways in which feminists have attempted to merge discussions of humans, non-humans, and environments. In her article *Rachel Carson Died of Breast Cancer* Seager notes, "Ecofeminism put spirituality, earth goddesses, nature/culture identities, and debates about essentialism, antiessentialism, and maternalism on the feminist front burner."[xlii]

While Seager remarks, "for every woman who reveled in the association of ecofeminism with earth goddesses, there was one who winced," she situates her own historical discussion of the debates between eco-feminists and environmental feminists within a more immediate goal of "putting and keeping environmentalism on the feminist agenda and feminism on the environmental agenda."[xliii] Arguing that the field of feminist environmentalism has grown immensely since the 1970s, Seager posits that it must also seek to move beyond the "pro/anti-ecofeminist" debates and further into new arenas for the exploration of environments and bodies, "The best of the recent feminist environmental scholarship engages with and extends transnational, post-colonial, and post-structuralist deconstructions and challenges."[xliv]

What I find most useful about both Seager and Sturgeon's historical situation of feminist environmentalism and eco-feminism is the relational analytic approach to these two directions of feminist scholarship. This work acts as a reminder that although the two camps may be plagued by a legacy of divisions, they have propelled each other to new possibilities for uniting feminisms and environmental discussion and inquiry. Though I do not situate my own work within a spiritualist-centered framework of environmental feminism, I remain heavily influenced by such scholars as Vandana Shiva, Maria Mies, Ynestra King, and Greta Gaard, whose work draws upon the spiritual at times, particularly in relation to the centrality of land and place, themes which nonetheless prove useful to pondering food in relation to differing environments and contexts.[xlv] Finally, a combined understanding of feminist environmentalist and food studies discourses engages long-standing methodological techniques of using food as a material source for teasing out nuanced socio-cultural relations based upon race, class, gender, and ethnic experiences.[xlvi] Yet, it also serves as critical inquiry into assumptions concerning what constitutes food, as I will discuss in Chapter 3 of this project, and speaks with tendencies in food studies

scholarship to trace food from cultural historical perspectives, often centered upon single food items. Warren Belasco refers to this as, "commodity chain analysis which seeks to trace the path of food as it moves through the global supply chain system from field to table, plant to plate, (and sometimes beyond to the dump).[xlvii] Rather, this project is rooted in praxes and epistemologies, in actions ensuing from food-centered concerns and experiences, such as insecurity, accessibility, or political motivation.

Listening for In/Security: Oral History as Feminist Method

This dissertation draws from 15 oral history interviews selected from 18 interviews collection conducted between Spring 2008 and Summer 2010. Interviewees self-identified as divers; varied in economic, gender, sexual, and ethnic identities; and ranged in age from 18-64 years. To supplement this modest number of interviews, I also conducted 52 surveys in Summer 2010. Out of 18 formal interviews (including three return sessions), 52 written survey participants, and dozens of informal conversations in multiple geographic locations on the subject, 4 formal interviewees were female, 10 were male, 1 person specifically identified as bi-racial, 1 as Jewish. Some interviewees were very financially secure, while others experienced highly limited incomes such as disability payments, or received housing assistance, and still others have experienced homelessness. Some were local Lawrencians, others local to the state of Kansas, while others hailed from diverse parts of the United States--Colorado, New York, New Orleans, and North Carolina, among other places. Thus, oral history interviews are a core primary source for the work of this dissertation. Through these narratives I ponder the space of the dumpster and the act of diving in relation to what interviewees theorize about what they were doing, how they connect it to broader social, economic, and environmental factors, and what

commons usage of waste might begin look like from differing perspectives. In this way, I have extended my understanding of reuse and the social taboos of reuse and waste over time, and in varied historical moments by listening to the narratives. The interviews permit me to better understand how diving fits in with interviewee's lived experiences of waste, as I pay special attention to narratives of food recovery. Likewise, the surveys have served a dual purpose in extending what we might take away from the oral narratives. First, the surveys combined pre-interview questions for divers of varying degrees of participation from the one-time, occasional, to the regular, or even 'has-been'. Moreover, the questions also served as information about people who partook from a dumpstered food table at the 2010 Lawrence Really Really Free Market, a widely attended and volunteer-run annual rummage event in which all items and materials are freely exchanged. The information gathered helped to situate common presumptions and stereotypes about dumpstering, legality, social taboo, the materials people do choose to take or the limitations and/or reservations they might have to dumpstering at all. In this way, I could compare or juxtapose information form divers and non-divers alike, and gather a sense of multiple rationales for participant actions, providing an extended understanding of why people might engage with 'dirt' and in what ways they might view such actions as taboo.

Donna Haraway's *Situated Knowledges* outlines a useful methodological approach exemplifying conceptualizations of power, knowledge construction, and questioning positionality, particularly as I grapple with qualitative research methods and the multi-vocality of my numerous and varied primary sources. Haraway problematizes what she sees as academic tendencies to purport and perpetuate "a feminist objectivity," suggesting that this approach is just as relativist as more traditional approaches to inquiry that denies the self and argues for supposed objectivity.[xlviii] In contrast, Haraway argues for "partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility of webs of connections called solidarity in politics and shared conversations in

epistemology."[xlix] By this Haraway purports that scholars must question both their supposed claims to an objective gaze and ways of seeing at large. Scholars must question positionalities, and attempt vision and critical thinking from a variety of perspectives, knowledges, and/or voices. Therefore, she ultimately suggests that there is no single, fixed Reality, and thus her challenge is for a methodology that embodies multiplicitous, fractured experiences wherein research is no longer conducted *on* a supposedly static subject without agency.[l] In relation to this point Haraway declares, "Feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. It allows us to become answerable for what we learn how to see."[li] Haraway argues for a methodology that inevitably opens up fields of scientific inquiry to a more interdisciplinary, or, what Kathleen Stewart calls a "contaminated" approach to conducting research "because it works through a sense of implication and entanglement, rather than purity and transcendence to transform things into networks of produced effects"—located in information drawn from a broader variety of perspectives and sources.[lii]

In her article "Who is the Subject? Queer Theory Meets Oral History," Nan Alamilla Boyd maps the impact of feminist oral history within the field of queer studies: "Feminist researchers try to empower (rather than exploit) historical narrators by trusting their voices, positioning narrators as historical experts, and interpreting narrators' voices alongside the narrators' interpretations of their own memories."[liii] As Boyd here suggests, postmodern feminist ethnographic and oral historical methods have centered upon questioning a number of key factors beyond the use of multiple narratives, including: researcher positionality, research knowledge production, explorative auto-ethnographic reflection about the research process, and creative ways of drawing out overlooked and de-legitimized subjectivities. Applied and feminist

ethnography have likewise worked to de-center researcher objectification of a distant and studied 'other,' and engage instead in increased collaboration.[liv] Beyond these methodological framings, oral historians have also particularly centered upon cultural memory as an active construction, an event that is partial and fragmented as opposed to "pure nuggets of truth tossed to us from the past."[lv]

American Studies and Jazz History scholar Sherrie Tucker argues, "If [we] think of oral histories as events in themselves rather than as clear channels to the "true story" then we begin to see how they relate to specific contexts."[lvi] Tucker also discusses the particular dilemma for many feminist historians of "us[ing] the same tools that are used to determine relevance in the dominant swing histories…[or] ignor[ing] those tools that ignored women musicians [to] construct a women's swing history in which recuperation of lost women is the sole purpose."[lvii] Here Tucker argues for the necessity of the contextualization of the oral histories and the available dominant narratives to draw out a different narrative that includes rather than solely privileges interviewee experiences, much like what the Popular Memory Group refers to as a "necessarily *relational* study [that] has to take in the dominant historical representation in the public field, as well as attempts to amplify or generalize subordinated or private experiences."[lviii]

Initial recruitment of interviewees for this project functioned predominantly through word-of-mouth from one interviewee to another; through my own networking in different food recovery networks webs from youthful anarchist potlucks, Food-Not-Bombs activist circles, circles of older tin-can scrappers, ex-homeless folks, to socio-economically privileged seasonal divers. Many people were simply brought to my attention by community members who had heard of my project, some found a flier about the collection, and still others received an email or a phone number via the proverbial grapevine. While not so for the numerous informal

discussions of this topic that I have experienced, most formal interviewees proved to be male. I don't feel this is because diving or salvage is necessarily gendered. More so, in my view, it is due to the predominant localized contexts within which interviews were conducted and the word-of-mouth nature of the recruitment. This project currently capped at eighteen interviews, was intended to be one or two interviews at the most. My initial small-scale inquiry swiftly turned into a broad spectrum of differing interviews, and a barrage of qualitative data to wrestle with.

To say the least, the interview collection grew both rapidly and haphazardly as I both grappled with the messiness of meaning making within qualitative research sources as an oral history student new to the process, and as I worked through my own presumptions and biases about who would most likely answer my call for interviewees. As I will continue to discuss elsewhere in this project, interviewees steadily surfaced from beyond the youthful, anarcho-punk networks that I presumed would respond and therefore persistently sought out through national info-shops, email circles, and activist circles. In fact, thanks to a particular email circulated by one interviewee to broader networks of scavengers, or scavengers and non-scavengers who knew scavengers, I received a number of new participant contacts. I was particularly intrigued by a particular slice of the email, which reads, "Get in touch with [Rachel] if you are interested in telling your stories. I am hoping that people from a wide variety of backgrounds will contact her and be included in the oral history. It would be great if this didn't just turn out to be an oral history of young anarchists and punks."[lix] I find this last line particularly intriguing because it suggests that there is already an understood given regarding the people who typically dive, or at least, who tend to get noticed for diving. In another thread, it also insinuates a standardized logic behind a young anarchist or punk's motivation for diving as both of these terms are culturally loaded. What, then, are the ramifications of this statement? It clearly posits that there are more

'types' of participants than are generally presumed to be a part of diving or material recovery. I have tried to take this interviewee's words seriously, as I examine the multi-vocality of experience and positionalities represented by the narratives in this collection.

Though I have not had the means with which to transcribe in full each interview in the collection; for purposes of the current dissertation project, I have transcribed pertinent sections of the interviews for content and critical analysis. In an attempt to critically engage divers as theorists in their own right, I have altered quotations from the interviews as little as possible, editing solely for length or occasional misunderstandings in auditory quality on my part.

Chapter Breakdown:

This dissertation is divided into 4 main chapters, each of which serves as an exploration of differing themes within diver narratives. The project begins in Chapter 1 with a theoretical analysis of the space of the dumpster and its social and legally stigmatized margins; then in subsequent chapters I move into discussions of diving that both fulfill and defy stereotypes not only about who is diving, but also why various people are diving, and what they 'take' from the dumpster. Topically, the chapters build from **Chapter 1**, *Dumpstering the American Way of Life*--a theoretical analysis of the space of the dumpster and its social and legally stigmatized margins framed within questions of ideal citizenship and consumption. **Chapter 2**, *Situating Food in the Dumpster* explores the possibilities of (re)imagining the dumpster-as-food-source within contexts of food in/security. **Chapter 3**, *On Twinkies, Chickpeas, and the 'Real' Food Paradigm* is an examination of the contemporary re-visitation and application of modernist food discourses as a means of constructing alternative food paradigms in the present. I trace a particularly gendered modernist history through to contemporary food movement literature constructing

'good' food and 'real' food including works by chef-activists and scholars such as Alice Waters, Michael Pollan, Carlo Petrini, Jamie Oliver, and Marion Nestle. **Chapter 4**, *Tackling Informality: The Dumpster as Public Health Threat* engages turn-of-the-century food specific public health measures in relation to a 'politics of clean' as it applies to the dumpster and extends to mechanisms of State control over other exemplary informal street food economies. By overlapping the oral narratives with research about food and waste policies, practices, and literature, I build an overall hypothesis. I begin by arguing that the interviews show there are broad spectrums of divers and diving narratives. Each chapter discusses varying diver experiences in relation to intertwined food, trash, and health related policies and paradigms in an attempt to thicken understandings of the dumpster and garbage as transnational material residue, as food source, and as a form of commons space.

Concluding Remarks

Topically and methodologically, my intellectual contribution remains my engagement with multiple voices placed in dialogue with one another, and the layering of marginalized or socially unacceptable objects and voices who are equally addressing new food paradigms and food in/securities. I center my attention on the *possibilities* generated by the space and place of the dumpster and of trash in general, as well as by the divers, and how they, in their own words,[lx] situate their actions in a socio-political manner, particularly in relation to their sense of im/mobility and food in/security within a capitalistic economy that continuously reinforces accessibility to food as an object of consumer *choice* as opposed to human *right.*[lxi]

There are multiple forms of food recovery and re-allocation all around us, from food pantries, food drives, commodity distribution, recovery kitchens and culinary programs, gleaning

projects and even entire gleaning movements.[lxii] While some of these recovery forms are well organized and funded, and serve as excellent models for thinking about community food concerns in the context of recycling en-masse, many are small-scale community or individual actions. I am particularly drawn to the narratives of divers because of the complex individual and collective implications: their sheer multivocality and insightful theorizing about what food is; what *good* food is; what might be considered community or commons spaces; what can or should be recycled; and ultimately, how the space of the dumpster is intertwined with broader socio-political concerns. I see my work acting as a combination of transnational dialectics of food as a material source for "trash talk," i.e. what trash might say about the presumptions surrounding what constitutes food, what constitutes waste, and various patterns of production, consumption, and economies of the commons from varying perspectives.

Chapter 1: Dumpstering the American Way of Life

In June 2010, Alaskan ex-governor and vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin was scheduled as a high dollar guest speaker at California State University. During her university address, Palin criticized dumpster-diving students at CSU who came across copies of the guest speaker's contract in the dumpster and used their finding to criticize and spark further inquiry into the university's foundation arm and potential "violation of public disclosure laws." In the midst of financial difficulties at CSU, "the rural university, like dozens of other public colleges, has had to cut some classes and cancel several scholarships as a result of California's ongoing financial woes." Student and legal criticisms of Palin's high cost visit questioned foundation arm practices and ethics given university secrecy about the details of Palin's speaking contract and exorbitant ticket costs of $500.00/seat. In contrast, Palin's keynote address suggests that she felt personally affronted: "Students who spent their valuable, precious time diving through dumpsters before this event in order to silence someone ... what a wasted resource […] A suggestion for those Dumpster divers: Instead of trying to tell people to sit down and shut up […] spend some time telling people like our president to finally stand up."[lxiii] The rationale for protest of Palin's visit to CSU is certainly multi-faceted, with some simply unhappy that specifically Palin was offered the job; some unhappy as to the expenditure given the dismal financial state of CSU, some unhappy with the high cost of attendance and thus limited access to the university's benchmark 50th anniversary celebration; and still others questioning the secrecy of CSU's non-profit foundation arm finances. Most intriguing here is the interplay between the act of recovery, i.e. dumpster diving a copy of Palin's contract, Palin's embarrassing re-construction of this act as 'wasted resource,' and the underlying public outcry for transparency into finances and expenditures in a time of financial crunch. While one might argue that the inaccessibility of ticket prices is *the*

point of holding a black tie event in times of financial trouble, nonetheless, the space of the dumpster here conjures two dominant themes of this first chapter: the dance between consumption and 'ideal' citizenship and ever-burgeoning outcries against the privatization of what many identify as commons resources and knowledge.

Historian Gary Cross attributes the success of consumerism and citizenship "over other social and cultural institutions in American history" to "the wedding of technology to the pursuit of happiness" and modern technology's ability to "[free] modern Americans from the need to restrain desire."[lxiv] Currently, examples of moralized consumption abound. There is an inundation of political talk and consumer focus on green living, energy reduction, recycling, and individual-centered environmental action, all recapitulated with a long line of ads for increased expenditure—soy candles, vegan shoes, energy-efficient light bulbs, and the list goes on and on. American Studies food scholar Warren Belasco, for instance, writes of environment and diet, "While the Atkins Company paid a heavy price for its hyperbole, in most media melodramas the food industry usually escapes blame, for corporate power is rarely mentioned in discussions of health and diet. Despite the growing sophistication of global environmental analysis, the overwhelming motivation for dietary change is personal, not political or planetary."[lxv] Similarly, Women's Studies and well-known Feminist Environmentalist scholar Noel Sturgeon suggests,

> The new environmentalist consumer wave has the potential to move far beyond the utopian hopes of the 'back to nature' desires of the sixties or the purist biocentrism of much of the mainstream environmentalist movement, because it is more sophisticated, more technologically adept, more realistic, and more situated in global contexts. But it must move beyond individual modifications of ways of living to address the systematic, institutionalized structures that maintain inequality and promote environmental devastation.[lxvi]

Likewise, in his 2009 article "Forget Shorter Showers," environmental author/activist Derrick Jensen argues, "Consumer culture and the capitalist mindset have taught us to substitute acts of

personal consumption (or enlightenment) for organized political resistance."[lxvii] Such are the parameters of food paradigms and environmentalisms that need question the role that consumerism plays within the dominant economic framework.

Many scholars of material culture and consumption conceptualize a late-capitalist 'problem of consumption,' and trace the ensuing moral, ethical, consumer activist, and policy-oriented dynamics of such a construction.[lxviii] In this and other chapters I do suggest, alongside many other material culture scholars who have argued before me, that at times consumption is questionably a problem of global scale with very embodied ramifications for specific people and communities. For this reason, I do not claim that diving, as an act of reuse, is quintessentially an American or even more broadly, simply an industrialized nation phenomenon. Instead, I see it as a global phenomenon taking many shapes and forms. One interviewee argued,

> It's really hard for me to say with any sort of knowledge…[dumpstering] does happen in other countries or [it] doesn't…I can say, you know, I have friends in Boston who, when the students left Harvard it was the same as hippie Christmas at Tulane. I have friends who have dumpster[ed] things for me in San Francisco. So, I can see, well this isn't just something that I personally experienced in the three cities that I've lived in as an adult. Um, I've heard reports from across the country. So, I can, I definitely feel like it's an American phenomenon in that it happens across America, across the US. Um, *anything* I said about other countries would be speculation."[lxix]

To extend this interviewee's point in a US context, I suggest that scavenging for reuse occurs in multiple global contexts, in multiple historical moments, for and even as a result of a variety of socio-economic reasons and conditions. I want to further put forth that diving, what I'll call non-consumerist consumption—an often socially unacceptable form of consumption born of/dependant upon consumerism—*can* be a means of agency, self-determination, even survival without the necessity for special resources or privileges, and in some instances, reuse may occur because of the very transnational violation of entitlement.[lxx] Thus, the repeated kernel of

consumerism within notions of 'ideal' citizenship and how that mingles with increasing privatization is the crux of this chapter. Take, for instance, the following clip from my conversation with a regular diver from Brooklyn:

> R: Why do you think it's important to keep [dumpstering] profitless, or outside of the exchange of money?
>
> M: Umm, I'm not down with exchange economies in general….I guess I'm more for just sharing stuff because there's just so much. If you have too much you should be giving stuff away anyway. [Yeah], if you're about to go broke and you're dying of hunger then no, don't give your food away, eat something, but, like, if you have extra food, don't let it sit around. Compost it, or give it to somebody who can eat it, or *something*. I feel like as soon as you put profit into the equation, it becomes competitive. That's not cool in my opinion if you're going to have so much *and* hoard it at the same time […].[lxxi]

Though not every diver that I interviewed felt exactly the same way—some divers, including myself, make use of the dumpster as potential site for resale, barter, or scrap exchange; many divers displayed the same overall concerns that trash be considered a commons resource openly used by anyone. Moreover, *all* of the people that I interviewed clearly made use of the dumpster as a site rich in resources. As the above quotation implies, conceptualizations of 'hoarding' from the dumpstered periphery are often constructed differently than, say, the stereotypical contemporary image of hoarding as public health threat due to mental illness and obsessive-compulsive disorder; or the negative modernist conceptualization of the hoarding Wartime Housewife in her 'kitchen-front.' On the contrary, hoarding from the dumpster margins seems to be more about critiquing consumerism as the taken-for-granted epitome of progress, or as an ideal of modernity, which shifts across time and moments of economic high or downturn. D argued for example, "There's *always* gonna be people goin' and gettin' [trash] and more and more so as things are getting harder and harder. But of course, less and less things are going to be goin' into the waste-stream too. I mean everybody says they're buyin' less stuff already."[lxxii]

In the pages that follow, I first situate an understanding of the dumpster as a legally and socially stigmatized resource. I then historicize contrasting links between so-called 'ideal' citizenship, increased privatization, and consumerism. I expose the historical overlap of citizenship, consumption, and US public health and sanitation efforts; and finally, I link anxieties conveyed from the dumpster communicating a commons-oriented approach to trash over privatization. Trash talks, and it often does so with a privatized authority that would deter those who make use of its fringes, of the alternative economic networks at once beyond and at the margins of capital exchange. For many, in contrast, the dumpster is a commons space, a site wherein local knowledges of foodscapes and reusables clash with the privatization of trash, the constitutional *and* policy-based publicization of waste, and the criminalization and social ambiguity of this particular form of reuse.

Situating the Dumpster: Criminalization, Social Ambiguity, Trans-nationality

You think it's trash, granny, but it's not/We'll be taking whatever you got/A give up, a give up, a give up, come on and give it to me […] All of your pretty, your pretty little rags and bones.
-The White Stripes, "Rag and Bone"[lxxiii]

As the above White Stripes' song lyrics imply, the notion that the material of trash is somehow desirable, sought after, *pretty* even, is hard for many people to believe. Popular depictions of trash reuse from all over the globe overwhelmingly suggest that it is dirty, disgusting, or that it is the stuff of 'people elsewhere,' someplace poverty stricken where reuse is acceptable only within the context of hunger, poverty, and desperation.[lxxiv] Some depictions likewise convey that trash reuse is solely worthy of comic relief and is persistently made the brunt of comedic routines such as the following performance from the *Colbert Report*:

> Look, I saw it in *The New York Times* […] There is a bold new breed of dumpster diver out there [audience laughter]. Perfectly healthy young people who are "living off consumer waste in an effort to minimize their support of corporations and their impact on the planet." [Audience laughter] Way to stick it to the man, freegans [flashes peace symbol to audience laughter]…Look, I'm all for finishing a half eaten falafel you find in an old tire [audience laughter], as long as you pay for it! But these trash-eating hippies are freeloading everything from paintings, to laundry-detergent…[lxxv]

In another popular thread, trash reuse is equally depicted as something visionary (read eccentric) environmentalists partake in.[lxxvi] American popular culture representations reinforce these stereotypes, such as the multiple award-winning 2007 documentary *Garbage Warrior* about "renegade architect Michael Reynolds," who (re) uses trashed materials like beer cans, car tires and water bottles as "tools of choice for producing thermal mass and energy-independent housing," which Reynold's and his team dub earthship designs.[lxxvii] Throughout the documentary, Reynolds experiences legal backlash and red-tape in attempting to develop test sites for his sustainable design creations, and for a time his architectural license is even revoked, until invited to conduct building demonstrations after natural disasters devastate communities in the Andaman Islands and Mexico—both of which are successful.

An episode of the Independent Film Channel's comedy series *Portlandia* starring *Saturday Night Live's* Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein of Sleater-Kinney, entitled "Dumpster Divers" further conveys comic relief rather than award-winning environmental education. Within the first 25 seconds of the skit, Carrie Brownstein's character locates a raw, unpackaged slice of watermelon and declares, "This is a perfectly good watermelon. There's a hair on it but…. [Takes a bite as she stands in the dumpster]."[lxxviii] Likewise, an episode of Fox Network's forensic series *Bones* opens with the following chat between two scraggily-clad dumpster diving freegans on a dumpster date: [Male freegan] "Best-before-dates are just

marketing tools to increase profits and make more garbage to feed the corporate monster. Oh look, eggs and some apples! [Camera pans above--one apple is bruised, another bitten into. Male freegan grabs for the latter and hands it to his date]. Just eat around the bruised part" [Companion takes a bite as she sits in the dumpster].[lxxix] The scene ends with the divers' discovery of a decomposing human skull as dramatic horror movie music with clashing symbols accompanies the scene.

While both television series are well known for their absurd, over-the-top theatrics, both representations reflect stereotypes of divers as youthful, over-zealous hipster environmentalists who are completely unhygienic in their approach to the spaces and materials of the dumpster. While analysis of popularized personal hygiene stereotypes go beyond the scope of this project, divers who *did* discuss dumpster hygiene during their interviews with me had very different sensibilities about the subject, which the following interview commentary highlights:

> R: People who shop in the supermarket tend to go by an expiration date in terms of what's good and what's rotten, right? [M. in background murmurs in approval] Um, so how would you say a dumpster diver goes about what's good or what's rotten?
>
> M: Well, the first thing you do, right, is you pick up the yogurt, and you look at the sell by, eat by, use by whatever date, and then, you laugh [chuckles sarcastically]. Then, you open it, and then you smell it. And, if it smells disgusting then you probably shouldn't eat it [chuckles]….You can trust yourself to judge food […]. I feel like it's common sense."[lxxx]

Another anonymous interviewee similarly emphasized trusting in one's own senses with regard to dumpstered food:

> I'm not very squeamish about food and I have a very good eye for what's safe or less safe, spoiled or not spoiled. […] I'm just pretty discerning and from my perspective I don't take a lot of risk, but if you talk to most people [they'll say] 'you're getting food out of dumpsters!'[…] I think it's more of understanding food and food spoilage. Now things are wrapped or not wrapped or covered, or how you clean things.[lxxxi]

Over the course of two meetings, C divulged that depending on what you are in search of, divers come into contact with differing kinds of dumpsters with varying degrees of so-called filth, "[Before they put a compactor on the Goodwill dumpster here in Lawrence] there was never any, you know, rotting meat, or rotting vegetables or anything… It was very dry and very clean. You had to be careful not to step on any broken glass, but it wasn't gross, like I think that a lot of people, when they think about dumpsters and dumpster diving, they think, you know, slimy. […]"[lxxxii] Moreover, during a special report for the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, freegan Madeline opens the NYC freegan trash tour--tours offered monthly in the city as a follow up to the regularly scheduled Freegan Meet-Up to expose people to the sheer quantities of food waste in New York--with the following commentary: "Just go home and wash things. Just remember good hygiene, and please don't eat on the tour."[lxxxiii] Though not all of the divers I interviewed were in agreement about taking specifically food products from the dumpster--some advised against it, others were very much accepting of the idea, and still others had limits on meat products or dairy—all of the divers expressed routine practices that related to hygiene in some fashion such as choice of dress, use of helpful tools to better facilitate the dive, gloves, washing habits, etc.

We might also turn to sources beyond the oral histories to engage this question of hygiene. For instance, reality TV project home cook and series hostess of *What's for Freegan Dinner*? Lynn Ubell, self-described as an Upper East Side middle-class wife, mother and trained chef," reveals that she became a freegan when she "went into survivor mode" after her husband's work department received 30 day notices.[lxxxiv] In an early episode of the series, Ubell states, "Dumpster diving is not pretty, it's messy. But, it's worth it."[lxxxv] Ubell's shows move between (mostly) street-side scavenging and cooking demonstrations, and in one such episode demonstrating her preparation of brazen pork chops she notes, "Now I know it sounds really

crazy, I mean, I totally get that, that a middle class woman would go dumpster diving for meat. But, it took me about eight or nine months before I felt comfortable picking up the meat and taking it home. There are a few rules to follow. The first one is your 'nose knows'. If it smells bad, it is bad. I [also] change my gloves [often] because my hands are full of meat juice and stuff, and that's how I keep my family very healthy and safe and nutritiously fed."[lxxxvi]

Still other divers have documented their methods and approaches to trash spaces in relation to hygiene with other ethnographers as in Ferne Edwards and David Mercer's Australian study of freegans and Food Not Bombs organizers, who garnered the following commentary, "There's no high risk food because there's no meat or dairy and the food's at its height in ripeness and it's the most nutritionally good when the shops would throw it away…. It's because of its shelf life—you can't have something there that would be rotten by the end of the next day."[lxxxvii] Edwards and Mercer go on to note, "Rather than relying on use-by dates to tell them what food is edible and safe, freegans use their innate senses of touch, taste and smell. This attitude marks a conscious shift away from corporate control enabling the diver to reclaim a connection to their senses and to the natural world."[lxxxviii] When I asked one of my interviewees "What do you think it takes to be a diver," she noted, "I think it takes not caring what people think. Like not being concerned that people are gonna think it's gross or that there's something wrong with you for doing it. And sometimes, I kind of struggle with that."[lxxxix] Persistent stereotypes, social stigma, and criminalization of divers and/or trash spaces reflect ambiguity with the alternative economies that make use of these fringe, sometimes privatized, spaces, places, and materials. As Cornell University student Jennifer Ayers noted in her analysis of Goodwill bins and the role of 'diggers' in large Goodwill outlets,

> The Outlet store is filthy and chaotic because there is little imposition of order on the goods. This is what precisely makes the site rich in rare goods, and rich in diverse and dynamic scavenger culture; therefore, dirt is in its place in this store. Scavenger culture is already inherently filthy because it traffics in what society deems trash. Yet scavengers perform a vital ecological role reusing and recycling what would otherwise be thrown in the landfill.[xc]

Other popular media representations of dumpster divers impose and/or expose stigma through the use of sensational shock-value in their depictions, such as Oprah's 2007 coverage of New York freeganism featuring journalist Lisa Ling. Just as Ubell conveys her secret of "sneaking out in the dark of night to dumpster dive for her groceries" to viewers, the *Oprah Show* conveys an air of unearthing un-seemly secrets about the individuals portrayed, clearly outlined by the show title "How far Would You Go?" and further highlighted by the second half of the show, dedicated to 'discovering' the secret life of a stripper-mom. The show's introductions of interviewees are telling, "Three years ago, Madeline was an executive living in New York City earning a six-figure salary. After a six-month period of conversion, she says she became a freegan who gets almost all her food from what other people throw away." An introduction of participants Daniel & Amanda outlines, "While most newlyweds spend their time picking out new furniture and china, Daniel and Amanda are picking through eggshells to find salvageable food. This doctor and engineer are Nashville-area freegans."[xci]

Though audience members and viewers of *Oprah* certainly get a swift education about *why* some people scavenge for food, as well as individual opinions about the politics of food waste in the United States; I have to wonder whether such media portrayals likewise perpetuate viewer discomfort with food margins working outside of capital exchange through the distanced, observational nature of their depictions. Whereas individual film footage of the NYC trash tours tend to encourage people to make use of what they find along the tour, and to seriously consider systemic reasons for why people become freegans, Oprah opened her discussion of freeganism

by suggesting that most people would not take action due to questions of respectability: "Obviously, I know you're not going to go on a trash tour after this show, but I do want you to start thinking about, as I have started thinking about, how much you consume. I mean like, every time you throw away a paper towel. Every time you are wasteful with food in your house."[xcii] This particularly highlights trends in the importance placed upon individual lifestyle changes.

Ubell's freegan series stresses that viewers get over their pre-conceived notions about trash to recognize the potential of food waste, such as when she states, "You know some people just see the food, but I see the ingredients. Some people just see overly ripe bananas [and] they throw them away. I see banana bread."[xciii] However, Ubell's series does not so much question systemic US food production and consumption concerns; rather, it exposes the possibilities of wasted food reuse for households in a safe, healthy, and often elegantly prepared manner. In contrast, the NYC freegan trash tours do focus on systemic problems of food waste in the US, and their website and calendar notes, "If you are mainly interested in dumpster diving in NYC, consider going on your own or in small groups rather than on our "trash tours," which are oriented more for learning than for acquisition."[xciv] In her work on "toxic tourism," environmental scholar Phaedra Pezzullo engages the dynamics of "non-commercial expeditions into areas that are polluted by toxins" as potential sites of grassroots activism and counter-hegemonic environmental intervention.[xcv] Though trash tours do not generally occur in areas of life-threatening toxicity as those described in Pezzullo's research, NYC freegan tours clearly attempt to encourage critical assessment and action amongst attendees on a grassroots level. Pezzullo further argues, "Although the exploitative possibilities of tourism remain important to consider, tourism also suggests opportunities for embodied engagement, counter experiences of everyday life, education, interpretation, and advocacy."[xcvi] Thus trash tour coverage often reveals

the one-time material or socio-economic affluence of some participants—such as Madeline's story regarding her professional class status prior to becoming freegan—as well as highlighting the sheer quantities of wasted food available. The level of engagement, educational outreach, and material interaction with the wasted food is intended to be hands-on and thought provoking; yet, I would also argue that media coverage of the tours tends to focus on the moral conundrums associated with wasted food in industrialized food paradigms.

Making use of the dumpster ultimately serves an immediate multi-faceted purpose for many divers, whether that purpose be broader range of ingredients, economic savings on certain materials to permit purchasing power elsewhere, quenching hunger in the short-term, or redistribution of goods that would otherwise rot or be disposed of. However, solely dumpstering as a *politicized* response to systemic food concerns seems indicative of individualized action in many cases, rather than systemic solution to US surplus production and waste, recalling what Jensen identified as the difference between "personal consumption [and] organized political resistance."[xcvii] During the first oral history interview that I conducted, D noted, "[O]ne critique actually of dumpster diving is that, you know…[diving] only exists within the context of capitalism because of all the waste that exists. Um, but that's not a reason why we shouldn't do it, that's a reason that just gets to why it exists."[xcviii] C argued during our interview, "Do I think dumpster diving is the revolution, or dumpster diving is gonna cause the collapse of civilization, I don't because I think that we are able to dumpster dive *because* capitalism exists. I think dumpster diving maybe chips away a little bit at capitalism, but if capitalism fell tomorrow there wouldn't be dumpster diving because people wouldn't be throwing away things that are perfectly good. So, I definitely don't think I'm bringing about the revolution."[xcix]

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The constitutional dynamics of trash are just as ambiguous as popular representation. As suggested in the "Introductory Notes," the 1988 California Supreme Court case *California v. Greenwood* ruled, "The Fourth Amendment does not prohibit the warrantless search and seizure of garbage left for collection outside the curtilage of a home […]." Based upon this ruling, police can use trash as a warrant-less resource in criminal analysis and pursuit.[c] Both the history of US sanitation policy as well as current domestic trash policy and practice suggests that beyond a legal constitutional outline of trash 'use,' the United States has never taken a unified approach to trash and sanitation measures. Martin Melosi notes that the varying nineteenth-century 'Age of Sanitation' methods constructed to deal with the seas of trash brought about by the massive jump in consumer products and waste generated during the onslaught of the industrial revolution was handled on a highly localized, state-by-state, even city-by-city basis. Thus, the US history of garbage, in general, and garbage disposal, in particular, are not unified experiences brought about by sweeping federal mandates, but rather, parceled out according to differing politicized municipal desires and needs in highly diverse geographic contexts.[ci] Internationally, US waste policy proves highly self-regulatory in the interest of private sector and military needs, and the US in general remains "the largest producer of hazardous waste" who to date continues to refuse to act in accordance with international dumping policy outlined by the Basel Convention.[cii] Exemplary is the aforementioned city ordinance where I live in Lawrence, Kansas citing that "It is unlawful and dangerous to remove any item from the trash […]."[ciii] While constitutional law upholds that trash is inherently public once it reaches the dumpster or the curb, local laws may very well maintain otherwise under the auspices of public health, personal safety, or property law.[civ]

Interviewees discuss this point of criminalization and social stigma as well. For instance, one interviewee was arrested, charged with burglary, paid hundreds of dollars in fines, and completed community service hours.[cv] Other interviewees requested complete anonymity even from me during the interview process. One anonymous interviewee noted, "there are legal as well as emotional ramifications to consider with this project. This has to do with more than dumpster diving. It has to do with poverty and with the law."[cvi] As I began drafting this project in July 2010, a breaking *NPR* news story reported that a man from Queens, NYC found his aunt's car impounded and slapped with a steep fine of $2,000.00, along with an additional fine of $2,000.00 for organized 'theft', after he took an air conditioner confirmed by the original owner as having been set out for garbage. In this instance, the NYC sanitation department can claim private property protections over all garbage set out on the curb.[cvii] Moreover, responses to 1 of 7 survey questions--"What common stereotypes exist about dumpsters, dumpster diving and/or dumpster divers?"—posed to over 50 people at the 2010 Annual Lawrence Really Free Market likewise suggested that dumpsters and divers are clouded with taboo and social anxieties. Divers were stereotyped with such descriptors as "poor" "homeless" "lazy transients" or the "unmotivated unemployed." Similarly, dumpsters were most commonly considered "dirty," "unsafe" and "germ-ridden."[cviii] During our interview C recognized concerns over identity theft, "There's a lot of paranoia lately about identity theft…I got something in the mail, maybe it came with my credit card, like, it actually said…'dumpster divers are looking for your credit card statements or your personal information,' like it actually said the words *dumpster divers*, so it's creating this paranoia you know, that like, maybe I'm just really wanting that pair of shoes that somebody threw away, but they think I'm going after their bank statement."[cix]

While divers often volunteer rationale behind rejecting diving as a crime and the diver as

criminal—the supposed theft or destruction of private resources, concern for cleanliness, fear of identity theft, the threat of potential bodily harm, I have wondered after a much broader socio-cultural frustration with individuals who will not or cannot purchase, resulting in a prevalent, "get a job" theme, such as the comical scenario depicted by the anonymous author of the zine *Evasion*, "The manager flew out the back door, shaking his fist, demanding to know why we were in the dumpster. We explained our positions as 'free-lance excess reduction engineers engaging in the reallocation of surplus.' He told us to get a job."[cx]

One interviewee relayed, "One time we went dumpstering…all the employees were outside…smoking cigarettes and just hanging out, bullshitting. We drove around and then we realized they were all just standing there, so we drove back and waited to see if they were going and they [stared] at us. [D interrupts to add] They actually stood around the dumpster…preventing us from getting [to it]." The pair continued with yet another example, "College kids will freak out if you're looking through their stuff. Some of them…especially guys—you know, macho frat boy [types] tend to, like to call people names, say stuff…" When I pressed the issue further by asking, "What do you make [of] those kinds of responses?" D replied, "I feel like it's the same thing [as the legal and commercial responses], it's a threat…[P]eople trying to pick themselves up by pushing someone else down. Like, by making themselves bigger, like 'oh, you poor assholes,' […] saying things like that, that puts them in a different economic status than everyone else."[cxi]

The dumpster is a contested, legally and socially ambiguous space. While one could easily argue that trash was/is always private in the personal sense, there are both varying degrees of this privatization of trash according to who retrieves it, or takes it to the landfill, and a disconnect in the minds of many citizens as to whether or not something is private once it has

been thrown away. Exemplary of this confusion is that out of the 52 surveys completed at the Free Market, 22 participants argued that diving *is* illegal with many clarifying that illegality is at the very least specific to particular locations, such as Lawrence. 11 participants argued that diving is *not* illegal; and 19 survey participants did not know, or were unsure whether the specific act of diving was illegal or if, rather, accompanying acts were the problem, such as trespass, theft, among other suggested charges. As one participant noted, "Not actually, but the perception that it is [illegal] exists widely." Another participant wrote, "I'm not sure [about legality] but certain places go to great lengths to try and stop it."[cxii] Oral history interviewees have likewise critically engaged the legal ambiguities of diving in multiple, conflicting ways. One interviewee from Brooklyn noted, "It depends where you are. In New York City technically it's illegal, but police are [just like] fuck that we're not going to go and enforce it. Um, a lot of places [d]on't have clear cut laws—if police want to harass you about it they can but they can't charge you with any thing except for mischief or something ridiculous […] You can't get charged with dumpster diving, unless you're in the UK, then there's just, like, laws against it all the time."[cxiii] As far as I can tell, however, the UK *Theft Act of 1968* does not clearly outline the illegality of recovering material from the trash as specifically theft or trespass; though it *may* fall under the auspices of Article 9: Burglary depending upon legal interpretations of the language therein.[cxiv] Other interviewees argue that legality in the United States has everything to do with where and when dumpstering occurs, further examples of which I will discuss in *Chapter 2*.

The act of retrieving something from a dumpster is therefore indicative of contested acts within contested space. Further, there is the very role that diving occupies within the capitalistic framework of public versus private. I posit that diving is a direct result of the particularly extreme inefficiencies, or perhaps *efficiencies*, of an often globalized, multi-national capitalistic

system that encourages and needs surplus. Farmer and food scholar Wendell Berry argues, "Our economy's most voluminous product is waste—valuable materials irrecoverably misplaced, or randomly discharged as poisons."[cxv] Thus, diving reaches beyond the notion of mere personal action or identity and into the realm of a very public discourse—albeit legally stigmatized and clandestine. Trash is a composite memory of transnational materials and labor, and it is a by-product of numerous neo-liberal policies such as resource privatization, patenting, surplus production or disposal, as well as results of policies that generate increased lack of accountability within specific environmental contexts such as effects of NAFTA, CAFTA and IMF loan agreements, all of which similarly effect food production and consumption processes, thereby necessitating close alliances between food and environmental justice movements. Throughout this dissertation, I explore a variety of diver narratives, from multiple socio-cultural positionalities, including life experiences of homelessness, criminality, economic dependence and/or total self-sufficiency, affluence, and political or environmental activism. In their own idiosyncratic ways and means, each of these narratives turns a fascinating critical eye upon consumption trends in a transnationalized consumer world, the long-time idealized constructions of citizens-as-consumers, and the dumpster as a site of commons-centered resourcefulness. In what ways, then, has citizenship so often been tied to consumption? In this next segment I attempt to trace a few examples of such a linkage.

Variations on a Theme: Consumption and Citizenship

In a September 27, 2001 speech mere days after 9/11 and the expenditure of a $15 billion airline subsidy to protect against bankruptcies incurred after the World Trade Center bombings, George W. Bush addressed a host of Chicago airline employees. With an air of reassurance in a moment

of historical confusion and uncertainty the president states, “When they struck, they wanted to create an atmosphere of fear. And one of the great goals of this Nation's war is to restore public confidence in the airline industry. It's to tell the traveling public: Get on board; do your business around the country; fly and enjoy America's great destination spots; get down to Disney World in Florida; take your families and enjoy life the way we want it to be enjoyed.”[cxvi] Immediately following the 9/11 attacks, and then again five years later in December 2006, Bush “urged [Americans] to go shopping” in the midst of a pending holiday season and the third year of war in Iraq. In spite of major economic set-backs beginning in 2000 and early 2001 such as a 10% stock market plunge in August and September ‘01, large scale layoffs resulting in a rising unemployment rate of more than 5% in October ‘01, a 15 billion dollar (plus) airline subsidy bailout just post 9/11, increased expenditures for infrastructure/security measures, rising oil prices, and an ever unstable and ignored minimum wage,[cxvii] President Bush among other global political leaders urged citizens to help their nation in difficult economic times by opening their pocketbooks. Though there were many similar global responses to the economic crises of the time period such as political figureheads Tony Blair, Rudolph Giulianni, or Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrètien’s, who all likewise made citizen shopping pleas, the intertwining of US citizenship and consumption as an ideal and construction of social legitimacy has its roots in an earlier American politics, and hardly begins with the above examples.[cxviii]

Quite the contrary, for some time, scholars have noted the merger of citizenship ideals and consumerism. I could easily trace this connection to trends in 19th century American Free Produce literature, the simple living philosophical underpinnings of Henry David Thoreau’s writings, the wary industrialization discussions of John Ruskin, the repurposing techniques for anything from sweetbreads to hook rugs outlined in abolitionist Lydia Maria Child’s *The Frugal*

Housewife; or even the Jazz Age burgeoning of mass communication via radio and telephone, or the rise of patent law and factory production in the early 1920s.[cxix] However, I here turn to post-war modernist scholarship of mass consumerism. Given my emphasis on trash as connected to consumption, post WWII America is an ideal place to root my analysis of the dumpster as it posed an economic turning point in patterns of American consumer habits. As George Lipsitz suggests in "The Meaning of Memory," "The consumer consciousness emerging from economic and social change in postwar America conflicted with the lessons of historical experience for many middle-class and working-class families. The Great Depression of the 1930s had not only damaged the economy, but it also undercut the political and cultural legitimacy of American capitalism…In the 1930s, cultural ideals based on mutuality and collectivity eclipsed the previous decade's 'rugged individualism'.[cxx]

This time period is crucial to understanding the economic and cultural effects of a burgeoning consumerism often propelled and enabled by federal government intervention. American and Gender Studies scholar Beth Bailey notes of the time period,

> During the war, building on FDR's New Deal, the federal government expanded its role and its reach. As federal authorities administered the draft and military training, oversaw defense industries, and attempted to manage the homefront war, the federal government became a greater presence in the daily lives of Americans and in the civic and economic lives of their towns and cities. In this process, the government often interrupted local practices and created new sites of power and authority.[cxxi]

Shifts in power and centralized federal policy greatly affected the means by which mass consumption became more feasible for an entire generation. Although accessibility was highly raced, classed, and gendered, many post-war Americans were the first generation of US citizens to have access to a disposable income, new housing via suburban construction, free higher education, and reproductive health and family planning options. By the mid 1930s, US public

radio opened itself to a media eager to sell products to a new base of consumer-listeners, thereby commercializing the airwaves.[cxxii] The same can be said of television, as Lipsitz similarly argues, "Government-sponsored research and development during the war perfected the technology of home television while federal tax policies solidified its base. The government allowed corporations to deduct the cost of advertising from their taxable incomes during the war […] Consequently, manufacturers kept the names of their products before the public while lowering their tax obligations on high wartime profits."[cxxiii] Thus, to understand dumpster diving as an often criminalized cultural function within broader capitalist contexts, I first historicize mass production and consumption in a modernist consumerism context of ideal citizenship. Though for many, dumpster diving seems the epitome of *anti*-consumerism—a point I will return to later in this chapter, rather than trace a US history of alternative or anti-consumer trends, I seek to understand trends and values of mass consumerism that have influenced US citizenship ideals which, in turn, shape social and legal ambiguities surrounding the dumpster and its use as a resource.

American Studies scholar Lizabeth Cohen's *Consumer's Republic* traces shifting social, political and material themes of US post-war citizenship as it relates to overlapping values of mass consumption and citizenship. Placing "American's encounter with mass consumption at the center of analysis,"[cxxiv] Cohen dubs the concept of "consumer's republic" as "a strategy that emerged after the Second World War for reconstructing the nation's economy and reaffirming its democratic values through promoting the expansion of mass consumption."[cxxv] Cohen argues elsewhere that "a surprisingly wide cast of characters came to settle on the same post-war script [and] agreed that the economic salvation lay in a vital mass consumption-oriented economy where good customers devoted to consuming 'more, newer, and better' were in fact good

citizens…Faith in a mass-consumption-driven post-war economy came to mean much more than the ready availability of goods to buy. Rather, it stood for an elaborate ideal of economic abundance and democratic political freedom."[cxxvi] Gary Cross' article, "Corralling Consumer Culture" likewise makes a link between citizenship and consumption:

> It never has been easy to conceive of consumers as citizens. This is because citizenship implies common interests that consumers outside of special circumstances (for example, monopoly exploitation and shortage crises) seldom possessed. More important still, consumer citizenship suggests a dysfunctional market—that buyers have distinct rights over producers and need protection from the informational or financial advantage of the latter—and that government has an obligation to enable consumers with 'purchasing power.' … The consumer citizen [also] suggested alternatives to private spending—goods and services acquired in the public interest or, even more threatening to capitalist orthodoxy, limits on consumption altogether.[cxxvii]

Further pointing out discrepancies and hierarchies in the yoking of citizenship and consumption, Women's Studies and American Studies scholar Inderpal Grewal argues, "In neoliberalism, the promises of rights and citizenship were believed to be achieved through the workings of market capitalism within what was commonly referred to as globalization."[cxxviii] Though no unwavering definitions or inherent meanings may be drawn from these analyses to pinpoint a uniform legitimate citizenship merged with consumption, as both are ever-evolving concepts over time and cultural dynamics such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and ethnic identities and relations, the link between the two is neither new nor uncertain in US cultural histories.

'To Protect the American Consumer['s]' Way of Life

Consumer credit has become an essential feature of the American way of life. It permits families with secure and growing incomes to plan ahead and to enjoy fully and promptly the ownership of automobiles and modern household appliances. It finances higher education for many who otherwise could not afford it. To families struck by serious illness or other financial setbacks, the opportunity to borrow eases the burden by spreading the payments over time.[cxxix]

Another central concept that both Cohen and Cross's work contends is that the binding of citizenship and consumption over time legitimizes an ideal which greatly molds US economic and political policy. Alongside the previously mentioned Horatio Algers myth of mobility via self determination, we might turn to the hazy yet equally popular concept of "The American Way of Life," as an ideal deeply intertwined in political policy effecting American consumption and citizenship. Presidents from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Barack Obama have conjured references to the 'American Way of Life,' and vowed to protect it in the face of multiple dangers ranging from economic crises, war, environmental catastrophe, to rising unemployment. When FDR references "The American Way of Life" in September 1936 "Fireside Chat," he implied practices of equality between laborers and property owners, employers and employees, and an ever-rising standard of living.[cxxx] In 1948 Harry Truman would likewise suggest, "Rising wages and rising standards of living, based on increasing productivity and a fair distribution of income, is the American way."[cxxxi] John F. Kennedy's 1960 call for better, more "moderately priced housing" was posited in contrast to America's "asphalt jungles," slums which "[made] a mockery of the American way of life."[cxxxii] In his September 1967 "Fraternal Order Representative Remarks," Lyndon Johnson definitively declares, "When we talk about the 'American way of life' we are talking about the prevalent belief in this country that every man ought to be able to make as much of himself as he can or as he wants to." A mere seven months later in April 1968, Johnson would again conjure the notion at the signing of the Civil Rights Act by suggesting that "fair housing for all--all human beings who live in this country--is now a part of the American way of life."[cxxxiii] In 1981 Ronald Reagan cites "economic stagnation and unemployment" as "creeping erosion[s] to the American way of life," and seven years later suggests that the American way of life serves as a global symbol for revitalizing capitalism and private enterprise.[cxxxiv] Bill Clinton

draws upon the idea to propose retrograde tax cuts in a time of deficit by stating, “The American economy is in the middle of the global marketplace, challenged by nations who have made wise investments in their people, their workers, and their technological edge, and who have disciplined their own spending on other things. If we don't start getting better, we can fall behind, and the American way of life will be denied to this generation and the next.”[cxxxv]

One day before his attendance of the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro on climate change and global concerns over long-term environmental sustainability, George H. W. Bush argued for the protection of private sector interests as a means of trouble shooting environmental protections. In declaring that “the US [is an] engine of global economic growth, and it's going to stay that way,” Bush suggests he has a very clear sense of how he would represent the US in discussions at Earth Summit. Mere days before the Earth Summit convergence, Bush argued that the US held a “superb” environmental record to represent itself in Rio, while simultaneously declaring that he “would not go down there and forget about people who need jobs in the United States of America.” Popular US memory attributes the infamous declaration that “The American way of life is not negotiable” to Bush on his way to Earth Summit 1992.[cxxxvi] Historically speaking then, the meanings of a so-called ‘American Way of Life’ have been a rhetorical hodge podge meant to conjure broad-based constructions of a unified American imagination and consumptive lifestyle surrounding such things as upward mobility, freedom, citizenship, democracy, applied and reapplied over the decades by multiple party leaders who have re/defined it’s meaning. Strikingly, the notion of a unified “American Way of Life” is conjured, or vehemently railed against, in the context of consumption-centered policies and environmental debate, such as the aforementioned 1992 Bush speech at Earth Summit.

The concept of a consumer-centric 'American Way of Life' sheds an interesting light then on patterns in US environmental and trade policies effecting trash and the transboundary dumping of wastes across international borders. Political Scientists R. Daniel Kelemen and David Vogel explore the shifting, and ultimately inverted, terrain of (weakening) US and (strengthened) EU environmental policies from 1970-present. Kelemen and Vogel suggest, "Where US domestic politics had stimulated ambitious environmental initiatives in the 1970s and the 1980s, the development of major domestic initiatives ground to a halt after 1990. By contrast, domestic support for environmental policy in the EU increased in the 1990s and the growing role of the EU in the environmental field stimulated further advances in 'domestic' environmental policies of EU member states."[cxxxvii] Moreover, beyond the strength of domestic environmental initiatives and green political party influences working to enforce or weaken international environmental policy, Kelemen and Vogel's work posits that we must understand the US' ever-weakening international environmental participation and compliance in correlation to the political economy of regulatory standards, i.e. "when domestic standards on an issue are strict or promise to become strict, producers are less likely to oppose relevant international treaties and are more likely to join environmentalists in Baptist-Bootlegger style coalitions to advocate them. [W]hen […] standards are weak, they are more likely to oppose international environmental agreements."[cxxxviii] Kelemen and Vogel's research offers critical insight into a number of environmental policies to which the US has taken on a non-supportive role, if not that of outright rogue nation, including the 1986 Montreal Protocal on ozone depleting substances, 2000 Cartagena Protocal on Biosafety, 1992 UN Framework on Climate Change & the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, 1997 Kyoto Protocal on greenhouse gas emissions, 2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Ethnic studies scholar David Naguib Pellow argues that waste industry and policy remains at the heart of concerns for environmental justice on both a national and international spectrum:

> The waste industry is vitally important because it was, and remains, the major driver of the environmental justice movement and the academic and policy debates surrounding environmental racism. All across the United States (and indeed the Global South), communities have risen up against the waste industry's efforts to locate facilities in their back yards. And the uncontested holder of the distinction as the most vilified waste hauler in history is Waste Management, Inc, (WMX), headquartered in Oakbrook, Illinois, a Chicago suburb […] I propose we ask more piercing questions that seek to understand how this process [of careless waste management] originates and how we can restructure our social, political, and economic systems in ways that produce environmental justice rather than…injustice.[cxxxix]

Sparked by scandal resulting from multiple instances of trans-boundary hazardous dumping in the 1980s, the 1989 Basel Convention, and subsequent meetings, was the first international attempt to ban "the dumping of hazardous wastes from rich to poorer nations." In spite of its initial participation in the Basel Convention, the US remains one of only three nations--out of a 2010 current total 173 participating nations and governmental entities--that have refused to sign the amended ban on developed-to-underdeveloped nation transboundary dumping of hazardous wastes.[cxl] The US's inhibited Basel Convention participation further exemplifies the trends outlined by Kelemen and Vogel. Environmental scholar Jennifer Clapp outlines that multiple international and national level attempts to halt toxic dumping across borders have been unsuccessful at completely stopping trade in wastes given loopholes in the legal mechanisms of the ban such as industrial relocation to 'lucrative' locations in developing nations, the rise in attempted trade of so-called 'recyclables' just post enforcement of the Basel Convention principles, and uneven enforcement of the ban.[cxli] For instance, in 2009 alone both the Indian and Indonesian governments rejected ships bearing toxic wastes for scrapping or so-called

'recycling' owing largely to whistle blowing and media coverage by independent environmental action networks, such as BAN.[cxlii]

Understanding the role of domestic environmental regulation and green political advocacy within the broader context of ever-strengthening globalized trade measures such as NAFTA/CAFTA, offers insight into domestic and transboundary US trash policies, if only by virtue of the fact that such trade agreements both expand the production and consumption of material good across national borders, and likewise generate living, working, and environmental conditions that persistently fall within grey areas of social and legal accountability.[cxliii] Moreover, such a discussion establishes re-occurring transnational linkages to the specific ways in which US consumerist protectionism remains a constant presence, even in the midst of policies that critique consumption. I do not here suggest that international environmental policy is even close to offering solutions to global environmental concerns. I would, however, argue that the specific ways in which the US 'plays/does not play well with others' in global environmental policy-making is reflexive of broader historical trends of consumerist desire that construct an ideal citizen who is wedded to a so-called 'American way of life' facilitated by the myth of American exceptionalism and the material realities of global resource usurpation and dependency at much higher levels than many other nations of the world.[cxliv]

Bodies of Waste and Common Pools: Anxieties of Negotiating Trash as Commons

Our crap ends up in the ocean. It breaks down. It gets eaten by jellyfish [and] smaller life forms who are filter feeders. Bigger fish eat those, bigger fish eat those, and eventually, we start eating these creatures.
--Journalist, Thomas Morton[cxlv]

One of the most beautiful views of San Diego is from the summit of a small hill in Tijuana's municipal garbage dump. People live on that hill, picking through the trash with long poles that end in hooks made of bent nails. –Luis Alberto Urrea, from *Across the Wire*

In April 2008 I interviewed a seasoned train-hopper and cyclist who was passing through Lawrence, Kansas during a cross-country bike tour. As I prepared and tested the recording equipment, this interviewee, who initially struck me as fairly quiet and reserved, enthusiastically asked if I had heard about "the island of garbage the size of Texas in the Pacific Ocean"? I hadn't. Days later I received an email media clip on the subject.[cxlvi] I watched as CNN news reporter Eric Lanford voice-over narrated maps and diagrams of the deep-water ocean region, while flashing white arrows danced on the screen to indicate whirlpool-esque water flow tendencies that funnel trash, generating what turned out to be the Pacific gyre, not so much an 'island' as a whirpool zone. Water dumping is not a new phenomenon to US sanitation practices;[cxlvii] however, more pertinent to my analysis is the transnational dynamic of trash, an image of which is easily facilitated by the picture of a floating island of trash moving with the ebb and flow of water. Trash in this example of the floating Pacific gyre is both transnational and transboundary in nature.[cxlviii] In recent years, Transnational and Borderland American Studies scholars have shifted towards discussion of permeability in the flows of things over humans; or, as environmentalist and cultural commentator Derrick Jensen puts it, "I don't want you, but I do want the coffee grown on land that used to be yours."[cxlix] I here move to situate my conceptualization of trash as common pool resource in this project, a core point linking each of the subsequent chapters, and stemming from all of this talking trash.

First, in my move to talk trash in transnational, transboundary terms, I do not suggest a symbolic pondering of trash as *representative* of global flows, or labor, or resources. As both of the above epigrams convey, it is my intent to maintain the transnationality of the physical terrain of trash, as well as the permeable, transboundary, borderlessness of trash in this project. In positing first that trash must be thought of as transnational/boundary, I argue that trash has

agency in human lives; it *does* stuff. It morphs, breaks down, decomposes (or not), reforms, sparks protest, incites outrage, generates bigotry, gets eaten-drunk-breathed in-scratched off-burned-rubbed-stuck-pooped. As the historical narratives and oral history interviews convey throughout this dissertation, however, trash can serve as *both* potential resource and environmental hazard. It is both an inevitable bi-product of human existences and an embodied part of it. A 2002 Geological Survey report reprinted by the EPA suggests, for instance, that 80% of tested streams in 30 states in the US alone showed "traces of painkillers, estrogen, antidepressants, blood-pressure medicines, etc. in water samples."[cl] Other estimates argue that upwards of 250 million tons of hospital pharmaceuticals are thrown away via toilets and sewer systems annually; and much of the plastic that makes it to the world's water supplies, roughly half of the annual 100 billion pounds produced in the US, cannot break down when thrown away given their chemical make-ups.[cli] Embodiment and proximity thus make up the crux of many, many studies of waste and waste streams: Dr. Frederick Vom Saal's study of negative health effects of transboundary waterway dumping; UC Berkeley biologist Tyrone Hays' arguments for heightened awareness over Atrizyne spraying--the most common pesticide used in the US though banned in every nation of the EU, and produced by Syngenta, a subsidiary of Monsanto GMO crop company in St. Louis and used at roughly 80 million pounds each year; UC Berkeley Microbial and Mycological Ecologist Ignazio Chapela's findings of genetically modified seed strains in remote Mexican subsistence farming plots; or physicist and feminist environmentalist Vandana Shiva's suggestion that pesticide dumping contaminates water supplies--"We musn't forget that these chemicals were designed for warfare. They are the ultimate weapons of mass destruction. Every one of them came out of the war system. Now they are in our drinking water."[clii] The fine line exposed in each of these cases is that consumer products swiftly become

ingestible and embodied within waste streams. A central component to the discussion is, therefore, that trash, like other modifiers on the genetic, or internal organismal level, does not simply 'keep its distance' from humans and other life forms; rather, it becomes an embodied part of life.[cliii] For some people, these processes and contexts of proximity may result in a lack of agency or informed consent, as environmental scholar Giovanna di Chiro notes, "The environmental justice movement has elucidated the ways that poor communities and communities of color have shouldered an unequal burden of the negative externalities of modern industrial society—their lands, homes, communities, and bodies have been exploited, dumped on, and contaminated with toxic emissions resulting in disproportionate rates of environmental illnesses, reproductive harms, and degraded homelands."[cliv]

While political practices and policies swirling around trash in certain places may very well take a NIMBY (not in my back yard) approach to select communities and locales; ultimately, a massive global quantity of trash, upwards of 440 million tons of hazardous wastes alone, become threats to the embodied realities of communities elsewhere. Chilling histories of US sanitation practices and public health policies exemplify the specific ways in which waste is utilized to stigmatize certain populations—never more adequately linked to citizenship then when historian Susan Strasser comments on burgeoning 19th century waste and sanitation reform efforts,

> The language of urban sanitary reform paid particular attention to the refuse of immigrant poor. […] Surveys and studies showed that more affluent "Americans" actually produced more garbage, ashes, and rubbish than poor […] immigrants. But the rhetoric of refuse was intermingled with rhetoric about human refuse. In 1901, that language was inscribed in bronze on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty, in Emma Lazarus's 'The New Colossus,' 'Give me your tired, your poor…The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.'[clv]

So too are the US's *lack* of stringent transboundary dumping regulations a reminder of both the proximity and hierarchies so bound to the social fabrics of trash.

However, it would be easy to fall into, what I will call, a 'purity trap' in this project, given that questions dealing with trash must ultimately contend with concerns over pollution, degradation, embodiment, and informed consent. The propensity for tangentially linked concerns of environmental justice such as organics or natural foods, genetic modification, industrial agriculture, air quality, water quality to fall into slippery slope, biologically-determined declarations of so-called natural versus unnatural states, pure/tainted, modified/unmodified is, likewise, an obvious concern. In contrast, it might also be just as easy to slip into more traditional environmental preservation-centered rhetoric that assumes a trash-as-pollutant position. Likewise, Giovanna di Chiro argues against what she refers to as "polluted politics," asking in contrast, "What are the toxic residues of unrecognized or unacknowledged polluted politics that continue to reassert the normalized body and the naturalized environment and therefore impede the potential for forging coalition politics that move us towards a more just, green and sustainable future? Can we imagine environmental- feminist coalitions that can forge a critical normative environmental politics (we all should live in a clean environment; we all should have the right to healthy bodies) that resist appeals to normativity?"[clvi]

Use of the dumpster fringes at once lays bare an environmental imperative towards reuse, espouses a commons ethic to keep objects for redistribution accessible, and at often acts as a critique of consumption, particularly surplus subsidized production and waste. Yet, it also defies presumptions that human interactions with trash are automatically a threat to health and safety, as well as socio-cultural politics of cleanliness and dirtiness. Such defiance thereby lays bare the availability of reusable, often surplus resources, as well as strains against presumptions over

idealized citizen-consumers by way of, what I'll call, a politics of the 'rotten.' When I asked, "Why do you think people are so hesitant to be open about [the fact that they dumpster dive], and to speak up?" one interviewee grappled with this common stereotype of dumpsters and consumption of the 'rotten': "I think, you know, the stigma that dumpsters are slimy and full of rats. [pause] The shame that's supposed to go along with being poor in this society, like, if you're poor you're not supposed to talk about it or tell people. So if you're not poor you certainly wouldn't want people to think you're poor. I think those things play into it, a lot."[clvii]

I would, however, be painting the dumpstered landscape into broader historical, political, and policy narratives with much too broad a brush, were I to define diving materially, or even somehow ethically *beyond* consumption and consumerism. The sheer range of rationale and logic for diving amongst interviewees suggests that while the dumpster is the vehicle with which to reuse and salvage a wide range of materials, individual diver desires, motives, identities, and socio-economic status effect consumption outcomes, patterns, and habits. Diving is clearly a form of consumption linked to consumer patterns and trends, though in many cases, it is likewise non/anti-consumerist for environmental, political, or socio-economic reasons. However, as one interviewee mused,

> Anonymous: I really feel that [trashing] really made me deal with the issue of materialism Because what it seemed to me is that anything you could possibly want could possibly be in the trash…so you deal with this 'so, am I gonna take this home?' and of course you do at times. But then you have to deal with [the stuff].
>
> R: How DO you deal with that?
>
> Anonymous: Yeah, how do you handle that?!" [R & A chuckle] I went through this! That's why I say [it made me] deal with my own materialism…So, for *me* it brought me to the place of we have such a wasteful culture that there's just so much stuff. How much do you want to immerse your life in *stuff*?[clviii]

This interviewee later noted during our meeting that the purpose of intercepting foodstuff being thrown away at a local site was "to stop the waste stream" and to reuse the materials as much as possible. In these instances, the common pattern of diver anxiety over the material trends in waste patterns as represented by visualizing useful waste in dumpsters is unmistakable. Striking a balance in dealing with the materials becomes the larger issue, and for many that material anxiety perhaps resurfaces in the form of non-consumerist consumption, such as diving.

In socio-economic contrast, one interviewee, an aluminum scavenger, who experienced homelessness for a number of years noted, "[Dumpstering] wasn't a glory thing, I was making money. I was getting my living out of it. […] It's not a proud moment in your life, I don't care who you are. […] Maybe some of the young kids will say that it's uh, a point of pride, or part of their lifestyle that they're really happy with. I mean, when you're actually digging in the trash. You got your hands down into a bunch of crap, that's not the high point of your day. I mean you're earning it. It's a real job."[clix] For this particular interviewee, diving was a means to specific ends, rather than an environmental answer or political statement, though he also narrated the development of his homeless activism among other causes to me. Similarly, as the opening epigram conveys, the stigma of poverty in the United States plays a critical role in patterns of social distancing and legal anxiety associated with making use of waste. For some divers, that stigma is only felt in and around the space of the dumpster, while others experience such discrediting as just one more layered extension of other socio-economic stigma. R noted the following about his homeless experiences: "The biggest thing about homelessness in my mind is unemployability. You don't have a phone number for call back […] When I first came here I wasn't, uh, employable, at all […] You can get little peace meal jobs, but that's not gonna get you an apartment […] You don't [even] have a laundry to go home to every night."[clx] Still other

divers feel strongly that their daily habits and actions should reflect personal political beliefs, as with M's aforementioned comment, "I'm not down with exchange economies in general. […] I'm more for just sharing stuff because there's just so much;"[clxi] while a number of other interviewees make diving work within their current economic needs and contexts. Claiming that the space of the dumpster, and trashed materials more broadly, should remain outside of capitalist exchange flies in the face of the lived realities, even economic needs, of many divers, scrappers, recyclers, salvagers, and trashers.

My colleague Jennifer Ayres similarly documents "a trend to claim authenticity through dirt" within stylized trends in avant-garde fashion realms that seek out and acquire forms of fashionable 'dirt':

> Dirt and filth is only exciting if you have the options and resources at your disposal to go somewhere else, so this aesthetic is almost exclusively borne out of privilege. Instead of demonstrating commitment to sustainability, these looks highlight the privilege of leisurely travel, the privilege of being afforded mobility in an increasingly militarized state, and adventure-colonialism of being 'the first one' and 'bringing back' a unique, rare, only-one-available token."[clxii]

In contrast, Ayres suggests, "[O]utlets, thrift stores, flea markets, and dumpsters…draw people that view discarded goods in a way that allows for possibilities: they see resources where others see refuse and trash."[clxiii] Thus, my central focus for this project highlights trash as potential accessible common pool resource particularly, dare I say even *especially*, with regard to food waste in the United States. So, what exactly do I mean, then, by common pool resource?

~

Well, a lot of people presumed that [common control] was impossible for those who used a fishery, or a ground water basin, or a lake, or a river to, um, self organize. So self-organization was considered to be impossible. [T]hat was why they recommended either *The* Market or *The* State—not well defined, not well worked out, but these in idealized form.- 2009 Nobel Prize winner, Elinor Ostrom[clxiv]

In 2009, Political Science scholar Elinor Ostrom became the first woman to ever receive the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for her shared research on the successes of commons-based economic governance. During a Nobel interview in December with editor Adam Smith, Ostrom discussed her life's work on commons resource use and the capability for self-governance. While neither scholar argues for the application or enforcement of specific models of commons resource management, both Ostrom and her colleague Oliver Williamson suggest that multiple cross-disciplinary field studies on the topic since the 1960s--often referencing the work of Vincent Ostrom and scholarship of the Bloomington School on polycentric systems, which countered the notion of 'simplified,' so-called non-chaotic, centralized systems of governance--continue to show striking differences in levels of 'performance' such as economic equity, sustainable harvest, and accessibility and distribution of commons resources. As scholars Paul Dragos Aligica and Peter Boettke suggest, "[The Ostroms'] work argues for the wisdom of institutional diversity, looking to individuals to solve problems rather than relying on top down, one-size-fits-all solutions."[clxv] As a recent Nobel Prize interview suggests, Ostrom's career scholarship shows similarity and measurable success in localized systems of self-governance over the commons both in the lab, and in multiple settings of global field research. Thus, the notion of the commons, and what Ostrom refers to as "common pool resources," is of particular importance to understanding the multi-faceted ways in which humans have come to address concerns over accessibility and sustainability of resources through, often, localized trial and error. Charlotte Hess and Elinor Ostrom elsewhere note, "*Commons* is a general term that refers

to a resource shared by a group of people. In a commons, the resource can be small and serve a tiny group (the family refrigerator), it can be community level (sidewalks, playgrounds, libraries…) or it can extend to international and global levels (deep seas, the atmosphere, the internet, and scientific knowledge). It can be well bounded…transboundary; or without clear boundaries."[clxvi] I find this particular kernel especially applicable to 'trash talk' of the dumpster utilized as commons resource. A central thread linking the subsequent chapters of this project is this question of imagining trash as a commons resource. That is to say, how is this imaginary even possible, and what might it even look like? While I will not claim to have answered this question in any satisfactory manner; at the very least, in posing the question I venture to suggest that the willingness to grapple with waste, even in instances when this may be the result of economic or social privilege, implies a certain discomfort with what is found within the so-called 'rotten.' Moreover, in utilizing trash as a form of commons material, divers ultimately draw attention to, if not expressly highlight, many of the privatized ironies of surplus material presences in neo-liberal contexts or gaps between haves and have-nots. What does a commons approach to trash look like? I cannot say for sure, but I think its malleable forms might just cast a critical eye on questions of agency, accountability and informed consent in the production and disposal of waste as *public* rather than private. In this sense, imaging a commons approach to trash might resist spatializations of waste as 'away,' remote, hidden, or otherwise secret approaches to its material existence and maintenance.

My intention in this suggestion is most definitely not to dispel well-established environmental justice arguments as myth--some trashscapes are definitely threats to public health and safety, as well as to the health of soils, water, and other organisms to multiple and varying degrees.[clxvii] The dumpster is not here constructed as a *solution* or an ideal that others need apply

to their own lives. In the ensuing chapters, I do, however, argue that a critical eye towards consumption practices and an attempted understanding of direct actions involving the space of the dumpster are highly public, highly political acts given current environmental, political and economic consumption trends of transnational import. As material culture scholars Matthew Hilton and Martin Daunton note, "The politics of consumption is no longer about shopping for identity, but about the global institutions that shape and determine the markets we are forced to operate within."[clxviii] Through the continued viewfinder of feminist environmental thought and oral histories with dumpster divers, a politics of trashscapes as commonscapes emerges.

Chapter 2: Situating Food in the Dumpster

In her poem "That the Science of Cartography is Limited" Eavan Boland writes about visiting the site of a 19th-century Irish famine road and of what maps of the area do not have the language or space to convey: "When I take down/ the map of this island, it is never so/ I can say here is/ the masterful, the apt rendering of/ the spherical as flat, nor/ an ingenious design which persuades a curve/ into a plane, /but to tell myself again that the line which says woodland and cries hunger/ and gives out among sweet pine and cypress, and finds no horizon/ will not be there."[clxix] The poem speaks back to dominant narratives about the famine through its documentation and remembrance of the road's material existence, though its presence is not represented on official maps of Ireland. In similar fashion, I wonder after maps, materials, and spaces in this chapter. No physical map of the US tells the affective narratives of economic downturn and uncertainty that mark this historical moment, and yet this reality looms ever-present and influences the topographies of food in/security and recovery that I will here discuss. Based upon this knowledge, where might we (re)imagine the dumpster within such a narrative of economic uncertainty? Is it even possible to imagine, given the social and legal taboos so associated with dumpstered materials and spaces, particularly when it comes to discourses of food? I do not here suggest that the dumpster is an answer to the landscape of US food security. Yet, in a moment of anxiety over food systems; in a context of high US food insecurity levels; high surplus food waste; and record US reliance on food stamps--1 in 8 Americans or roughly 38 million people, 6 million of whom report no other income, and a record number of 'criminal' food stamp sales—the above questions strike me as especially relevant.[clxx]

Viewed from another spatial perspective, making use of recovered foods such as foods pulled from a dumpster strikes me as indicative of an incredibly savvy ability to read urban

foodscapes that are otherwise fraught with cultural taboo, or which prove as scapes intended to be erased entirely by way of placement at the curb or in a dumpster. Throw in that some of these spaces are then locked, compacted, fenced in, barred off, etc. and the intended erasure seems even further highlighted. Though in this dissertation I have chosen *not* to out details relating to specific frequented dive locations and 'hotspots'—information which often surfaces during oral interviews, I am well aware of national, even international, attempts to spatially document the dumpster through the creation of dumpster maps noting specific locations and common finds.[clxxi] Therefore, in this chapter, I situate multiple local and broadly national instances of food recovery as a means of exploring the ways in which diving narratives, particularly those associated with food, fit into, speak to, and/or defy discourses and landscapes of security, hunger, and cultural taboos associated with waste proximity.[clxxii] Through analysis of multiple interviews and current news coverage addressing food-specific diving, I suggest that the dumpster-as-food-source offers much in the way of information about diving as a method of food recovery, as an alternative food economy, and as an act necessitating an interwoven understanding of, what I call, 'a politics of clean' given its relation to the cultural taboos so often associated with sanitation and waste. While further primary research is necessary to establish more definitive connections between acts of food recovery and socio-political anxieties over individuals and communities who do not eat the 'right' foods, the analysis provided in the pages that follow permits an extended discussion of the common stereotypes associated with dumpsters and divers outlined in *Chapter 1*-specifically dumpster 'diners'- in order to generate a more centralized focus on food in *Chapter 2*.

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In this chapter, I begin by framing the dumpster within questions of food security and hunger. I highlight binary presumptions about the dumpster as solely a site of privilege and/or absolute deprivation. Such an approach is a means of generating a much more complex conversation about food recovery especially within current trans-nationalized contexts fraught with food anxieties for both producers *and* consumers. However, in this chapter I also wish to emphasize the particular taboos associated with food waste recovery, taboos that are particularly embodied, and *hardly* new to the aversions associated with waste proximity in the US. Thus, I trace a tenuous US history commonly linking people and communities with waste through to the contemporary, highly globalized, neo-liberalized moment. I pay special attention to the ways in which waste proximity has been identified with specific bodies that are highly gendered, racialized, and classed. Linking trash picking and reuse to historicized presumptions of cleanliness, and the historical processes that idealized certain materials, labor, and lifestyle over reuse practices raises questions of critical import when applied specifically to food reuse. I situate literature addressing the social fabrics of salvage through narratives of scrap, salvage, and reuse within historical US contexts of turn of the century urban sanitation efforts.[clxxiii] I then overlap exploration of specific systemic and legal mechanisms used to delineate so-called 'problematic' or 'tenuous' citizenship, thereby generating what I argue to be a reoccurring theme of 'ideal' citizenship and state paternalism by way of normative constructions of cleanliness. Intertwining broader social histories of scrap and salvage with the long-standing complexities and politics of reuse as it relates to social acceptance and citizenship generates a much clearer understanding of common cultural discomforts with [food] waste recovery. Finally, I utilize this renewed understanding to explore the dynamics of the lock down, privatization, and even

charitization of food and food spaces as relational to what I historically trace and presently hear in interviews from the dumpstered periphery. *Chapter 2* ultimately posits that while speaking broadly about dumpstered spaces as potential commons sites as outlined in *Chapter 1* is useful for framing initial discussion of the materials, spaces, *and* people who may make up or make use of the dumpster, a more targeted application of commons spacializations as relational to questions of food in a highly globalized, neo-liberal world is growing ever more pertinent both to contemporary food movements, and to normative food production, consumption and distribution trends within the US and trans-nationally.

"You begin with the possibilities of the material": Food Within a Politics of Clean[clxxiv]

I've always been attracted to familiar or ordinary things because I find them a lot more mysterious.
-Robert Rauschenberg[clxxv]

Trashy. White Trash. Piece of trash. Looks like trash. Trailer Trash. I'm sure you've heard such epithets applied to both people and places that are stereotyped as less than desirable or acceptable. Common presumptions about making use of the dumpster often revolve around a hierarchy of understanding trash materials and spaces through a lens of respectability over poverty, or even supposed desperation. While this is not to say that such life experiences do not drive one's use of the dumpster, I do want to highlight that such reasons are not the only rationale for its usage. As a reflection of such presumptions, typically when I tell people that I study trash and narratives of reuse I get what I now refer to as the 'wrinkled nose effect,' as people's noses betray their silent wonder after my sanity in actually choosing to study such unpleasentries as trash. I mean trash is gross, right? It's stinky, grimy, dingy, goopy, insect-enticing, bacteria-laden matter--among so many other spine-tingling negative descriptors to captivate the imagination. If trash is *dirty*, then how in the world does one "begin with the

possibilities of the material," as the Rauschenberg-derived title of this segment suggests? How does one reconcile that mental image of *dirty* with useful resources--with things to put in the house, or to wear, or worse yet (audience, here is where you gasp) to cook with as a food resource? As mentioned in *Chapter 1*, popular representations often depict trash reuse within contexts of environmental eccentricity, hipster fanaticism, or dire poverty and/or homelessness; and generally as public-health-threat, such as in instances of hoarding. As one exemplary episode of the television series *Hoarders* conveys about a formerly homeless hoarder, "Steven is at risk of eviction from his government subsidized housing" as a direct result of his hoarding tendencies related to his dumpster diving practices.[clxxvi] In this episode of the series, the dumpster becomes a site of pathological tension, and a direct source for hoarding rehabilitation as his hoarding is labeled a health threat both to himself and to others in the building.

My central point is that a juxtaposition of extremes here emerges: the diver solely in contexts of privilege or poverty. Or putting it even more bluntly, the diver represented as predominantly white, wealthy, trust-a-farian hipster *or* homeless person barely scraping by. My primary research with divers however, suggests that there are many more lived experiences associated with the dumpster. In some cases the interviews affirm these two extremes, and yet at other times, interviews completely reject the stereotype binary of diver as elite or poverty ridden. Likewise, interviews often reject the pathologization of trash picking as dangerous public health nuisance. As K put it during our interview in 2008, the generation of trash may very well be the public health nuisance: "You know what there's a social aspect to your trash. [R: yeah, um huh] Just because you've thrown it out doesn't mean you are not responsible for that trash. It has to go *somewhere* and so there's this disconnect [of] 'I throw it away, I don't have to worry about it, and I *don't* want anyone else messing with it.' […] I see [trashing] as an ecologically responsible

thing to do."[clxxvii] On the contrary, the interviews open interesting discourses surrounding the long-standing historical connection of waste to so-called 'problematic' populations or tenuous citizenship—a point that will continue to be of import in the following *Chapter 3*, as I document a complete flip in idealized citizenship from out and out citizen-consumer to frugal salvager during the modernist war era. As mentioned in *Chapter 1*, the dumpster serves highly varied purposes for many diver interviewees, including regular access to a broader range of ingredients, economic savings on certain materials to permit purchasing power elsewhere (eg. copper stripping, aluminum cans), quenching hunger in the short-term, or redistribution of goods that would otherwise rot or be disposed of, *as well as* a presumed 'hipster' or counter-cultural romanticism and embellishment of authenticity through encounters with 'dirt' so often depicted in popular representations. The very absence of diversity and complexity in popular representations seems to suggest that the purpose of such public discourse is purely comical, and perhaps inadvertently so, ends up serving as a means of shaming or criticizing would-be waste-recovery into a more 'civilized respectability' through the proper or rather, necessary, channels of capital exchange.

It would be unwise, however, to suggest that all divers experience stigma over the use of this space in the same ways. Diver identities ultimately play a crucial role in the socio-legal dynamics of dumpstered spaces and food resource availability. As discussed in *Chapter 1*, not all divers receive equal legal or social treatment, though many experienced varying degrees of stigmatization surrounding their activities. While I cannot say definitively why there is such differentiation in experiences, such as the multiple legal examples outlined in the previous chapter, it does seem to suggest a combination of factors that could include identity. For some, the stigma experienced at sites of disposal becomes merely an extension of other socio-economic

stigma, for others, such stigma, if it is present at all, may prove to be an anomaly experienced only in contexts of waste recovery. Take for instance the following discussion I had with M about dumpstering for food in Montreal:

> I remember the cops came up to me once in between two dumpsters, I was riding my bike, and they were like 'What are you doing?' and I was like, 'I'm riding my bike to go eat trash.' They were like, 'Alright, cool. Do you have a screwdriver with you? And, I think this whole time they were thinking that I was some suspect for some crime involving a screwdriver, because they didn't seem to care at all about me having tons of food in my bag or riding around looking super sketchy.[clxxviii]

In this case, the question of diving legality does not seem to pose a central problem; whereas, the possible racial dynamics of being pulled over (if one can be, in fact, pulled over on a bicycle) and questioned about his "sketchy" seeming activities (i.e. riding one's bike at night while wearing a back pack?) as a bi-lingual person of mixed racial heritage, prove an interesting point concerning gradations of diver stigma experienced within and around the space of the dumpster.[clxxix] During another interview, K noted, "The police are never very [pause…] they just tell ya to move on. It wasn't [pause…] they asked for identification, they didn't decide to press charges for whatever reason. And so, that was that."

> R: Was that when you were younger?
> K: Yeah, when I was still learning the rules, [and] that after dark, and the reason I think the police pull you over is because they're thinking that you're breaking in."[clxxx]

The hesitations and pauses here might indicate that contrary to what we had discussed earlier about younger, perhaps, lesser experienced divers convey about feeling ostracized by the police or others upset by the recovery of what is still viewed as 'their personal items,' K conveys his encounters with police—or lack thereof later in life--in terms of a greater sense of expertise in reading dumpstered landscapes, in knowing what to do and when to do it to avoid confrontation.

However, as someone who has dumpstered at varied times of day and often preferably at night though not definitively so, K's comment leads me to wonder after the role of intent in confrontational experiences. Certainly, those divers seeking a sense of 'authenticity' or counter-cultural appeal through 'dirt' might see such encounters as a badge of honor—what one interviewee identified as "not the high point of your day [though] maybe some of the young kids will say that it's uh, a point of pride, or part of their lifestyle that they're really happy with."[clxxxi] But, could we also flip this idea of inexperience on its head and view this as a form of public discourse beyond questions of 'authenticity'--as a form of outing oneself in the hopes of demonstrating new sensibilities surrounding waste? Or, at the very least, simply a more public cynicism about feeling pathologized for reusing what others no longer desire? Perhaps this conceptualization is too broad, too ideal, too romantic in its parameters, but forgive me if I pursue this just a moment further by suggesting that while many divers conveyed skepticism at the thought of diving as revolutionary act, or as a form of dismantling capitalism;[clxxxii] others did stress the role of outing oneself as a way of critiquing the pathologization of 'dirt', such as when one diver discussed a friend:

> A: "I had a friend who […] I'd say for a good twenty years he did not buy any clothes and most of all that time he never did any laundry […] It just shows that there was just *that* much clothing.
>
> R: Was this something that your friend would discuss, I mean, would talk about, like [A: yeah] in other words, to make a point?
>
> A: Yeah, he also liked shocking people [both chuckle, R: um hm] ya know, was not at all abashed about talking about that, or, being gay. Just, like he was just *out*, out with it [all]. But, ya know most people, myself included, are feeling more discreet, or it's not culturally acceptable […].[clxxxiii]

Context seems key in each of these examples of stigma, or lack thereof. Still, as I pose the question of context I have to note that further research is necessary to address this point of varied

stigma in depth. But, how might the taboos and legal implications of taking from the trash effect people and bodies that are expected to move in the world differently, as might be the case with female-identified divers, queer-identified divers, African-American divers, or, say, those who might be 'read' as non-citizens? K's discussion of the police fits into what scholar Sara Ahmed re-conceptualizes as the figure of the stranger within acts of (mis) recognizing the stranger as a figure already known and hence recognizable as the Other, as opposed to unknown and unrecognizable.[clxxxiv] As Ahmed notes in relation to Neighborhood Watch programs in the US and Britain that perpetuate the Stranger Danger ideology, "Information is not given about how to tell the difference between normal and suspicious, because that difference is already 'sensed' through a prior history of making sense as the making of 'the common.'"[clxxxv] Thus, one could argue that the more tangible reasons behind rejecting diving—the supposed theft or destruction of private resources, concern for cleanliness, fear of identity theft, the threat of potential bodily harm, etc. (all consistent reasons offered during oral history interview) likewise culminate into a broader frustration with individuals who will not or cannot purchase. To be found in, perhaps even near or remotely interested in, the dumpster, or to witness a person in a dumpster is a codified act signifying a threat to what has become privatized, to what could potentially be purchased, to what is already 'owned.' As just one more case in point, perhaps C's legal experiences as outlined in *Chapter 1*--arrest, fines and community service--are intertwined with the identity dynamics and visibility politics discussed in a later zine, "I'm working class poor, and I live in a trailer. […] I'm also queer."[clxxxvi]

Thus, what I reference throughout *Chapter 2* as 'a politics of clean' might equally correlate to a broad spectrum of diver privilege and identity, exposing dynamics between presumed cleanliness and visibility politics. Certainly, exemplary instances of this are available

in the turn-of-the-century, largely immigrant, sanitation history I work through in this chapter, so why not contemporarily as well? However, it is pertinent to note that the other half of this equation must be understood through practices and processes of disposal specifically within contemporary neoliberal environments. Though not all of the oral histories exhibit an awareness of, or attention to, say, as one exemplary interviewee put it, "stopping the waste stream" because there is simply "so much stuff";[clxxxvii] almost all of the interviewees exhibited a transnational understanding of the material culture of garbage as something that a.) Can and should be made use of if and when possible even *in spite of* taboo social norms, and b.) Is reflexive of dizzying global environmental justice concerns, just as K's emphasis on the social responsibilities attached to trash created by both individuals and societies underscores. One might argue that such claims are chalked up to a certain level of social privilege that tolerates non-respectable behavior *because* of one's established social status—and sure, this is absolutely possible in some instances though not inclusive of all examples. I argue, however, that such a critical outlook of systemic (and systematic) global waste scales and the possibility of ever-encroaching waste proximities across borders suggests an invaluable understanding of garbage as being of transnational materiality in a globalized world. That is to say, as being both materially constructed of *stuff* from multiple locations, as well as being symbolically representative of material flows in an increasingly globalized world.

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During a recent, much loved, and widely attended public event in Lawrence, I signed up to work an eight-hour events crew shift where, quite ironically I might add (I was still in the midst of drafting this project), I was put on trash duty emptying public waste bins, managing recycling bins, and helping vendors set-up and take-down their displays. As a diver, I have

proven to be quite picky in my own habits—I often choose to go alone, in the evening, and only when I am looking for specific items or need to make money through resale. Once when prompted about why I found diving to be so much fun, I found myself responding that in fact I didn't find it all that pleasurable, but more a valuable resource that I associated with work--a way to "hustle to make money" as one interviewee put it--and an extension of my family's auction business. In contrast, this event instance proved to be much more uncompromisingly visible and public. It equally proved to be heavy manual labor (as was expected), but it was accompanied by the awkward glances, quiet whispers, and surprised stares of event attendees who were there to enjoy their weekend, not to be confronted by the waste stream effects of their very presence. Ultimately, without the event waste services, the crowded nature of the day would have quickly proven uncomfortable, as trash bins filled beyond capacity, and a steady stream of attendees loomed. Still, when it comes to trash, actually having to handle it in any capacity, looking at it, carrying it or loading it, in essence *dealing* with it not just generating it, is just too unpleasant for some. And, herein lies the fundamental merger of conceptualizing dirt in capitalist contexts: capitalism permits *some* people to avoid dirt or proximity to dirt (especially their own); and at its highest functioning, capitalism depends upon the production of dirt—of waste and surplus to achieve its goals of supply and demand.

Anthropologist Mary Douglas suggests, "[D]irt is essentially disorder. There is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the eye of the beholder. If we shun dirt, it is not because of craven fear, still less dread of holy terror. Nor do our ideas about disease account for the range of our behavior in cleaning or avoiding dirt. Dirt offends against order. Eliminating it is not a negative moment, but a positive effort to organize the environment."[clxxxviii] Applying this argument to the dumpster raises fascinating points about this very public space and the materials

found there, while highlighting unique social justice dynamics regarding dirt as applied to people *as well as* to foodstuff, all of which is just ripe for critical inquiry. Regarding Douglas' notion of purification as positive ritual, the dumpster is indicative of a receptacle for those 'rituals' of purification, in essence, the other side of such re-ordering processes. To inquire after what is found therein is to peer into a broad range of materials that may or may not still hold use-value or subjective beauty for others—all of which is dependant upon geography, time, cultural factors and individual behaviors.[clxxxix]

Utilizing food as a more specific framing for this point about "dirt as disorder" or dirt as "matter out of place," however, opens unique discussion necessarily entwined with discourses of capitalist political economies. Anyone who dumpsters for food in the US with regularity will generally find surplus foods available, and often in large quantities. Thus, such ritual perceptions of dirt as applied to dumpsters containing surplus food waste raise pertinent questions about the very systems of order and 'purification' that so often control current food sources. Ultimately, one is led to inquire then: What is the rationale for throwing these now 'dirty' items away as "matter out of place"? And, why the need to lock down the waste sites once the materials have been disposed? Within capitalist contexts, making a profit on the materials, whether they are of sale-value to producers/distributors or not, must remain central for the system to be in 'good' working order.

An anonymous interviewee provided insight into the lock-down of food waste streams in the US:

> All grocery stores throw out lots of food because it's just cosmetically damaged, or there's a few left in the lot…[so] there's still a tremendous amount of food that's thrown out. Although grocery stores have more and more moved to grinders and such because they don't want the waste stream to be something someone would eat. […] A liability issue is part of it, but more they don't want a bunch of people back there grabbing food and maybe it'd cut into their sales, although a lot

> of folks that are going after food wouldn't necessarily make a lot of purchases, or wouldn't buy those foods, so I think it's more just the…not wanting to foster that sort of activity.[cxc]

Actions of food recovery, like diving, are examples of creative approaches to grappling with large-scale food waste and food in/securities as lived experiences. One self-described low-income interviewee divulged, "Definitely as an adult [diving] is something that I've done everywhere that I've lived**.** I remember one time […] pulling a huge restaurant size sack of onions out of this coffee shop trash pile. And some of them were bad but most of them were good. And now it's my standard if I go to the supermarket and the produce is kind of iffy, I'm just like 'I've pulled better stuff out of the trash I'm not paying for this.'"[cxci] This person's point speaks to what the aforementioned anonymous interviewee brainstorms about the potential 'threat' that diving poses to grocery sales, because, quite frankly, once you've lifted the lid and got a peek at standard American food waste, who would buy sad-looking produce if there's better to be had from the dumpster?

Other interviewees discuss more generally the *overwhelming* food (among other material) possibilities of the dumpster. The previously cited anonymous interviewee declared, "There wouldn't be an opportunity to dumpster dive if we didn't have so much material in our culture […] and especially of the hard goods and soft goods, right? Probably any culture is going to have wasted food [but] in terms of our country it's just *so much* that you end up with these waste streams that are just *huge*, that it just shows you, uh, how much a materialist country and economy we are."[cxcii] One couple narrated their experiences with surplus consumables, "Basically, […] it's a commonly known thing […] that the community shares this resource…That if you need juice [chuckles], or you just want juice you would go there, and on any given day you can find cases and cases [in the distribution center's dumpsters]."[cxciii] One

Kansan recounted, “It was about ‘72 or ‘73 when I first started [diving]. And then the obvious next step was to do grocery. We started checking behind grocery stores. For many years I pretty much lived out of dumpsters […] I lived *high* out of dumpsters. It was just like going into the grocery store…sometimes out of date and sometimes surplus stuff.”[cxciv]

Diver M. narrated the experience of being ‘found out’ by family members by stating, “I told them that ‘this [stuff on the table] is all trash; I didn’t buy any of it. This is all stuff that’s been thrown out. I never buy food.’ And they were just kind of like, “Whoa, whoa, whoa.”[cxcv] Other divers experience similar ambiguity when people discover their food scavenging tendencies, such as this aforementioned quote from an interviewee responding to my question regarding what it takes to be a diver: “I think it takes not caring what people think. Like not being concerned that people are gonna think it’s gross or that there’s something wrong with you for doing it. And sometimes, I kind of struggle with that.”[cxcvi] One formerly homeless interviewee argued, “I don’t want to say I was a little too proud, but I think I was a little too proud [to dumpster at first on that particular activist walk across the country]. Um, digging in somebody else’s trash, and diapers and needles and rotten food--there’s a lot of things that you have to kind of overcome before you are able to dig in the trash.”[cxcvii] Though I take issue with the presumption that all dumpsters are equally dirty or dangerous, or hold the same *kinds* or quantities of ‘dirt’, the question of respectability in diving, especially with regard to a heightened awareness of social status, remains critical in the latter two instances. Similarly, Psyche Williams-Forson highlights the role of decorum in war-era black middle and working-class discourses of the era. In her analysis of black, newly urban dwellers of the 1930s, she argues,

> Collecting stale and sometimes rotten food that had been dumped by merchants in the ‘Black Belts’ or left behind and discarded at wholesale markets enabled some of these women to feed their families and purchase property. Yet despite this disposition to thrift, black women reformers…[used] food as one of the many

> platforms, [seeking] to instill notions of respectability, decorum and selfhood into the minds of working-class black women.[cxcviii]

This question of respectability and waste, whether it be internalized or socially applied to the body is, therefore, nothing new. Rather, it has a long, heated narrative in United States sanitation and public health history.

"Getting a Living Out of It": Tracing Cultural Narratives of Scavenging[cxcix]

As one of my interviewee's noted, "[Dumpstering] wasn't a glory thing, I was making money. I was getting my living out of it. […] It's not a proud moment in your life, I don't care who you are. […][cc] This person's previous experiences with homelessness specifically inform the ways in which use of the dumpster construct possibility. In her important study of homelessness and scavenging in San Francisco sociologist Teresa Gowan argues, "The collection and sale of other people's trash has long been a common means of survival for very poor people all over the world […] Trash pickers are back in the United States. As state laws over the last twenty years added redemption taxes to the costs of beverages, recycling became an important source of income for poor people. The US recycling industry mushroomed on both the formal and informal levels."[cci] Gowan's work ultimately highlights scavenging as a means of "combat[ing] stigma and creat[ing] a space for self-respect and solidarity" through the construction of alternative economies of reuse framed within manual labor and self-reliance, just as the title for this chapter segment highlighting information from my interview similarly reveals.[ccii] While I agree with Gowan's assessment that alternative economies of trash reuse and scavenging do in fact function as a means of survival in locations across the globe, information provided by my interviewees also suggests that scavenging for materials to reuse in the

household or (more importantly for this chapter) for food consumption purposes, can equally serve as a political or activist-centered outlet for some divers who might also have access to money or other social capital resources that could otherwise shield them from the cultural taboos and decline in respectability so often attributed to waste proximity. Susan Strasser similarly notes, "As always and everywhere, poor people sell and reuse what they can, while a broad movement to protect and restore the environment has encouraged some who do have money to adopt ways of life that acknowledge the effects of trash on the global ecosystem."[cciii] Historically speaking however, the processes of "getting a living out of" scavenging for reusable materials was often highly gendered and performed within predominantly immigrant communities, creating complex residual social hierarchies of 'good' citizenship linked to what I call 'a politics of clean' regarding spatial as well as bodily proximities to waste materials. To better understand present-day anxieties and associations of reuse as well as the legal ramifications previously outlined in *Chapter 1*, I turn to America's waste ridden past to explore both the historical material *and* social fabrics of trash.

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Thinking about waste engages a long and complex US history of public health and sanitation measures involving scientific and technological exploration and contested citizenship. Engaging this history of sanitation requires an understanding of the interaction between the socio-political fabric of garbage and the technological twists, turns, and processes that have marked the terrain of sanitation and public health measures in the United States. Multiple interdisciplinary scholars have tackled the history of shifting public health and sanitation policies along clashing racial-ethnic, class, and gender-based lines of critical analysis.[cciv] In spite of the expansive geographic differences explored in such historical public health and sanitation scholarship, the work

persistently exemplifies a.) How the processes and materials that led to the rise of public health and sanitation reform were applied to specific stigmatized bodies and b.) The specific ways environmentally racist public health practices targeted particular communities. These themes remain crucial to my research because each uncovers the overlooked histories of large populations of targeted communities forced into the center stage of public health & sanitation policies and technological changes enforced along racist, ethnocentric, classist and sexist ideals of health, cleanliness, germ protection theories, and so-called public (read white) interests.

Ethnic studies scholar Natalia Molina, for instance, explores the role that 19th and early 20th century public health officials and policies played in constructing the racialized terrain of 'foreigners' in Los Angeles: "Issues of race, class, and gender were considered in all aspects of health officials' work, from identifying and defining problems, to developing preventative health care programs, to handling disease outbreaks. Disease itself was defined as much by sociocultural beliefs in the inherent uncleanliness of immigrants and nonwhites as by biological explanations. Such definitions effectively stigmatized entire populations of already-marginalized groups in the city."[ccv] Similarly, in his recent publication mapping the racialized terrain and embodied history of tuberculosis in African Americans living in Baltimore, historian Samual Roberts notes, "Much of the stigma that condensed around the image of the black patient was immanent of modernizing public health as a mode of governance and its contested relation to citizenship […] The stigmatization or criminalization of certain behaviors, combined with the barrage of literature, advertisements, public lectures and demonstrations, and visual images, had the cumulative effect of not only raising public awareness [about tuberculosis] but also drawing enforceable distinctions between innocent victims and incorrigible anti-social consumptives."[ccvi] Both Molina and Roberts' work likewise recall Foucault's explorations of eighteenth century

medicalization processes wherein he notes, "the progressive emplacement of what was to become the great medical edifice of the nineteenth century cannot be divorced from the concurrent organization of a politics of health, the consideration of disease as a political and economic problem for social collectivities which they must seek to resolve as a matter of overall policy."[ccvii] The rise of public health and sanitation processes that made this history a reality suggest an overwhelming interplay between the material culture of wastes, the moral and political reforms used to address burgeoning waste concerns, and the rhetorical and socio-political *actions* that equated certain bodies to trash or with the problems associated with overwhelming industrial waste capacities, and the policies and practices that ensued.

Discussions of waste, citizenship, and surveillance were, thus, a central part of public health and sanitation reforms of the 19th and early 20th centuries: "Public health served as one of the most agile and expansive regulatory mechanisms in nineteenth-century American cities. Next to the police and tax assessors, municipal public health administrators assumed the most sweeping authority to survey and monitor the city and its inhabitants […] the idea of securing the 'health' of the population linked the condition and the conduct of individuals with the vitality, strength, and prosperity of society overall."[ccviii] As Molina has argued, "Because medical discourse had the power to naturalize racial categories, it also had the effect of naturalizing societal inequalities. Rather than addressing the structural inequalities that hosted virulent diseases, public health departments consistently identified the root problem as racialized people who were in need of reform. By shaping racial categories and infusing them with meaning, health officials helped define racialized people's place in society."[ccix] Both historian Nayan Shah and Natalia Molina here suggest the powerful influence that the landscape of public health had upon the lives and the socio-economic success of multiple populations and peoples. Likewise,

the domain of public health and sanitation play a crucial role in the perpetuation of resources being funneled into certain projects and neighborhoods over others, "The many connections between the health departments and the broader municipal infrastructure challenge the idea of public health as being driven by pure principles of 'scientific objectivity.' Overarching social and political issues of the time played essential roles in the development of the city and county health departments, determining where clinics were established and what types of programs were offered to whom."[ccx]

Expanding beyond the early rise of sanitation measures of late 19th and early 20th centuries, two exemplary directions in public health histories include either an early, detailed attention to poor, disenfranchised, or immigrant communities as public health problems, or an absolute neglect of the needs of communities unfairly identified with or associated with waste. This latter proves to be the case in the work of my colleague Derrel Enck-Wanzer, whose analyses of the infamous 1969 Garbage Offensive taking place in the Puerto Rican Young Lords' community in New York suggest an intertwining of non-ideal citizenship and sanitation neglect. He notes:

> Garbage was a significant problem in communities such as El barrio/East Harlem. Streets were littered with debris of both the conventional (waste paper, food, plastics, etc.) and the unconventional (cars, tires, glass, sinks, etc.) kinds. The first issue the newly formed New York Young Lords mobilized around was garbage collection […] When the city continued to deny regular garbage services or the resources [to] take care of things on their own (brooms, trash bags, etc.) the Young Lords and community members repeatedly blocked the streets with burning debris.[ccxi]

After the Offensive, Young Lords continued to organize around the health and sanitation needs of their community. As the Lords' newspaper *Palante* reported, "When our people came here in the 1940's, they told us New York was the land of milk and honey… Our men can't find

work…Our women are forced to become prostitutes. Our young people get hooked on drugs. And they won't even give us brooms to sweep up the rubbish on our streets." Mirroring the Black Panther's ten-point plan, the YLO demanded "regular collection of trash; at least ten brooms and trash barrels per block; the hiring of more Puerto Ricans by the Sanitation Department; and higher starting pay for sanitation workers."[ccxii] Moreover, points eight and nine of the plan clearly outline environmental racism faced by Puerto Rican communities in the connections made between public health and sanitation concerns, "[8] We want 'door-to-door' preventative health services emphasizing environment and sanitation control, nutrition, drug addiction, maternal and child care and senior citizen services. [9] We want education programs for all the people to expose health problems—sanitation, rats, poor housing, malnutrition, police brutality, pollution, and other forms of oppression."[ccxiii] Highlighting these linkages between material culture and the social fabrics of trash prove crucial to piecing together a broader understanding of the social and legal stigma of trash reuse.

In his landmark text historicizing the shifting American terrain of sanitation practices and public health policy, Martin Melosi suggests that the rise of public sanitation shifts in the United States is welded to the emergence of laissez-faire capitalism**.** Brought about by the industrial revolution, this resulted in massively overcrowded urban centers, which sparked an interest in the municipal as vehicle for changes in waste and public sanitation practices—what Melosi and other scholars have referred to as "municipal socialism," or, "a demand for services provided by the city rather than the individual."[ccxiv] Melosi has noted that sanitation was of particular importance given that, "industrial cities paid a high price for their rapid population growth and economic dynamism. They experienced crowded tenement districts, chronic health problems, billowing smoke, polluted waterways, traffic congestion, unbearable noise, and mounds of

putrefying garbage. Americans were unprepared to deal with the extent of these pollutants and the rapid transformation of the Unites States into an urbanized nation."[ccxv] Furthermore, in her seminal social historical exploration of trash, reuse, waste, and production, historian Susan Strasser sets the stage for waste volumes brought about by the explosion in industrial goods and services, "the physical volume produced by American industry nearly tripled and the horsepower of industrial machinery quadrupled between 1899 and 1927. American industry spewed out a wealth of standardized, uniform goods that cost money to replace the makeshift, the homemade and the handmade."[ccxvi]

Industrial shifts likewise slowly altered the social terrain surrounding trash and its ecosystems of reuse. Strasser suggests that the early "trade in used goods amounted to a system for reuse and recycling that provided crucial domestic resources of raw materials [and] scavenging was essential to that system […]. The old systems of recycling began to pass into history during the decades around the turn of the twentieth century."[ccxvii] Mechanized technological changes further challenged the human systems of reuse and barter that had been a crucial part of both urban and rural terrains previously, "Sanitary reformers and municipal trash collection did away with the swill children. New papermaking technologies substituted wood pulp for rags. Mechanization, and later, prohibition destroyed the used bottle business. Swift and Armour produced and sold enough bones to put an end to collections from scavengers. The giant modern meatpackers marketed byproducts to fertilizer companies and other firms that required massive amounts of skin, hair, and bones; they also produced their own fertilizer, glue, and other products that used animal wastes."[ccxviii] Susanne Friedberg's fascinating explorations of transnational changing conceptualizations of freshness, such as localized cultural resistances to frozen foods (as opposed to freshly harvested or killed) as *real*, safe foods likewise suggests that

the technological processes utilized to mechanize and mobilize frozen meats on a global scale--via Frenchman Charles Tellier's 1878 invention of the Frigorifique--resulted in new practices like US meat packer industrial processes, "[Packers] developed national and international markets for every conceivable by-product—from margarine to hairpins—and used the profits to keep prices down on their main product fresh meat. Not least, the packers invested in refrigerator cars, or "reefers."[ccxix] Dissent such as the aforementioned exemplifies the twists and turns that industrialized technological changes brought to bear upon myriad established social practices and labor forms; but it is also indicative of the ways in which poor and working class laborers especially attempted to both maintain certain labor and cultural practices and welcome others in the face of a burgeoning industrialized capitalism and a growing technological expertise of health and sanitation reform.

As Melosi has suggested, one of the most critical social components to influence sanitation shifts occurring first in industrialized England and then later in the US "was the emergence of modern public health science [which] resulted in an overall 'age of sanitation.'"[ccxx] As Susan Strasser's research puts forth, a mix of small-scale businesses, municipal practices, and voluntary organizations and networks constituted possible trash services through the 1980s. However, these ultimately "could not compete with the efficiencies and the economies of scale achieved by the large companies that took over the waste business. By the late 1980s, municipal solid waste hauling—once done by ten to twelve thousand independent companies—was dominated by four big firms."[ccxxi]

Mid-nineteenth century explorations of miasmatic theories of waste and filth versus germ theory slowly shifted the terrain of public health and sanitation as well. Melosi notes, "with so much organic waste accumulating in the cities, giving off foul odors, and attracting flies and rats,

urbanites could not avoid recognizing a connection between refuse and health hazards."[ccxxii] Inspired by the mid-century sanitation efforts in Britain, "American US health officials [began to] consider refuse collection and disposal from the perspective of improving health conditions."[ccxxiii] Thus, the miasmatic theory of disease prevailed through the end of the 19th century as an approach rooted in the yoking of disease to environmental toxicity and filth. With the late nineteenth century discovery of bacteria however, public health officials moved away from a miasmatic, i.e. environmental, approach to disease and embraced the notion of germ theory as central to controlled disease and public health.[ccxxiv] Melosi argues, "In the wake of the bacteriological revolution of the late nineteenth century, many professionals in the health field came to regard environmental sanitation as an inconsequential means of combating disease […] They placed their faith instead on germ theory of disease transmittal, which led to the establishment of bacteriological laboratories and the widespread use of inoculation and immunization to eradicate communicable diseases."[ccxxv] This change also resulted in the development and public dependency upon a field of public health and sanitation workers with specific scientific and technological expertise. But, as I have elsewhere cited, Melosi suggests that "The major impact of *civic reform* was educational: It publicized and popularized a new environmental ethic of cleanliness and efficiency […]."[ccxxvi]

In a similar fashion, Strasser puts forth that the social terrain of reuse and recycling shifted at this time to incorporate specialized workers in charge of recycling for industrial reuse, "the very distribution system that brought manufactured goods to consumers took recyclable materials back to factories. By the end of the century, this two-way trade had given way to specialized wholesalers and waste dealers—a separate, highly organized trade built on the foundation of industrial waste, supplemented by scraps collected from scavenging children and

the poorest of the poor. For the first time in human history, disposal became separated from production, consumption and use."[ccxxvii]

Such shifts, however, also further exposed xenophobic municipal measures put in place to create classed partitions of waste proximities both inside and surrounding the home, such as what scholar Carl Zimring suggests in his important text on US scrap history *Cash for Your Trash*:

> A combination of technological and organizational measures made life in America more sanitary in 1920 than it had been in 1880. To be sure, many residences, including tenements, lacked these amenities in the early twentieth century, but by this time they were seen as a problem for lacking them. Federal mortgage policies enacted during the New Deal specified that new homes suitable for federally insured home loans had to have basic sewage, water, and power amenities, policies that would reshape American homes as federally funded battle grounds against germs by 1950.[ccxxviii]

Inner-city tenements were often occupied by new immigrant populations settling in the US during waves of immigration from Western Europe between the late 1800s through the early 1900s. Zimring makes note of the practicalities of new migrants settling in inner-city locales as such "areas were within walking distance to large employers; they also were proximate to loud, dirty industrial practices that had begun to lead upper-class residents to search for quieter, cleaner residences on the urban periphery."[ccxxix] Thus, such insurance policies would have expressly affected communities across racial-ethnic barriers as well as according to class differences: "Prior to [WWII], running water, gas, and electricity had become mainstream features of the new suburbs, but tenements and aging housing stock in the cities frequently left residents with few means to stay clean."[ccxxx]

Not solely housing and labor conditions in which many people were forced to adapt, but also Progressive Era public health measures further influence the specific associations made

between people and waste materials: “One reason immigrants were able to get such a strong foothold in scrap was the trade’s reputation as dirty, unscrupulous, and dangerous […]. As junk shops, scrap yards, and peddlers proliferated, customers, neighbors, and police increasingly saw them as centers of physical and moral ills.”[ccxxxi] Other reforms such as urban “zoning regulations to regulate where scrap yards and junk shops could be located, forbidding them in residential areas” and the licensing of “waste dealers and peddlers in an effort to get them to comply with local sanitary and trade regulations and zoning laws prohibited their activities in some areas altogether.”[ccxxxii] The fact that the early scrap trade in a newly industrialized United States was predominantly made up of immigrant laborers and entrepreneurs both permitted immigrant communities to thrive in an industry requiring very little start-up capital, but also proved a source for further social and legal targeting as a result of the taboos associated with scrap-waste materials and urban waste proximity.[ccxxxiii]

Furthermore, Zimring’s research suggests that industries of reuse likewise proved highly dangerous given that, “sharp or jagged edges of scrap metal could cut flesh and, if rusty, cause tetanus. Rags separated by hand were often stained or contaminated with disease-causing germs, and stored rags provided fuel for fire.”[ccxxxiv] Because poor and immigrant community members made up the majority of many turn-of-the-century economies of reuse beyond that of household waste streams, the multiple dangers of such manual labor would have been largely absorbed by these particular populations. Industries of reuse were highly gendered labor forces as well, poor and immigrant men, women, and young children were thus affected in unique ways, such as the women and young children who acted as rag and bone pickers in streets or city dumps; immigrant men who worked largely in the scrap metal and peddling arenas; or “single women” who worked in the harsh conditions of paper factories largely dependant upon scavenged rags for

pulp.[ccxxxv] Environmental justice scholar David Naguib Pellow equally notes the highly gendered dynamics of Progressive Era reforms encompassing "municipal housekeeping," whereby largely middle and upper class women's civic organizations, "placed pressure on the city to clean up its act in a way that did not overstep that era's domestic expectations of women."[ccxxxvi] In this way, Pellow documents the opposite end of the social spectrum associated with urban sanitary reforms of the era, providing an interesting juxtaposition to consider between reformers and those in 'need of reform.'

No matter the gender dynamics of the multiple small-scale reuse economies or burgeoning municipal services; the overall extended embodiment of waste resulting from the conditions and requirements of labors associated with early scavenging, scrapping, and reuse is profound--whether it be multiple health effects, or the literal manual components of such work like carrying found materials in sacks on the back or pushing/pulling them in carts, or use of the hands and feet to scrounge for buried materials for trade, the effects of which would have been plainly read on the body by way of one's clothing, special materials used to aid in scavenging, as well as dirt, dust, ash, etc. on the skin

Ultimately, hand in hand with the turn-of-the-century shift to dependency upon public health and sanitation "expertise, technique and scientific method" came an increased reformist desire for municipal control of waste removal to ensure public wellbeing and sanitation protections.[ccxxxvii] Melosi suggests, "The fear of private monopoly, not uncommon among reformers of all kinds, lent support to the anti-contract sentiment. Many environmental reformers in particular feared that privately controlled water supplies or energy supplies (particularly coal) threatened a vulnerable urban society. Public ownership, whatever weaknesses it had, was a better gamble than contract systems. A private monopoly in garbage collection hardly posed the

same potential danger as a privately controlled water supply, but the principal was the same: public works were meant for the benefit of all the citizens; they should not be the means of private gains."[ccxxxviii] Thus, fear of private cooptation and profit from public health and sanitation concerns fueled further Progressive Era civic engagement, and in general, the rise of "sanitation reform [both] contributed to the institutionalization of refuse management, and offered a departure point for a more sophisticated environmentalism among American city dwellers. Much has been made of the contributions of the conservation movement of the early twentieth century to the ecology movement of the 1960s. Too little has been made of the contributions of sanitation reform in particular and urban environmental reform in general to modern environmentalist thought and action."[ccxxxix] In a fascinating contemporary twist on Melosi's point, much of what I am hearing from the margins of the dumpster highlights this very point, as contemporary divers seem to both question a privatized conceptualization of waste practices and many see what they are doing as contemporary environmental action or mere social responsibility for consumption in the wake of unbridled capitalism within a neoliberal, globalized world market.

What the history of turn of the century scavenging and urban sanitary reforms in the United States ultimately exposes is that for decades multiple economies were constructed out of, in fact, heavily dependant upon the reuse or gathering of waste materials and foodstuff for reuse in industries, and for personal use or consumption. Strasser not so much nostalgically as matter-of-factly suggests, "Cities too were once systems that incorporated rag-pickers and scavengers to process the detritus of others. In this respect, they resembled sustainable biological ecosystems, which are in general closed, or cyclical …[This] ecological analogy offer[s] a way to think about reuse and disposal as part of a process that also encompasses both extracting raw materials and manufacturing, distributing, purchasing, using industrial products."[ccxl] However, US scavenging

history also reveals that multi-faceted social conceptualizations and hierarchies of cleanliness lie at the heart of idealized US citizenship norms beginning in burgeoning industrialized America and spanning well into the twentieth century through World War II--at which point we see a shift that I will delve into further in *Chapter 3* in my discussion of modernist food narratives that certainly carries into the present in both legal and culturally normative ways. Strasser writes, "Sorting is an issue of class: trash-making both underscores and creates social differences based on economic status. The poor patronize junk stores and charitable thrift stores, which depend on richer people to cast things off and even to subsidize their operations with cash or volunteer work. What is rubbish to some is useful or valuable to others, and the ones who perceive value are nearly always the ones with less money."[ccxli]

Securing Food in the Waste Bin

The outsourcing of basic welfare by the state to private charity is a mode of political containment, a transformation in the mode of regulating the poor. -Nik Heynen [ccxlii]

Local elections for city commission and school board were held in April 2011 in Lawrence, Kansas. In response to a question concerning the city's role in addressing homelessness and shelter placement in town one candidate noted, "I believe the city needs to be actively involved in assisting private and/or faith based entities in finding a suitable location for the proper housing, counseling and assistance of those members of our community who are homeless. The City should continue to lend financial and planning assistance *to those agencies that have taken ownership of the issue* and help facilitate the transition of those in the emergency shelter to more permanent housing."[ccxliii] While this short response certainly offers no clear indication of the candidate's true representative intentions were he to assume public office (in fact, he did ultimately assume office), the comment does raise a fundamentally crucial question for this

chapter concerning the imagination and privatization of public resources and services within contexts of charity, specifically because my emphasis has been the intertwining of food resources and waste. As geography scholar Nick Heynen suggests in his analysis of Food Not Bombs as a grassroots based, counter-form of direct action against urban hunger—an organization, I might add, notorious for its use of scavenged foods for redistribution purposes: "At the height of the welfare state, the state itself could be an object of political struggle—struggle to expand rights and entitlements, to redistribute wealth, to force the state to live up to its promise of ending poverty and providing for all. Yet now the providers for the least among us are benevolent and beneficent. In this case, the ability to eat is not a right, but a gift. Not the state's promises, but people's goodness is at stake. How can this be attacked through some sort of radical project?"[ccxliv]

This question of the *right* to eat in relation to food security dynamics is crucial to formulating sundry community responses to security issues; and I would further argue, to do so in a way that does not *solely* seek to charitize food accessibility to people in need. As emergency food scholar Janet Poppendieck argues regarding the institutionalization of emergency foods as a product of Reaganomics in the 1980s: "As a supplement to a robust array of constructive public provisions, emergency food […] would clearly be a net social gain, and we could all rejoice in the energy and compassion of the volunteers and…donors that make possible a kinder, gentler society. If, however, as I believe, charity food is increasingly substituting for adequate public provision […] then it is time to take a closer look at the costs of kindness."[ccxlv] It is imperative here that I highlight that I am not suggesting the problem is people who offer services or help, but the systemic ramifications of such a paternalized approach to food—a staple of life. As

Heynan notes, "Not the state's promises, but people's goodness is at stake."[ccxlvi] Ex-Black Panther Party member Elaine Brown similarly argues during an interview with Heynen,

> Because we are so used to the capitalist construct, it doesn't occur to us that we have a human right to eat; because if you don't eat you will die, it's not complicated. So, if there is a price tag to eating, then there is a price on your head, because the minute you don't have enough money to eat, you're slated for death….[W]hat I see is important…is the right to eat. It's not just…am I dealing with hunger, because I could set up a thousand charities that will feed a bunch of people. The question is, do I as a human being in this society, or in this life, have a right to eat."[ccxlvii]

Not many of the interviewees who participated in this project experienced food insecurity, while a select few did experience insecurity to varied degrees in particular periods of their lives. Evidence in other research completed with low-income divers does, however, suggest that people may dive in spite of other food source options, or perhaps because of the paternal nature of those options, such as one diver participant noted in Nicole Eikenberry and Chery Smith's Midwestern study, "Just like food stamps or general assistance. It's all nothing but hurry up and wait and play our game or you just don't get nothing."[ccxlviii]

More so, most interviewees in this project spoke frankly about utilizing the dumpster as a highly viable and reliable food resource, thereby generating a broader discussion of not only who is 'associating' with dumpstered spaces and objects in the face of social norms, but also just how this resource is used in varied socio-spatial contexts. The point remains simply that people *are* making use of this space as food resource. It may be perceived in my opinion, therefore, a form of direct food-centered action. Not only do the interviews specifically addressing food security provide insight into the myriad and complex ways in which people address their own food needs, but in some respects, so too do those interviews with people who had the resources with which to consider themselves unquestionably food *secure*, yet still chose to make use of dumpstered foods

among other materials. As Ken suggested during our interview, "I think that there is a need for letting people provide for themselves."[ccxlix] Without undermining the lived experiences and embodied realities of those people who cannot always choose the self-sufficiency potentially provided at the edge of a dumpster, his point proves an insightful counter-discussion to the anti-poverty discourses that so often prevail in the US which tend to underscore a presumed dependency or absence of self-sufficiency.

Linking a discussion of the space of the dumpster to food in/security permits an interwoven analysis of the ways in which trash is linked in both substance and policy to food politics, and thereby calls for close alliances between scholars and activists of environmental justice, public health policy, feminist thought, and food studies, the latter two of which I will discuss in *Chapter 3*. Recall that in the United States the USDA estimates food insecurity to be at roughly 14.7% of US households, or upwards of "50.2 million people" who were food insecure in 2009.[ccl] I return momentarily to the definitions discussed in the *Introductory Notes* to re-visit how the USDA defines food security, which implies that individuals of a household experience "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways." This definition of food security excludes "resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies."[ccli] While this project takes as a major leaping off point the *possibilities* generated by imagining the dumpster as commons site and potential food source as narrated in multiple oral histories with divers, the parameters of the above definitions are very much in line with recent international food security policy goals; an understanding of which is crucial to gauging the viability of what I am proposing regarding dumpsters as commons resources.

Political and policy-driven conceptualizations of food security have shifted multiple times as noted by anthropologist Johan Pottier, from the early 70s concerns over "global supply problems" and "[market] price stability;" the early 80s concerns over "physical and economic accessibility;" to the 1996 Rome Declaration's focus on the multiple causes and effects of food insecurity including complex social concerns that need be taken into consideration such as "poverty eradication."[cclii] Given the shifting terrain of postmodern food security concerns, Pottier argues, "If policy–makers are serious about responding to the 'diverse nature of the problem as experienced by poor people themselves,'[ccliii] then they will need to focus on how poor people- as a *diverse* category- experience not only agrarian change, but also the presence of aid programmes and markets."[ccliv] Thus, current emphasis remains on the intersecting concerns effecting food in/security, along with the diversity of experiences of security, poverty, colonialism, and policy. An ethics *and* diversity in the application of policy is of central focus for Pottier, who cautions against forms of institutionalization of diversity in food security, and the maintenance of sovereignty in the face of policy.[cclv]

Central to more recent discussions of food in/security is this critical engagement of food sovereignty and sustainability, key concepts of the 1996 World Food Summit and the People's Food Sovereignty declaration of 2001. Authors Mustafa Koc, Rupen Das, and Carey Jernigan argue that the commonly referenced "4 A's of food security" need include: Availability, Accessibility, Adequacy--i.e. "food that is nutritious, safe, and produced in environmentally sustainable ways"-- and Acceptability. Sovereignty is presumed a complimentary addition to the definition of security and "describes people's ability to control their own food systems, and policy […]."[cclvi] Thus, economic self-sufficiency remains key. Moreover, the nature of food

in/security specifically is entwined with geographic location. As food desert researcher Mari Gallagher notes in her article "Brother Can You Spare an Apple,"

> A food desert is a geographic area with no, or distant, grocery stores often served by plenty of fast food restaurants. […] These residents are more likely to die and suffer prematurely from diet-related diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. […] Many factors, such as personal choice, contribute to health, but location matters. If an apple is further away than a burger, then the chances of choosing fresh food more often than fast food is a mirage.[cclvii]

This of course further shakes up the popular idea that "healthy foods" are a lifestyle decision dependant upon consumer choice, which has remained the center of certain US food movement discussions for some time, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

In proposing to examine the possibilities of dumpster sites and resources, I do not suggest that a prescription for eliminating food security lies within the margins of a dumpster, quite the contrary. At its core, food needs must be met with all of the aforementioned security criteria, which a dumpster can and does provide for some, though not always, and not necessarily in a consistent manner depending upon geographic location, time, locale, among many other factors. However, I argue that what the dumpster does provide is a glimpse into the existence of *material possibilities* that persistently prove to be a resource for many, even as they might be legally and socially shunned. This ultimately raises questions as to a.) The very constraints surrounding certain taboo spaces and materials, and to b.) The mystique of a mounting US food insecurity in the wake of such surplus material availability. Given the numerous social stereotypes, historical connotations, legal parameters, and criminal dynamics of using the dumpster as a site laden with resources, the possibility of its successful and frequent reuse as someone's *ideal* is incomprehensible for many people. Pair that with both the historical rationale outlined in the previous chapter segment, as well as the swift ways in which questions of legality act as

deterrents, and one need not be surprised by the ambiguity clouding such spaces. My research with divers, however, does suggest that despite these hesitations, many people continue to make use of the dumpster as a regular and reliable food source. Therefore, I do not intend this information as a proposed utopic ideal to which one might aspire, so much as a point of fact corroborated by the oral narratives I here explore.

Expanding upon the latter question, in the concluding remarks to his text, *Appetite for Change*, Warren Belasco addresses the glaring economic divides of affordable food accessibility and affluence of even the intended counter-cultural organic and whole foods-based consumption in the US by drawing parallels between "green marketing of the new millennium and the brown marketing (natural, organic) of thirty years before: premium prices, extravagant hyperbole, unverifiable claims, inevitable deception, consumer skepticism, and backlash."[cclviii] Similarly, *Slow Food Victoria* president Kelly Donati challenges the Slow Food movement "to recognize its own heritage of privilege" and "to resist fetishiz[ing] cultural difference and sentimental[izing] struggles for cultural or economic survival." [cclix] Belasco's point speaks to larger concerns regarding the future of food security in the United States, particularly the stark contrast between urban food deserts and the "ecologically righteous" organic consumer paradigms presently gaining force in the US and elsewhere, by suggesting that the politics of organic foods as merely a question of shifting consumer choice often work in direct contention with the realities of the material absence and economic inequalities surrounding food—dare I say, to the very right to food. Donati's point carries these inequalities into the realm of food movements-a point I will not drop here but carry with me into *Chapter 3*-by making a case that the Slow Food Movement--identified by the author as an attempt to embrace "taste, cultural identity and regional individuality" and ensure that these "are not assimilated into, and

homogenized by, a global food culture devoid of diversity and pleasure"--grapples with questions of inequality and accessibility in spite of the small-scale, farmer-centric parameters of its philosophical endeavor.[cclx] While I disagree that globalization necessarily equals a void in [food] diversity and pleasure, I am intrigued by Donati's move to problematize Slow Food's tendency to moralize and romanticize agricultural endeavors. This point strikes me as an insightful suggestion at the heart of what I am learning from the dumpstered periphery as well. Yet, I also want to underscore that in raising these points my intention is not to call out the organic counter-cultural movement. Rather, to show that *even* from the corporate organics and whole foods end of the spectrum, the systemic issues remain so long as industrial production models remain at the core.[cclxi] Questions of accessibility likewise remain in non-industrial agricultural models as well because people are now accustomed to the market effects of low prices, often below production-cost. In some cases, the oral narratives expose a means with which to experience greater, and perhaps even wider ranging, food security—a fact dependant upon the capitalist structures of waste that produce the excess in the first place. However, the act of making use of this taboo-laden space likewise highlights other more valuable points about food security in the Unites States across the mainstream and corporate organic structures, which I will here propose.

Why is it that there are surplus quantities of food resources thrown away, while even the most plainly accessible data regarding food security, food stamp dependency, and global hunger suggest massive and growing numbers of food insecurity? To put it more bluntly, why so many dumpsters just laden with food, while some people have to sign up for the 'privilege' of highly regulated US public food services? And why all of the paternal regulations within those services--I mean, even just a quick glance at federal food stamp regulations or WIC services suggest very

clear, highly controlled parameters for consumption, such as the following specifications from federal WIC regulations, "The food packages provide participant choice and variety. Foods such as tortillas, brown rice, soy-based beverage, canned salmon, and a wide choice of fruits and vegetables provide State agencies flexibility *in prescribing* culturally appropriate food packages."[cclxii] Being careful not to criticize individual agencies and agents who are attempting to meet the day-to-day food needs of WIC-needy populations, or, "people's goodness" as Heynan posits it, my critical inquiry of the charity industrial complex as it relates to food, stands. There are, to push this further, whole segments of questions and answers related to the prescriptive parameters of acceptable consumption for WIC recipients available at the click of a mouse:

> *Is rice beverage WIC-eligible?*
> Rice-based beverages are not authorized milk substitutes in the WIC Program. Soy-based beverages that meet the Federal WIC nutrient requirements are authorized at the State agency's option.
>
> *Is yogurt WIC -eligible?*
> Due to cost considerations, WIC regulations do not allow the substitution of yogurt for milk in the WIC food packages.[cclxiii]

And the permission list goes on. Returning to USDA documentation of the US food security landscape, how is it possible that in a nation with such high, and ever-increasing, gendered numbers of food insecurity—the most food insecure individuals in this nation prove to be single mothers of color after all—likewise throws away upwards of "590 billion tons of food each year," ranging from "one quarter to one half of all the food produced in the US" annually?[cclxiv] And more crucially, how can businesses afford to lose such potential profits? The proof seems to remain in the pudding (only WIC approved in powdered form on a state-by-state basis), because just as a number of food scholars have proven before me through their searing food commodity

chain analyses, the US charity industrial complex is dependant upon the surplus production of food commodities maintained through systemic corporate welfare that fixes the landscape of food production in favor of large agro-business with access to government subsidy. The state-level food banks, schools, and other subsidized food distributors are then able to purchase such commodities at very low prices, often below the costs of production. I state nothing new here, but merely nod to the countless exemplary exposes that have come well before me.[cclxv] Janet Poppendieck, for example, references the US discovery of 200 million pounds of surplus dairy product in Kansas City facilities in Fall 1981 all "acquired under price support mechanisms": "The combination of food waste at public expense in the midst of growing need proved irresistible…In keeping with the president's emphasis on volunteerism [however] the distribution was to be accomplished through nonprofit organizations in states that chose to take advantage of [Reagan's] offer to [release 30 million pounds of government cheese]."[cclxvi] Permit me to continue talking trash when I suggest that the reason why so many people are food insecure in the face of surplus production (and I would include waste as a material form of production here) is that there must be profit in this particular consumer model, otherwise wouldn't it have fallen out of fashion long ago? A distinct awareness of overwhelmed and overwhelming quantifiers remains at the forefront of the oral narratives I have here discussed because, as I mentioned in my anecdote about being on public trash duty, the proximities to waste in such narratives are up close and personal; they are already in-your-face, embodied, and ripe with the sights and scents of yesterday's garbage. Thus, the narratives help piece together a landscape of overwhelming quantities, and one that seems to defy any rational sense of the human right to food being thwarted in this historical moment of rising food insecurity numbers, and increased dependencies upon public food services.

The data provided by these oral histories with dumpster divers does not as yet document a distinct correlation between populations dependant upon public services and a parallel rejection or thwarting of such services in the name of the potential self-sufficiencies available by way of the margins of a dumpster. Nor does the research specifically address such responses along distinct gender, class, or racial-ethnic specific lines of inquiry. More research would be necessary to make either suggestion. However, the narratives do clearly depict trash as a potential food resource despite its taboo laden past and present. The narratives also lift the lid on the overwhelming quantities of such cultural material as waste in an age of neo-liberal trade de-regulation and surplus commodity production and material availability. As one interviewee laughingly put it, "I think you realize that you can get so much *stuff*, that, like, how much do you really need? [R: yeah, um huh] And then I have friends, dear friends, uh, who I feel struggled with that. I mean, who've filled houses [or] garages with stuff. Almost paralyzed their lives they got so much stuff that they found. Ya know [chuckles ironically]?"[cclxvii] Situating the dumpster as a taboo-laden, but nonetheless potential foodscape, serves to underscore and juxtapose the steep quality of US food waste streams and food insecurity data, as it highlights the extreme inefficiencies--perhaps they are *efficiencies* depending on one's systemic point of view—of a food system that places a surplus profit model at its desired core.

During an expose on Wal-Mart and surplus production margins for *Frontline News* Vice president of the CATO Institute Brink Lindsey stated, "I think Wal-Mart is good for America. Wal-Mart is doing what America is all about, the American market economy is all about, which is producing things consumers want to buy. And Wal-Mart is offering consumers a wide range of goods at rock-bottom prices, and therefore, it is meeting the market test. It is not good for its competitors. They have a tough time keeping up."[cclxviii] My focus here is not at all on the initial

interview question—"Is Wal-Mart good for America?" Rather, my intent is to document what many perceive to be the stasis of "American" consumerism,[cclxix] which is that the very point of this particular market system, no matter where it is utilized or applied, is to generate large quantities of products, to keep costs down on those products, and to encourage consumerism. Lindsey's comment encapsulates this nicely. We might also turn to Chicago School scholar and political figure Milton Friedman--long associated with the Cato Institute--who outlines an ideal market system in the *New York Times* in 1970:

> Businessmen believe that they are defending free enterprise when they declaim that business is not concerned "merely" with profit but also with promoting desirable "social" ends; that business has a "social conscience" and takes seriously its responsibilities for providing employment, eliminating discrimination, avoiding pollution and whatever else may be the catchwords of the contemporary crop of reformers. In fact they are–or would be if they or anyone else took them seriously–preaching pure and unadulterated socialism. […] In a free-enterprise, private-property system, a corporate executive is an employee of the owners of the business. He has direct responsibility to his employers. That responsibility is to conduct the business in accordance with their desires, which generally will be to make as much money as possible while conforming to the basic rules of the society, both those embodied in law and those embodied in ethical custom.[cclxx]

Journalist Naomi Klein has more recently traced the parameters of Friedman's influential market system to a different end, calling it "disaster capitalism" because of the model's pattern dependency on political application immediately post major environmental or social crisis and upheaval. Klein notes,

> [T]heir orthodoxy is known as 'neoliberalism,' but it is often called 'free-trade' or simply 'globalization.' Only since the mid-nineties has the intellectual movement, led by the right-wing think tanks with which Friedman had long associations—Heritage Foundation, Cato Institute and the American Enterprise Institute—called itself 'neoconservative,' a worldview that has harnessed the full force of the US military machine in the service of a corporate agenda. All these incarnations share a commitment to the policy trinity—the elimination of the public sphere, total liberation for corporations and skeletal social spending […]. A more accurate term for a system that erases the boundaries between Big

> Government and Big Business is not liberal, conservative or capitalist, but corporatist.[cclxxi]

The stinging reverberations of such a model with regards to food, and particularly for those not on its' sufficiently food secure end, strike me as four-fold: 1.) Legitimized welfarism or subsidy essentially for over-production, generating a landscape of 2.) Surplus food and waste that must still be profited on, thereby leading to its increased commodification for subsidized programs such as school lunches, welfare food distribution, or food banks,[cclxxii] or 3.) Surplus export trade onto global markets due to de-regulative trade agreements strengthening heightened international border trade;[cclxxiii] and finally, the simultaneous production of a 4.) Distinct cultural script of poverty that depicts those making use of public services as system dependents, even cheats in some cases. This remains in the face of high government subsidy for commodity foodstuff over-production and distribution, with ever-decreasing profits for individual producers who still face rising costs *for* commodity production.

This model has a stronghold on the US food system. Food and environmental scholar Michael Pollan argues against US government subsidies for 4 central edible crops--corn, soy, wheat, rice--to generate a more just market for food competition. He argues, "One of the ways you help democratize healthy food is you [get the government to] support healthy food."[cclxxiv] American industrial agriculture hinges upon production and sale of these 4 central commodity crops, and large-scale domestic importation of foodstuff figuring in at nearly 77 million dollars in 2009.[cclxxv] Tracing a single commodity crop, the documentary *King Corn*, for instance, features a telling interview with Earl Butz, Secretary of Agriculture during the Nixon administration, wherein Butz is asked about systematic surplus food production in the US:

> Documentarian 1: What part did you play in creating the food system that we have today?

> Butz: When I was a youngster on the farm, we had this program cutting back on production. We paid farmers not to produce, one of the stupidest things we ever did, I think, where they got paid for not producing instead of paid for producing. When I became secretary we stopped that system.
>
> Documentarian 2: We've heard from some people who think there is too much food. What do you think of that?
>
> Butz: (makes a face) Well it's the basis of our affluence now, that we spend less on food. It's America's best-kept secret. We feed ourselves with approximately 16 or 17% of our take home pay. That's marvelous. That's a very small chunk to feed ourselves. And that includes all the meals we eat in restaurants, all the fancy doodads we get in our food system, uh, I don't see much room for improvement there, which means we'll spend our surplus cash on something else.[cclxxvi]

As Pollan suggests in *Omnivore's Dilemma* in contrast, "Government farm programs once designed to limit production and support prices (and therefore farmers) were quietly rejiggered to increase production and drive down prices. Put another way, instead of supporting farmers, during the Nixon administration, the government began supporting corn at the expense of farmers."[cclxxvii] Butz's argument here mirrors what Lindsey says about Wal-Mart, "Because American consumers have saved at Wal-Mart buying Chinese goods, they've got more money in their pocket to buy something else, which creates business opportunities for those other business, which means they hire workers they would not have hired otherwise."[cclxxviii] The very intention of the market model is to maintain low-costs, higher consumption rates, and surplus production. The similarities between Lindsey and Butz's points only serve to further underscore the fact that these goals appear systemically across multiple corporate entities maintaining an influential stronghold on US production, distribution, and consumption practices, as well as US subsidy and trade policy.

I would argue, that a glaring counter-suggestion emerges at the margins of a dumpster because taking from the waste stream documents a different kind of desirability for surplus re-

commodification. In the words of one interviewee, “I think a lot of people who have regular, 9-5 jobs, or white-collar jobs, don’t realize…ways that poor people […] kind of hustle to make money is a lot of work. And […] you know on the one hand people are saying, well, poor people just need to work and they need to pull themselves up by their bootstraps but then they don’t recognize these sort of underground economies that a lot of poor people have going.”[cclxxix] Utilizing socially unacceptable channels for food recovery, in essence, reading one’s food landscape for the surplus landscape that it in fact unfailingly provides, only draws greater attention to the use of social taboo as a protective deterrent against the ‘wrong kind’ of consumer practices, i.e. those not encouraging good citizenship as good consumption. It also necessarily highlights the systematic ways in which industrial agricultural models depend upon surplus foods. At the very least, it highlights the average American household’s access to large quantities of food that statistically wind up in the garbage in eye-popping quantities, and all of this even as food insecure numbers rise annually. Perhaps it is my olfactory sensitivity, but something in this model stinks like yesterday’s garbage.

Chapter 3: On Twinkies, Chickpeas, and the *Real* Food Paradigm

Introduction

I was recently invited to set up a dumpstered food distribution table for the annual Lawrence, KS Really Really Free Market. On night 1 of market preparations, my sidekick and I make our rounds and end up at the base of a towering, ten-feet high dumpster. As I scale up the side of the corroded beast and toss my right leg over the edge I recall that I am without my flashlight, and just as I begin to muster an angry grumble my partner in crime whispers the tell tale "uh oh…I think we got company." Though my back is now to the parking lot, I can hear the crunch of tires behind me--what later turned out to be your common, late-night parking lot doughnut-loopers rather than the Police. But, thanks to the lack of light, I can't make out the metal ledge on the inside of the dumpster, and in my hurry to escape impending jail-time I miss my footing, and in a haze of expletives and pain stumble into the mouth of the beast. Amidst the sickly sweet smell of overripe strawberries and (what must be) tomato pulp beneath me, I gaze up into the night sky interrupted on all peripheral sides by the jutting volcanic lips of a rusty dumpster and am struck with the clarity of two undeniable truths: Truth #1: I may very well be a ridiculous character in my own life narrative, but this scenario is absolutely ridiculous—not that I am lying in the stench of a corroded dumpster, due to a moment of lightless frenzy in anticipated police escape, but that my straddling a dumpster in search of food even begins to merit the dexterity necessary for potential police escape. Truth #2: A massive dumpster score for night 1! To my right is a large boxful of beautiful, bulbous, seedless red grapes—*real* grapes, still under plastic, shimmering at me in the crusty moonlight.

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In light of current trends to address the question of *real* food and *what* to eat —most recently, for example, the work of Marion Nestle, Michael Pollan, Carlo Petrini, and chef/activists Jaimie Oliver or Alice Waters—emerges a broader question of the politics of such constructions of food as it revolutionizes contemporary food discourse. This chapter explores how the space of the dumpster and the act of diving work as alternative forms of cultural knowledge about food, albeit marginalized, socially unacceptable forms; necessitating an expansion in thinking of what might be considered commons spaces, what/where gets currently constructed as *real* food or *real* food sources. Ultimately, I ask how the labels 'real,' or by default 'un-real', 'edible' or 'inedible' might effect people of varying food in/securities, given the current food systems we eat within in the US.

In this chapter, I frame my analysis of contemporary food movements within a gendered cultural history of post-war modernist narratives of salvage, reuse, security, and victory garden production and consumption policies. Such narratives serve as tools for understanding current food value trends within historical contexts of intensified food anxiety. I suggest that some of the most commonly referenced alternative food economies today are increasingly memorial returns to a pre/war-era past, when people were supposedly closer to, more knowledgeable of, and more self-sufficient about their foods. Through the lens of this cultural memory, we see the ways in which historical understandings of salvage and reuse shift over time, so that the yoking of citizenship with sanitation at the turn-of-the century outlined in *Chapter 2*, evolve into core points of idealized American identity and citizenship during the war-era. Moreover, the residue of this cultural memory raises questions as to *why* chefs, food scholars, and activists are revisiting specifically modernist food narratives to make their claims in the food world; and also

what the ramifications of such posturing might be for people and communities who are not immediately equipped with the space or resources necessary to return to the kitchen or go "back to the land."[cclxxx]

In fact, given the evidence of racial disparities in American farms and land ownership, I see this last question as especially pressing.[cclxxxi] A 2005 news story, *Black Farmers in America* documented that, "In 1920 more than half of all black people in America lived on farms, mostly in the South. […] By 2003, they accounted for less than 1 percent of the nation's farmers and cultivated less than .003 percent of the farmland. Today, battling the onslaught of globalization, changing technology, an aging workforce, racist lending policies, and even the U.S. Department of Agriculture itself, black farmers number below 18,000, and they till fewer than 3 million acres."[cclxxxii] While it is not my intention to victimize or speak *for* socially and economically disenfranchised individuals or communities, I feel such research questions that speak to complexities within current food movement trends are paramount to the maintenance of strong, sustainable food movements based in mutual human-environmental equity.

As the UN suggests, if we fundamentally see food as a human right not a privilege based on access to special resources, popular US food movements need to continue reaching out to broader, economically limited actors to effect necessary large-scale paradigm shifts.[cclxxxiii] I do not intend to offer 'counter' prescriptions by way of the dumpster; however, I maintain it is crucial to pay attention to the complex ways in which people of varying food securities arrive at, resist, or otherwise address questions of food accessibility and security. This is *particularly* of import in a historical moment of intensified international concern over centralized, localized, mono crop, and genetically altered food systems; and within a historical moment of increasing emergency food dependence and intensified systemic global food waste 're-discovery.'[cclxxxiv] As

feminist scholar bell hooks argues, "The willingness to see feminism as a lifestyle choice rather than a political commitment reflects the class nature of the movement [...]."[cclxxxv] In turn, we might ask the same of food activists and scholars—what do food movements look like when rooted in access to special resources? What shape does or might it take when the movement's central focus is equal access to food as a human right across class and social spectrums? Lesbian activist Leslie Feinberg wrote of solidarity within LGBTQ liberation movements, "Couldn't the *We* be bigger? Isn't there a way to help fight each other's battles so that we're not always alone?"[cclxxxvi] Ultimately, in posing such questions to food movements, my intention is to maintain a focus on points of potential organized resistance and solidarity—in "making the *we* bigger" for equitable food security, as opposed to maintaining, what I see to be, a persistent elitist focus on individual lifestyle choices based largely upon resource accessibility.

In the pages that follow, I imagine the dumpster's place by revisiting historical narratives of food anxiety and contemporary food movement concerns to reveal specific ways in which the dumpster both speaks to modernist linkages between salvage and citizenship, as well as complicates politics of an emerging *real* food paradigm. I first pinpoint the emergence of modernist references in contemporary alternative food discourses and situate specific themes of contention and debate worthy of further examination. I then turn to an exploration of salvage, reuse, and victory gardening particularly during World War II, to situate a gendered and racialized history of alternative food economies within contexts of wartime food anxiety. By overlapping these historical narratives with persistent themes surfacing in current popular food movement dialogue, I complicate the ways in which reuse serves as an attempt to address chasms in resource in/accessibility and questions of food security. Situating the dumpster in more extensive histories of reuse and salvage draws out how complex ideals of citizenship and reuse

shifted during this particular historical moment; while equally providing a lens for the ways in which modernist memory is being conjured to address current food anxieties in postmodern, capitalist contexts.

"More Precious Than Silver or Gold:" Alternative Food Economies Through Modernist Lenses

> Each [victory garden is] a health insurance policy, a dooryard savings bank; each a vitamin mine from which you can take stuff more precious than silver or gold.[cclxxxvii]

In the opening pages of his 2010 *New York Times* best selling book *Food Revolution*, chef activist and Emmy Award winning television sensation Jamie Oliver draws upon US and British transnational wartime food histories to argue that current food practices and food related health concerns are abominable. Oliver conjures the war-era British Ministry of Health and food writer Marguerite Patten as inspirations for his book, and argues that the MOH used radical outreach tactics as a means of getting people to use their rations appropriately, and thus, to eat better.[cclxxxviii] 91-year old Patten herself recently appeared in a vintage-inspired podcast for Britain's Anchor Butter, happily instructing "busy mums and busy dads" how to prepare homemade "delicious, traditional Christmas pudding [made] in minutes the modern way" via microwave.[cclxxxix] Following President Obama's inauguration into the White House, chef Alice Waters, known to many as "the Mother of Slow Food," sent a letter to the president elect arguing for better, more accessible food for all Americans. In the letter she offers her services in helping to select a White House chef interested in Slow Food values, and ultimately argues, "I cannot forget the vision I have had since 1993 of a beautiful vegetable garden on the White House lawn. It would demonstrate to the nation and to the world our priority of stewardship of the land—a true *victory* garden!"[ccxc] In a July 2010 interview on the Bill Maher Show, Waters suggests that the reason the US "has got so off course with food" is because, "[after World War II] apparently

they had a lot of pesticides left over and they didn't know what to do with them. And, I think we've been kind of easy prey because…we don't have deep gastronomic roots like other countries have."[ccxci] Waters' suggestion highlights the war era as a period of great influx; though it is unclear who the collective 'we' references in this statement and what having "deep gastronomic roots" looks like comparatively.

Freelance writer and blog author Emily Matchar critiques an October 2011 *New York Times* article entitled "Back to the Land, Reluctantly," deftly writing, "Ever since the recession began, we've been seeing a certain kind of story pop up all over the media. Call it the Tale of the Heroic Recession Homemaker. It's a person (usually a woman, often a mom) who pulls herself up by her bootstraps via intensive domestic work or neo-homesteading – sewing her own curtains, growing her own veggies, baking her own bread."[ccxcii] The nostalgic re-visitation of pre-war and war-era foodways and tactics in US history resounds in each of these examples, and the war-era *v for victory* through food rationing, reuse, gardening, and preservation is now recycled into contemporary contexts addressing food anxieties related to health, food-system politics and policy-building. References to the victory garden and the construction of urban schoolyard or community gardens so touted by contemporary food culture writers and critics as alternative, even subversive, food economies—and by alternative here I intend other than, or counter to, the dominant, industrialized, mono-crop paradigms—are clearly not new fangled concepts drummed up by 'kids these days.' On the contrary, alternative foodways today are increasingly memorial returns to a war-era past.

Reuse, salvage, and rationing are underlying themes deeply rooted in US histories, and thus, I trace these wartime narratives to interweave discussion of the dumpster with broader histories of salvage and intentional frugality, as opposed to (yet still linking) the post-war

consumerist shift so identified with ideal citizenship traced in *Chapter 1*. However, reclaiming this cultural memory also leaves residual questions as to *why* some chefs, food scholars, and activists are revisiting specifically modernist food narratives to make their claims in the food world, and also *what* the ramifications of such posturing might be for people and communities not as equipped with the space or resources necessary to generate or utilize alternative food economies, and to do so on healthy soils. In critically exploring residual themes of recycled wartime food narratives my intent is neither to question the integrity of Slow Food, alternative foods, or non-'conventional' food movements.[ccxciii] Nor do I suggest that the movements are indicative of a single, unified organization, community, or group of actors. The very terrain of contemporary food movements suggests a need to emphasize both their political *and* academic nature, and thus I draw upon a host of popular and scholarly texts to drive my discussion. I pluralize the term for this reason, and likewise in reference to nutritionist and food scholar Marion Nestle who notes, "[There] is little evidence of an organized movement in the traditional sense of those for civil rights, women's rights, or environmental protection, [there are a wide] number and range of mini-movements aimed at improving specific aspects of the health of people, farm animals, and the environment."[ccxciv] Rather, my critical exploration is an attempt to complicate such residual themes through the lens of what I hear from the dumpstered margins to expose points of similarity or overlap, as well as points of socio-economic contention.

Taking on Big Ag.

> They made seed bombs to lob over barbed wire fences onto the tightly cropped lawns of military installations and corporate headquarters. Packed with the seeds of native flowers, the bombs would take root and grow. Little clumps of vegetative anarchy. –Ruth Ozeki, *All Over Creation*[ccxcv]

Global contemporary 'alternative' food economies work as a means of rejecting certain aspects of perceived globalization processes. Slow Food founder Carlo Petrini suggests in his iconic text

Slow Food: A Case for Taste, "Slow food was born in Italy in opposition to the fast food that landed on our shores and tried to take over, so the awareness that the issue was international was there from the start. […The irony, force, and bite in the] name we chose for our project comes from the choice of an English-language name conveying a stance that people all over the world immediately understand."[ccxcvi] Similarly, during a 2003 Berkeley panel discussion on food and globalization, activist Vandana Shiva contends, "I believe you can only have a virtuous globalization if it isn't about globalization first [and should be] based on localization first. First because food unlike anything else needs the soil, the biodiversity, the water, and unless we conserve those we are never ever going to have virtuous production. Secondly, if we cannot maintain farmers on the land and guarantee livelihoods through robust local economies, we're not going to have virtuous trade […]."[ccxcvii] Alternative food economies popularized by US food movements today include: the rise of localized farmer's markets, community supported agriculture, buying groups/clubs (including market-day ordering such as Angel Food Ministries or Colorado Shares), community and home gardening.[ccxcviii] Just as the epigram to this chapter segment suggests, doing food on smaller scales can serve as an expression of resistance.

Binaries of alternative food economies are persistently balanced between 1.) Challenging transnational industrial agricultural practices, government subsidy of surplus commodity crops, and public health concerns over obesity, all of which are popularly countered by 2.) Supporting small-scale, localized organic agricultural practices that can remain economically and/or spatially out of reach for many consumers given current government subsidy of big agriculture and geographic accessibility. Indicative of this binary, Bill Maher spouted in his interview with Waters, "[S]omehow eating right got to be elitist. Didn't it? [That] astounds me that eating the right food somehow is something that a lot of this country looks on as very suspect, kind of,

democratic politics—eating good food [audience chuckles], shopping at Whole Foods [audience laughter] as I call it whole paycheck [more laughter]. […] Everybody says that and I'm sick of it." The proposition of eating products considered morally 'good' as Maher dubs it--organic, local, free-range, GMO-free foods, for instance--versus say, what chef Anthony Bourdain's argues to be the realities of socio-economic differences further exposes this common binary: "I think it's important to understand that when we [chefs] talk about the joys of all these great foods, that we also recognize, you know, that right now in the Mission district, Tuesday nights…at Popeye's Fried Chicken they're lined up for an hour and a half for that 99 cent…chicken leg. And they're not lined up there because it's a cruelty free chicken, or because it's organic, or even because it's delicious. They're lining up because it's 99 fucking cents."[ccxcix]

Noteworthy here, however, is Bourdain's popular role as foodie underdog and Alice Water's personal antagonist, particularly in his most recent book *Medium Raw*. Pair that with his equally public disdain for the multi-million dollar product endorsements (Dunkin Donuts, Ritz, etc.) of celebrity cooks Rachael Ray--of Food Network's *30 Minutes Meals*, among other television accolades--and Sandra Lee, hostess of *Semi-Homemade*, whom Bourdain refers to as "The hellspawn of Betty Crocker and Charles Manson," and you have the makings of the contrarian bite in his discussion of Popeye's Fried Chicken.[ccc] Waters' response to Bourdain attempted to engage the ways in which policy directly effects market prices and forces local organic producers to compete against heavily subsidized conventional products (to the tune of 25 billion dollars a year),[ccci] as she noted, "Let us subsidize real food instead of fast food."[cccii] I want to push back a little on Waters' point, however, as her commentary did not clearly outline the parameters of a so-called 'real' food, nor did she engage the potential effects of the 'real' or, by

default, ‘un-real’ label on people who might not have access to multiple markets and food sources.

Clearly though, all of the above arguments represent over-simplifications of complex political economies and global food subsidy trends affecting, in this instance, US eating habits. Yet, the comments also illuminate the class divisions associated with food and socially accepted consumption patterns. Moreover, just as Maher’s sardonic suggestion that Whole Foods be known as ‘whole paycheck’ garnered peels of audience laughter, critical debate regarding the high costs of organic fare, or the risks of fetishizing the ‘right’ foods over conventional foods, has often become the laughable stuff of nay-sayers and neo-liberals, merely being protective of the cheap, unequal, industrialized commodities and food production trends that for many have come to quintessentially identify US foodways and global trade policy reverberations. Chef Bourdain has elsewhere articulated broader concern with attempts to legislate food products based upon moral oppositions, “We're all in the middle of a recession, like we're all going to start buying expensive organic food and running to the green market. There's something very Khmer Rouge about Alice Waters that has become unrealistic. I mean I'm not crazy about [America’s] obsession with corn or ethanol and all that, but I'm a little uncomfortable with legislating good eating habits. I'm suspicious of orthodoxy, the kind of orthodoxy when it comes to what you put in your mouth.”[ccciii] While I would here again argue that such commentary is indicative of an unequal simplification of the ways in which economic trends affect cultural practices like foodways, both food accessibility and acceptability (without the paternal State looking over one’s shoulder) are, in fact, defining, fundamental concepts of food security and sovereignty debate, as I outlined in *Chapter 2*.

'Take Me to Your'…Kitchen

For Waters and many others, the proper response to the *real* food dilemma is returning to the kitchen, "McDonald's is never the answer…because there are so many beautiful things to cook. We just have to learn how to cook them again."[ccciv] Similarly, Jamie Oliver has responded to the dilemma with measures such as promoting healthier alternatives in school lunch options available in public schools and establishing a community kitchen, such as the one in Huntington, West Virginia featured on his ABC reality television series and national campaign *Jamie's Food Revolution*. Clearly, what Oliver--and Waters for that matter--have to say about food is gaining popular momentum, as Oliver won the 2010 TED Award for his *Food Revolution Campaign* among other media accolades. Discussions of food politics as relational to US health and obesity concerns have taken center-stage in food movement rhetoric and advocacy, as well as in popular media representations of food crises. Oliver argued in his TED award speech for example, "My wish is for you to help a strong sustainable movement to educate every child about food. To inspire families to cook again, and to inspire people everywhere to fight obesity."[cccv] Ultimately, Oliver's campaign plan, funded in part through his recent TED award is outlined as follows:

> Set up an organization to create a popular movement that will inspire people to change the way they eat. The movement will do this by establishing a network of community kitchens; launching a traveling food theater that will teach kids practical food and cooking skills in an entertaining way and provide basic training for parents and professionals; and bringing millions of people together through an online community to drive the fight against obesity. The grassroots movement must also challenge corporate America to support meaningful programs that will change the culture of junk food.[cccvi]

Pushing back upon the trend of anti-obesity centered rhetoric in the work of food scholars such as Michael Pollan, Marion Nestle, Peter Singer, Anna Lappé's and Jane Goodall, Community Studies scholar Julie Guthman argues, "Entirely absent from the pages of the recent popular

[food] books is any authorial reflection on how obesity talk further stigmatizes those who are fat, or on how this social scolding might work at cross-purposes to health and well-being… [And] if junk food is everywhere and people are naturally drawn to it, those who resist it must have heightened powers."[cccvii]

Whereas Oliver's speech clearly centers upon the empowering effects that food knowledge and outreach can have upon people and communities broadly, he equally opens his discussion with alarming research about the health effects of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and other diet-related diseases to grab the audience's attention. His focus targets conventional, corporate, and fast foods, which have trumped local, organic and homemade fare. A current trend in popular food discourses targeting obesity is the targeted focus on fat itself, which can be fought through consumption of better foods and greater accessibility to foods, exercise and education; but sometimes perhaps at the expense of critical engagement of systemic causes of the socio-economic, racial, and gender disparities at the root of food crises.

In contrast, many feminist and corporeal studies scholars have steadily addressed questions of centralizing public health discussions around obesity as problematic.[cccviii] Still other environmental feminists have joined the anti-obesity discussion. As Guthman noted in her analysis of food movement discourses in relation to Kathleen LeBesco's *Revolting Bodies: The Struggle to Redefine Fat Identity*, "At best, fat people are seen as victims of food, genetic codes, or metabolism; at worst, they are slovenly, stupid, or without resolve. Meanwhile, [LeBesco] notes, many thin people can indulge in all manner of unhealthy behaviors without being called to account for their body size. In other words, fat people are imbued with little subjectivity no matter what they do, while thin people are imbued with heightened subjectivity no matter what they do."[cccix] Scholar Anna Kirkland's recent article "The Environmental Account of Obesity: A

Case for Feminist Skepticism" similarly asks tough questions aimed at redirecting trends in the targeting of fatness and food in feminist scholarship noting, "Feminist scholars have recently echoed the public health perspective on obesity, in which a heavier population is a serious problem that must be broadly addressed through taxation, agricultural policy, food labeling and advertising, wellness programs, and urban planning (Yancey, Leslie, and Abel 2006; Berlant 2007; Probyn 2008)."[cccx] Kirkland's central claim in re-positioning such feminist discourses towards anti-discrimination, addressing conditions of unequal access to resources like transport and food, and outcomes of poverty as opposed to obesity is clearly outlined:

> So why balk at the environmental account of obesity, particularly when it aims to ease the suffering and expand the choices of low-income minority women? [The] environmental approach to obesity has been sold as a progressive, structurally focused alternative to stigmatization, but it actually embeds and reproduces a persistent tension in feminist approaches to social problems: well-meant efforts to improve poor women's living conditions at a collective level often end up as intrusive, moralizing, and punitive direction of their lives [and] redounds to a micropolitics of food choice dominated by elite norms of consumption and movement.[cccxi]

The ensuing result of such trends within contemporary food movements is thus both a pertinent environmental emphasis on obesity as public health concern, but also an increasingly problematic moralizing, anti-fat, popular discourse that centralizes upon obesity and weight-loss, perhaps, over healthier social conditions and resource inequality regardless of size. As Kirkland argues in closing remarks to the aforementioned article, "We should not frame poverty in terms of fat so that helping the poor comes to mean addressing their fat. […] Another step is to enact broad antidiscrimination measures in employment, insurance, and public accommodations so that what citizens weigh becomes less and less meaningful for life opportunities."[cccxii]

Others are less forgiving of increased trends in 'foodie' moralizing, as B.R. Meyers argues in "The Moral Crusade Against Foodies,"

> The mood at a dinner table depends on the quality of food served; if culinary perfection is achieved, the meal becomes downright holy—as we learned from Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006), in which a pork dinner is described as feeling "like a ceremony … a secular seder." The moral logic in Pollan's hugely successful book now informs all food writing: the refined palate rejects the taste of factory-farmed meat, of the corn-syrupy junk food that sickens the poor, of frozen fruits and vegetables transported wastefully across oceans—from which it follows that to serve one's palate is to do right by small farmers, factory-abused cows, Earth itself. This affectation of piety does not keep foodies from vaunting their penchant for obscenely priced meals, for gorging themselves, even for dining on endangered animals—but only rarely is public attention drawn to the contradiction.[cccxiii]

The distinct moral tug-of-war here is clearly shaping up to reflect Guthman's aforementioned point—due to resource differentiations, some foods and eaters are touted as 'ideal' while others are constructed as problematic. As Kirkland points out, "Proper practices of food, eating, and exercise have been raised to the status of absolutely correct rules for good health rather than simple features of human cultural variety. [A] highly specific…set of social rules govern[s] the hierarchy of foods. A baguette is not junk food, but sliced white bread is [for example]."[cccxiv] In this historical moment, food acts as a medium not only for social change but also for participation in that change. However, the conundrum that ensues from moralized consumerist values is equally problematic, particularly when consumer power becomes a necessary component to participation.

This is not to say, however, that empowering educational opportunities about food, thinking critically about where food comes from, and questioning the role that industrial capitalism plays is not important, or should not remain central to alternative food politics. During an interview with journalist Amy Goodman, Derrick Jensen suggested,

> [We've] come to believe that our food comes from the grocery store and that our water comes from the tap, and that's because it does. [If] your experience is that your water comes from the tap and your food comes from the grocery store, you're going to defend to the death the system that brings those to you, because your life depends on it. If, on the other hand, your water comes from a river and

> your food comes from a land base, you will defend to the death the river and the land base, because that's what your life depends on.[cccxv]

Many food activists have not only identified the necessity of alternative food economies, as well as educational outreach to better prepare adults and young people alike with information about the origins and growth of their foods; activists are also pinpointing shifts in food policies and business practices. Professor of Science & Environmental Journalism at UC-Berkeley Michael Pollan, considered by many to be the "public face of food activism," has particularly moved towards addressing concerns of accessibility, affordability, and education as key to democratizing the food system.[cccxvi] Pollan notes, "To eat well in this country costs more than to eat badly. It will take more money and some people simply don't have it, and that's one of the reason's that we need changes at the policy level, so that the carrots are a better deal then the chips."[cccxvii] As Jensen suggests, thinking critically *and* systemically about the role that large-scale industrial food systems play within alternative opportunities needs to remain a top priority: "[T]he vast majority of so-called solutions to global warming…take industrial capitalism as a given and the planet…must conform to industrial capitalism."[cccxviii] The undeniable elephant in the room remains the *How To* portion of the accessibility venture across socio-economic spectrums as policy change is neither an overnight phenomenon, nor will it fundamentally alter the capitalist political model currently inherent in the State. And, as previously outlined in *Chapter 2*, a capitalist model thrives on, in fact, depends upon surplus production to be in considered in good, working order.

Anyone who has ever discussed popular food gurus such as Alice Waters, Jamie Oliver, Carlo Petrini, Michael Pollan, or Barbara Kingsolver in polite conversation with anything but admiration is generally met with a resounding verbal thwack. Who doesn't support local farmers,

simple seasonal meals, or poison-free foods, you might be asked? Who wouldn't worry over persistent government crop subsidies, GMO seed, US epidemics of childhood obesity, or Type 2 Diabetes? These are indeed critical *systemic* concerns rightfully worth questioning, and most recently, a multitude of scholarship addressing the above concerns on a policy level continues to emerge.[cccxix] In questioning the ramifications of common themes surfacing from some US and international food gurus, I do not here offer blanket criticisms of food movements writ large. I recognize the movements as attempts to teach and gain more knowledge and autonomy in food; and as attempts to counter industrial agricultural paradigms that generate surplus, centralized, often bio-engineered food commodities in the face of high-levels of food insecurity in the US and abroad.[cccxx] However, I *do* argue that this key theme of generating broader autonomy and knowledge about food also complicates the politics of 'real food,' anti-obesity, and lifestyle-centered posturing through highly classed, gendered, and racialized historical contexts. I remain equally skeptical of proposals still dependent upon maintaining food—a human necessity—solely within capitalist contexts of exchange, a point I will return to shortly. I move next to trace war-era histories of alternative food production, situating salvage in broader historical contexts and framing alternative food systems.

"Carrots keep you healthy and help you see in the blackout:" Modernist Victory Gardening[cccxxi]

Urban hunger, which is rarely talked about independently of hunger more generally, fundamentally transforms urban space. Yet the lack of existing [spacial] literature requires theorizing it within the context of political economy, social reproduction, and poverty more generally. –Nik Heynan[cccxxii]

Systematized rationing and particularly the iconic victory garden as an alternative food source has long remained a fixation of American cultural memory, and continues to be today. As the above epigram alludes, war-era systematized rationing would have fundamentally sculpted urban spaces. Wartime gardens were encouraged in the US and Europe through government and

private policy initiatives and propaganda campaigns such as those generated by the USDA, The Office of War Information, National Victory Garden Institute, and the US Department of Agriculture. Victory gardens were promoted throughout WWII as a means of supplementing fresh foods while certain commodities such as sugar, fresh meat, and canned goods were forcibly rationed to the public as a means of maximizing use for war-front troops.[cccxxiii] As many food scholars suggest, the idea that the troops needed and deserved the choicest foods, while the American public, particularly women, might fulfill their patriotic duties by rationing meals, maintaining a sense of happiness and normalcy at home through food, gardening to supplement what could not be obtained at the grocery store, and avoiding hoarding rationed commodities, is prevalent across wartime rationing propaganda.

Commenting on the post-war historical moment, author Mark Kurlansky notes of the era, "America was starting to build highways, sell farms to build suburbs, and industrialize the production of food."[cccxxiv] In hindsight, wartime food production alternatives, such as war gardens and rationing, might seem especially radical from where the US currently sits within complex systems of industrial agriculture hinged upon 4 central commodity crops—corn, wheat, soy, and rice; and large-scale domestic importation of foodstuff figuring in at nearly 77 million dollars in 2009.[cccxxv] A modernist tracing of rationing and reuse is central to understanding the shifting role that salvage plays in conceptualizations of ideal citizenship. Yet, we might also revisit such food-centered political organization with a keen eye towards *work* that is classed, gendered, and raced. Reuse and its ties to frugality are closely interwoven, specifically in terms of communal food production. It weaves its way into US cultural memory with tight stitches spanning multiple decades. From the pages of abolitionist Lydia Marie Child's *The Frugal Housewife*, the idealism that sparked Bronson Alcott's 1842 utopian community *Fruitlands*,

which later prompted his daughter Louisa's 1873 criticism of the endeavor made famous in *Transcendental Wild Oats*; 19th century, anti-consumption Free Produce campaigns of both African-American and white abolitionists; the communal kitchens and kitchen-less homes envisioned by Charlotte Perkins Gilman in the early 1900s; the 1969 communal breakfasts organized by The Black Panthers outlined in the Oakland Statement "To Feed Our Children;" back-to-the-land strategizing of counter-culturalists of the 1960s-70s; to the ecologically centered scavenged Digger Feeds of the 1960s.[cccxxvi] Salvage, reuse, frugality, and rationing particularly through food as a politicized medium have, thus, long held highly public, captive roles in the American imagination. Victory gardens remain an incredibly successful historical example of politically enforced rationing by way of patriotic sentiment to generate a code of frugality. Political participation is then codified in uniquely gendered, as well as diverse racial-ethnic and class-based ways.

As popular culture and food scholar Sherrie Inness notes in *Cooking Lessons: The Politics of Gender and Food*, "gender in particular is heavily intertwined with food, since food preparation is so frequently assumed to be women's primary domestic responsibility."[cccxxvii] American and Food Studies scholar Amy Bentley has written prolifically on the gendered and racialized components of US wartime rationing and the uses of propaganda constructing both necessity and patriotic duty for salvage. Bentley argues that two particular icons, that of the infamous Rosie the Riveter and that of the ration-sensitive patriotic Wartime Homemaker maintaining her "kitchen front" in tandem, re-enforced the kitchen, food preparation, and the canning of produce generated by victory gardening as gendered spaces and roles for women in the midst of heightened masculinist wartime rhetoric of war-front sacrifice and home-front production for victory.[cccxxviii] The duel public faces of 'food for victory' versus the unpatriotic

hoarding of rationed items both appeared as largely middle-class, white and female.[cccxxix] The status of Wartime Homemaker was likewise racialized and socially elevated as black women left domestic positions in record numbers for "higher paying and more dignified war work." Bentley suggests that the ensuing (though surely not new) "cult of domesticity which gain[ed]…strength in the 1950s, worked to elevate white women above their working class counterparts. White and middle-class women were in the best position to fulfill all Wartime Homemaker's duties, while women of color and poorer women were far more likely to take on, in addition, an outside, 'Rosie the Riveter' war job."[cccxxx] The pressures placed upon women to perform their patriocy in very specific ways becomes clear by understanding anxieties over the iconic Rosie the Riveter. As American Studies scholar Sherrie Tucker argues on the subject, "So long as her man is away and her country is at war, Rosie will 'work for victory' and spend her paycheck on 'lots of war bonds.' Women who wanted to keep their improved working conditions after the war, who enjoyed their independence, who did not necessarily see their identities as welded to the institutions *wife* and *mother*, and who spent their hard-earned wages on themselves were not good Rosie's at all."[cccxxxi]

Likewise, in *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture*, Sherrie Inness notes, "Given the tremendous difficulties confronting any woman during the war who cooked for a family and grappled with everything from ration points to soybeans, wartime cooking was a vexing responsibility. Yet millions of women performed their domestic duties, and worked double duty, cooking for a family and also maintaining wartime jobs outside the home [in part] because of popular media" messages.[cccxxxii] Self-sufficient food production, thus, serves as a tool for reinforcing both patriotic duties and particularly hetero-normative gendered labor dynamics

that leave 'real' women at home, and maintain men's 'natural' roles within public spheres. As Bentley notes in her chapter "Victory Gardening and Canning,"

> Preserving food has always been women's work, except when it required men's stronger muscle power […]. While home canning in the twentieth century decreased in importance, world crises kept the practice alive. World War I provided stimulus for women to maintain their canning skills, and, with the Great Depression, women who once canned but quit took out their pressure canners and glass jars to make sure their families had adequate food supply. World War II only increased this need [as] significant portions of the nation's canned goods were sent overseas to the military and allied countries.[cccxxxiii]

In contrast, Christopher Holmes Smith's analyses of women's roles in the development of new post-war frozen food technologies for consumption and home-use suggests, rather, the potential for freedom and autonomy through convenience food markets *as opposed to* the war-era rationing that people previously experienced. Holmes argues new technologies of frozen foods, convenience household appliances, and preservative, eye-catching packaging were all marketing attempts that "gave material expression to the nations desire to celebrate the end of scarcity through postwar lifestyle of leisure […. And] represented how the spoils of victory were to be translated into radically revised social relationships back home."[cccxxxiv] However, such attempts reinforced social concerns over the preservation of traditional, hetero-normative gender roles between men and women by the war's end, the central "cultural discourses during the war emphasized [that] domestic values and the American home [were what] GIs were fighting [for]. When they came home from the war, the propaganda went, soldiers deserved to find that dream still intact. No wonder millions of women left their wartime jobs and became fulltime homemakers; they were inculcated with the belief that they played a crucial role as symbols of the American dream."[cccxxxv]

The racial differences associated with wartime gardens, canning, and frugality were notably different for particularly middle class white women then for black women. Bentley argues that whereas wartime propaganda was intent on constructing, even prescribing a unified image of American strength, patriocy, and prosperity, such media served as "icons of abundance during a time of restricted consumption [and also] "naturalize[d] gender and racial hierarchy."[cccxxxvi] Bentley notes of Rockwell's painting *Freedom from Want* for instance, "Rockwell did not feel the need to paint the black woman in the kitchen who might have cooked the succulent feast. During this war waged to administer America's four freedoms to all parts of the world, many Americans were, literally and figuratively, barred from sitting at the table and partaking of the meal."[cccxxxvii] Though popular representations of the kitchen front may have been white-washed, USDA victory garden statistics reveal that "Whether out of need or patriotism (or both), African Americans nationwide were active wartime gardeners…Even though gardening had always been a strong component of African American culture, a product of necessity as well as a source of community cohesion, recreation, and creativity, those in charge of statistics were sometimes surprised that African Americans were avid and accomplished gardeners."[cccxxxviii] Environmental historian Dianne D. Glave notes in fact that in the face of persistent stereotypes of African Americans as "physically and spiritually detached from the environment," evidence suggests, "dating back to the antebellum period, enslaved people used organic methods such as composting [fire ash, barnyard waste, and human waste as fertilizer] when they took or were given the opportunity to grow their own gardens." After emancipation, Glave explains, "[organic] gardens served as sources of food for women's families, means of enhancing their homes, and in some circumstances, small sources of revenue."[cccxxxix]

In contrast, Bentley's research of the canning and communal kitchen initiatives sparked by intensified victory gardening proved to be class and racially specific. Communal canning schools and kitchens were often "segregated by tradition if not by law" and "Not all women had the financial means to preserve food, even though it meant saving money in the long-run. Historically, it is women with at least some means of steady income who have enough initial capital [to can]." For these reasons, Bentley suggests that "the government and media somewhat accurately portrayed home canning as a middleclass venture for women who could afford the time and money it took to can food for one's family."[cccxl] Victory gardens and food preservation as keys to survival during the lean war years take on other meanings and implications if viewed from the perspective of Japanese-American prisoners of war as well.

Regarding the remote imprisonment of 110,000 Japanese and Japanese-American citizens during WWII, Connie Chiang argues, "WRA officials tried to use nature as an instrument for social control by locating the camps in places where they could isolate Japanese Americans and procure their labor in the name of assimilation and patriotism. These landscapes compounded their feelings of anger and despair, [but] their willingness (or lack thereof) to transform and adapt to the natural world could help them survive and contest their confinement."[cccxli] Beginning February 1942 just following Pearl Harbor, the incarcerations, "appeared as a curious extension of New Deal conservation projects […] which purported to simultaneously improve public land and Americanize immigrant workers. The critical distinction was that Japanese Americans, unlike CCC workers, were to be imprisoned."[cccxlii] Multiple prison sites were constructed on public lands or Native American reservations, and the sudden removal of peoples to remote and environmentally harsh conditions of high heat, desert, swamp bayous, and poorly irrigated or landscaped areas proved especially difficult. Public health fears resonating from

"previous…decades…painted Asians as probable carriers of disease due to what they perceived as Asians' low standards of living and refusals to adhere to public health norms of the day. L.A.'s public officials would soon sound a general alarm, warning that a mere mile was not buffer enough to prevent imprisoned Japanese Americans from inadvertently tainting, or perhaps intentionally sabotaging, the city's water supply." Thus, isolation from civilian populations proved one of the key government factors in selection and construction of prison locations and the agricultural labor to be conducted on these sites.[cccxliii]

Chiang argues that interactions in the outdoors surrounding prison sites, involving hiking, fishing, gardening, landscaping, and picnicking, were empowering experiences for many prisoners: "[According to the WRA] if Japanese Americans became more 'American' through their interactions with the natural world, their imprisonment would appear less abhorrent […] But arguably of greater significance were the benefits Japanese Americans derived from their outdoor activities."[cccxliv] Victory Gardening in these environmental contexts prove particularly compelling and "seemed to fulfill both WRA and Japanese American objectives, acting as vehicles for social protest and reform. [They] allowed Japanese Americans to reject their exclusion from the American polity and join the ranks of nearly 20 million other Americans who alleviated pressure on the national food supply by growing their own produce. It also had practical benefits, such as providing plants for the Agricultural Division, flowers for funerals, and food for the hospital and mess halls […]."[cccxlv] Geographer Karl Lillquest documents a handful of other central goals outlined for WRA prison agricultural programs beyond the main objective of food for prisoner consumption: "Next, in declining importance, was raising livestock feed crops, seed crops, and "war crops" (crops to help the war effort) […] Other objectives included selling surplus produce on the open market, preparing evacuees for life after the centers,

and developing lands for the post-war years."[cccxlvi] Laboring in victory gardens in contexts of such racially charged, nationally sanctioned imprisonment of thousands of people speaks with dominant wartime rhetoric of idealized nationalism through food security, as Japanese Americans participated alongside other American growers. Yet, their gardens likewise defy such rhetoric as they toiled under harsh and isolated conditions of imprisonment in the name of assimilation. In this way, race, class, ethnicity and gender differences are key to understanding questions of shifting American values concerning salvage and self-sufficiency as a wartime effort and ideal citizen sacrifice.

The same question of *whose* labor contemporary visions of alternative foodways might include and depend upon proves equally intriguing. For instance, Michael Pollan places this gendered history at the center of one of his many *New York Times* articles when he recalls, "[Decline in cooking] has several causes: women working outside the home; food companies persuading Americans to let them do the cooking; and advances in technology that made it easier for them to do so. Cooking is no longer obligatory, and for many people, women especially, that has been a blessing. But perhaps a mixed blessing, to judge by the culture's continuing, if not deepening, fascination with the subject."[cccxlvii] In like manner, US comedian Steven Colbert's tongue-in-cheek testimony before Congress regarding his experience with United Farm Worker's *Take Our Jobs Campaign*, "offering unemployed Americans farm work, providing necessary training, and addressing the chronic and endemic shortage of agriculture laborers across the country," provides insight into racial, ethnic, and class divisions present in migrant agricultural labor standards in the US.[cccxlviii] W*ho* will do the critical agricultural work that is required to maintain steady food supplies, or as chef Anthony Bourdain snidely puts it, "Who will work these [Elysian] fields? If, somehow, we manage to bring monstrously evil agribusinesses like

Monsanto to their knees, free up vast tracts of arable land for small, seasonal, sustainable farming, where's all the new help coming from?"[cccxlix] Yet, this question strikes me as much too simplistic, in that it constructs a divisive food system binary and a straw-person upon which to hang the so-called problem.

On the one hand remains the insight that cultural memory offers regarding questions of labor. The 'double-shift,' for example, has long plagued feminist labor historians.[cccl] The re-conceptualization of ideal citizenship is once again contemporarily being yoked to 'good' food consumption and the re-politicized question of 'what's for dinner?' So, the initial question of labor and resources for implementation is pertinent. Who has land, time, and resources to implement these new food goals, are all crucial questions. On the other hand though, modernist cultural memory provides a broader historicized picture of shifting values associated with citizenship and salvage, which complicates the present socio-legal stigma of the dumpster as I have traced it in this dissertation. As the work of activists like Waters, Pollan, and Oliver becomes increasingly popular, historical memory might certainly chide us to inquire whose labor Oliver's "networks of community kitchens" might depend upon? But, hopefully, it also compels us to ask after a much more complex dilemma, and that is in what ways do such projects resist or perpetuate current inequitable resource accessibilities given that the strategies are rooted largely within a capitalist paradigm? Freelance writer Emily Matchar noted aptly, "It's when this neo-homesteading starts being presented as a genuine solution for poverty that I start having questions."[ccccli] J discussed labor circumstances necessary to run a farm during our interview and noted,

> J: I'm still a wage laborer. I still have [to have] a wage slave job.
>
> R: You mean outside of the farm?

> J: Yeah…Even though it's more arduous doing the farm, it's just more meaningful to me.[ccclii]

Doing food in alternative ways within capitalist paradigms is *work.* Historically, it is unpaid work that is highly gendered and racialized. And, in this example, it is clearly work in addition to necessary paid labor formats that mean emotionally less to the interviewee than the additional farm work.

Nik Heynen aptly suggests that capitalism's role in the socio-spatial dynamics of hunger, particularly urban hunger, remains a point of central focus in understanding hunger as embodied and spatially experienced:

> [C]apitalist societies, and the proliferation of free market forces, rely on access to food as a negotiating chip to maintain domination and coercion…[The] contradictory notion of capitalist fairness, that is, that so many should go hungry amidst such material abundance, is hard to imagine as a result of its brutality. The spatial contradictions within this notion of fairness and justice are vital for articulating the interrelated and interconnected processes inherent in urban poverty and hunger, and how both impede social reproduction.[ccciii]

Heynen's argument about thinking of food in relation to purchasing power is central to understanding the research questions I have likewise outlined for the direction of this chapter. If, as activist/author Derrick Jensen has argued, food movement activists continue to return to food crisis solutions that "take industrial capitalism as a given," or that persistently seek answers via food policy reforms rather than systemic change, what equitable effects might such solutions ultimately generate? As previously cited, former Black Panther Elaine Brown adeptly highlights a critical component of tackling long-term systemic shifts with equitable resource distribution in mind when she points out, "Because we are so used to the capitalist construct, it doesn't occur to us that we have a human right to eat; because if you don't eat you will die, it's not complicated."[ccciv] I am not here armed with a host of counter-suggestions or resolutions.

However, given that the concern over food security, or even access to land necessary for growing, has a long, deeply gendered, classed, and raced history in the US and globally—as situated in the *Introduction* and *Chapter 2* especially, and the US numbers alone prove deeply so—I feel compelled to inquire after food paradigms rooted in capitalist competition.

The gendered dynamics of such a paradigm are certainly a case in point. Common stereotypes of farmers as white males, for instance, are telling. Beyond the gender and raced dynamics of US food insecurity statistics, the global reality speaks another truth. That is that women remain the most vital sources of food production, generating over 50% of the world's total food supply, and between 60-80% of the food in developing nations alone.[cccv] In a US context, a telling *New York Times* article by Peggy Ornstein discussing Shannon Hayes' 2010 book *Radical Homemakers: Reclaiming Domesticity from Consumer Culture* constructed a more middle-class view of farming and food production as hobby-centered noting, "All of these gals — these chicks with chicks — are stay-at-home moms, highly educated women who left the work force to care for kith and kin. I don't think that's a coincidence: the *Omnivore's Dilemma* has provided an unexpected out from the feminist predicament, a way for women to embrace homemaking without becoming Betty Draper."[cccvi] In response, *The Nation's* Laura Flanders challenged Ornstein's presumption of the "predicament" women face between a *choice* of homemaking and labor outside of the home via her commentary on femivore's, "If the *Times* really wanted to talk dilemmas -- there is no shortage. But the one we need to be talking about isn't what will it take to make status symbol farming satisfying -- it's how do we empower the world's women farmers. Raising chickens isn't the key to feminist liberation. But women's security just might be key to ending hunger."[cccvii] Given the current gendered and racialized landscape of food insecurity and hunger within the United States alone, movement focus would

do well to prioritize improved foods through a focus on systemic inequalities, or as Janet Poppendieck puts it, "the popular response to poverty and hunger in America is 'kinder but less just'" as a result of more than two decades of funding cuts to robust social services where "charity replaces entitlements and charitable endeavor replaces politics."[cccLviii] Popular movements centered on questions of consumption do well to place the role of systemic and systematized inequality of resource acquisition and availability firmly in the center of its goals and objectives, in opposition to idealized citizen participation dependant upon access to special resources.

'Living over the Edge': Contemporary Subversions, Constructing a *Real* Food Paradigm

R: You used a term a couple of times, 'living over the edge?'
D: I mean, not in the mainstream society.
R: What do you think it takes to 'live over the edge'?
D: Poverty [chuckles nervously…] Yeah, either… self-imposed or thrust on you by, uh, circumstances.[cccLix]

Michael Pollan argues that food, not "edible food-like substances," need actually be defended because of the state of poor dietary health and widespread food-related chronic diseases in the United States resulting from the industrialization of food and food resources.[cccLx] Likewise, NYU Food & Nutritional Science scholar Marion Nestle discusses "Techno-food" which she describes as "an enormous range of products" that are enriched, fortified or reformulated.[cccLxi] Nestle's premise in tracing a cultural history of techno-foods is that, as Pollan also suggests, food becomes a confusing and incomprehensible sum of its parts that seems to require an 'expert' trailing us through the supermarket aisles. In contrast, in a 2008 interview Pollan notes, "There's an enormous amount of wisdom […and cultural authority] contained in a

cuisine."[ccclxii] This implies that valuing the cultural knowledge embedded in cuisine is one way of rethinking the authority surrounding food and of resisting many of the aforementioned processes of re-fortification, mechanization, and genetic modification. In this way, Pollan suggests that consumers may reclaim knowledge about their food in the most intimate ways, that is through local knowledges of understanding food sources, growers, growing locations, farmer practices and values about the food they might choose to grow. Pollan writes, "As cook in your kitchen you enjoy omniscience about your food that no amount of supermarket study or label reading could hope to match…And what these acts subvert is nutritionism: the belief that food is foremost about nutrition and nutrition is so complex that only experts and industry can possibly supply it."[ccclxiii]

The re-valuation of local knowledges that Pollan and Nestle are talking about here has become a far-reaching concept for local food initiatives across the nation. Pollan argues, "You're in no danger of mistaking [food as alive as this] for a commodity, or a fuel, or a collection of chemical nutrients. No, in the eye of the cook or the gardener, or the farmer who grew it, this food reveals itself for what it is: no mere thing but a web of relationships among a great many living beings, some of them human, some not, but each of them dependant on the other, and all of them rooted in the soil and nourished by sunlight."[ccclxiv] Urban Farmer Novella Carpenter conveys a sense of both subversion and empowerment noting, "To be an urban farmer [is] to share. Unlike a rural farm, a secret place where only a few lucky people may visit, an urban farm makes what seems impossible possible."[ccclxv] In her article "Local Knowledge and Memory in Biodiversity Conservation," ethnoecologist Virginia Nazarea suggests, "Local knowledge is experiential and embodied in everyday practice. It is not logically formulated apart from what makes sense from living day to day in one's environment; nor is it inscribed as a set of processes

or rules. To treat it solely as information to be tested, or text to be deconstructed, is to ignore the sensory embodiment of local knowledge, as well as the attendant emotion and memory that is its power."[cccLxvi] Importance, here, is placed upon the senses, cultural memory, and experience as rich sources of knowledge, as a means of conceptualizing biodiversity as relational to a given context, and as an approach to 'knowing' biodiversity that differs from a dominant scientific model.[cccLxvii]

Just as the opening epigram to this segment implies, my research with divers suggests that the space of the dumpster and the act of diving also work as forms of what I would call localized, particularly spatialized knowledge about food, commons spaces, and alternative economies for obtaining food; albeit marginalized, socially unacceptable acts. While diver-consumers cannot control what ends up in a dumpster in the same ways that one might influence or help to steer markets for local, organic, heirloom crops through processes of supply and demand, nor are divers necessarily even growers of food as opposed to solely waste-stream consumers (though some interviewees certainly were), divers do experience resource selection processes such as locale, time, frequency, or degree of deviance in obtaining products. More importantly, whether or not divers were interested in taking food--some certainly did while others abstained--the point remains that there is food to be had. Thinking about diving as an alternative, or even simply supplemental, food economy only further highlights the *multiple* ways in which people find, access, and otherwise convey knowledge of food and foodscapes, particularly (though not solely) within post-modern, industrialized contexts. As D noted during our interview, "[Dumpstering in the 70's in my circle] wasn't poverty, it was a choice. It was a supplement to however we were cobbling our living together with odd jobs or gardening."[ccclxviii] In both instances of local knowledge, that of growing one's own and that of reclaiming what has

been thrown away, (and sometimes both tactics together), this notion of subversion is highlighted. J argued during our interview, "Encounters with gathering resources that aren't within exchange society are, are very powerful. They can be very powerful for the development of a…radical psyche…They can become little subterfuges for taking out capitalism."[ccclxix] In another way, divers have emphasized reliance upon their own sensory abilities for freshness over product labeling recalling what Edwards and Mercer argued concerning "use [of] innate senses of touch, taste and smell…[as] a conscious shift away from corporate control."[ccclxx] In *Chapter 1*, I argue that use of the dumpster is in fact a form of non-consumerist consumption, and I document commentary from an interviewee who notes, "Do I think dumpster diving is the revolution, or dumpster diving is gonna cause the collapse of civilization? I don't, because I think that we are able to dumpster dive *because* capitalism exists."[ccclxxi] But I have also noted that making use of the waste stream is equally a form of subversion, a counter-construction of commons spaces and resources, at least within capitalist confines. In this way, whether intentional or not, the subversions being suggested are strikingly similar.

The variety of ways that we find, access, or otherwise convey knowledge of food *within* late capitalist contexts emphasizes the necessity for an expansion in thinking about the ramifications of a 'real' food nametag particularly in critiquing its often socially sanctioned origins. As the narratives suggest in *Chapter 2*, the margins of a dumpster prove to be a potential food source for many who seek it out; and for some people, it is a core source for eating 'well,' such as when one interviewee noted, "I lived *high* out of dumpsters."[ccclxxii] As I will put forth in *Chapter 4*, food from the dumpster is already socially taboo material and thereby de-legitimized in differing ways from other economies. In articulating the possibilities of local, organic, and sustainable food products as alternatives to conventional, additive-rich fare, contemporary food

activists and scholars are attempting to counter-normalize and educate, to construct new markets for healthier fare. But what of these more marginalized spaces and sources of re-use? Re-framing off-the-radar foodways and spaces in terms of agency, cultural ingenuity, and resourcefulness as Pollan suggests in *In Defense of Food* only *highlights* the complexities and politics of labeling something edible or inedible, and how that label potentially effects people of varying food in/securities. This is because the underlying notion of subversion is deeply entwined with broader questions of movement agenda and material reality for many people not living off the land.

To further this point, we might consider the buzz surrounding Alice Waters, whose 2009 guest appearance on CBS's *60 Minutes* reiterates Slow Food's local and farmer-centric philosophy, with increased demand for food in education, such as Waters' implementation of the "edible schoolyard."[ccclxxiii] Over the course of the interview, Waters reveals her personal views about accessibility to organic foods. In response to the common complaint, suggested by Leslie Stahl, that Waters is "self righteous and elitist" Waters states, "I feel that good food should be a right and not a privilege and it needs to be without pesticides and herbicides and everybody deserves this food. That's not elitist."[ccclxxiv] When challenged as to the high cost of organic grapes at a farmer's market venue, Waters notes, "Some people buy Nike shoes--two pairs. Some people buy grapes to nourish themselves. I pay a little extra but it's what I want." Thus, fresh, whole, local-organic, and otherwise pesticide–free foods are at once deemed a human right, necessarily accessible to all without special resources; yet also the product of 'good' consumer food choices--a point which intends *access* to consumer possibility. Other recent personalized food narratives take up similar food system concerns; many addressing individual or "what to eat" lifestyle concerns, though not as easily identifiable with discussions about systemically

produced food insecurity or food-land accessibility related to homelessness, poverty, or economic and geographic disenfranchisement.[cccLxxv]

In the 2009 documentary *Food, Inc*. Stoneybrooke Farm CEO Gary Hirshberg notes, "When we run an item past the supermarket scanner, we're voting for local or not, organic or not."[cccLxxvi] If access to "good food is a right not a privilege," and yet some of the most prominent proposals and the most widely recognized 'faces' of food tend to push "voting with the wallet" and lifestyle shifts—just buy organic grapes at the farmer's market rather than Nike shoes as Alice Waters notes on *60 Minutes* and in the *New York Times;* just slow down, return to the land, eat locally, can your own tomatoes as Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* suggests; purchase, cook, and prioritize whole foods rather than processed (and for god's sake bury your *Fry Daddy*) as Jamie Oliver argues in *Food Revolution*—the issues remain within an under-represented realm for the food insecure, particularly urban, land poor or otherwise economically limited people.[cccLxxvii] This is not to suggest that individuals of varying socio-economic positionalities have no agency; rather, my point is to put forth that whereas the "homegrown revolution" might very well be an option and direct action solution for some people, it might also be a completely impractical impossibility for others given the time, labor commitments, and spatial necessities among other resources necessary to make it happen.

In her recent *New York Times* article about her life as a single, urban-dwelling mother going "back to the land" Susan Gregory Thompson argues, "My biggest revelation in terms of self-sufficiency is this: It is no big deal. You can tell yourself anything is too difficult, or you can just do it. And you do not need to reconstruct your worldview or take issue with others. You just need to be hungry."[cccLxxviii] While there is certainly something to be said for individual degrees of tenacity, resources count for something in one's ability to "just do it," including: access to

education, reading and writing abilities, computers, having a wife/husband/partner to supplement incomes, media access such as Oliver's television and cooking shows; or the finances and credit you need to own a locally sourced restaurant such as Waters' *Chez Pannisse*, or to own/lease land necessary to grow enough to feed oneself let alone others; not to mention the skills and manual dexterity necessary to grow or if necessary rehabilitate polluted soils. All of these prove critical to supplementing one's ability to participate in a social movement centered on consumption, or idealizing frugality for that matter. The very radicalization of such strategizing about food, particularly within the confines of capital exchange and purchasing power--whether it be victory gardens, canning, or production and purchase of whole over processed foods—slowly constructs an ideal standard of activism and participation that may prove to be unobtainable for many people and communities. My question is, what other practical actions surround us everyday that are legally stigmatized, socially illegitimized, disassociated, or de-revolutionized, just as the dumpster is constructed as a social and legal taboo or health threat? Or, what of collectivity over individual actions in an economic paradigm that pushes consumer participation?

I agree with many food movement assessments of rethinking food systems, questioning hidden costs, surplus food production, vast usurpations and privatization of land/resources, genetic modification and patent of foods, and implementing experiential educational directions with food in schools. For that matter, many interviewees were similarly inclined, such as J who implemented permaculture on a family farm: "There've been times when [the five people living here] have produced even less than a bag of trash, uh, a month. All of our food scraps go to the worms or the chickens…that stuff is made back into food or vegetables…we do a lot of jarring and canning and reuse those jars…until they break […] That's kind of a goal we're setting for

ourselves is not having to buy anymore food. We do…buy a little bit of food, and that [complements the solely food] dumpster diving that we do."[cccLxxix] However, piecing together what I hear as a whole from the margins of the dumpster pushes back specifically on the question of "voting with one's wallet" and virtuous spending in the name of constructing new food paradigms—a moral discourse deeply entrenched in US consumer history and policy. To recycle into a new context something Kingsolver wrote about maintaining her family farm plot, "It's an interesting question, how to navigate this tangled path between money and morality."[cccLxxx] One of *the* central looming dilemmas in US food movements is bridging the gap in this vast economic divide that separates lifestyle change, potential food policy change, and the day-to-day material realities of food insecurity and accessibility. And, in my mind, this is partially a question of expanded representations within food movements, which can only happen with a redirection of targeted movement goals *away* from individual bodies and virtuous spending ideals, and *onto* systemic discussions of the socio-economic factors that generate unequal health disparities and food accessibility.[cccLxxxi] We are not talking solely about matters of consumer choice—and even if we were, many might still choose a twinkie over chickpeas as a matter of course.

In questioning the 'real' food paradigm I do not here intend to defend the twinkie (for example) as a nutritionally dense food, nor am I arguing that evidence from diver interviews points to such a claim—something Pollan would certainly label an "edible food-like substance." I am also not questioning the logic in Pollan or Nestle's (among others), encouragement of consumers to "shop the perimeter of the supermarket" when possible; or to "Create a farm on a city lot, sell produce on a corner, show urban kids where eggs come from. Plant in the cracks of the city," as Novella Carpenter argues.[cccLxxxii] But, let's not forget the wrestling over public-private spaces that resurfaces again and again in my analyses of the dumpster in *Chapters 1& 2*,

or as I situated in my *Introductory Notes* by way of the South Central Farm closure either, wherein farmers are evicted and gardens are bulldozed over private property dispute. Resources matter in this movement, and that is what's so unsettling, because food is required not optional. As food scholar Warren Belasco argues, "Only the richest twentieth percent regularly buy the ecologically righteous wares of Smith and Hawken, Ecover, and Whole Foods. Indeed there are all too many parallels between green marketing of the new millennium and the brown marketing (natural, organic) of thirty years before: premium prices, extravagant hyperbole, unverifiable claims, inevitable deception, consumer skepticism, and backlash."[cccLxxxiii] I am particularly drawn to diver narratives because of the far-reaching implications of their insightful theorizing about what food is; what *good* food is; what community or commons spaces might be; what can or should be recycled; and ultimately, how the dumpster is wrapped up in broader social values about so-called 'good' citizenship, 'real' work, and self-sufficiency.

Chapter 4: Tackling Informality: Beyond the Dumpster as Public Health Threat

Food Policy is contested space. […] Part of the struggle witnessed within and about food policies is the result of different interest groups seeking to influence policy frameworks and accepted understandings of food [--]a constant 'juggle' of competing interests and perspectives.[cccLxxxiv]

As a vegan baker I have often turned to baking as a means of supplementing my income, gifting, bartering, or otherwise seducing folks with sweet-savory delectables. In the midst of a terrible economy, multiple proposed cuts to higher education, and an already limited graduate income; when suddenly faced with the cancellation of my summer teaching contract at the University of Kansas, I once again turned to baking as a means of pulling in some meager income.[cccLxxxv] Offered the opportunity to share a stand with urban farmer friends at the Lawrence Farmer's Market at no additional cost—in exchange I purchased, featured, and promoted their local produce in my baked goods--I set out to construct a weekly menu, ingredients lists, labels, business cards type-written on recycled chip board, and a preparation regime for Saturday morning markets throughout some of the hottest months of the year that Kansas has to offer. Initial sales seemed to be a success; people consistently expressed admiration of my euro-bakery style display and signage, and I regularly sold out of my weekly seven diverse menu offerings—all indicative of a 10-12 hour workday of solo market preparation. One morning during 6am prep for market, a board representative visited our booth and inquired when I planned to individually wrap and label every menu item? My response was simple—I did not plan to individually wrap each individual item, but was more concerned with generating an extended display that covered the foods uniformly before temperatures began to soar, while not disrupting my popular, over-flowing bakery-style display appeal, which proved a critical component to my market sales. People seemed to want to eat my food because it was visibly inviting and decadent to them while still affordable. The response was not so pleasant, however. I was curtly reminded that the

regulations outlined by the Kansas Department of Agriculture governing farmer's market vending clearly required all items to be individually wrapped, sealed, and tagged with bakery information, ingredients lists, and product weights all prior to sale. My current provision of that information, *including* contact information, take-away bags, ingredient lists, and netting or cake stand coverage of the food available on site, was not enough. Non-compliance could get me in trouble with both the State, as well as place me on "bad terms" with other market vendors who "would all hate me," according to this board member, if KDA investigation into my vending practices were to result in investigation of their own stands and practices. A pleasant 6 a.m. conversation in the midst of busy market preparation and on the heels of a very late night's work of baking fresh the night before, to say the least. I was both furious *and* nervous over this exchange. People working regularly with food often convey the emotions I here convey—feeding people weighs heavily on you. There is often a huge sense of responsibility, pride, and concern over the quality of the goods being created and consumed. While I was frustrated by my financial circumstances, I was equally concerned that I generate the best possible products for market sales.

The following week, market board members issued an email reminder clarifying vendor requirements for all market bakers to be "in accordance with Kansas health regulations" due to "a complaint."[ccclxxxvi] Already desperate about my financial situation, I thought long and hard about bowing out of the market stall altogether—it was time-consuming, required highly stressful, detail-oriented preparation, and long-hours on my feet either standing on painful tile flooring without shock absorption, or on an asphalt parking lot at market while exposed to the elements, all with little to no payment of my labor. But what other part-time job options did I have in a saturated campus-town market with few openings mid-summer, and a time-consuming

dissertation to complete? Every overdue bill was already a crisis; and likewise, every failed cupcake, pie crust, or tart a representation of wasted money and product. In spite of my reservations, I decided I would try to play nice with the public health codes in the hopes that market sales would pick up enough as the summer progressed to make the endeavor more financially viable. What I quickly discovered was that packaging each individual item added both money and time (two hours on my first try and at least 1.5 hours on consecutive tries) onto an already time-sensitive workday of baking, and that was *with* the help of friends eager for their chance at French apple tart crumbs or in search of the glass of wine I plied as barter for helping me package. There was no way I could possibly afford to keep this up all summer.

That first market in compliance with regulations was an absolute disaster. Numerous customers asked why I had altered my display of the products. Not wanting to waste perfectly good packaging, many people simply opened up the packages only to hand the packaging—hours of additional late night prep mind you—right back to me for reuse. And once the sun had risen completely overhead, a new issue with individual packaging emerged--condensation began to form on the *inside* of packages containing the moistest products, baking them further in the sun, and softening my handmade, hand-fluted pie crusts. Fewer people approached the stand because they complained they "couldn't tell what I was selling" in the packages. Those who did approach often pressed down upon the packaging to try to peer through the condensation build up forming on the inside of the packaging to get a glimpse at what I was selling. I donated what I could of that week's product, and went home feeling the usual post-market exhaustion mixed with utter defeat.

I began talking to other bakers to get their perspectives on the issue. We talked about how this was affecting their business, and how they planned to address the topic further in their

displays and packaging. Many experienced the same issues that I did—their sales models were greatly affected--they felt forced to suddenly raise prices in the middle of market season to account for expensive packaging of individual products or end up making little to no profit on their efforts; they felt they wasted good packaging on each item; their customers persistently felt that the individual packaging was wasteful; and the list went on. I was particularly frustrated by the fact that the State of Kansas does not require a certified kitchen to sell directly between producer and consumer for 'value-added goods' at market.[cccLxxxvii] And yet, unlike businesses with certified kitchens, such as storefront bakeries, market merchants were required to package and label each item individually. The irony of this struck me deeply: first, because my home state of Illinois is even more strict on this issue and requires certified kitchens for any average bake sale, rummage sale baked good, kid-on-the-corner lemonade stand, etc. Second, because it seemed particularly odd to trust the unseen baking conditions and packaging methods of one's private home, yet ruffle feathers over un-packaged goods bought and sold at market under conditions of absolute consumer choice. If anything, these changes meant that I had to put the products at even greater exposures between oven and market transportable casing because pre-packaging everything required more cooling time on the limited surface space that I already had in my tiny home; and greater handling of the products by more people because each item had to be covered, enclosed, labeled and then placed in market cases for transport. I simply could not afford to comply with each component—individual ingredients labels were expensive to print each week, packaging added time and money. I had to find a happy medium to try to bring my sales back up, or bow out completely. I decided simply to comply in some regards and not others—as one fellow vendor put it, to "not be the worst offender, show that [I] was making an effort to comply, and provide rationale for efforts taken if/when confronted."

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Thus far, this dissertation has centered specifically upon the space of the dumpster as an oft utilized, highly taboo food and material resource for many people of varying economic needs and backgrounds. However, there are numerous examples of public health and safety centered arguments similar to those applied to the space of the dumpster that likewise work upon small-scale, often informal, food economies in unique ways—such as the complex interplay between the dumpster as a presumed public health threat and social litigations over subjective views of 'dirt' versus cleanliness. Examples of the push and pull over land use, sanitation and beautification efforts, and public safety initiatives are equally available. Of course, these concerns similarly affect large-scale globalized food markets as well, as geographer and food studies scholar Susanne Friedberg argues in her latest book *French Beans and Food Scares*, "the power to demand goodness in food—as defined by cultural norms of what makes food safe, natural, moral, and appetizing—has introduced new forms of domination and vulnerability in postcolonial food commodity networks […].[cccclxxxviii] Working in accordance with such public health centered controls, and the State needs and desires that drive them clearly serves a precautionary, protective purpose for consumers and producers alike; and follows a similar historical trajectory to the rise of sanitation measures in the United States that I traced in *Chapter 2*. However, such measures may also serve as a means of control over food economies that might otherwise be working voluntarily off the radar or outside of legitimized means of production or consumption of foodstuff. In "Other Women Cooked for My Husband" American & Food Studies scholar Psyche Williams-Forson discusses an underground economy of Ghanaian women cooking and selling food out of their homes in urban settings:

> Unable to afford the luxury of a formal restaurant, the kitchens in these women's homes became makeshift establishments for making money and transmitting culture. […] It is not unusual to find women and men who illegally prepare and sell ready-to-eat meals. This is especially the case in locales inhabited by various immigrant groups where formal restaurants catering to their gustatory needs and desires are few and far between. This underground trade is performed all the time by people in every social strata to make ends meet and to garner a few additional funds. While illegal, it is an important occupation for women and men unable otherwise to find other employment. This work not only contributes to their family's economic support but also to the cultural well-being of those who frequent their temporary eatery.[cccIxxxix]

Williams-Forson's example of negotiating the culinary conditions of her own bi-cultural, diasporic household by reaching out to other culinary networks is a case in point of how I wish to address the complex interplay between economics; concerns over public health; and illegal, non-normative, or alternative culinary economies of production and consumption. This chapter is an attempt to explore such tensions in relation to the producers or consumers they invariably affect, as relational to and as an extension of my analysis of the dumpster. The dumpster here serves as a lens onto interconnected examples of informal food economies. In my approach of the dumpster, I have had to braid together an understanding of legal, social, and material dynamics to get at the complexities of this space and food resource. I am careful to highlight exemplary public health controls from multiple angles; looking at the ways in which they are designed to both help and hinder certain food economies and "'juggle' competing [food] interests and perspectives" as the chapter epigram suggests.

I would argue that whereas the dumpster can rarely serve as a legitimized food space, such extended examples of informal food economies can cast greater light onto the unique role that public health controls have on food. I explore the monitoring of these exemplary food economies, particularly as 'politics of clean' play a central role in the rationale behind such policies, laws or strategies asserted over the activities discussed. More research will most

certainly be necessary to make any definitive links between the success/failure of food economies and the cultural, legal, and economic controls over them. Nonetheless, the final portion of this chapter serves as an attempt to extend understanding of the dumpster, always with an eye towards the ways in which discourses of public health 'threat' or 'concern' invariably effect food economies that may be informal, under-legitimized or valued, and yet remain highly active in the face of such barriers. Strikingly, the role of government controls discussed in this chapter work as a mechanism of consumer protectionism; whether or not the consumer is particularly concerned becomes irrelevant. The logic of control here is that if a consumer purchases food from a licensed vendor, the State has approved not only the product, but also the methods and means of sanitary production. The vendor is, in essence, on the State's radar of documentation. However, it might also be inferred that consumers who choose to make purchases from these informal food economies ultimately consent to 'doing food' in a different, perhaps non-normative, even underground, or in some cases, such as Williams-Forson's discussion of informal Ghanaian food vending, maybe even in a more culturally appropriate way. We might liken this to the discussion raised in *Chapter 2* by divers who rejected product sell-by dates, or the common concerns that dumpstered foods are somehow rotten, unsafe or unsanitary and therefore inedible.

In the pages that follow I situate an historical understanding of public health monitors as it relates to practical assessment and control over food-borne illnesses. However, I maintain a simultaneous critical focus on the particular social biases that that have informed and effected public health monitors of food as it relates to what I situate in *Chapter 2* of this dissertation as 'politics of clean.' Drawing upon the historical basis of public health controls over food consumption and vending, I then explore specific contemporary instances of public health

intervention against informal food economies and vendors, pulling from a host of news coverage and select oral interviews completed with vendors and producers. In making such a move in this final chapter, my intention is to establish a link between dumpstered food economies and other small-scale, non-dominant food practices, from corner lemonade stands, food carts, street foods[cccxc] and urban foraging measures beyond the dumpstered margins, because I think this permits heightened exploration of the following core themes carried throughout this project: 1.) Why some people engage in non-normative, or even taboo food spaces and materials; 2.) The multiplicity of US food economies already at work, even in spite of State monitoring; and 3.) The re-occurring theme of 'ideal' citizenship within idealized consumption; and the intermingling of cleanliness into these core themes and values. I feel this approach also permits discussion of the ways in which such food economies may be popularly, perhaps even nostalgically, romanticized within other cultural contexts, yet highly controlled (licensed, certified, monitored, etc.), or even entirely absent from certain municipal US contexts. Ultimately, however, moving beyond the dumpster as a public health threat, extends the conversation to underlying socio-political currents over the public/private divide and the uses, especially, of public spaces within neo-liberal contexts of persistent re-negotiation. As geographer Nick Blomley suggests, "The politics of neo-liberalism, especially in relation to property, should not be taken as a settled fact, but as an analytic question. Let us not take them at face value. Even neo-liberalism can contain, if you like, forms of neo-socialism."[cccxci] In like manner, we might come to imagine negotiations of commons usage of the dumpster and beyond, to other similar food economies.

On 'Creamy Corn Cups' and Street Fare

Street food is the life and soul of cities the world over. The concept is simple enough: the vendors provide cheap and tasty snacks to people on the move, have jobs that they otherwise might not have, contribute revenue to public coffers through license fees, and add colour and vibrancy to otherwise drab streets. Everyone wins.[cccxcii]

In a recent episode of the Food Network's *Mexican Made Easy* entitled 'Creamy Corn Cups,' celebrity chef Marcella Valladolid narrates her love of Mexican street food from Tijuana, where she grew up.[cccxciii] In his *Remembrance of Repasts,* anthropologist David Sutton discusses this type of food-centered memorializing—what he calls memories "sedimented in the body."[cccxciv] Sutton notes, "I argue that food's memory power derives in part from synesthesia, which I take to mean the synthesis of or crossing of experiences from different sensory registers (i.e. taste, smell, hearing)."[cccxcv] Williams-Forson tells an exemplary story of this food-centered memory triggering when she writes of her husband's seeking authentic Ghanaian foods, "I was willing to accept my husband's comfort eating some foods prepared by Ghanaian women because it seemed clear that his feelings were directly tied to issues of memory. By refusing to eat the Ghanaian foods cooked by me, however, my husband exerted a certain amount of emotional power and control in that he made it clear that when it came to Ghanaian cooking he preferred food cooked by Ghanaian hands."[cccxcvi] The emotive utterances communicated for global street fare are hardly an uncommon theme for food-centric shows. In fact, one glance at shows such as the Travel Channel's *No Reservations* featuring chef Anthony Bourdain; Andrew Zimmerman's *Bizarre Foods*; or even Food Network's *The Next Food Network Star,* clearly establishes global culinary quests for the best, most 'authentic' or 'bizarre' global fare; as well as a crucial (perhaps network induced) need to tap one's emotional memorial connections to food--all on camera of course.[cccxcvii] In each popular showcase of street fare, viewers are invited to either re-create street flavors at home, as is the case with *Mexican Made Easy*; or imagine travel to exotic places as a

means of experiencing the authenticity of street foods through the snacking, munching, sipping, and eating practices of the ever hollow-legged hosts of the aforementioned travel shows. The affective connections that Valladolid makes between her Tijuana childhood memories, for instance, and the dishes she recreates for her Food Network viewers are not at all surprising.

What interests me here, however, is not that these connections *are* being made—research is available on the affective dynamics of food and memory—rather, that comparatively, street food, among other small-scale food economies in the United States remains monitored in unique and interesting ways, and in many contexts is simply less prevalent, if not entirely unavailable. And so what, you might ask? What does it matter that there is an absence of dynamic forms of street food production and consumption within many pockets of the US? Well, a critical question is one of economic import—a complex array of localized economic opportunities arise from the ability for people at varied levels of economic means, whether producers or consumers, to engage and thrive. Moreover, because such opportunity suggests a diversification of producer and consumer bases, it thereby enables expanded economic agency and representation through food. My intention is not to romanticize the lives or experiences of global street food vendors, or to suggest that there do not exist complex webs of licensing, certification, or socio-economic agreements in food economies beyond the US. These of course exist the world over. Rather, my intention is to begin to chip away at the ways in which diverse food economies are both important and yet monitored in modes that may favor producers and consumers of greater economic ways and means, inhibit possibilities for the more economically limited; but ultimately, speak to socio-political tug-of-wars over the use of public spaces.[cccxcviii] Mirroring how dumpstered fare is often perceived as a threat to sanitation, public health and questions of respectability bound up in citizen-consumerism, the controls placed upon informal food

economies offer important insight into the reality that many simply persist in doing food in informal, perhaps even taboo, ways. But first, to better understand the dynamics of food-centric, protective pubic health measures taken by the State, permit me to situate a transnational history of critical rationale for these controls.

On Typhoid Mary & Food-Borne Terror: Historical Instances of Public Health and Food

> At the simplest food scares are episodes of 'acute collective anxiety,' set off by reported risks of invisible food-borne pathogens and resulting, typically, in plunging sales of the suspect products…What alarms people is the evidence that the risks hidden in an increasingly industrialized and internationalized food supply are neither well understood by science nor well regulated by government.[cccxcix]

MacArthur Fellowship awardee and controversial African-American artist Kara Walker once noted about her work on the silhouette--particularly a piece entitled *Insurrection: Our Tools Were Rudimentary Yet We Pressed On*, envisioning a slave revolt in the ante-bellum South: "This work is two parts research and one part paranoid hysteria."[cd] In piecing together historical instances of food-borne illnesses informing contemporary public health precautions that seep into our understanding and interpretation of the dumpster, among other underground food economies, I have likewise tried to imagine this Walker-ian awareness of the slipperiness of truth within contexts of sanitation effort. When I was a teenager, my grandmother, a Serbian-American Immigrant to Chicago narrated to me, quite suddenly and out of the blue, a story about her mother Sophie, whose name I could otherwise recall solely in correlation to the few instances of late-night proximity with my grandmother, when I got the chance to sleep in her room and ask her a deluge of questions about her mother "Soapy" (as I pronounced it). The daughter and youngest sister of Serbian bakers—whose faces I have seen only once in a wedding photo my grandmother tucked away in a hallway coat closet--my grandmother told me of a moment in her childhood when she fell fast asleep next to her mother, "who was very cold and asked [my

grandmother] to sleep beside her to keep warm." When she awoke, she discovered that my great-grandmother had passed on of tuberculosis. This restrained narrative that my grandmother offered spoke its truths of grief by virtue of its scarcity. Knowledge of the Serbian heritage within my family history is limited, and reduced largely to similar passing snippets of information; words in a mother tongue my grandmother or great-aunts would share with us only sporadically and otherwise reserve entirely for one another; and the ever-present foods available at family gatherings. Yet, if, as Kara Walker suggests I apply my own "fictions into those known [historical] facts" I can imagine such snippets within a broader context of what life might have been like for my grandmother and her four other orphaned siblings, particularly given that being Serbian (not always considered racially white at this historical point in time), being orphaned as a result of tuberculosis (it turns out my great-grandfather was likewise consumptive), *and* being bakers in constant proximities to food could have meant something very grave in the early twentieth century urban United States.[cdi]

As I have elsewhere discussed, the turn-of-the-century rise of particularly urban public health and sanitation measures greatly transforms the urban discourses of health as well as moral virtue in the United States and abroad, and informs current practices. Tracing contemporary global food scares within highly transnationalized contexts, Susanne Friedberg states, "Although popular anxieties are by no means new, modern food scares owe their political potency to 19th century developments in mass media, mass food marketing, and scientific measures of food purity and danger."[cdii] Early public health workers made great strides in addressing some of the most pressing illnesses and sanitation concerns of the time period. Out of this historical moment the notion that "cleanliness is next to godliness" becomes central to the crusades of multiple urban reforms and reformers working to address sanitation efforts, including crucial focus on

sewage, water, street sanitation, and garbage services, among other food-centered controls such as milk pasteurization. As historian Suellen Hoy documents, "Municipal housekeeping would unite women of many backgrounds, but the most articulate resembled leaders of the WCTU who were white, upper-middle-class, educated, and native-born Protestants of Anglo-Saxon ancestry. Motivated by a desire to protect their homes and nurture their families, they came to believe that they, as the nation's homemakers could improve the deplorable housekeeping practices of their cities and towns."[cdiii] At the same time, "the experimental work from the laboratories of Louis Pasteur in France and Robert Koch in Germany had revolutionized medical theory about the very causes of epidemic disease, substituting microorganisms for undifferentiated filth as the culprit. Narrowing the etiology of disease from the whole urban environment to microscopic germs seemed to pinpoint the public health activity needed to eliminate the problems."[cdiv] As a result, scientists locate the role that bacteria and environmental factors play in the spread of disease, shifting the face of medical practice and centralizing the role of sanitation efforts in the prevention of disease. Public health scholar and author of *The Sanitarians* John Duffy argues, "The sanitarians' emphasis upon clean air, clean food, pure water, and personal hygiene undoubtedly helped to reduce typhoid and other enteric disorders. Personal hygiene also contributed to the eradication of typhus; and a rising standard of living, which permitted the screening of houses and other buildings, was a factor in eliminating malaria…[H]istorically the gradual improvement in the quality of food and housing throughout the United States has been a major factor in reducing all forms of sickness."[cdv]

However, along with these crucial changes remain the parallel ways in which the social biases of scientists living and working within a newly industrialized, and likewise xenophobic, racist, and sexist society result in targeted reformist efforts that singled out places and peoples

not only considered the most at-risk for disease, but also those considered ‘dirtiest’ and the most problematic to the health and well-being of society at-large. As feminist historian Anna Davin has suggested about early twentieth century public health efforts, “[British doctors] knew that environmental factors and infection played a part in both stomach and respiratory infections; yet only the mothers' ignorance and neglect were stressed. The vocabulary of concern also reflects their views of the world around them: the anxiety to build a race of strong men, to promote virility, and so on; and also the capitalist terminology of commodities, assets, and the rest.”[cdvi] The infamous US typhoid case of Irish immigrant and cooking talent Mary Mallon, is certainly a key historical example of these trends, particularly with regard to food-borne illness. Discovered to be a healthy carrier of typhoid bacillus, and charged with having caused over 50 individual outbreaks and three typhoid deaths, Mallon was isolated on New York’s North Brother Island on two separate occasions, once in 1907 and then again in 1915 until her death in 1938--in all a total of “more than 26 years” of confinement and health monitoring, long after public health approaches to typhoid shifted from patient isolation to a more humane professional re-training.[cdvii] Focusing on the west coast in Los Angeles, Natalia Molina argues, “Public health workers contributed to the negative perception of the Japanese by explicitly raising the specter of food-borne disease, particularly intestinal diseases to which ‘the Japanese nation [was] subject.’ … Although reports of typhoid cases were few [between 1915-1920], officials argued that the types of produce the Japanese farmed, such as berries and celery, were ideal carriers of typhoid since people generally consumed them raw.”[cdviii] Public health scholar and Mary Mallon historical expert Judith Leavitt speaks more broadly to present-day interpretations of historical public health dilemmas when she notes, “Examining the contrasting perspectives on Mary Mallon and looking back at the debate about the control of healthy carriers of typhoid fever will

not reveal ready-made solutions to our current public health problems, [but does] remind us of important approaches to consider and pitfalls to avoid…"[cdix]

The historical belief that miasmas, 'bad air' caused by urban pollutants, were at the bottom of countless nineteenth and early twentieth century illnesses,[cdx] and that these illnesses were largely connected to, if not outright blamed on, immigrants living in crowded urban housing communities thoroughly exemplifies the ways in which social prejudices influenced even newer scientific practices, as bacteriological foci persisted in targeting the poor and disenfranchised as 'dirty' or disease-ridden. To be sure, as I historicize in Chapter 2, tenement housing in urban locations such as New York are no picnic. The lack of indoor plumbing, running water, and garbage clean-up, paired with over-crowding, high risks of disease and death, surely made for unpleasant, to say the least, living experience. However, Leavitt, Molina, and Davin, among others highlight in their research the rise of public health expert tendency to equate environmental factors with moral degeneration. Molina notes, "Most Japanese farmers lived on their farms, often in inexpensively constructed homes that housing and health officials portrayed as inferior to 'typical' housing found in Los Angeles […]. Implicitly defining *inferior* as equivalent to *unsanitary*, officials' reasoned that these assumed unsanitary conditions could spread to produce cultivated on the same land. [Yet,] Japanese farmers…would have had little incentive to build permanent housing given the provisions of the Alien Land Laws of 1913 and 1920."[cdxi] Relating fears over racial purity, racialized power, and the importance placed upon the role of motherhood in the early twentieth century, Davin likewise makes note of the tendency to ignore crucial environmental factors affecting many twentieth century urban working class mothers in Britain and elsewhere:

> Failure to breast feed, taking an infant to the minder in the cold early morning before clocking in at the mill, going out to work at all, were all signs of maternal

> irresponsibility and infant sickness and death could always be explained in such terms. Even as careful a statistician as Arthur Newsholme… [ignored] the evidence of his own tables as to regional variation and the excessive incidence of infant mortality wherever particular features of working-class urban life were concentrated (most of all over crowding and the failure of local authorities to introduce a waterborne sewage system in place of middens and ash privies), and sounding off interminably about the 'ignorance and fecklessness of mothers'.[cdxii]

Each of these arguments highlights the social influences and biases obscuring the environmental realities disenfranchised communities and populations associated with 'dirt' or poor sanitation as a social ill.

Beyond infant mortality, however, in other early twentieth century instances of addressing food-related health and wellness we might also look to the shifting face of government influence over food intake with the formation of the USDA in 1862, created to "ensure sufficient and reliable food supply"[cdxiii] and also to "diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word; otherwise "interpreted as a mandate to issue dietary advice.[cdxiv] As NYU nutrition, food and public health scholar Marion Nestle notes, "In 1900… the leading causes of death were infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and diptheria made worse by the nutrient deficiencies and overall malnutrition that were especially prevalent among the poor. […] To overcome nutritional deficiencies and related disorders, government nutritionists urged people to eat more of a greater variety of foods."[cdxv] Within contemporary contexts, Nestle suggests that, "dietary advice issued by the government never has been based purely on considerations of public health. The agencies that issue dietary advice inevitably have other constituencies as well as the public, most notably the agricultural and food industries."[cdxvi] Taken in this broader historical context then, we see that the State has long played a role in problem-solving public health and sanitation concerns, especially as they relate to food and

improvement of food-borne illnesses. Yet, the particular approaches to addressing these matters must likewise be understood within particular historical contexts and shifting social biases. While I do not here suggest that the subsequent cases of public health concern or alarm discussed in the next chapter segment indicate an intentional, targeted social bias on the basis of identity, as the aforementioned public health histories show. More research would be necessary to make such a claim, and falls beyond the purview of this dissertation. Rather, I highlight the following examples as evidence of the ways in which voluntary food exchange, public health controls, questions of financial exigency, food accessibility, and interests over public space collide.

'Quality of Life Campaigns': Rogue Lemonade Stands & Food Cart Bans in Contemporary Times

> In a clash that led an army of food vendors to marshal their carts along Fifth Avenue yesterday, New York City has begun a new crackdown on vendors operating in areas that the city has declared off limits…The administration of Rudolph W. Giuliani views enforcement of such laws as part of a campaign on 'quality of life' issues.[cdxvii]

Permit me to turn to one of the most iconic examples of street fare in popular US imagination—at once the darling of a purported American entrepreneurial spirit and a potential problem in the eyes of many local and public health officials. Just as I address the legal and social ways in which dumpstered foods are constructed as questionable or taboo, so too do public health monitors of other food economies construct socially anxious encounters. From what I can gather, as far back as 1984 through to the present,[cdxviii] news coverage from multiple states across the nation reports closures, fines, or the threat of fines placed upon numerous youth and adult-run lemonade stands, or other similar consumables. News coverage about the August 2010 Portland-based closure of 7-year old Julie Fife's lemonade stand at a neighborhood, grassroots street festival quoted Julie's mother, "While Fife said she does see the need for some food safety regulation, she thinks the county went too far in trying to control events as unstructured as Last

Thursday. ‘As far as Last Thursday is concerned, people know when they are coming there that it's more or less a free-for-all,’ she said. ‘It's gotten to the point where they need to be in all of our decisions. They don't trust us to make good choices on our own.’[cdxix] Contrastingly, the standpoint of Jon Kawaguchi, environmental health supervisor for the Multnomah County Health Department is quoted with the following: "I understand the reason behind what they're doing and it's a neighborhood event, and they're trying to generate revenue […] But we still need to put the public's health first."[cdxx] Of particular interest here is the dynamic interplay between public health food-borne illness concerns along with ensuing permit requirements, and the seemingly voluntary desires of consumers who choose to frequent such informal food economies.

Most infamously in 2003, seven-year-old Avigail Wardein appeared on *Late Night with David Letterman*, *The Jay Leno Show*, and had the likes of Rush Limbaugh, CNN, Keith Olbermann, Bill O' Reilly, among many other public radio shows buzzing about the Naples, Florida permit requirement made on her lemonade stand. The issue garnered so much national attention that the Naples Police Department rescinded the fee requirement as countless supporters mailed in money to cover any fines or licensing fees. Or so much of the national media attention suggests. St. Petersburg, Florida journalist Chuck Murphy argues, contrastingly, that the truth lies somewhere in between Avigail’s mother’s view on the not-so-neighborly incident which sparked the flood of news coverage, and the viewpoint of the now infamous neighbor who made the phone call to local police. In this reported version, the police arrived merely as a “reminder of the ordinance [requiring licensure]” and prior to the national attention, local city officials both prepared the permit and waived the fee.[cdxxi] News coverage of the event points to the entrepreneurial and individual freedom-centered linkages that lemonade stands seem to hold in popular American imagination. The neighbor cited as the cause of the dispute is

documented as having since contacted local police as a result of having lemonades thrown at her house, media camped on her lawn, and, what I view as post 9/11 racially charged references to her as "Osama Bin Neighbor."[cdxxii] Fascinatingly however, this question of permits, fines, or even closures in the name of public health safety measures effects small-scale food producers and vendors all across the nation. This particular context of the iconic, child-entrepreneur selling lemonade at the side of the road to 'learn the value of a dollar' only seems to escalate public outcry. Of particular import, in contrast, are the ways in which such mechanisms of control exhibited by the paternal state work upon producers who might otherwise not have access to the resources and means for a more established store-front operation, or even for the high costs necessarily accrued with the purchase and maintenance of a food cart or food-service vehicle. In the instances of the child entrepreneurs affected in the news coverage I found, many had the financial and moral support of their parents or family members.

The tug-of-war playing out in discourses of public health monitoring, questions of individual freedom, and State paternalism is swiftly ping-ponging across bi-partisan lines as well, as both Democrats and Republicans duke it out over lemonade stands, of all things. In *Washington Post* author Esther Cepeda's article "Setting Free the Lemonade Stands. Really?" she discusses the Freedom Center of Missouri as well as blogger Robert Fernandes' *Lemonade Freedom Campaign*, both of which argue against "the government war on kid-run concession stands."[cdxxiii] Cepeda argues in contrast, "[D]on't swallow the "we're standing up for the rights of children's economic freedom" rhetoric the hysterical Lemonade Freedom people are stirring up. Their moral outrage has little to do with nurturing the next generation of salespeople. It has everything to do with the current populist negativity toward anything that might even remotely smack of government intrusion into private lives. These people simplistically and wrong-

headedly believe that “laws are bad” and should be resisted.[cdxxiv] In contrast, the libertarian bent of the Missouri Freedom Center claims to “secure individual liberty and constitutionally limited government in Missouri...and beyond,” and the center has mapped more than 20 concession stand closures nationally between 1990-summer 2011.[cdxxv] Cepeda’s point is well taken, specifically with regard to present currents of individual freedoms in American political dialogue. However, I want to push back upon her tongue-in-cheek perspective on voluntary exchange. It is critical to highlight Cepeda’s concern for the demonizaton of government ‘intrusions’ of any shape or form; yet, I likewise underscore the validity of salvaging possibilities for voluntary exchange beyond State coercion as well. Ideal citizenship implications in such arguments abound, as partisan lines, perhaps a bit too simplistically, are drawn between the maintenance of “individual freedoms” as *oppositional to* public welfare and vice versa.

In spite of the individualized dynamics of the aforementioned 2003 lemonade stand case, the complex undertones of private property, individual rights, and public health and protectionism speak to core questions for this chapter, such as those suggested by this Florida local cited in Murphy’s journalistic coverage of the incident, “All these sympathetic letters about Avigayil breaking the law make me sick. Let's have all these vehement advocates of lemonade stands, tree houses, ramshackle fruit stalls and Girl Scout cookie booths . . . come out from under their rocks and see a row of these on their streets! And then, watch out ‘crabby neighbors!'"[cdxxvi] While motivations for this commentator’s remarks are uncertain, concern at the heart of this comment is somewhere in between the other classical arguments marking the debate divide—i.e. ‘too much government’ versus concerns over food sourcing and public health protectionism, even in the face of public outcry. In this instance, the worry falls along the borderlands between questions of public health, public appearance or ‘beautification’ measures, and local ordinances

often associated with such fines or closures ranging from anti-solicitation laws, traffic endangerment, and food preparation controls. In a similar instance of informal food economy bans centered around property concerns, a 2002 roadside Coto de Casa coffee stand run by to young teenage boys was banned when local officials, "refused to reverse a rule prohibiting vendors on common property, such as parks and street corners, citing safety as the main concern."[cdxxvii] As I have elsewhere suggested, spacialized debates over trash materials and dumpstered fare likewise prove to intersect with similar regulations-of-extension, such that dumpstering may be expressly regulated by municipal ordinance, but is often enmeshed within a broader legal web of other criminalized activity such as trespass, destruction of property, theft, etc. In this way, we might also understand informal food economy controls as extensions of broader socio-legal divides over property, public space, and health concerns.

Another case in point highlighting questions of zoning and public health is the 2001 Rio Nido closure of a candy stand run by twelve year old Josh Yoho and his mother, open for business for over two years but closed due to zoning violations. "Zone enforcement officials concluded after multiple complaints that they had no choice but to shut down the stand because of the nuisance and the danger that a child attempting to make a sale might be struck by a car. While most lemonade stands exist for a day, this one has been open for about eight hours a day, six days a week, for two years." The issue in this instance seems to be one of streetside location, and the fact that the kids encouraged cars to stop at the stand. Yoho's mother, "who gets by on disability benefits, said she so enjoys the children that she spends hours a day at the snack stand…Several supporters said Monday that over the course of two years, the stand has become a focal point for Rio Nido kids who otherwise would have nothing to do and no place to go."[cdxxviii]

The push and pull over public health monitoring and financial need in contexts of informal food economies are certainly not limited to the United States. Rather, examples are readily available and span multiple global experiences, the most troubling, in my view, relating to the January 2011 public self-immolation of Tunisian fruit and vegetable cart vendor Mohamed Bouazizi. In seeming desperation of the debt and humiliation Bouazizi experienced at the hands of local officials over lost produce, increased financial debt, physical assaults, and public harassment over proper licensing, he reportedly doused himself with paint thinner and lit himself on fire on the steps of the governor's office. Bouazizi is persistently sited as an Arab martyr—one of many on an unsettling and growing list of people reacting to what seems to be economic and social disenfranchisement--and is viewed as "the instigator of a revolution that forced out President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali after 23 years of authoritarian rule."[cdxxix]

On another global front, writing for the *Ecologist* journalist Anna da Costa noted,

> [In 2007] it was decided by India's Supreme Court that the cooking of food on the streets of Delhi is now banned. This is not just some foods, this is all unpackaged cooked food, and all forms of cooking on site, except for boiling water for tea and coffee. According to Justice BP Singh, one of the two Supreme Court judges responsible for the ruling, the reasons are threefold: [P]resence of vendors on the streets is an inconvenience and hazard to pedestrians; [T]hey occupy a large amount of space […]; and much of the food is accused of being unhygienic, at times prepared with unclean water, in the presence of flies and dust, and served in unsanitary vessels.[cdxxx]

Without romanticizing the global fare of other nations while maintaining strict sanitation standards in a US context, da Costa's report on Delhi leaves this researcher with numerous questions. Global feminist environmentalists continue to question the ways in which social inequalities reflect and effect experiences of environmental import such that, as I have elsewhere noted in greater detail, "there is a relationship between social inequalities and environmental problems."[cdxxxi] If we take the very streets that people may "live, work or play on;" or the

formations of foodscapes within which many global peoples operate, as environments, then such questions of who gets to participate, at what financial and social costs does participation occur, and according to whose 'sanitation' or beautification efforts must participants operate are all crucial to mapping the landscapes of food contribution. Feminist Environmentalist Noel Sturgeon argues, "The new environmentalist consumer wave…must move beyond individual modifications of ways of living to address the systematic, institutionalized structures that maintain inequality and promote environmental devastation.[cdxxxii] The question remains then, whether or not the accessibility to one's livelihood based upon shifting socio-legal parameters of acceptability and accountability in informal food economies may be seen in certain contexts as a form of environmental devastation. The three central concerns from India's Supreme Court reported by da Costa are critical, and worries over food-borne contamination and sanitation measures, particularly in contexts lacking regulation or documentation, prove key. Moreover, producer concerns are clearly not the only components to the equation, as other central questions regarding uses of public space, consumer health, and producer protections are equally of import. However, we might also consider the ways in which public health controls enacted specifically in the form of bans, fines, or licensure will effect those vendors who do not have the standard of livings or means with which to comply.

A ban issued in Hong Kong in 2009 conveys the central role that public health officials play in maintaining Hong Kong's 'anti-clutter' enforcement of the food bans. One journalist noted, "Food hawkers have been chased indoors. The traditional street restaurants they operate, dai pai dong, were years ago deemed by bureaucrats to be causing clutter. A ban on new licenses is in effect: only the owner's spouse can take over the license, which means the businesses cannot be sold for profit or passed on to other family members…Food and Environmental Hygiene

Department hawker-control teams patrol the streets to enforce regulations."[cdxxxiii] At a global glance, city after city from New York, Hong Kong, Montreal, Toronto, Washington D.C., New Orleans, and the list goes on, has debated, disputed, litigated, outright banned, or even later rescinded banned street foods and food carts at various points over the last two decades.[cdxxxiv] Cited concerns persistently document the push and pull over spacialized claims to both private and public property concerns, mobile food economies as 'eyesores,' presumably unsanitary public health threats, nuisances to street-side thoroughfares, and competition for 'brick-and-mortar' restaurant businesses.[cdxxxv] In reference to the opening epigram to this chapter segment, the 1994 Rudolph Giuliani-organized "Quality of Life Campaign" intended to ban street food carts in multiple Manhattan locations during major established business hours, for instance, resulted in an urban feud over city beautification efforts, pedestrian concerns and local vendors whose livelihoods were threatened by the proposal. The campaign's purported goals were for laws addressing "safety and convenience, intended to prevent obstruction of walkways and lessen congestion."[cdxxxvi] In 2009 a Hong Kong journalist chided their government for a similar crackdown and ban on street fare by appealing to examples from other global locales, "Mainland authorities have lifted a ban on street food to create jobs. Tourists flock to Taiwan, which is famous Asia-wide for its street fare. Traditional snacks can be purchased from carts or stalls from London to Cairo to Johannesburg to Sydney and beyond. Hong Kong is the loser for the government's blindness."[cdxxxvii] In the US more recently, we observe interesting urban tug-of-wars in multiple locations as, for instance, attempts to diversify food availability in Washington DC in 2007 resulted in the removal of a decade-long food cart ban in the district.[cdxxxviii] In an attempt to bring fresh fruit and vegetable vendors to low-income neighborhoods in New York, "the city has approved 1,000 new mobile food carts for neighborhoods in the five boroughs that

have long been isolated from traditional supermarkets, grocery stores and farmers' markets offering fresh produce at reasonable prices." While only 15 carts will eventually have the capacity to accept EBT cards, and vendors are solely permitted to sell raw fruits and vegetables, here is an instance where cities see possibilities with such forms of small business.[cdxxxix] However, across the nation we likewise see an array of difficulties, bans, fines, fees, and municipal deliberations over food carts and use of public spaces for purposes of food vending. Sometimes, just across the same city. The *Street Vendor Project*, working in extension of the Urban Justice Center advocates for vendors on a grassroots level stating, "The Street Vendor Project trains our 900-plus members about the vending rules and how to respond to harassment from police officers and store owners. We defend them in court when they are ticketed or arrested, or when they have their goods confiscated, which happens often. We also help link our members with financial training and small business loans." The organization publicly documents numerous street vendor encounters with police, land owners, customers, among many other interest groups; conveying an incredibly diverse and complex picture of the legal, social, and health dynamics of street food in the US.[cdxl] The complex debates here are as much concerned with tussling over the uses of public spaces and private interests, as they are, then, with food quality, or health concerns per se.

Rooting Around: Modes of Urban Foraging within Public Spaces

> In recent months, the city [of New York] has stepped up training of park rangers and enforcement-patrol officers, directing them to keep an eye out for foragers and chase them off.[cdxli]

An article in the *New York Times* outlines recent enforcement measures taken by the city of New York against urban foraging in public parks, which has become a major concern for park rangers. Author Lisa Foderaro notes, "Plants are not the only things people are taking. In Prospect Park in Brooklyn last week, park rangers issued four summonses to two people for

illegal fishing. Although officials say such poaching is not widespread, park advocates say taking fish and turtles for food is not uncommon, and some have reported evidence of traps designed to snare wildfowl."[cdxlii] Urban Foraging is a method of eating and cooking by scavenging wild edible foods sources from within one's immediate and surrounding eco-systems. In many ways it sounds a lot like dumpstering: nor am I the only one to make note of this similarity. Travel Channel's Andrew Zimmerman, host of *Bizarre Foods*, for instance, visits San Francisco during his 2011 series, and covers a range of alternative foodways including urban foraging, dumpstering, as well as an extended application of dumpstered foods by way of San Francisco *Food Not Bombs*. The spatial connections and similarities abound in his popular depictions.[cdxliii]

On a more local note, the *Lawrence Fruit Tree Project* is an educational, fruit gleaning, and tree grafting project that has its roots in Lawrence (pun intended). The group provides workshops on tree grafting, neighborhood foraging walks and tree identification, documenting of edible fruit tree sites for voluntary gleaning, as well as low-cost fruit tree sales and maintenance for individuals as well as school yards, and other public sites. The project website states, "There are many trees on private property that, for one reason or another, do not get harvested. Please contact us so that we can register your tree in our database. At the appropriate time, we will harvest the fruit and will make sure that the fruit gets used. Our primary goal is to redistribute the fruit to those in need around our community. We will also make an effort to pick up fallen fruit around your tree. This helps maintain the health of the other ripening fruit."[cdxliv] Gleaning methods and recommend approaches specifically address the needs of both gleaners and property owners, including: "1) Contact private land owners before picking fruit to obtain permission first! 2) Pick ripe and ready fruit only and take only what you can use or share. Offer to remove rotten dropped fruit (this helps keep fruit diseases under control). 3) To avoid liability issues, do

not use ladders or climb in trees. Climbing in trees may also break branches. 4) Use care as you pick fruit so that branches are not damaged. 5) Pick fruit by hand or use a picking pole specifically designed for harvesting fruit out of reach."[cdxlv] Beyond the wasted food documented in this dissertation that is encountered at the edge of a dumpster then, urban foraging methods such as the above fruit gleaning example are small-scale attempts at re-imagining public spaces as foodscapes and addressing localized food security concerns through the voluntary documentation of edible food sources available for harvest. Local ordinances on the books, particularly "City Code 14-303 officially prohibits picking, or gleaning, as it's called, from city trees, stating: 'No person shall willfully injure or destroy any plant, tree, vine or flower, the property of another, standing on or attached to the land of another, or shall pick, destroy or carry away there from or in any way interfere with any part of the flowers or fruit thereof.'"[cdxlvi]

A June 2011 Sustainability Advisory Board Meeting memo suggests; however, that the city will implement changes to the wording of this ordinance, intends to work with the project members to learn better tree pruning practices to avoid public health threats related to tree climbing, and agrees to plant fruit and nut bearing trees along new public access-ways and trails.[cdxlvii] Unlike the *Times* example in NYC, wherein city officials wish to maintain foraging possibilities only in so far as they relate to educational the observations and touring, the Lawrence example includes both an educational and practical application dynamic, or should I say, an edible one. Use and maintenance of public-scapes as foodscapes in this instance is a negotiation of legal and social concerns between the community and the municipality.

Concluding Remarks

In many instances, specific community needs or interests seem to be met by the products and services provided within informal food economies, and the exchanges appear to be consensual exchanges made between producers and consumers. State interventions thus raise interesting questions as to public health goals and outcomes, particularly when/if the public does not always seem to desire the protectionism, and in fact, often conveys outrage or defiance of the official codes and monitoring measures. In "False Promises," geographers Heynan, McCarthy, Prudham and Robbins note that neo-liberal discourses "tend to [argue for a roll-back of] the state apparatus where it is seen to impinge upon capital investment, commodity production, and market exchange, typically via championing abstract constructions of yeoman entrepreneurial capitalists and small businesses (as opposed to powerful, footloose multi-nationals) struggling under the oppressive weight of an overbearing state […and] tends also to reinforce and celebrate strong private, individual, and exclusive property rights."[cdxlviii] In critiquing certain public health mechanisms as controlling dynamics of informal foodscapes and economies, I do not argue that the government is too big, that it immediately infringes upon individual freedoms that need take precedence, or that public health controls over food production and consumption should be immediately dispelled or devalued. However, as history suggests, I am willing to venture that negotiations over presumed public health threats are as much to do with social perceptions, even taboo, and contentious meaning making within public spaces and usage, as they are to do with imminent 'threats' to health or safety.

During the Question & Answer session of a public lecture that I recently completed, one participant questioned the role of entitlement in my presentation of dumpster fare, to the extent that my critical analysis of local and national ordinances and public health concerns pushed back on the finality of legal taboo. My work suggests, in contrast, that diver narratives indicate that

many people dive in spite of the regulations, and sometimes even in spite of private property law. Yet, throughout this project, it has not been my intention to speak for the motivations of individual divers. Rather, my goal has been to present the socio-political possibilities exposed by the narratives as I have heard and understood them. In the same way, *Chapter 4* situates both a broader historical understanding of public health controls over food economies, while questioning the role that these might play in stifling or propelling possibilities for voluntary food economies to thrive in the face of regulation. The emerging question driving this critical analysis is, therefore, one that seeks to frame possibilities for understanding divergent environmental responses to State paternalisms. As I have elsewhere suggested of the dumpster, by looking at our immediate environments as *potential* foodscapes a diverse array of options are apparent.

Some might argue that the parameters defined by the law should be enough to halt such food economies that might fall outside of the legal purview; rather, dipping their proverbial toes into the cracks and crevices of criminality. Others would certainly argue that one person's financial exigency, entrepreneurial scheme, or social agenda is hardly cause for interference on public properties, lax approaches to important public health initiatives for public safety, or infringements upon avenues for building state revenue gains. However, I have here suggested that there are multiple sides to such questions, each conveying points of legitimacy. Such instances of public health help and hinderance, safety measures and mechanisms of control, only further highlight a unifying theme of this project related to foodscapes (whether intentionally or unintentionally) working at the social and legal margins. That is, a question of the role that 'dirt' and health--or, as may be the case in many of these instances of small-scale food bans, fines, closures, and litigations--presumptions of dirtiness or cleanliness play in constructions of social legitimacy and 'acceptable' uses of public space.

Gesturing Toward Conclusion: Having Trash in Common

While the bulk of commons research has been aimed at natural resource commons, particularly forests and land, fisheries, and water resources, attention to human-made resources has increased dramatically since 1995…the essential question for any commons analysis are inevitably about equity, efficiency, and sustainability. –Charlotte Hess and Elinor Ostrom, from *Understanding Knowledge as a Commons*[cdxlix]

During recent public presentations of my research to graduate students at Oklahoma State University, two interesting themes emerged during group discussions of the dumpster—property talk through the lens of private ownership, and a question of food waste and philanthropic endeavor. For many people, my opening discussion of the legal parameters of trash and property laws are enough of a deterrent—conversation surrounding my work becomes imbued with 'criminal' meanings. And, upon situating the landscape of surplus food productions or waste, the essential solution becomes one of diverting food recovery for charitable purposes. Yet, what are the implications of privatized conceptualizations of waste, or such ironies in the social acceptances of food recovery by way of charity? In *Mending Wall*, American poet Robert Frost writes, "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know /What I was walling in or walling out, /And to whom I was like to give offence. /Something there is that doesn't love a wall, /That wants it down.'"[cdl] The responses to this research outlined above are, similarly, walls of a sort, wherein a dynamic interplay of legality, social taboo, and public health work as deterrents, and sometimes, attach social hierarchy to the reuse of trash materials. Over the course of this dissertation, I have suggested that there have been few clear-cut, large-scale policies addressing garbage or its reuse in the US. On the contrary, changes occur on more local levels, and the social monitoring and control of garbage and forms of its reuse have changed over time, waxing and waning according to factors ranging from public need, economic downturn, concern over public health, or even national security.

Methodologically, my use of oral history interviews with dumpster divers is an attempt to highlight divers as theorists who situate their own understandings of their reuse and recovery actions. The range of difference and multivocality in these narratives works as a key strength, highlighting the ways in which a range of different people and voices can likewise expose a few critical and patterned similarities, such as the role that food plays in many diver experiences; the general use of the space of the dumpster as a practical resource; or experiences and expressions of a range of shame, fear, or embarrassment *in combination* with indignation and pride in their use of this resource. Overall however, I have tried to highlight a central unifying thread that weaves throughout my analysis of diver narratives and in my understanding of trash as resource. That is the question of trash as a potential commons site or material. Although each of the individual interviewees may not have expressly proposed or highlighted this particular theme, I see commons use of trash as a central pattern in each of the narratives given interviewee tendencies towards such spaces and materials as practical resources or even sites of re-gifting networks. As diver D recollects, "People [putting out the trash] were trying to be respectful and were like well, let me not get it dirty [or they'll] leave it out I mean...[trash] really does become a community thing especially when people realize that other people are looking for things they need and that not everything goes in the trash is...ruined or trash." Likewise, C suggested that by making use of the dumpster in extension with other rummage sites such as localized rummage stores, clothing exchanges, or freecycle, generated regular networks for re-use or re-gifting: "I feel like I have built up other networks so that, you know, unless it's the can corn came in or, um, you know, the packaging for sweet potatoes that I got out of the Aldi dumpster, you know if it's really a tangible, useable item, I have a network where I can offer that." Another person who self-described as having to live "fairly low-end" still noted, "A lot of stuff I find, good stuff, I fix

it up and take it over to [the infoshop]. Or, a lot of times I got stuff…I don't know how many times, I've headed over to the Service League with stuff [to donate]."[cdli] These comments are hardly idiosyncratic to these particular divers either. Most divers discussed a range of re-use networks extending beyond their own needs. Perhaps less a question of personal ethics, I see such actions as extensions of the having visualized the waste-stream on a regular basis—there is simply much too much to be reclaimed from US trash for any one person alone to make use. Broader networks of exchange are both necessary and common, but these examples are indicative of mere individuals grappling with the materials of much larger systems of waste.

As the section epigram implies, human-made resources have already begun to play a role in commons and common-pool resource discourses. I cannot claim to have mapped out any sort of applied models or solutions to thinking trash-as-common. However, in posing the 'what if' question, I hope to extend these dialogues of the everyday—and I cite the everyday here because, to me, that is what the act of diving conveys, everyday acts in everyday spaces. As William Rathje and Cullen Murphy highlight in their research of garbage as artifact and archaeological site, "the creation of garbage is an unequivocal sign of a human presence." Trash is what many humans have in common though, "that the distant past seems so misty and dim is precisely because our earliest ancestors left so little garbage behind. An appreciation of the accomplishments of the first hominids became possible only after they began making stone tools, the debris from the construction of which along with the discarded tools themselves now probed for their secrets with electron microscopes and displayed in museums not as garbage but as 'artifacts.'"[cdlii] While trash may appear in multiple forms or be handled contemporarily in diverse ways, its physical existence has been traced by generations of scholars of global material culture.

Thus, my question remains--what happens when trash is treated publicly as opposed to privately? How did the graduate students I mentioned at the open of these concluding remarks come to form such private opinions of waste reuse as illegal trespass, theft, or social deviance, for instance? And why is the common response to large-scale food waste in the US or globally to implement diversion of the material into charitable reuse as opposed to systemic resistance, circumvention, or subversion? Answers to these questions are varied and dependant upon context, but one commonality persists. For many people, private ownership is privileged in their understandings and approaches to trash. The sense of privacy, shame, even secrecy in much human treatment of trash is written all over the social and legal taboos and associations assigned to 'dirt' in varying cultural contexts, and I have documented that even the divers struggle with these same emotions. But, as I suggested in the *Introductory Notes* to this dissertation, I utilize diver narratives as a means of revisiting trash--to remember it, sift through it, ponder it, and re-imagine its lifecycles. As K put it during our interview, "[Trash] has to go *somewhere.*"[cdliii] Upon reading this, perhaps some will be inclined to consider their personal associations of trash and the dumpster in re-imagined ways, or maybe even in terms of broader local, national, or international treatments of such material. For many, however, this work will reaffirm feelings of fear, disgust, or trepidation with regard to trash spaces or materials, and the people who make reuse of such margins. Through this exploration of diver narratives, however, I propose new contemplations of the space of the dumpster as the residue of having trash in common. Rathje and Murphy proclaim, "It would be a blessing if it were possible to study garbage in the abstract, to study garbage without having to handle it physically. But this is not possible. Garbage is not mathematics. To understand garbage you have to touch it, feel it, to sort it, to smell it." For many people, Rathje and Murphy's point is a turn-off, a point to which some might simply hold their

proverbial noses; that some may choose to distance themselves from whereas others might not have the means or desire. As I have previously documented, most divers don't see what they are doing as "the revolution." Yet, it seems to me that at least grappling with 'dirt' and providing forums for talking trash in expanded ways and means *could* become a site for political action from the margins of a dumpster. However, this entails what ethnographer Keta Miranda refers to as "the publicization of the private," which is very complex indeed in the face of discomfort and taboo.[cdliv]

Notes

[i] M. Personal Interview with the author. August 7, 2010. New York City.

[ii] From *Evasion*, an autobiographical account written by an anonymous author, originally published in zine-series format between 2000-2003. Edited and reprinted as single bound copy, *Evasion*. Salem, Oregon: Crimethinc Ex-worker's Collective.72.

[iii] Ryan Owens and Suzanne Yeo. "One Man's Trash is Another Man's Dinner: Freegans Go Dumpster Diving for Unspoiled Food." ABC News. 12/16/2007. Accessed 4/1/2009. www.abcnews.go.com. See also accompanying news video Ryan Owens' "Garbage Goes Gourmet." 12/16/07.

[iv] Freegan comes from the terms free and vegan (no consumption of animal by-products), and is used to identify someone who rejects consumption via purchase. The movement has been the center of much news coverage in the last year. See Lisa Ling's "How Far Would you Go?: Living on the Edge." *The Oprah Show*. February 27. 2008. Accessed 2/29/2008. www.oprah.com; and Steven Kurutz's "Not Buying It." *New York Times*. June 21, 2007. Accessed 3/15/2008. http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/21/garden/21freegan.html.

[v] "The State of Garbage in America." *Biocycle: Journal of Composting & Organics Recycling* Volume 47:4. (April 2006). 26. Accessed 4/1/2009. http://www.jgpress.com/archives/_free/000848.html. Comparably, Linda B. Bolida notes, "According to The Weight of Nations, a report by the World Resources Institute (WRI), Japan produces 11 metric tons of waste per person each year, while […] 25 metric tons of waste are produced for every person in the United States." Quoted in *The Quest for Zero Garbage in the Philippines*. World Resources Institute. May 2003. Accessed May 4, 2009. http://www.wri.org/publication/content/8351.

[vi] Brown, Bob. "Dumpster Diving for Food: 'Freegans' Feed Off of City's Waste to Make a Point." *ABC News*. 12/16/2005. Accessed 4/1/2009. http://abcnews.go.com/2020/Health/story?id=1407046. See also Timothy W. Jones report on US food loss, "Using Contemporary Archaeology and Applied Anthropology to Understand Food loss in the American Food System." Accessed 4/1/2009. http://www.communitycompost.org/info/usafood.pdf; and *Food Navigator* article "US wastes half its food." November 26, 2004. Accessed 4/1/2009. http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Financial-Industry/US-wastes-half-its-food. Finally, for details on various kinds of garbage, the formation of garbology as a field of inquiry, and historical data concerning garbage materials see William Rathje & Cullen Murphy's *Rubbish: The Archaeology of Garbage*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001. Rathje & Murphy also cite an earlier study completed in 1980-81 of household food waste, documenting archaeological evidence of losses at an eighth of a pound per person in a household, per week. See page 69 for details.

[vii] USDA. "Food Security in the United States: Key Statistics and Graphics." *Diet, Health, and Safety*. November 2010 for 2009 annual report. See also previous year's statistics from November 2009 for 2008 annual reporting, "14.6% of US households, or "49.1 million people, including 16.7 million children." Accessed 11/28/2010 & 12/4/2009. http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/stats_graphs.htm. For a detailed breakdown of these numbers see the chart entitled "Food Insecurity by Household Type," provided on the same webpage.

[viii] USDA. "Food Security in the United States: Measuring Household Food Security." *Diet, Health, and Safety*. Accessed 3/31/2009. http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/measurement.htm. See also Urban Institute's 2000 report on US homelessness. They note a need for adjustments to the nation's homeless numbers: "Since not all people experiencing homelessness utilize service providers, the actual numbers…are likely higher than those found in the [survey of service providers], Thus, we are estimating on the high end of the study's numbers: 3.5 million people, 39% of which are children." National Coalition for the Homeless. "National Estimates of Homelessness." *How Many People Experience Homelessness?* Updated June 2008. Accessed 3/31/2009. http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/How_Many.html. These numbers relate to food insecurity, as homeless populations are not included on the USDA's lists of the food insecure.

[ix] For detailed distinctions in the terminology and usage see William Rathje & Cullen Murphy's *Rubbish: The Archaeology of Garbage*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001. 9. For discussion of a wide range of historical waste materials see Pellow, David Naguib. *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago*. The MIT Press: Cambridge, 2004.

[x] For instance, male interviewees in their late fifties and early sixties often referred to this act as trashing. See D. Personal Interview. March 27, 2008. Kansas; or K. Personal Interview. April 18, 2008. Kansas.
[xi] Ferrell, Jeff. *Empire of Scrounge: Inside the Urban Underground of Dumpster Diving, Trash Picking, and Street Scavenging*. New York: NYU Press, 2006.
[xii] Edwards, Ferne & David Mercer. "Gleaning from Gluttony: an Australian youth subculture confronts the ethics of waste." *Australian Geographer*. Volume 38:3 November 2007. 279 – 296.
[xiii] Clark, Dylan. The Raw and the Rotten: Punk Cuisine. *Ethnology*. Volume 43:1 (Winter 2004). Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh. 19-31. Web of Science. Accessed 3/15/2008. The article explores scavenged food and punk ideology.
[xiv] Belasco, Warren. *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2007.
[xv] Pritchett, Laura (editor). *Going Green: True Tales from Gleaners, Scavengers, and Dumpster Divers*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009.
[xvi] Nicole Eikenberry & Chery Smith. "Attitudes, beliefs, and prevalence of dumpster diving as a means to obtain food by Midwestern, low-income, urban dwellers." *Agriculture and Human Values* (2005) 22. See page 198. Web of Science. Accessed 3/31/2008.

[xvii] See for instance Inderpal Grewal's *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005; *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, eds. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994; John Carlos Rowe's "Postnationalism, Globalism and the New American Studies." *Postnationalist American Studies.* John Carlos Rowe, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press. 23-39.

[xviii] For a local example, see for instance chapter 9 of the Lawrence, Kansas city codes, section 9-409, "Unlawful Acts," "It shall be unlawful for any person to […] Remove any portion of the contents of any refuse container, or remove any material placed out by residents or occupants of any premise for collection by operators of recycling services authorized under provisions of Article 9-416." Interestingly, the local laws define the term garbage as inclusive of food wastes and other compostables apart from graywater, see section 9-402 for full definition. *Code of the City of Lawrence* (2009 Edition). "Chapter 9: Health and Sanitation." Accessed March 1, 2009. http://www.ci.lawrence.ks.us/city_code/.
[xix] See Pezzullo, Phaedra. "Overture: The Most Complicated Word." *Cultural Studies*. Volume 22:3-4. May-July 2008. On page 362 Pezzullo outlines key criticisms concerning environmental research in Cultural Studies.
[xx] Young, Iris Marion. "The Logic of Masculinist Protectionism: Reflections on the Current Security State." *Signs: A Journal of Women, Culture, and Society.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Volume 29: 1, 2003.16.
[xxi] Young, 16.
[xxii] Ibid, 14.
[xxiii] Solinger, Rickie. *Beggars and Choosers: How the Politics of Choice Shapes Adoption, Abortion, and Welfare in the United States*. New York: Hill & Wang, 2002.139.
[xxiv] Ibid, 182.

[xxv] Ibid, 170. See also USDA, Economic Research Service. "Prevalence of Food Insecurity 2010." *Food Security in the United States: Key Statistics and Graphics*. Accessed 10/3/2011. http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/Stats_Graphs.htm

[xxvi] USDA. "The Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act." *A Citizens Guide to Food Recovery*. Accessed 7/1/2010. http://www.usda.gov/news/pubs/gleaning/seven.htm
[xxvii] See "California V. Greenwood (No. 86-684)." Cornell University Law School: Legal Information Institute. Accessed August 1, 2010. <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/historics/USSC_CR_0486_0035_ZS.html>
[xxviii] Lawrence Court *Good Neighbor Brochure*. accessed 4/21/2008. <www.lawrencecourt.org>
[xxix] For an excellent analysis of squatting, rent strikes, and other global direct action tactics related to housing and property law, see Corr, Anders. *No Trespassing: Squatting, Rent Strikes, and Land Struggles Worldwide*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1999.

[xxx] See *The Garden*, directed by Scott Hamilton Kennedy (Oscilloscope Laboratories, 2008); or the SCF website for their version of the bulldozing of the 14 acre LA community gardens in 2006, www.southcentralfarmers.com (last modified 11/27/2011).

[xxxi] For just a few further analyses and examples of the social constructions of this vastly influential myth see Richard Weiss' *The American Myth of Success: From Horatio Alger to Norman Vincent Peale*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988; Carl Bode's "Introduction" to an edited edition of Horatio Alger's *Ragged Dick and Struggling Upward*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1985. Pp. x-xxi; Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America*. New York: Holt Paperbacks (Reprint edition), 2008; or Michael Moore's "Face it, You'll Never be Rich." Zcommunications. Thursday, October 9, 2003. Accessed 6/29/2010. www.zcommunications.org For a review of the field of American Studies which includes discussion of the role of the myth of American exceptionalism, see Richard P. Horwitz's "American Studies: Approaches and Concepts." 2001, Reprinted online 2010. Accessed 6/29/2010. www.myweb.uiowa.edu/rhorwitz.

[xxxii] Melosi, Martin V. *Garbage in the Cities: Refuse, Reform, and the Environment*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. 22.

[xxxiii] Ibid, 67.

[xxxiv] Ibid, 88. My emphasis added.

[xxxv] Strasser, Susan. *Waste & Want: A Social History of Trash*. Metropolitan Books: New York, 1999, 109.

[xxxvi] Ibid, 113.

[xxxvii] Foucault, Michel. "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century." *The Foucault Reader*. ed. Paul Rabinow. Pantheon Books: New York, 1984. 277.

[xxxviii] Sturgeon, Noel. *Environmentalism in Popular Culture: Gender, Race, Sexuality and the Politics of the Natural.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009. 6

[xxxix] Ibid, 8.

[xl] A huge thank you to Dr. Hannah Britton and graduate students in the Spring 2009 Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies 898 Research Colloquium at the University of Kansas for their helpful suggestions on the earliest draft of the original comps field paper that informs this introductory segment and portions of Chapter 1.

[xli] See especially Vandana Shiva's speaing segment of *Fast Food World: the Perils and Promises of the Global Food Chain*. Sponsored by the Knight Program of Science in Environmental Journalism. University of California-Berkeley. November 24, 2003. UC Television. 1-hour panel discussion with Michael Pollan, Vandana Shiva, Carlo Petrini, Eric Schlosser, and Wendell Berry. Accessed March 18, 2009. You Tube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM_PSqjIF0o.

[xlii] Seager, Seager, Joni. "Rachel Carson Died of Breast Cancer: The Coming of Age of Feminist Environmentalism." *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture in Society*. 28:3.Chicago. 2003.948.

[xliii] Seager, 949.

[xliv] Seager, 950. I would also differentiate here between Seager's linkage of environmental feminism and animal rights versus the animal studies scholarship that I find useful in my own research and construction of this field. I would argue that there are distinct and important differentiations between animal rights, animal welfarism, animal studies, animal liberationist, and animal abolitionist scholarship and activism. It is, however, beyond the scope of this project to address these differences in detail. Let me just say for the moment that I find the work in animal studies most compelling and pertinent to my own construction of this field because of its interdisciplinary tendencies to theorize human-non-human agency and relations along a continuum of possibility.

[xlv] I am particularly thankful to literary scholar Thadious Davis from University of Pennsylvania whose February 26, 2009 keynote address at the Southern Intellectual History Circle Conference at the University of Kansas entitled, *The Polarities of Space: Segregation and Alice Walker's Intervention in Southern Studies*, helped me to see the important connections being made by eco-feminists like Alice Walker between land, place, and cultural memory, and to re-envision their work in relation to place as opposed to certain nature/culture binaries and spiritualistic stances, which I initially found difficult to address.

[xlvi] Though there are many examples, see for instance, the important work of Psyche Williams-Forson's *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food and Power*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2006; Sherrie Inness'*Cooking Lessons: The Politics of Gender and Food*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001; Inness, Sherrie. *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender and Race*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2001; or Avakian & Haber's *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005.

[xlvii] Warren Belasco situates a list of common methodological approaches to food and food analyses with extensive citations, including "writing a history of a single foodstuff," or "commodity chain analysis," and "investigative journalis[m] [that patrols] the food chain." Through the metaphor of the chain, Belasco further suggests that "For students of sociological distinction, there are *chain link fences*: tools and institutions that divide insiders and outsiders, the privileged and the disposed. Such barriers, hedgings, railing, and screens determine who gets dinner and who doesn't. Here we get into issues of class, food security, and obesity." This last 'fence' approach is what I am particularly interested in for my research. However, as stated in a previous section, I take issue with the 'what to eat' & 'obesity'-centric analyses. See Belasco, Warren. *Food: The Key Concepts*. New York: Berg, 2008. See pages 60-1, 64.

[xlviii] Haraway, Donna. *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism ad the Privilege of Partial Perspective Feminist Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Autumn, 1988), 579.

[xlix] Ibid, 584.

[l] Ibid

[li] Ibid, 583.

[lii] Stewart, Kathleen. "On the Politics of Cultural Theory: A Case for 'Contaminated' Cultural Critique." *Social Research*. Volume 58: 2 (Summer 1991). 400.

[liii] Boyd, Nan Alamilla. "Who Is the Subject? Queer Theory Meets Oral History." *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol. 17:2 (May 2008).178.

[liv] See Lamphere, Louise "The Convergence of Applied, Practicing, and Public Anthropology in the 21st Century." *Human Organization*. Volume 63, No. 4 (Winter 2004). 431. See Behar, Ruth. *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996. 26.

[lv] Tucker, Sherrie. *Swing Shift: "All-Girl" Bands of the 1940s*. Durham: Duke UP, 2000. 28. Tucker argues throughout that the interviews she draws upon in her text can only be taken as partial truths.

[lvi] Ibid, 26.

[lvii] Ibid, 27.

[lviii] Popular Memory Group. "Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method." *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson. New York: Routledge, 2006, 43-53. See Pg. 44.

[lix] C. forwarded email to author. March 14, 2008.

[lx] I use Sherry Ortner's *Anthropology and Social Theory* as a method for engaging diver narratives, both written and oral. Ortner uses the term 'working class' with interviewees to gauge, not what she thinks it is, but what *they* think it is. Similarly, I try to engage what divers think about waste, excess, and their sense of food security in relation to their actions as divers. See Ortner, Sherry B. *Anthropology and Social Theory: Culture, Power, and the Acting Subject.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

[lxi] I drew the idea of this particular dichotomy between choice and right from Rickie Solinger's book *Beggars and Choosers: How the Politics of Choice Shapes Adoption, Abortion, and Welfare in the United States*. New York: Hill & Wang, 2002. 6. See also the United Nations' "The Right to Food." *Report of the High Commissioner For Human Rights*. 20 April 2001. Accessed March 26, 2009. See also Article 25 of the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* which reads, "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services […]." Accessed April 14, 2009. http://www.ohchr.org.

[lxii] There are many global examples of food recovery, but just to name a few see Chicago's Resource Center: Perishable Food Recovery Program http://www.resourcecenterchicago.org/food.html; Washington DC's infamous DC Central Kitchen and culinary training program recovering some "600,000 lbs. of food per day" http://dcpages.com/cgi-bin/dcpdir/jump.cgi?ID=17941; even a gleaning AND growing project called The Lawrence Fruit Tree Project in Kansas, http://lawrencefruittreeproject.wordpress.com; or my opening examples of the Freegan movement.

Notes Chapter 2

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[lxv] Belasco, Warren. *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2007. 251.
[lxvi] Sturgeon, Noel. *Environmentalism in Popular Culture: Gender, Race, Sexuality and the Politics of the Natural.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009. 182.

[lxvii] Jensen, Derrick. "Forget Shorter Showers: Why personal change does not equal political change." *Orion Magazine*. July/August 2009. Accessed February 1, 2011. Magazine webarchive.
[lxviii] See for example *Confronting Consumption*. Thomas Princen, Michael Maniates and Ken Conca (eds.). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002; or Jennifer Clapp & Peter Dauvergne. *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005.
[lxix] C. Second Personal Interview with author. March 31, 2008. Kansas.
[lxx] Interviewee identification of diving or scavenging ranged from physical contact with the inside of a dumpster or individual trash bins, ground scores of found objects, scavenging for materials on the side of a dumpster, or at the side of the road.
[lxxi] M. Personal Interview with author. August 7, 2010. New York City.
[lxxii] D. Personal Interview with author. March 27, 2008. Kansas. Emphasis original.
[lxxiii] The White Stripes. "Rag and Bone." *Get Behind Me Satan*.V2, 2005.
[lxxiv] See, for instance, the excellent documentation of this in *Maquilapolis (City of Factories)*. Produced by Vicky Funari and Sergio De La Torre. (Independent Television Service and Creative Capital, 2006); or the documentary entitled *Wasteland*. directed by Lucy Walker and featuring Vik Muniz. (Almega Projects and 02 Films, 2010).
[lxxv] Colbert, Stephen. "The Freegans." *The Colbert Report*. June 25, 2007. Accessed February 1, 2010. <www.colbertnation.com>
[lxxvi] There are, for example, countless artists using trash as both content and material across the globe. See the work of Vik Muniz, Tim Noble and Sue Webster, Robbie Rowlands, Dr. Evermore as well as other outsider artists too numerous to name.
[lxxvii] *Garbage Warrior*. Directed by Oliver Hodge. (Morningstar, 2007). See the film media website "About" http://www.garbagewarrior.com/about.html
[lxxviii] *Portlandia*. "Dumpster Divers." Season 1, Episode 3. February 4, 2011. Starring Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein. Hulu. Accessed February 6, 2011. www.hulu.com
[lxxix] *Bones*. "The Body and the Bounty." Season 6, Episode 4. Directed by Dwight H. Little. October 14, 2010. Hulu. Accessed October 16, 2010
[lxxx] M. Personal Interview with author. August 7, 2010. New York City.
[lxxxi] Anonymous. Personal Interview with author. May 2, 2008.
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[lxxxiii] Ling, Lisa. Special Report & Trash Tour for "How Far Would you Go?: Living on the Edge." *The Oprah Show.* February 27. 2008. Accessed 2/29/2008. www.oprah.com.
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[lxxxv] Ubell, Lynn. "Friday Night Dive!" *What's For Freegan Dinner?* May 14, 2010. Accessed February 1, 2011. Youtube.
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[lxxxvii] Edwards, Ferne & David Mercer. "Gleaning from Gluttony: an Australian youth subculture confronts the ethics of waste." *Australian Geographer*. Volume 38:3 (November 2007). 286.
[lxxxviii] Ibid, 290.
[lxxxix] C. Second Personal Interview with author. March 31, 2008. Kansas.
[xc] Ayres, Jennifer. "Goodwill Bins, Diggers, and the Role of Dirt in Establishing Authenticity" Paper delivered at *Dirt:* New York Metro American Studies Association meeting. December 5, 2010. Copy forwarded via email to the author February 2, 2011. See also Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
[xci] Ling, Lisa & Oprah Winfrey. "How Far Would you Go?: Living on the Edge." *The Oprah Show.* February 27. 2008. Accessed 2/29/2008. www.oprah.com. See also Lynn Ubell's Freegan Dinner Channel for biographical description on Youtube.com

[xcii] Ibid

[xciii] Ubell, Lynn. "Reality TV Pitch." *What's for Freegan Dinner?* Posted April 2, 2010. Accessed February 1, 2011. YouTube.
[xciv] See NYC Freegan Meet-Up. "Sustainable living beyond capitalism." Accessed February 14, 2011. <http://www.meetup.com/dumpsterdiving-4/>
[xcv] Pezzullo, Phaedra C. "Introduction." *Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics of Pollution, Travel, and Environmental Justice.* The University of Alabama Press: Tuscaloosa, 2007. 5.
[xcvi] Ibid, "Tourist Itineraries," 51.
[xcvii] Jensen, Derrick. "Forget Shorter Showers: Why personal change does not equal political change." Orion Magazine. July/August 2009. Accessed February 1, 2011. Magazine webarchive.
[xcviii] D.D. Personal Interview with author. February 29, 2008. Kansas.
[xcix] C. Personal Interview with author. March 13, 2008. Kansas.
[c] See "California V. Greenwood (No. 86-684)." Cornell University Law School: Legal Information Institute. Accessed August 1, 2010. <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/historics/USSC_CR_0486_0035_ZS.html> See also USDA. "The Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act." *A Citizens Guide to Food Recovery*. Accessed 7/1/2010. http://www.usda.gov/news/pubs/gleaning/seven.htm
[ci] Melosi, Martin V. *Garbage in the Cities: Refuse, Reform, and the Environment*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. 9.
[cii] Clapp, Jennifer. "Seeping through the Regulatory Cracks." *SAIS Review*. Volume XXII (Winter-Spring 2002). 145. Accessed July 20, 2010. JSTOR. www.ku.edu See also the US communications statement at the '89 Basel Convention concerning military and cargo vessels in relation to the convention standards, Basel Convention, <http://www.basel.int/ratif/convention.htm#13>

[ciii] Lawrence Court *Good Neighbor Brochure*. accessed 4/21/2008. <www.lawrencecourt.org>

[civ] Localized debates about homelessness equally play a central role in unraveling criminalized taboos about dependency and what is being taken from the trash. Instances of property abandonment and re-appropriation likewise conjure discussions about legitimacy and citizenship, such as the 2006 demolition of the LA South Central Community Gardens. See *The Garden*, directed by Scott Hamilton Kennedy (Oscilloscope Laboratories, 2008).
[cv] C. Personal Interview with author. March 13, 2008. Kansas.
[cvi] Anonymous. Phone Interview with author. April 1, 2008; also g.c. personal interview with author. 4/29/2008; and g.c. personal email with the author. 3/18/2008.
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[cix] C. Second Personal Interview with author. March 31, 2008. Kansas.
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[cxi] D.D. Personal Interview with author. February 29, 2008. Kansas.
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[cxxiii] Lipsitz, 360.
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[cxxviii] Grewal, Inderpal. *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.124.
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[cxxxvi] Bush, George H. W. Bush. "Remarks on Departure for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development." June 11, 1992; and "The President's News Conference." June 4, 1992. John Woolly and Gerhard Peters, eds. The American Presidency Project. UC Santa Barbara. Accessed July 20, 2010. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu. A fascinating point about popular US memory and environmentalism worth further analysis at a later date is that I was unable to pinpoint a primary source for this widely used and attributed quotation in both academic and non-academic work. Ironically, the latter Bush, Jr. would likewise generate great environmental scorn in 2001 by refusing to attend Earth Summit in Johannesburg.

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[cxliii] For an excellent example of such conditions, see the documentary *Maquilapolis (City of Factories)*. Produced by Vicky Funari and Sergio De La Torre. (Independent Television Service and Creative Capital, 2006). Women working in the factories are recorded by the film's producers as well as self-documented by way of 'film diaries' of their neighborhoods, activism, and living conditions resulting from relaxed regulations and conditions stemming from NAFTA.
[cxliv] For specific data and detailed maps by country, see World Resources Institute online profiles and compilations http://earthtrends.wri.org/#. For instance, their data on "Energy and Resources" expenditure suggest that the US followed by Canada and Saudi Arabia exhibit the highest per capita carbon emissions. See "Per Capita Carbon Emissions, 1999." <http://earthtrends.wri.org/maps_spatial/maps_detail_static.php?map_select=185&theme=6>
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See also Thomas Morton's documentary *TOXIC: Garbage Island* <www.vbs.tv>
[cxlvi] CT. Personal Interviews with author. April 13, 2008 & April 15, 2008. Kansas. News link made available via personal email with author. April 14, 2008.
[cxlvii] For historical examples of water dumping in the US, see Melosi, *Garbage in the Cities*, 34.
[cxlviii] For other examples, see Clapp, Jennifer. *Toxic Exports: The Transfer of Hazardous Wastes from Rich to Poor Countries*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.
[cxlix] See American Studies scholar John Carlos Rowe's "Postnationalism, Globalism, and the New American Studies." *The Futures of American Studies*. Eds. Donald Pease & Robyn Wiegman. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002. 167-182. See Gunter H. Lenz's "Toward a Dialogics of International American Culture Studies: Transnationality, Border Discourses, and Public Cultures." *The Futures of American Studies*. Eds. Donald Pease & Robyn Wiegman. Duke University Press, Durham, 2002. 461-485. See Grewal, Inderpal. *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Finally, see also Jensen, Derick. *EndGame*: *The Problem of Civilization*, Volume 1. Westminster, Maryland: Seven Stories Press, 2006. 115.
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[clxi] M. Personal Interview with author. August 7, 2010. New York City.
[clxii] Ayres, Jennifer. Comments taken from personal email exchange with author, February 2, 2011. See also Ayres, Jennifer. "Goodwill Bins, Diggers, and the Role of Dirt in Establishing Authenticity" Paper delivered at *Dirt:* New York Metro American Studies Association meeting. December 5, 2010.
[clxiii] Ibid
[clxiv] Ostrom, Elinor, 2009 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences. Personal Interview with Ostrom & Oliver Williamson conducted by Adam Smith. December 6, 2009. <www.nobelprize.org>.
[clxv] Aligica, Paul Dragos and Peter Boettke. *The Two Social Philosophies Of Ostroms' Institutionalism*. Paper delivered at American Political Science Association 2010 Annual Meeting. Available August 3, 2010 on APSA webpage.
[clxvi] Hess, Charlotte and Elinor Ostrom. "Introduction." *Understanding Knowledge as a Commons: From Theory to Practice*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. 2007. 4.
[clxvii] See for instance, Pellow, David Naguib. *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago*. The MIT Press: Cambridge, 2004. Pellow, David Naguib & Lisa Sun-Hee Park. *The Silicon Valley of Dreams: Environmental Injustice, Immigrant Workers, and the High-Tech Global Economy*. New York University Press: New York, 2002. Pulido, Laura. *Environmentalism and Economic Justice: Two Chicano Struggles in the Southwest.* University of Arizona Press: Tucson, 1996. Sandler, Ronald & Pezzullo, Phaedra. *Environmental Justice and Environmentalism: The Social Justice Challenge to the Environmental Movement.* Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007. Pezzullo, Phaedra C. *Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics of Pollution, Travel, and Environmental Justice.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007.

[clxviii] *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*. Eds. Martin Daunton & Matthew Hilton. Oxford: Berg Publishing, 2001. 3.

[clxix] Boland, Eavan. "That the Science of Cartography is Limited." *In a Time of Violence.* New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1995.
[clxx]See Kim Severson's article "Some Good News on Food Prices" *New York Times*. April 2, 2008. Accessed May 3, 2009. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/02/. For information on Food Stamp Sales see also Seth Wessler's "Selling Food Stamps for Kids' Shoes" *ColorLines Magazine*. Supported by The Investigative Fund at The Nation Institute. Reported by Daisy Hernandez. February 17, 2010. Accessed November 25, 2010. <http://colorlines.com/archives/2010>
[clxxi] An interviewee forwarded the following sample food recovery map: <http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=100574565875408827436.000460d7b0698fbea089e&ll=40.712004,-73.965969&spn=0.058423,0.11055&t=h&z=13> See M. personal email with the author. 08/1/2010.
[clxxii] I chose to move between local and national examples because I don't feel that diving is unique to rural or urban locations. While methods may shift, and certainly material accessibility, frequency, etc. might change depending on geography and locale, overall, I find the tendency to be present nationally and internationally.
[clxxiii] For an excellent counter-cultural food history inclusive of diggers of the 1960s see Belasco, Warren. "Food as Medium." *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2007. While I do feel that the counter-cultural history Belasco pinpoints influences the interview narratives, particularly those interviewees "trashing" in the 1960s & 70s, I chose to focus on 19th-early 20th century sanitation reform efforts in my tracing and framing of salvage history given that a fundamental question of my research is related to the politics of what is 'clean,' and the ways in which 'clean' or 'sanitary' is applied and associated with specific bodies.

[clxxiv] Rauschenberg, Robert. Qtd. in *Rauschenberg at Gemini*. Pamphlet from special exhibit. Philbrook Museum of Art. June 12-September 11, 2011. Tulsa, Oklahoma.
[clxxv] Ibid
[clxxvi] "Episode 00: Linda/Steven." Season 1, *Hoarders.* A & E Networks, LLC. Quotation taken from episode guide for Season 1. Accessed August 25, 2011. <http://www.aetv.com/hoarders/episode-guide/>
[clxxvii] K. Personal Interview with author. April 18, 2008. Kansas.
[clxxviii] M. Personal Interview with author. August 7, 2010. New York City.
[clxxix] Ibid. Interviewee documented mixed racial identity on the pre-interview questionnaire August 7, 2010.
[clxxx] K. Personal Interview with author. April 18, 2008. Kansas.
[clxxxi] R. Personal Interview with author. April 10, 2008. Kansas.
[clxxxii] See citation of on Page 12, *Chapter 1* of this dissertation. C. Personal Interview with author. March 13, 2008. Kansas.
[clxxxiii] Anonymous. Personal Interview with author. May 2, 2008. Emphasis original.
[clxxxiv] Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. London: Routledge, 2000. 24.
[clxxxv] Ibid, 29. I am careful here to note that Ahmed's application is post-colonial, post-9/11 racial profiling. I am drawing upon this concept as a means of exploring 'identifiers' that carry a certain cultural taboo.
[clxxxvi] C.G. *Mistaken For Straight*. Zine. Gloworm Press, 2009. 1.
[clxxxvii] Anonymous. Personal Interview with author. May 2, 2008.
[clxxxviii] Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger*. New York: Routledge, 2002. 2.
[clxxxix] Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger*. New York: Routledge, 2002. 44.
[cxc] Anonymous. Personal Interview with author. May 2, 2008.
[cxci] C. Personal Interview with author. March 13, 2008. Kansas.
[cxcii] Anonymous. Personal Interview. May 2, 2008. Kansas. Emphasis original.
[cxciii] D.D. Personal Interview with author. March 1, 2008. Edited from a transcript made for Sherrie Tucker's AMS 998 Oral History Spring 2008.
[cxciv] D. Personal Interview with author. March 27, 2008. Kansas.

[cxcv] M. Personal Interview. August 7, 2010. New York City.
[cxcvi] C. Second Personal Interview with author. March 31, 2008. Kansas. The first quotation from C was originally cited in an epigram in Chapter 1 of this project.
[cxcvii] R. Personal Interview. April 10, 2008. Quotations used taken from portion clocked 2.20-5.00 minutes.
[cxcviii] Williams-Forson, Psyche. *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food and Power*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2006. 93.
[cxcix] R. Personal Interview with author. April 10, 2008. Kansas.
[cc] R. Personal Interview with author. April 10, 2008. Kansas.
[cci] Gowan, Teresa. "The New Hobos." *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders: Homeless in San Francisco*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 2010. 150.
[ccii] Ibid, 149.
[cciii] Strasser, Susan. *Waste & Want: A Social History of Trash*. Metropolitan Books: New York, 1999. 250.
[cciv] See for instance Shah, Nayan. *Contagious Divides; Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 2001; Molina, Natalia. *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939.* University of California Press: Berkeley, 2006; Roberts Jr., Samuel Kelton. *Infectious Fear: Politics, Disease, and the Health Effect of Segregation*. University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2009.
[ccv]Molina, Natalia. *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939.* University of California Press: Berkeley, 2006. 2.
[ccvi] Roberts, Jr., Samuel Kelton. *Infectious Fear: Politics, Disease, and the Health Effect of Segregation.* University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2009.148.
[ccvii] Foucault, Michel. "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century." *The Foucault Reader*. ed. Paul Rabinow. Pantheon Books: New York, 1984. 274.
[ccviii] Shah, Nayan. *Contagious Divides; Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 2001. 3.
[ccix] Molina, 8.
[ccx] Ibid, 3.
[ccxi] "The Garbage Offensive." *The Young Lords: A Reader*. Edited by Darrell Enck-Wanzer. Foreword by Iris Morales & Dennis-Oliver Velez. New York: New York University Press, 2010. 185.

[ccxii] Ibid, "Ten Point Health Program,"187.
[ccxiii] Ibid, 188.
[ccxiv] Melosi, Martin V. *Garbage in the Cities: Refuse, Reform, and the Environment*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. 9.
[ccxv] Ibid, 13.
[ccxvi] Strasser,170.
[ccxvii] Ibid, 12.
[ccxviii] Ibid, 13.
[ccxix] Freidberg, Susanne. *Fresh: A Perishable History*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University: Cambridge, 2009. 72.
[ccxx] Melosi, 9.
[ccxxi] Strasser, 284.
[ccxxii] Melosi, 17.
[ccxxiii] Ibid, 21.
[ccxxiv] Ibid, 22.
[ccxxv] Ibid, 67.
[ccxxvi] Ibid, 88. My emphasis added.
[ccxxvii] Strasser, 109.
[ccxxviii] Zimring, Carl A. *Cash for Your Trash: Scrap Recycling in America*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2005. 39.
[ccxxix] Zimring, 52.
[ccxxx] Ibid, 42.
[ccxxxi] Ibid, 61.
[ccxxxii] Ibid, 70.
[ccxxxiii] Ibid, 55.
[ccxxxiv] Ibid, 28.
[ccxxxv] For further information on rag economies see Strasser, 87 and Zimring, 46
[ccxxxvi] Pellow, David Naguib. *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago*. The MIT Press: Cambridge, 2004. 27.
[ccxxxvii] Melosi, 234.
[ccxxxviii] Ibid, 94.
[ccxxxix] Ibid, 233.
[ccxl] Strasser, 15.
[ccxli] Ibid, 9.
[ccxlii] Heynen, Nik. "Cooking up Non-violent Civil-disobedient Direct Action for the Hungry: 'Food Not Bombs' and the Resurgence of Radical Democracy in the US." *Urban Studies*. 47:6, May 2010. 1227.
[ccxliii] Candidate for Lawrence, Kansas City Commission Mike Dever. See *Douglas County League of Women Voters Guide*, April 2011 "Elections for City Commission." Response to Question 3, "3. What role should the city play in housing Lawrence's homeless population?" Accessed April 2011. http://lawrenceleague.com/elections.html
[ccxliv] Heynen, 1227.
[ccxlv] Poppendieck, Janet. "Introduction."*Sweet Charity? Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement.* New York: Viking, 1998. 6
[ccxlvi] Ibid
[ccxlvii] Qtd. in Heynen, Nik. "Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 99: 2. London: Routledge, 411. May 6, 2009. Accessed March 18, 2011. JSTOR.
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[ccxlix] K. Personal Interview with author. April 18, 2008. Kansas.
[ccl] USDA. "Food Security in the United States: Key Statistics and Graphics." *Diet, Health, and Safety*. November 2010 for 2009 annual report. Accessed 11/28/2010 http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/stats_graphs.htm.
[ccli] USDA. "Food Security in the United States: Measuring Household Food Security." *Diet, Health, and Safety*. Accessed 3/31/2009. http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/measurement.htm.

[cclii] Pottier, Johan. "Food Security in Policy and Practice." *Anthropology of Food: the Social Dynamics of Food Security*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999. 11.
[ccliii] Qtd. in Ibid, 14.
[ccliv] Ibid, 14.
[cclv] Ibid, 18.
[cclvi] See Mustafa Koc, Rupen Das & Carey Jernigan. "Food Security and Food Sovereignty in Iraq: The Impact of War and Sanctions on the Civilian Population." *Journal of Food, Culture and Society*. Volume 10:2 (Summer 2007). Oxford: Berg Publishing. Accessed February 15, 2009. KU Libraries electronic journal database. 320.

[cclvii] Gallagher, Mari. "Brother, Can You Spare and Apple." *The Huffington Post*. September 8, 2008. Accessed May 1, 2009. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mari-gallagher/>. See also Gallagher's interview with Mark Summer on "Food Deserts: Nutritional Starvation in the Land of Plenty." ITunesU podcast. *A World of Possibilities*. March 27, 2009.
[cclviii] Belasco, Warren. *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2007. 250.
[cclix] Donati, Kelly. "The Pleasure of Diversity in Slow Food's Ethics of Taste." *Food, Culture and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*. eds. Ken Albala & Lisa Heldke. London: Berg,Volume 8:2 (Fall 2005). 239.
[cclx] Ibid, 228.

[cclxi] For further information on this topic see Belasco, Warren. *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2007; Fromartz, Samuel. *Organic, Inc.: Natural Foods and How They Grew*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2007; or Guthman, Julie. *Agrarian Dreams: The Paradox of Organic Farming in California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
[cclxii] USDA. Food & Nutrition Service. See Benefits & Services Page. "How do the food packages appeal to WIC's culturally diverse populations?" emphasis added. Accessed August 30, 2011. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/benefitsandservices/>
[cclxiii] Ibid
[cclxiv] Bloom, Jonathan. *American Wasteland: How American Throws Away Nearly Half of Its Food (And What We Can Do About It).* Cambridge, MA:Da Capo, 2010. Pg. xi
[cclxv] For information on the rise of emergency food systems as a product of Reaganomics see for example, Poppendieck, Janet. *Sweet Charity? Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement.* New York: Viking, 1998. For exemplary information on surplus agricultural commodity chain analysis see Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin Press, 2006 or Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation*. New York: Perrenial, 2002.
[cclxvi] Poppendieck, Janet. "The Rise of Emergency Food." *Sweet Charity? Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement*. New York: Viking, 1998. 88-9.
[cclxvii] Anonymous. Personal Interview with author. May 2, 2008.
[cclxviii] Qtd. in "Is Wal-Mart Good For America?" *Frontline*. PBS Special. DVD. November 2004.
[cclxix] I put this in quotations merely in reference to Lindsey's point; however, feel strongly that this systemic impulse is applicable in multiple global contexts and should not solely be seen as an "American" application *onto* other locations and markets.
[cclxx] Friedman, Milton. "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits." *The New York Times Magazine*, September 13, 1970. Copyright @ 1970 by *The New York Times* Company. Reprinted with permission in *Corporate Ethics and Corporate Governance*. 2007, Part IV. 173-178. Accessed August 31, 2011. Google Scholar.
[cclxxi] Klein, Naomi. "Blank is Beautiful." *Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism.* New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007. 14-5.
[cclxxii] For information on example emergency commodities and their political histories, see Poppendieck, Janet. *Sweet Charity? Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement.* New York: Viking, 1998. See also recent publication son surplus global food production and waste such as Bloom, Jonathan. *American Wasteland: How American Throws Away Nearly Half of It's Food and What We Can Do About It.* Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 2010; Stuart, Tristram. *Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal*. New York: Norton & Co, 2009; or Thurow, Robert & Scott Kilman. *Enough: Why the World's Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty. New York:* Public Affairs, 2009.

[cclxxiii] See especially Michael Pollan's discussion of corn in *Fast Food World: the Perils and Promises of the Global Food Chain*. Sponsored by the Knight Program of Science in Environmental Journalism. University of California-Berkeley. November 24, 2003. UC Television. 1-hour panel discussion with Michael Pollan, Vandana Shiva, Carlo Petrini, Eric Schlosser, and Wendell Berry. Accessed March 18, 2009. You Tube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM_PSqjIF0o. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM_PSqjIF0o. See also a useful discussion of US re-purposing of surplus commodity crops into corn-centric consumer products such as the documentary *King Corn*. Documentary directed by Aaron Woolf. With Earl L. Butz, Ian Cheney, Curt Ellis. Mosaic Films Incorporated, 2007. Finally, see Pollan, Michael. "The Farm." *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2006. 32-56.
[cclxxiv] Michael Pollan interview with Clara Jeffrey. "5 Questions for Food Guru Michael Pollan." *Mother Jones*. March 6, 2009. Accessed May 6, 2009. Podcast. http://www.motherjones.com.

[cclxxv] "Value of U.S. food imports, by food group: Summary data on food import values for 14 food categories, annual data since 1999." USDA: Economic Research Service. Accessed October 18, 2010. Updated Report released April 2010 on 2009 statistics. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/foodimports/>
[cclxxvi] qtd. in *King Corn*. Directed by Aaron Woolf. With Earl L. Butz, Ian Cheney, Curt Ellis. Mosaic Films Incorporated, 2007.
[cclxxvii] Pollan, Michael. "The Farm." *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2006. 48.
[cclxxviii] Qtd. in Interview with Brink Lindsey for "Is Wal-Mart Good For America?" *Frontline*. PBS Special. November 2004. See transcript at www.pbs.org.
[cclxxix] C. Personal Interview with author. March 13, 2008. Kansas.

Notes Chapter 3
[cclxxx] While popular memory often associates back to the land movement with the 1960s and '70s, earlier documentation shows this concept of the idealization of growing food on limited space planes to be a much earlier concept. See, for instance, Bolton Hall's early 20th century texts *Three acres and Liberty* (1907), or *A Little Land and a Living* (1908). See also David B. Danbom's "Romantic Agrarianism in Twentieth-Century America." *Agricultural History*, Vol. 65:4 (Autumn, 1991). 1-12. Accessed 2/25/2011. JSTOR. In the article Danbom notes, "Romantic agrarianism has waxed and waned throughout American history, but it became increasingly popular around the turn of this century." (pg. 2) See also T.J. Jackson Lears' *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981; reissued by University of Chicago Press, 1994.
[cclxxxi] See Wood, Spencer D. & Jess Gilbert. "Returning African American Farmers to the Land: Recent Trends and a Policy Rationale." *The Review of Black Political Economy*. Spring 2000. 43-63. For information on the rise in black migration back to the South see William W. Falk, Larry L. Hunt & Matthew O. Hunt "Return Migrations of African-Americans to the South: Reclaiming a Land of Promise, Going Home, or Both?" *Rural Sociology* 69:4, 2004. 490–509.

[cclxxxii] from Ficara, John Francis and Juan Williams. *Black Farmers in America*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006. Reprinted by National Public Radio. February 22, 2005. Accessed October 22, 2011. http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5230129 For details and data concerning racial disparities in American farming and farmlands see *The Black Farmers & Agriculturalist's Association*, http://www.bfaa-us.org/

[cclxxxiii] See the United Nations' "The Right to Food." *Report of the High Commissioner For Human Rights*. 20 April 2001. Accessed March 26, 2009. See also Article 25 of the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* which reads, "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services […]." Accessed April 14, 2009. http://www.ohchr.org.

[cclxxxiv] See Janet Poppendieck's *Sweet Charity?: Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement*. New York: Viking, 1998. Poppendieck references the "hunger revelations of the 1960s" resulting from media and political coverage in aftermath of the switch from free federal commodities to Food Stamps in the Mississippi Delta. See pp. 10-11. Similarly, scholarship on the 're-discovery' of food waste and surplus is proving a popular subject. See for example Bloom, Jonathan. *American Wasteland: How American Throws Away Nearly Half of It's Food and What We Can*

Do About It. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 2010; Stuart, Tristram. *Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal*. New York: Norton & Co, 2009; or Thurow, Robert & Scott Kilman. *Enough: Why the World's Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty*. *New York:* Public Affairs, 2009.

[cclxxxv] hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. London: Pluto Press, 2000. 29

[cclxxxvi] Feinberg, Leslie. *Stone Butch Blues*. Ithaca: Firebrand Books, 1993. 296.

[cclxxxvii] *Victory Gardens*. USDA film, 20-minutes. Narrated by Bill Jefferay & photography by George Ortlieb. Prelinger Archives. http://www.archive.org/details/victory_garden

[cclxxxviii] Oliver, Jamie. *Jamie's Food Revolution: Rediscover How to Cook Simple, Delicious, Affordable Meals.* New York: Hyperion Books, 2009.

[cclxxxix] *Daily Mail*. "Marguerite is the world's oldest podcaster at 91." March 23, 2011. Accessed 3/23/2011. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/>. Thank you to Dr. Sheyda Jahanbani for forwarding this coverage.

[ccxc] See *Gourmet Magazine's* reprint of the letter, "Alice Water's Open Letter to the Obama's." January 15, 2009. Accessed October 27, 2010. www.gourmet.com/foodpolitics See also Tara Parker Pope's *New York Times* printed interview with Alice Waters, "Alice Waters and Obama's 'Kitchen' Cabinet." December 11, 2008. Accessed October 27, 2010. <http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/11/alice-waters-and-obamas-kitchen-cabinet/>

[ccxci] Alice Waters interview with Bill Maher. *Real Time with Bill Maher*. HBO. April 9, 2010. For video clips of the interview, see Raphael Brion's *Eater National*. "Alice Waters on Real Time with Bill Maher." Posted April 12, 2010. Accessed October 1, 2010. www.eater.com/archives

[ccxcii] Matchar, Emily. "Can urban homesteading really be a solution to poverty?" *New Domesticity* (blog). Posted October 10, 2011. Acessed 10/12/2011. http://newdomesticity.com/ For the original article she comments on see Gregory Thomas, Susan. "Back to the Land, Reluctantly." *New York Times*. October 8, 2011. Accessed 10/12/2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/opinion/sunday/i-went-back-to-the-land-to-feed-my-family.html?_r=1 For a humerous counter-example see also Madeline Holler's "I am a Radical Homemaker Failure." *Salon.Com On Motherhood*. June 30, 2010. Accessed 10/12/20111. http://life.salon.com/2010/06/30/radical_homemaker_failure/ Thank you to Dr. Sheyda Jahanbani for bringing these citations to my attention. For a more general discussion of this topic outside of the gender dynamics see "Victory Gardens: Digging Their Way Out of a Recession." *The Economist*. from the print. February 26, 2009. Accessed 11/5/2011. http://www.economist.com/node/13185476 For further critique of such popular representations see also Douglas, Susan. *Enlightened Sexism: The Seductive Message That Feminism's Work is Done*. New York: Times Books, 2010. See definition page 9. Douglas suggests that popular media continues to portray the message that feminism has been achieved, progress made, and therefore "it's ok, even amusing, to resurrect sexist stereotypes of girls and women."

[ccxciii] In the United States, foods that are not organically produced are referred to as conventional, which I interpret as part of a process of normalizing industrial agricultural methods and products over organic. Throughout the chapter I utilize this term purely as a means of distinguishing differences between the methods and products that make up the divide between so-called alternative foods and conventional. For information regarding the politics of this process of organics versus non-organic, please see Fromartz, Samuel. *Organic, Inc.: Natural Foods and How They Grew*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Orlando, Florida. 2006. See also Belasco, Warren. *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2007.

[ccxciv] Nestle, Marion. "Writing the Food Studies Movement." *Food Culture and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research.* London: Berg. Volume 13: 2 (June 2010). 164.

[ccxcv] Ozeki, Ruth. *All Over Creation*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003. 257

[ccxcvi] Petrini, Carlo. *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001. 17.

[ccxcvii] Shiva here references Slow Food Italia's Carlo Petrini who utilizes the term 'virtuous globalization' during his panel segment. There is a well-established literature on the concept of 'glocalization'. See for instance Roland Robertson's "Glocaization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity." Mike Featherstone *et al* (eds.) *Global Modernities*. London: Sage Publications, 1995. 25-44; or Ty Matejowsky's "Spam and fast-Food 'Glocalization' in the Phillipines." *Journal of Food, Culture and Society.* Oxford: Berg Publishers, Volume 10:1 (Spring 2007). 24-41. See Shiva and Petrini speaking portions of *Fast Food World: the Perils and Promises of the Global Food Chain.* Sponsored by the Knight Program of Science in Environmental Journalism. University of California-Berkeley. November 24, 2003. UC Television. 1-hour panel discussion with Michael Pollan, Vandana Shiva, Carlo Petrini, Eric Schlosser, and Wendell Berry. Accessed March 18, 2009. You Tube. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM_PSqjIF0o.

[ccxcviii] For a fascinating historical tracing of alternative foods and markets in American New Left contexts see Warren Belasco's *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2007.
[ccxcix] Statement by Anthony Bourdain made during a discussion entitled "Food for Thought" featuring Bourdain, Alice Waters, and Duff Goldman (of Food Network's "Ace of Cakes"). *The Connecticut Forum*. May 14, 2009. <www.ctforum.org>
[ccc] See Bourdain, Anthony. "Selling Out." *Medium Raw: A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook*. New York: Ecco, 2010. 10. See also Bourdain's tongue-in-cheek discussion of painfully doing "bad things" to good food in his chapter "The Fish On Monday Thing." 266.
[ccci] See Pollan, Michael. "You are What You Grow." *The New York Times Magazine*, April 22, 2007. Accessed March 8, 2011. For a link to the complete article see www.michaelpollan.com To read the complete USDA 2008 *Farm Bill*, see the Farm Service Agency at usda.gov.
[cccii] Statement by Alice Waters made during a discussion entitled "Food for Thought" featuring Bourdain, Alice Waters, and Duff Goldman. *The Connecticut Forum*. May 14, 2009. <www.ctforum.org>
[ccciii] Anthony Bourdain interview with Jamie R. Liu. "Chewing the Fat: *No Reservations*' Anthony Bourdain." From *Dcist* "Food and Drink" column. January 19, 2009. Accessed March 8, 2011. <www.dcist.com>
[ccciv] Alice Waters interview with Bill Maher. *Real Time with Bill Maher*. HBO. April 9, 2010. For video clips of the interview, see Raphael Brion's *Eater National*. "Alice Waters on Real Time with Bill Maher." Posted April 12, 2010. Accessed October 1, 2010. www.eater.com/archives

[cccv] Oliver, Jamie. "Teach Every Child About Food." TED Award Speech. February 2010. Accessed March 1, 2011. www.ted.org. The award comes with $100,000.00 in funds to act upon the speakers TED 'wish to change the world,' in this case, Oliver's *Food Revolution Campaign*. See also www.tedprize.org.
[cccvi] See Jamie Oliver's "TED Prize Page" on his *Food Revolution Campaign*. Accessed March 1, 2011. <ww.tedprize.org>
[cccvii] Guthman, Julie. "The Food Police: Why Michael Pollan makes me want to eat Cheetos." *The Utne Reader* (excerpted from *Gastronomica*). January/February 2008. Accessed May 3, 2009. http://www.utne.com/2008-01-01/Politics/The-Food-Police.aspx.

[cccviii] For examples of feminist corporeal studies in regard to fatness, see for instance, Rothblum, Esther and Sondra Solovay, eds. *The Fat Studies Reader*. New York: NYU Press, 2009; Guthman, Julie. "The Food Police: Why Michael Pollan makes me want to eat Cheetos." *The Utne Reader* (excerpted from *Gastronomica*). January/February 2008. Accessed May 3, 2009. http://www.utne.com/2008-01-01/Politics/The-Food-Police.aspx; LeBesco, Kathleen. *Revolting Bodies?: The Struggle to Redefine Fat Identity*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004; or Braziel, Jana Evans & LeBesco, Kathleen. *Bodies Out of Bounds: Fatness and Transgression*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

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[cdxxiii] See Freedom Center of Missouri. "The Government War On Kid-Run Concession Stands." Published July 26, 2011. See also Robert Fernandes' "Lemonade Freedom: Selling Lemonade is Not a Crime." August 11, 2011. Accessed September 27, 2011. http://www.lemonadefreedom.com/Freedom. See also Cepeda, Esther. "Setting free the lemonade stands. Really?" *PressDemocrat*. Published Friday, August 19, 2011. Accessed September 27, 2011. http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20110819/WIRE/110819465

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Appendix 1: 2010 Survey and Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Preferred name or pseudonym: Age: Hometown:

Preferred Gender Identity: Preferred Racial Identity:

1.) Do you currently use any of these programs (check all that apply)
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) --------- National School Lunch Program, the Special----------Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)----------
Child & Adult Care Food Program---------- School Breakfast Program ---------- Other (please explain) ----------

2.) By what means do you usually procure food for yourself and/or dependents?

3.) In your opinion, what common stereotypes exist about dumpsters, dumpster diving, and/or dumpster divers?

4.) Is dumpster diving illegal?

5.) Have you ever scavenged or dumpstered? (If NO, why not? If YES, why? What were you looking for? / What found?)

6.) Do you self identify as a Dumpster Diver? If NO, do you go by another term?

7.) My primary reasons for dumpster diving are (Please check all that apply):

Social-------- Political--------- Economic---------- Health Based---------- Other---------- (please list)
Explanation of Reasons:

8.) My primary reasons for NOT dumpster diving are (Please check all that apply):

Social-------- Political--------- Economic---------- Health Based---------- Other---------- (please list)
Explanation of Reasons:

Appendix 2: 2008 Pre-Interview Questionnaire

"Chuck That": Oral Histories of Freegans and Other Dumpster Divers: Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Date:

- Preferred name or pseudonym:

- How old are you?

- Where are you from?

- Do you self identify as a Freegan or Dumpster Diver? If NO, do you go by something else?

- My primary reasons for dumpster diving are (Please check all that apply):

  Social---------- Political---------- Economic---------- Other---------- (please list)

- Please list any issues and/or questions you do not wish to discuss during your interview:

Please contact me if you have questions, concerns, or comments:

Rachel Vaughn
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