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People, Plants, and Fungi: Examining the Ecological and Social Landscapes of the Swan Creek Park Food Forest

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2014 Summer Research in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
**People, Plants and Fungi: Examining the Social and Ecological Landscapes of the Swan
Creek Park Food Forest**

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Introduction

This summer, I researched the plants, fungi, and people of Tacoma's Swan Creek Park Food Forest (SCPFF) giving the site the opportunity to tell its own story through the histories in

which the local plants and people are both rooted. My overall goal was to unearth the submerged influences that have shaped the SCPFF which, in their exposure, can create an approach to sustainable community building that is inclusive of multiple cultural identities, as well as respectful of the sovereignty of those identities.

I began my investigation with plants and fungi that are indigenous to the area, focusing on how they were used by the First People of Cascadia. The Puyallup Tribe Indian Reservation's boundaries used to include Swan Creek Park, and honoring and promoting awareness of this history is integral to the overall ethical development of the site. I also researched local native culture as it exists today, highlighting Native American food sovereignty projects in the Puget Sound area that share a mission of promoting native traditional foods and plants.

According to the Washington Native Plant Society, native plants are “those species that occur or historically occurred within the state boundaries before European contact based upon the best available scientific and historical documentation.”¹ This definition braids social values and history with science as most invasive species of plants in Washington state were brought here by settlers of European descent as food, medicine, reminders of home, or even by accident. This group's influence on the SCPFF persists to this day in the echoes of natural resource acquisition that scarred the soil, allowing certain plant species to become invasive to the native flora. The ways in which early Americans on the frontier interacted with native plants, as well as the plants they brought with them, provides not only context, but also a metaphor for the ongoing struggle between invasive and native/naturalized species at the SCPFF.

Surrounding the SCPFF is Salishan, one of Tacoma's most diverse neighborhoods. I helped administer a survey in 2013 for the purpose of finding which plants and fungi four

¹ Washington Native Plant Society, “What is a Native Plant?” Last modified October 26, 2011, http://www.wnps.org/about_wnps/native_definition.html.

different ethnic groups living in Salishan would most like to see cultivated in the SCPFF, including members of the Ukrainian, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Korean diasporas. Disappointingly, this survey rendered answers that were more limited than the creators of the survey had anticipated. Though a team of interpreters were present, it became clear we needed not only linguistic translation, but also a better understanding of the cultures and histories of each respective group in order to formulate better questions.

An example is the traditionally informal practice of wild mushroom hunting. Many participants claimed that they did not know the names for the mushrooms they liked, or that they would “know it when they saw it.” The interpreters, in turn, were not specialized in the names of fungi, and were therefore unable to accurately translate the mushrooms participants did name into English. This resulted in the generalized categorical answer of “mushrooms” by three of the four groups.² If we had researched mushroom hunting in each culture prior to hosting this meeting, we could have presented the groups with pictures of scientifically identified species and asked them to name the ones they would most like to see cultivated. That way, we could collect the untranslated names directly from the groups themselves for the purpose of multilingual signage, and interpreters would not be faced with the burden of finding the correct taxonomic correspondence of each mushroom in English, since a well-chosen picture would have provided that information.

Although there were four different ethnic groups present at this meeting, I chose to narrow my focus to one group so that I could form a process with which to conduct further studies that will lead to the creation of a more detailed survey, providing a basis for cultural literacy as we work with these groups. I chose to begin with the Ukrainian group for two reasons.

² See Appendix I.

First, this is the group that I sat with during the survey. Since I speak a south Slavic language,³ there were a few similarities in plant names that I knew from my own background. I was therefore able to suggest *lipa*, a beloved flowering tree used for tea, and the group enthusiastically agreed that they would like to see it cultivated. I have identified *lipa* as “linden” in English, and through further research I have identified *Tilia cordata* as the specific species that is found in Ukraine. This is what sparked the idea for this research, as linden is the most specific plant name we were able to obtain during the survey.

After this summer, I hope to continue this research with the southeast and east Asian groups that were also included in the initial survey. This research has helped lay the groundwork for me to begin a conversation, and though I took no oral histories for this project, I researched with the intention of conducting well-informed and culturally sensitive interviews in the future.

Overview

To understand this complex history and evolving ecology, I begin with the native history of Swan Creek Park as a site, where the SCPFF is situated. Outlining the steps the Washington Territory took in securing property as it moved toward statehood, I detail the loss of land ownership the Puyallup Tribe experienced from the mid to late 19th century to the 20th century. After examining the social invisibility of the Native American tribes that emerged with this loss of land, I then explore the cultural appropriation of agroforestry that operates on this invisibility. Finally, I describe the numerous food forest projects that have been started by indigenous people in the Puget Sound region that predate any permaculture⁴ ‘food forest’ initiatives, as well as the

³ The Ukrainian language is east Slavic, which is a different linguistic lineage, though it shares common roots with the south Slavic languages.

⁴ Permaculture is an alternative agricultural movement that combines traditional and scientific techniques for the creation of sustainable human habitat. For more information, see: Bill Mollison. *Permaculture: A Designer's Manual*. Sisters Creek: Tagari Publishers, 1988.

ways in which Puget Sound tribes are currently working toward food sovereignty and the “decolonization” of their diets.

I then explore the plants that colonial and frontier settlers brought and connected to as they tried to create a sense of home in Early America. I include those plants that were historically able to aggressively spread and are currently considered ‘invasive,’ due to the rapid pace of development that significantly altered the landscape during the 19th and 20th centuries. I then discuss the people of Ukraine and their connection to agroforestry, making a comparison to the Soviet concept of the *dacha*, or rural second homes used by city dwellers for the purpose of recreation, foraging, and food growing.⁵ Next, I discuss fungi’s transcultural importance in early, frontier, Native, and mainstream American cultures, looking at environmental, historical, anthropological and even nutritional factors. Finally, I outline my process for researching and cross-referencing the Ukrainian and English names for different mushrooms commonly found both in the Puget Sound region and in Ukraine, ending with suggestions for how to proceed when conducting future interviews and surveys at the SCPFF.

The Native History of Swan Creek Park

It is of utmost importance to understand the historical shift in land ownership that the Swan Creek Park site has undergone, and its lasting effects on the psychological, social, and physical well being of Puyallup Tribe members and other ethnic stakeholders. It is a mark of privilege that mainstream society can interact with this site without ever becoming aware of the loss resounding through the soil, and we must resolve to bring this pain into our awareness if we

⁵ Also included in the Appendices are accounts that detail the Ukrainian connection to food and sense of place, as shaped by terror-famines and the Chernobyl disaster.

are to determine what an ethical agroforestry project might look like. As the SCPFF is on what has historically been the “usual and accustomed” grounds of the Puyallup Tribe, we must become aware of the contextual significance of our very presence to that site.

Due to the enduring social invisibility of Native American tribes throughout the course of the United States’s formation as a political entity, it is especially important to read secondary source literature about the history of the tribes critically because of profound differences in interpreting historical events. In cross-referencing most scholarly sources with the “About” and “History” sections of official tribe websites, I have found discrepancies between accounts, especially if secondary source material is not sourced directly from the perspectives of the tribes they cover.

An example of this is Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown’s *Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest*, in which they provide a summary overview of each tribe. In the section on the Puyallup tribe, they state that the “derivation of the name Puyallup has been traced to a Nisqually Indian word for the mouth of the Puyallup River.” They claim that the name “has also been traced to the native word meaning ‘shadow,’ because of the dense forest shades of the Puyallup lands. It is also said to mean ‘crooked steam.’”⁶ The Puyallup tribe official website, however, says that: “In the old days, in our aboriginal language, we were known as the S’Puyalupubsh, meaning ‘generous and welcoming behavior to all people (friends and strangers) who enter our lands.’”⁷ Ruby and Brown do not indicate how they traced the word “Puyallup,” but such discrepancies make me question the scholarly and well-reviewed descriptions of native history in general.

⁶ John A. Brown and Robert H. Ruby. *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press (1986) 166.

⁷ “Historical Overview.” The Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Accessed July 10th 2014. http://www.puyallup-tribe.com/history/historical_overview/

These conflicting accounts of history become especially problematic when trying to determine what it means to ethically develop a site such as Swan Creek Park, which is currently owned and managed by Metro Parks Tacoma. The Metro Parks website details the history of the shifting ownership of the 383 forested acres that make up Swan Creek Park, stating that the Puyallup tribe used the land for tribal councils and hunting until the “reservation system ended” in 1886.⁸ The ending of the “reservation system” likely refers to the events leading up to The Dawes Severalty Act of 1887, which is one of the many political movements in Washington’s state history that continue to perpetuate the loss of land and affect the identity of native peoples. I do not intend to imply that Metro Parks is omitting information with nefarious intent; rather, I simply wish to point out the worlds of emotion and experience that lie behind such simple sentences, and implore that we strive as a group to include such worlds as we develop projects like the SCPFF on the land today.

The official political beginning of the cultural chasm between native people and the first generations of nonnative settlers is arguably the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854, brokered with Puget Sound tribes by governor Isaac Ingalls Stevens of Washington Territory, who by the end of his term had acquired from Native Americans over 65 million acres of land.⁹ Stevens was primarily interested in gaining legal dominion over the territories in question so that a railway could transverse them, and had little interest in the actual content of the land itself.¹⁰ Stevens recognized that fishing, hunting, and gathering were crucial to Native American life and survival, and if he barred these practices, he would be responsible for providing alternatives.

⁸ “History.” Metro Parks Tacoma, Accessed June 27th 2014. <http://www.metroparkstacoma.org/history-swan-creek/>.

⁹ Bradley G. Shreve. “From Time Immemorial”: The Fish-in Movement and the Rise of Intertribal Activism.” *Pacific Historical Review* 78 (2009): 406. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/phr.2009.78.3.403>.

¹⁰ Parman, Donald L. “Inconstant Advocacy: The Erosion of Indian Fishing Rights in the Pacific Northwest, 1933-1956.” *Pacific Historical Review* Vol.53, No. 2 (1984): 166.

What resulted was, in essence, a document moving Native American communities from their homes to a reservation that also allowed them to continue subsisting off of traditional hunting, gathering, and fishing sites.¹¹ This presented an odd form of dual ‘ownership,’ in which both Native Americans and United States citizens could conceivably lay certain claims to the same piece of land, but in very different ways. Article III of the Medicine Creek Treaty maintained that the “right of taking fish, at all usual and accustomed grounds and stations, is further secured to said Indians in common with all citizens of the Territory” and even allows the tribes the right to build temporary structures for curing fish. These rights were for the lands that were being “purchased” from the Native Americans. The Article further accedes to what it calls the “privilege” of “hunting, gathering roots and berries,” as well as “pasturing...horses on open and unclaimed lands.”¹² The words “open and unclaimed” in this context reveal a bias, as all of the area referred to in the Treaty was in some way “claimed,” just not by white United States citizens. This wording, therefore, suggests that Stevens viewed Native lands as passively awaiting white ownership.

Interestingly, Article VIII claims that the “aforesaid tribes and bands acknowledge their dependence on the Government of the United States, and promise to be friendly with all citizens thereof.”¹³ In Article VI, it says that the President may reorganize Native Americans on reservations at will, relocating them to another part of the Territory, or even “consolidat(ing) them with other friendly tribes or bands,”¹⁴ essentially giving the President the right to impose social structure on Native American communities.

¹¹ Shreve, “From Time Immemorial,” 407.

¹² *Treaty with the Nisqualli, Puyallup, Etc., 1854*. 10 Stat., 1132. Art. III.

¹³ *Treaty with the Nisqualli, Puyallup, Etc.*, Art. VIII.

¹⁴ *Treaty*, Art. VI.

The various historical sections of the official websites of tribes included in the Treaty on the whole suggest that it is problematic to assume that the native signatories present in 1854 fully understood the Treaty's implications. According to the Squaxin Island Tribe, the Treaty was brokered in Chinook Jargon, which they define as "a trade language inadequate to convey the complex issues of treaty making."¹⁵ They also claim that, although the Treaty affected native people across the region, only 660 tribe members showed up, many staying home due to severe winter weather.¹⁶ Also citing poor weather, the Puyallup Tribe details the renegotiations that happened in the decades following the initial signing of the Treaty, stating that there was a discrepancy of "thousands of acres" between the original boundaries of the Puyallup reservation and the final version decreed in 1886. "To this day," the Puyallup Tribe official website concludes, "our people recognize the injustice that prevailed."¹⁷

This diminished allotment map laid the groundwork for the aforementioned Dawes Severalty Act of 1887. Here, "severalty" refers to the separation of all lands communally managed by the signatory tribes of the Treaty, and severalty as a concept had multiple purposes. First, the government at that time interpreted the practice of communal living as a lack of social evolution. Parcels of communally owned land were re-assigned to individual tribe members in an effort to foster their assimilation by way of individualism, private property ownership, and the traditional European familial structure, which early Americans saw as hallmarks of civilization and social wholesomeness.¹⁸ The Act was also in no small part enacted to the advantage of the United States government, which acquired through this Act many of the "usual and accustomed"

¹⁵ "Info." Squaxin Island Tribe, Accessed August 14th 2014, <http://squaxinland.org/info/>.

¹⁶ "Info." Squaxin Island Tribe.

¹⁷ Judy Wright, "The Treaty of Medicine Creek," Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Accessed August 28th, 2014. http://www.puyallup-tribe.com/history/treaty_of_medicine_creek/.

¹⁸ Jane Simonsen, "Object Lessons: Domesticity and Display in Native American Assimilation," *American Studies* Vol. 43, no. 1 (2002) 78.

places referred to in the Treaty. The Puyallup Tribe, for example, lost 17,463 acres of the 18,000 they had before the Dawes Severalty Act was enforced.¹⁹ The land now known as Swan Creek Park was included in this loss.

“Remembering Who We Are”: Indigenous Food Sovereignty

There have been many ways in which Native Americans have coped with this loss, and since the land was so closely tied to indigenous food systems, food has become a powerful tool with which indigenous communities can begin reclaiming their identity and their connection to the earth. “Native foods have been in this region for thousands of years,” said Valerie Segrest, Northwest Indian College nutritionist and coordinator of the Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty Project. “That’s what people are craving—more than carbohydrates and protein. They want a connection with food, with the environment, with community. These foods help us remember who we are.”²⁰

Coined in 1996 by the grassroots International Peasants Movement La Via Campesina, the term “food sovereignty” is defined as “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.” The concept seeks to shift the bottom line of food production systems from commodity and profit to people and communities.²¹

Inspired by this movement, Segrest created an organization to fit a need she saw in her own community, and though she is a part of the Muckleshoot Tribe, Segrest is an activist for

¹⁹ “From Time Immemorial,” 408.

²⁰ Kim Eckart, “Traditional Foods Remind Us Who We Are,” Yes!, Last Modified October 30th, 2012, Accessed August 15th, 2014. http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/its-your-body/tribe-revives-traditional-diet?icl=email_octnov12&ica=titleTraditionalFoodsWhoWeAre

²¹ La Via Campesina International Peasant’s Movement, “What is La Via Campesina?” Last Modified February 9th 2011, <http://www.viacampesina.org/en/index.php/organisation-mainmenu-44/what-is-la-via-campesina-mainmenu-45>.

spreading traditional food knowledge to indigenous communities across the Puget Sound region. She has become a regional leader, teaching classes on how to process traditional game such as salmon and deer, as well as how to forage and gather from the region's rich flora. She developed these programs in response to the exponentially increasing incidence of lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and heart disease among native people over the past 150 years, which is viewed as a symptom of the cultural colonization of food.²²

This is an example of what food sovereignty activists and professors Luz Calvo and Catrióna Rueda Esquibel call the “decolonized diet,” which emphasizes regional foods that predate the influence of Europeans on colonized continents. Their work - *Decolonize Your Diet: A Manifesto* - serves to support people of color as they reunite with their roots that have been historically oppressed, co-opted, and/or catalogued into institutional silence.²³ Movements like these emphasize the importance of food in defining a culture, and the recognition of food as an extension of the land upon which it is grown further underlines how crucial it is to nurture a sense of place.

Though the SCPFF sought first to support and encourage the presence of native foods and medicines in the overall design, the project must maintain sensitive awareness of its own nonnative social positionality. The SCPFF has compatible goals with food sovereignty projects, but it is not itself a food sovereignty project for any one particular community. Rather, it is a collaboration between multiple communities, and must therefore be careful to make this distinction, lest it further the social invisibility of indigenous projects such as the ones described here.

²² Northwest Indian College Traditional Plants and Food Program, “The Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty Project,” Accessed September 22nd 2014, <http://nwicplantsandfoods.com/muckleshoot>.

²³ Decolonize Your Diet, “About,” Accessed September 20th 2014, <http://decolonizeyourdiet.org/about>.

‘Columbusing’ Food Forestry

“Oh, these white people are still discovering medicines that our medicine people have used for thousands of years,” remarked Puyallup Tribe member and intertribal activist Ramona Bennett in 1989,²⁴ and this sentiment is still strong today. Contemporary bloggers and social justice activists have coined the term “Columbusing” to refer to the white American “discovery” of something that already exists.²⁵ The term sardonically references the fact that in the United States, Christopher Columbus is often credited for the discovery of the Americas. This hurtfully implies that these continents did not exist before European settlement, even though they were richly populated with a wide array of indigenous societies and cultures for thousands of years prior to Columbus’ arrival. The City of Seattle has brought attention to a piece of this injustice by voting to change the name of October’s Columbus Day to Indigenous People’s Day, the first of which will be celebrated in 2014.²⁶

The Swan Creek Park Food Forest will not be guilty of ‘Columbusing’ simply by planting and educating the public about the uses of native plants; rather, the SCPFF must seek to be meticulous about giving credit and supplying sufficient historical and cultural context for what is planted and promoted. Though the late intertribal activist and Nisqually tribe member Billy Frank Jr. did not make public comment on the SCPFF before his death in May of 2014, he did mention Seattle’s Beacon Hill Food Forest in his monthly column *Being Frank*. He called the project “important” and a “good idea,” but cautioned people to remember that before European contact, “every forest was a food forest.” He then expressed hope that those in charge of the

²⁴ Ramona Bennett. “The Puyallup Tribe Rose up from the Ashes.” In *Messengers of the Wind: Native American Women Tell Their Life Stories*, edited by Jane Katz, 150. New York: Ballantine Books, 1995.

²⁵ Brenda Salinas, “Columbusing: The Art of Discovering Something That is Not New,” NPR, Last Modified July 6th, 2014. <http://www.npr.org/blogs/codeswitch/2014/07/06/328466757/columbusing-the-art-of-discovering-something-that-is-not-new>.

²⁶ Associated Press, “Tension as Seattle ‘Indigenous Peoples Day’ Vote Delayed,” KOMO News, Last Modified September 2nd 2014, <http://www.komonews.com/news/local/Tension-as-Seattle-Indigenous-Peoples-Day-vote-delayed-273684791.html>.

Beacon Food Forest would be sure to reserve a prominent place in their design for native plants.²⁷

Most of Frank's article is devoted to giving food forestry historical context from a native perspective, which shows that it was important to him that people know that food forestry is nothing new. In this way, the SCPFF and other food forest projects that are not implemented by Native American tribes run the risk of 'Columbusing' the very practice of food forestry. Articles popularizing the Beacon Food Forest to this point have treated food forestry as a daring innovation, calling it "Seattle's free food experiment,"²⁸ or even "the nation's first food forest."²⁹ Meanwhile, the Puget Sound tribes have been actively maintaining demonstration native forest gardens and ethnobotanical trails for years.³⁰ Seattle's Bernie Whitebear Daybreak Star Garden, for example, is a demonstration forest garden of plants that have been used for food, fiber, and medicine by the Coast Salish people, and it has been in existence since 2003.³¹ There are even multiple references in news articles about the Beacon Hill Food Forest that call it the nation's largest, and though the project sees itself expanding to seven acres, it currently occupies only 2 acres.³² In contrast, the Nisqually Tribe's community garden boasts 5 acres of perennial edible forest gardening, and has been in existence since 2009.³³ Admittedly, the news publications and media that sensationalize Beacon Hill's food forest are not the official statements of the Beacon

²⁷ Billy Frank Jr. "Every Forest Once a Food Forest." *Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission*, Last Modified Aug 5th, 2013. <http://nwifc.org/2013/08/every-forest-once-a-food-forest/>.

²⁸ Dan Stone, "Seattle's Free Food Experiment," *National Geographic Magazine*, Last Modified April 29th, 2013, <http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2013/04/29/seattles-free-food-experiment/>.

²⁹ Clare Leschin-Hoar, "It's Not a Fairytale: Seattle to Build Nation's First Food Forest," *Takepart*, Last Modified February 21st, 2012, <http://www.takepart.com/article/2012/02/21/its-not-fairytale-seattle-build-nations-first-food-forest>.

³⁰ Northwest Indian College Traditional Plants and Foods Program, "Tribal Gardens: Tribal Community Gardens in Western Washington," Accessed September 5th 2014. <http://nwicplantsandfoods.com/tribal-gardens>

³¹ Friends of Bernie Whitebear Daybreak Star Garden, "About Us," Accessed September 5th 2014.

<http://daybreakgarden.org/about-us/>.

³²

³³ Northwest Indian College Traditional Plants and Foods Program, "Tribal Gardens: Tribal Community Gardens in Western Washington," Accessed September 5th 2014. <http://nwicplantsandfoods.com/tribal-gardens>.

Food Forest itself. Although this suggests a larger social structure that reinforces indigenous invisibility in mainstream society and the media, nonnative projects ultimately have the social visibility to influence how their projects are depicted, and can use this visibility to counter the underrepresentation of Native American projects in the media. This can be accomplished by crediting specific tribes when they have inspired certain techniques, or by submitting a correction to a media outlet when they sensationalize a project as being the ‘first.’

Invasive and Naturalized Plants and People

In the thick understory of the SCPFF, plants native to England can be found alongside those native to the Puget Sound region. Some of these plants are recognized as natural and relatively harmonious features of the environment, while others dominate niches, choking out the native flora in the process. This struggle perhaps best illustrates the echoes of the SCPFF’s social history in was a struggle that is still happening among the site’s botanical constituents every day. If plants can be seen as extensions of people, then who are these plants connected to, and what did they mean to the people who brought them?

In an effort to populate the Pacific Northwest with American citizens, the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 gave settlers free land and liberal access to materials for cabin building in exchange for living in the region for at least four years.³⁴ This westward migration of people caused both the physical and social landscapes to undergo considerable changes that persist in the region’s local ecology to this day.³⁵

³⁴ Jacqueline B. Williams. *The Way We Ate: Pacific Northwest Cooking, 1843-1900*. Pullman: WSU Press (1996). 1.

³⁵ The Donation Land Claim was created under the false assumption that Pacific Northwestern land was vacant, and this assumption is an indicator of the invisibility Native American people suffered as the United States expanded and established itself.

Alice Morse Earle (1851-1911), a historian of early American domestic life, wrote volumes on colonial food, gardens, dress, and genealogy in a populist format.³⁶ As she remarked in her book *Old Time Gardens*, colonial women “were not accustomed to the thought of emigration, as are European folk to-day; they had no friends to greet them in the new land; they were to encounter wild animals and wild men...they left everything, and took nothing of comfort but their Bibles and their flower seeds.”³⁷ The “wild men” to which Earle refers are presumably the Native American men encountered by colonial Americans on the East Coast. Calling them ‘wild’ may provide an insight into the way in which Earle’s contemporaries living on the West Coast also might have regarded Native Americans: not as human beings with which they could potentially connect, but as parts of the landscape to be feared, a landscape in which one feels isolated and alone, as if no other humans existed there at all. This idea of vacancy echoes from the verbiage of the Donation Land Act itself, which sees the land as a blank canvas for civilization, even though civilization did already exist.

Earle wrote this in 1901 while living on the East Coast of America, conducting research through the Long Island Historical Society.³⁸ Though she was primarily referring to the original settlers of the Eastern colonies, it is interesting to note that people of European descent had very recently faced parallel fears and dangers as they traveled westward, e.g. Washington Territory was only granted statehood twelve years before these words were written.³⁹ Indeed, just as colonial Americans faced uncertainty and danger as they left behind everything dear and

³⁶Susan Reynolds Williams. “Alice Morse Earle and the Domestic History of Early America: the Biography of an Influential Progressive Era scholar of colonial American History.” *University of Massachusetts Press*. Accessed 8/01/2014. <https://www.umass.edu/umpress/title/alice-morse-earle-and-domestic-history-early-america>

³⁷ Alice Morse Earle. *Old Time Gardens*. New York: The Macmillan Company (1901). 4.

³⁸ Susan Reynolds Williams. “Alice Morse Earle and the Domestic History of Early America: the Biography of an Influential Progressive Era scholar of colonial American History.” *University of Massachusetts Press*. Accessed 8/01/2014.

³⁹ Jacqueline B. Williams. *The Way We Ate: Pacific Northwest Cooking, 1843-1900*. Pullman: WSU Press (1996). 177.

familiar, so did the following generations of settlers on the frontier. The former crossed an ocean, the latter crossed the continent.

In this way, nonnative plants continued to hold a close and emotional place to their nonnative caretakers as powerful symbols: their ability to cultivate a sense of home in a completely new environment was transformative. Earle continued, “when I see one of the old English flowers, grown of those days, blooming now in my garden, from the unbroken chain of blossom to seed of nearly three centuries, I thank the flower for all that its forbears did to comfort my forebears, and I cherish it with added tenderness.”⁴⁰ One could imagine that if Earle herself had moved across the country to settle in Washington Territory during her lifetime, she would have taken solace in the lineage the English flowers represented to her, in perhaps an even more immediate and less reflective way. For women who did move to the Pacific Northwest, their gardens offered not only the psychological and emotional comfort Earle identified, but also a sense of order in a world that felt chaotic and uncertain.⁴¹

Plants also served as tangible reminders of family. Though more seeds and saplings became commercially available in the Pacific Northwest during the latter half of the 19th century, settlers still preferred to continue the tradition of planting heirloom seeds that had been cultivated in their own families.⁴² The following anecdote about a woman planting heirloom corn she had brought with her to Washington Territory illustrates the fierce loyalty many settlers felt towards family-cultivated seeds:

“She had just a half cupful of seed corn which she had brought with her. This was very precious as nowhere could any be obtained out here. While she was digging the ground

⁴⁰ Alice Morse Earle. *Old Time Gardens*. New York: The Macmillan Company (1901). 4.

⁴¹ Arnold R. Alanen. “Immigrant Gardens on a Mining Frontier.” *The Meaning of Gardens* eds. Mark Francis and Randolph T. Hester, Jr. Cambridge: MIT Press (1990). 160.

⁴² Jacqueline B. Williams. *The Way We Ate: Pacific Northwest Cooking, 1843-1900*. Pullman: WSU Press (1996). 103.

her old rooster sneaked up behind her and gobbled up the corn. When she saw what had happened, without any hesitation, she killed the rooster, recovered the corn from his crop and planted her garden.”⁴³

This juxtaposition of the fierce alongside the domestic shows the extremes that defined daily life for frontier women every day, as well as how valuable seeds could be to women who struggled to hold on to their identity amid ambiguity and instability.

Not all plants that made it to the Americas were brought deliberately, even if their presence was useful and offered an aesthetic reminder of home. Perhaps no plant better embodies this than plantain. In the 18th century, naturalist Peter Kalm reported that Native Americans had dubbed plantain “the Englishman’s foot” when they noticed the plant springing up for the first time seemingly in the footsteps following anywhere Englishmen had been.⁴⁴ According to Alice Morse Earle, plantain was considered as much a weed in England as it was in the United States, and likely was a stowaway in the soil that was supporting other, more desirable plants on the Mayflower.⁴⁵ Though she characterizes plantain as a garden pest that will grow whether or not it is wanted, Earle waxes sentimental as she includes plantain when listing plants to include in an authentic English medicinal herb garden, a tradition she sadly notes was waning in popularity.⁴⁶ American Studies historian Alfred Crosby reports that despite its status as a weed, plantain was historically important to the English, as it was “one of the nine sacred herbs of the Anglo-

⁴³ Jacqueline B. Williams. *The Way We Ate: Pacific Northwest Cooking, 1843-1900*. Pullman: WSU Press (1996). 103.

⁴⁴ Peter Kalm. *The America of 1750: Peter Kalm’s Travels Into North America, The English Version of 1770*. Barre: Imprint Publishers, 1976. 66.

⁴⁵ Alice Morse Earle. *Old Time Gardens*. New York: The Macmillan Company (1901) 4.

⁴⁶ Alice Morse Earle. *Old Time Gardens*. New York: The Macmillan Company (1901) 111.

Saxons,” and “Chaucer and Shakespeare cited its medicinal qualities.”⁴⁷ Plantain can still be found abundantly dotting the trails and clearings in and around the SCPFF site.

Alice Morse Earle also mentions nettles in her account of weeds that unintentionally made their way cross the ocean to the New World. “Mullein and nettle, henbane and wormwood, all are English emigrants,” she writes.⁴⁸ Though these plants are native to Europe, they were not endemic until they reached North American soil. This is largely because such weeds in England were ‘checked’ by both their natural surroundings and the slowness of the country’s agricultural development that had accrued over the course of two millennia, which allowed landscapes to adapt to changes. Once colonists began clearing large swathes of land at once for monoculture crops, both native and English weeds aggressively filled the newly created voids.⁴⁹

As with plantain, nettles were also considered to be useful and important despite their unwanted ubiquity. In seventeenth century England, villagers reportedly used the thick fibers that run through the stalks of nettles to make thread.⁵⁰ In 1862, a reference to nettles was made indicating their use by women to make a “blood purifying tea.”⁵¹ Apparently, there are two different species of stinging nettles, and while one was brought to the United States from England, the other is a native species that has its own historical lineage.⁵²

⁴⁷ Alfred Crosby. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1986) 169.

⁴⁸ Alice Morse Earle. *Home Life in Colonial Days*. Stockbridge: The Berkshire Traveller Press (1898) 436.

⁴⁹ James E. McWilliams. “Worshipping Weeds: The Parable of the Tares, The Rhetoric of Ecology, and the Origins of Agrarian Exceptionalism in Early America.” *Environmental History*, Vol 16 (2011). 290-311. doi:10.1093/envhis/emr034. 295.

⁵⁰ R.E. Prothero, “Agriculture and Gardening,” 349-355, in *Shakespeare’s England: An Account of the Life & Manners of His Age*, edited by Sir Sidney Lee, Oxford: Clarendon Press (1917).

⁵¹ James H. Winter. *Rash Assault: Sustaining the Victorian Environment*. Berkeley: University of California Press (1999).205.

⁵² Jennifer H. Carey “*Urtica dioica*. In: Fire Effects Information System.” *U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Fire Science Laboratory*. Last modified September 9th, 2014. <http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/>.

Crosby makes an interesting argument regarding weeds and colonization in his 1986 book *Ecological Imperialism*, using plantain as his illustrative example. Plantain is found on every continent worldwide, with the exception of Antarctica, and is able to spread aggressively. It was brought by accident to the Americas, and people (myself included) have wondered why no “invasive” weeds have been inadvertently brought from the Americas back to Europe, when clearly there was a reciprocal exchange of cultivated plants between the two continents.⁵³ The answer lies in what Crosby believes is the ecological purpose of plantain: that, as a weed, it functions as “the Red Cross of the plant world” in that they “deal with ecological emergencies.”⁵⁴ Imperialism disturbed habitats, and weeds, or “colonizing plants,” as Crosby calls them, thrive in disturbed environments. In short, “weeds thrive on radical change, not stability,” and therefore did quite well as colonial America pushed across the continent. Crosby likens weeds like plantain to skin transplants, sprouting over invaded land in order to “save newly bared topsoil from the water and wind erosion and from baking in the sun.” “Europeans who cursed their colonizing plants,” Crosby concludes, “were wretched ingrates.”⁵⁵ The plants that migrated with the early American settlers helped them cultivate emotional resilience, but they also demonstrated the resilience of nature. Even species that are today considered invasive are still fulfilling an important ecological job amid the aftermath of development.

⁵³ Alfred Crosby. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1986) 166.

⁵⁴ Alfred Crosby. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1986) 169.

⁵⁵ Alfred Crosby. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1986) 170.

The Swan Creek Park Food Forest and the Ukrainian Diaspora

When the SCPFF administered the land use survey to different ethnic groups on December 6th, 2013, it was in an effort to gather input from the different groups so that their requests could be implemented into the overall design. As we struggle with the aftermath of this continent's very first waves of immigration, we have seen the ways in which people and plants can end up over and underrepresented, marginalized, and invaded. As the United States continues to incorporate waves of diasporas into the fabric of American society, we have a chance to create a better framework that does not rely on assimilation, maintaining the cultural sovereignty of multiple identities. This means that, when creating a project such as the SCPFF, it is important to understand the multiple layers of context that diasporas bring with them to this country. On an ecological level, we can research the native flora and fauna and their interactions, seeking to connect these species to analogous native species wherever possible. On a social level, it is also critical to research the ways in which people were and are connected to land both cultivated and wild in their home countries, as well as what it means to have a sense of place in each respective nation.

This sense of place came through in the form of soil for the Ukrainian diaspora, which was the first group on the survey administered on December 6th, 2013. Known as the "Breadbasket of Europe," the land of Ukraine is incredibly productive. During the Soviet era, Ukraine was (after Russia) the most important economic producer, providing more than 25% of

the agricultural output for the entire Soviet Union as a whole.⁵⁶ Soil that is dark with rich fertility has provided the basis for a Ukrainian national identity that is based on agriculture and homesteading, and in that respect, it was the nation's rural farmers who fed the entire Soviet Union.

The SCPFF is adjacent to one of Tacoma's most socially diverse community gardens, many of whom are from post-Soviet countries such as Ukraine. Community gardens in the United States are probably the most similar entity we have to the post-Soviet concept of a *dacha*, or a "plot of land typically with some living accommodation on it away from the owner's main residence."⁵⁷ In Ukraine, the *dacha* offers the estimated 20 percent of people who live on incomes that are below the minimum for subsistence a way to supplement what they are able to afford in a relatively new market economy with foods they grow or barter.⁵⁸ The *dacha* is also a social nexus for Ukrainians, as well as a welcome summer escape from increasingly cramped and crowded urban living conditions. It offers space for psychological release, as well as a practical means of subsistence and coping during turbulent times. An important fixture of Ukrainian culture that predates the Soviet era but has also survived it, *dachas* have become "homes in their own right."⁵⁹ The request of benches for sitting⁶⁰ from the group might indicate that they would not like to simply pass through the forest, but would rather enjoy being there, beyond the time it would take to forage.

⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Europe: Ukraine," The World Factbook, Last Modified June 23rd 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html>.

⁵⁷ John Round, Colin Williams and Peter Rodgers. "The Role of Domestic Food Production in Everyday Life in Post-Soviet Ukraine." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 100, No. 5 (2010): 1198.

⁵⁸ "The Role of Domestic Food Production." 1199.

⁵⁹ Stephen Lovell. *Summerfolk: The History of the Dacha, 1710-2000*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, (2003): 207.

⁶⁰ See Appendix I for survey results.

It is important to note that although the practice of growing food on a *dacha* is beneficial in many ways, it is indeed “borne out of economic marginalization rather than a wish to disengage with formal structures.”⁶¹ Elderly Ukrainians, for example, have expressed a preference for a better living wage over having to supplement their diets with food from physical labor that is increasingly difficult for them. It would seem, then, that *dachas* are beloved, but slightly resented when they become obligatory supplements to conditions of poverty. Though Eastern Slavs in a post-Soviet world do feel pride that they have through the years cultivated such rich circumventions to adversity, some younger generations see *dachas* with stigma, interpreting them as a vestige of peasantry.⁶²

Still, it is widely believed among Ukrainians that exposure to nature offers numerous benefits, both physically and psychologically, and produce that is “homegrown” rather than purchased is widely regarded as nutritionally superior.⁶³ On the periphery of *dachas* are uncultivated and generally “wilder” swathes of common land, which serve to further a *dacha* cultivator’s yield over all. Such items as berries and wild mushrooms are picked, then preserved for use over the winter.⁶⁴ Indicating this mind toward the deprivations of winter is the fact that many Ukrainian recipes that include mushrooms specifically call for mushrooms that have been pickled or dried.⁶⁵ This indicates that while the community garden in Swan Creek Park is analogous to a *dacha*, the SCPFF is analogous to the wild common land that is frequently foraged around *dachas*.

Wild Mushrooms in Ukraine: from Toxic Waste to Pierogies

⁶¹ “The Role of Domestic Food Production.” 1202.

⁶² Stephen Lovell. *Summerfolk: The History of the Dacha, 1710-2000*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, (2003): 206.

⁶³ “The Role of Domestic Food Production.” 1199.

⁶⁴ “The Role of Domestic Food Production.” 1201.

⁶⁵ Helen Papashvily and George Papashvily. *Russian Cooking*. New York: Time-Life Books (1969).

Wild mushrooms hold such a treasured place in Ukrainian culture, a monument built for the purpose of honoring Manitoba's Ukrainian community was erected in 1993 featuring three mushrooms that are emblematic of the waves of the mushroom season. Explaining why mushrooms were chosen as a subject, the Rural Municipality of Armstrong website explains that "mushrooms conjure up many happy memories of picking, cooking, eating; of family and friends; and somehow always Babas (Ukrainian for Grandmother) in the background comforting, sheltering, nourishing as in childhood. People of all ages enjoy scouring the Meleb woods for mushrooms."⁶⁶ The survey we conducted with Swan Creek Park's own Ukrainian population yielded simply the word "mushrooms," since the group agreed that they were important to include, but did not feel they could explain or translate specific kinds in further detail. Indeed, mushroom hunting can be an informal cultural practice. Though in the United States we are starting to see cross-pollination between mycologists and amateur mycophagists, this connection does not seem to exist to the same degree in Eastern Slavic culture, though both groups are independently present.

My hope was to find instances in Ukrainian cooking and culture of the use of specific mushrooms whose identities could be keyed down to the species level, but there does not yet seem to be a scholarly source that does this. I therefore began, strangely enough, with Chernobyl, because many mushrooms are known hyperaccumulators of radionuclides, and have thus been used in efforts to cleanse the Exclusion Zone and its surrounding areas of toxic radiation in a process called "mycoremediation."⁶⁷ Because mushrooms used to mycoremediate land should be obtained and disposed of as a biohazard for several successive fruitings, scientists have been

⁶⁶Rural Municipality of Armstrong. "Destinations: Maleb Park Cumming Mushroom Statues." Accessed July 15th, 2014. http://rmofarmstrong.com/main.asp?fxoid=FXMenu,2&cat_ID=2&sub_ID=29.

⁶⁷Paul Stamets. *Mycelium Running: How Mushrooms Can Help Save the World*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press: 2005. 99-105.

experimenting with identifying and avoiding the use of mushrooms that are edible and popular in the Ukrainian practice of foraging. Instead, they have been using different species from the same genus that also hyperaccumulate radioactive elements, but are considered inedible, unpalatable, or even independently toxic by the Ukrainian public.⁶⁸ In fact, scientists wishing to use these hyperaccumulators as long term bioindicators of radiocaesium and strontium in the soil and leaf matter of forests are advised to use inedible species so as to factor out the likelihood that regular mushroom hunting practices will disturb the monitored populations. Simply discouraging the practice of mushroom hunting in contaminated parts of Ukraine has been unsuccessful.⁶⁹ As the authors explain in their paper “Radioactive Contamination of Wild Growing Mushrooms in Ukraine,” it is extremely difficult for the public to stop partaking in what they consider to be “gifts of the forest,” even when studies find the mushrooms studied to be extremely toxic. The authors say that not only does information regarding the toxicity of wild mushrooms and berries have limited reception both due to meager distribution and fatigue from incessantly negative news, but some rural Ukrainians rely almost entirely on the sale of foraged mushrooms as their livelihood.⁷⁰ Mushroom foraging is thus embedded into Ukrainian culture on multiple levels, ranging from the gastronomic to the economic. The highly regarded edible (and also

⁶⁸ Grodzinskaya, Anna A., Syrchin, Sergei A., Kuchma, Nikolai D., and Bilay, Victor T. “Radioactive Contamination of Ukrainian Wild Growing Mushrooms.” *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Mushroom Biology and Mushroom Products (ICMBMP7)*. World Society for Mushroom Biology and Mushroom Products, 2011. <http://wsmbmp.org/proceedings/7th%20international%20conference/1/ICMBMP7-Oral-6-4-%20Grodzinskaya.pdf>.

⁶⁹ See Appendix II for more information on living and foraging in Chernobyl’s Exclusion Zone.

⁷⁰ Grodzinskaya, Anna A., Syrchin, Sergei A., Kuchma, Nikolai D., and Bilay, Victor T. “Radioactive Contamination of Ukrainian Wild Growing Mushrooms.” *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Mushroom Biology and Mushroom Products (ICMBMP7)*. World Society for Mushroom Biology and Mushroom Products, 2011. <http://wsmbmp.org/proceedings/7th%20international%20conference/1/ICMBMP7-Oral-6-4-%20Grodzinskaya.pdf> 562.

hyperaccumulating) species listed here are *Boletus edulis* (Porcini), *Lentinula edodes* (Shiitake), and *Pleurotus ostreatus* (Oyster Mushrooms).⁷¹

Ukrainian Translations for Commonly Foraged Mushrooms

Welcome to Ukraine Magazine contributor Mariya Kotsyshyna lists “*bily, shushurebky, shchitky, huby, kozari, lysychky, holubinky, ryzhky*, (and) *pidpenky*” as popular mushrooms among the Hutsul people, a semi-nomadic ethnic minority found in the Ukrainian steppes. There is considerable overlap in Ukrainian and Hutsul cuisine, especially regarding the enthusiastic consumption of mushrooms. Referring to the mushrooms named above, Kotsyshyna states that “it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to find corresponding names for these mushrooms in the English language.”⁷² This difficulty is indeed what inspired me to undertake this very project, and I am happy to report that I was able to cross reference at least some of the above in order to find names for them in English, as well as scientific identifications.

Pidpenky (підпеньки)

Honey Mushroom (*Amillaria mellea*)

One would be ill-advised to introduce honey mushrooms into a food forest, as this genus is a pretty voracious tree parasite. In fact, the close relative *Amillaria ostoyae* (also referred to as the “honey mushroom”) is known as the world’s largest living organism, and has covered 2,385

⁷¹ Grodzinskaya, Anna A., Syrchin, Sergei A., Kuchma, Nikolai D., and Bilay, Victor T. “Radioactive Contamination of Ukrainian Wild Growing Mushrooms.” *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Mushroom Biology and Mushroom Products (ICMBMP7)*. World Society for Mushroom Biology and Mushroom Products, 2011. <http://wsmbmp.org/proceedings/7th%20international%20conference/1/ICMBMP7-Oral-6-4-%20Grodzinskaya.pdf> 566.

⁷² Mariya Kotsyshyna. “Dishes of Hutsul Cuisine.” *Welcome to Ukraine*. <http://www.wumag.kiev.ua/index2.php?param=pgs20052/154>

acres of Oregon forest, weighing up to an estimated 35,000 tons.⁷³ There is a possibility that honey mushrooms are in the Swan Creek Food Forest, as they fruit during the fall and the first set of biodiversity data from Peter Hodum's Conservation Biology class was taken in the spring.

During the course of my research, I noticed that many recipes feature "pidpenky" in the title, but call for store bought mushrooms in the recipe,⁷⁴ or even for any unspecified dried mushroom.⁷⁵ This lack of specificity is likely due to the belief outlined by both Kotsyshyna above, that it would be difficult or nearly impossible to successfully translate such heirloom knowledge, though many mycologists today actively practice mycophagy, and are therefore filling in this missing information. *Hunt, Gather, Cook* author Hank Shaw reports that honey mushrooms are generally not well-liked among North American mycologists, probably owing to their mucilaginous properties when cooked.⁷⁶ This texture, however, does well in Ukrainian preparations that use them as a filling, or in sauces and gravies.

While Shaw and even the Wikipedia page for *Amillaria* claim that the mushrooms are used to make Ukrainian pierogies, I could not find any Ukrainian sources that corroborated, even when accounting for the fact that the Ukrainian word for "pierogi" is "pyrohy." I did find many recipes for honey mushroom gravy, however, and it is tradition to serve the gravy as one of the twelve ritualistic dishes for the Ukrainian Orthodox Christmas Eve.⁷⁷ Finally, I found a

⁷³ Craig L. Schmitt and Michael L. Tatum. "The Malheur National Forest Location of the World's Largest Living Organism [The Humongous Fungus]." *United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service*. 2008. http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fsbdev3_033146.pdf

⁷⁴ Grant Senio-Turka. "Pidpenky Mushrooms With Gravy." *Family Cookbook Project*. 04/07/2012. <http://www.familycookbookproject.com/recipe/2813235/pidpenky-mushrooms-with-gravy.html>.

⁷⁵ "Pidpenky With Gravy Recipe." *Cooking With Our Next Generation Cookbook, Family Cookbook Project*. 05/03/2014. <http://www.familycookbookproject.com/recipe/3173033/pidpenky-with-gravy.html>.

⁷⁶ Hank Shaw. "Honey Mushrooms Caution and Pierogi." *Hunter, Angler, Gardener, Cook*. 12/27/2010. <http://honest-food.net/2010/12/27/honey-mushrooms-caution-and-pierogi/>.

⁷⁷ "Customs and Traditions." St. Luke the Evangelist Orthodox Church. <http://www.stlukeorthodox.com/html/parishinfo/customs.cfm>

reference to the use of chopped mushrooms in *varenyky*, a type of dumpling that is very similar to *pirohy*, though the authors do not specify what type of mushroom is used.⁷⁸

Ryzhky
 Milky Caps
 (*Lactarius deliciosus* and *Lactarius sagufluus*)

A search for “Ryzhky mushroom” yields one recipe on a blog entitled “Food Geeks,” in which the author claims that ryzhky mushrooms are “saffron milky caps” in English, also known as *Lactarius deliciosus* and *Lactarius sagufluus*.⁷⁹ Searches for Ukrainian recipes featuring “saffron milky caps” are more numerous, as are those using the search terms “*Lactarius deliciosus*” and “Ukraine.” It would be recommended to show a picture of *Lactarius deliciosus* and *Lactarius sagufluus* to the Ukrainian group at Salishan, asking them if any of the pictured mushrooms can be identified as “ryzhky.” If they are indeed the same, it is then recommended that if these mushrooms are harvested or at some point found on site, that this name appear in cyrillic alongside it.

The following are more translations I was able to find, but they need to be cross-referenced with pictures of each species in an interview with a Ukrainian forager before they are officially committed to signage:

Holubinky
*Russula sp.*⁸⁰

Lysychky

⁷⁸ Helen Papashvily and George Papashvily. *Russian Cooking*. New York: Time-Life Books (1969). 129.

⁷⁹ Food Geeks, “Saffron Milky Cap Fritters/Ryzhky Khriaschi v Tisti.” Accessed August 7th 2014, <http://www.foodgeeks.com/recipes/saffron-milky-cap-fritters-ryzhky-khriashchi-v-tisti-17891>

⁸⁰ Myko-Shop, “Holubynky (Russulae),” Accessed August 7th 2014, <http://www.myko-shop.de/Holubinky-Russula/en>.

Chantrelles⁸¹

Cantharellus cibarius, *Cantharellus* spp.

Kozari

Boletus spp.⁸²

Smorzhi

Morel

Morchella spp.⁸³

Recommendations:

The above mushroom names were found by finding key words in recipes, blog posts, and other informal internet forums. I then used those names in a Google image search, and was at times able to identify the species from there. For species that showed image results that were unclear, I searched Ukrainian scientific literature, and was actually able to find that many of the supposedly informal common names are actually used in a scientific context in Ukraine, as well. *Holubynky*, or *Russulae*, is an example of this. The final step in this process of cross-referencing is presenting a picture of a specimen that has been scientifically identified down to the species level of taxonomy in a survey, and asking for the community member to name it in its original language. Finally, the survey should ask whether or not the species is important to them, how they like to use it, and if they would like to see it cultivated in the SCPFF.

Mushrooms as a Cultural Intersection at the SCPFF

⁸¹ Olga Drozd, “Baked Chantrelles - Zapikani Lysychky,” Accessed August 7th, 2014, <http://www.ukrainianclassickitchen.ca/index.php?topic=5804.0>.

⁸²Rural Municipality of Armstrong. “Destinations: Maleb Park Cumming Mushroom Statues.” Accessed July 15th, 2014. http://rmofarmstrong.com/main.asp?fxoid=FXMenu,2&cat_ID=2&sub_ID=29.

⁸³Rural Municipality of Armstrong. “Destinations: Maleb Park Cumming Mushroom Statues.” Accessed July 15th, 2014. http://rmofarmstrong.com/main.asp?fxoid=FXMenu,2&cat_ID=2&sub_ID=29.

Mushrooms have proven to be an extremely transcultural and socially connective component of the SCPFF design. In February, 2014, Ja Schindler of the grassroots organization Fungi for the People led a community outdoor mushroom cultivation workshop, where the initial mycological layer was installed. Attendees put into various logs Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) and Lion's Mane (*Hericium erinaceus*) mycelium, as well as buried Garden Giant (*Stropharia rugosoannulata*) and Black Morel (*Morchella elata*) mycelium. Since mushroom hunting attracts many Pacific Northwesterners to the woods, the cultivation of charismatic mushroom species such as morels (*Morchella sp.*) at the SCPFF was a deliberate effort to draw people in. Species such as reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) were cultivated to appeal to Salishan's Asian communities, as they are an important ingredients in traditional medicine. After putting down the initial mycological layer of the forest, the SCPFF is now seeking to add even more species that are sought after by those in the Salishan community, such as those mentioned in the Ukrainian section of this paper. As previously mentioned, three of the four groups present for the multilingual survey in 2013 wrote "mushrooms" on their forms, though they did not offer further specifications.

Mushrooms are both beloved and feared by people around the globe. It is common among ethnomycologists to divide the cultures of the world into two categories: mycophillic, or those who consume and use fungi enthusiastically, and mycophobic, or those who avoid it, or at the very least use it externally for art, dyes, or material.⁸⁴ Mushrooms therefore offer a window into the histories and cultural practices of a people, and are thus make up a powerful connective layer of the SCPFF's design.

⁸⁴ George Wong, "Wild Edible Mushrooms," University of Hawaii, Accessed September 22nd 2014, <http://www.botany.hawaii.edu/faculty/wong/BOT135/Lect17a.htm>.

Mycophobia is a feature of the mainstream culture of the United States, and because of this general fear, the SCPFF has had to focus more on introducing mycological species to the public through educational classes and workshops than on simply providing edible and medicinal species through cultivation. This mycophobia has its roots in the colonial and frontier American attitudes toward fungi, which is still exerting an influence on mainstream American culture. I found very few frontier or colonial American recipes that even mentioned mushrooms, and those that did mentioned no specific mushrooms by name.⁸⁵

Interestingly, there are several cultural reasons for the paucity of mushrooms in early frontier American cooking prior to the 19th century. First, cooking at this time was heavily influenced by English gastronomy, and thus relegated mushrooms to vinegared sauces and “catchups.” This method of preparation was due to the belief that vinegar and salt could neutralize toxic components within the mushrooms.⁸⁶ Though she doesn’t mention it by name, author Eliza Leslie writes of a mushroom that can most likely be identified as *Agaricus campestris* in her popular 1837 cookbook *Directions for Cookery*.⁸⁷ Also known as the “field mushroom,” *Agaricus campestris* shares its genus with the white button mushroom (*Agaricus bisporus*) most commonly found in grocery stores today. This mushroom is fairly easy to identify, and as the common name suggests, it tends to grow out in open fields and under the sun. Culinary historian Cathy Kaufman in her paper “Taming of the Shroom” posits that this characteristic may have made *Agaricus campestris* seem more “pure” and worthy of consumption in a puritanical sense. In fact, most edible mushrooms require moist, dark

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Trudy Eden. *Cooking in America, 1590-1840*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Company (2006).

⁸⁶ Kathy Kaufman. “The Taming of the Shroom.” *Wild Food: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, 2004*. Edited by Richard Hosking. Oxford: Prospect Books (2006). 159.

⁸⁷ Eliza Leslie. *Directions for Cookery; Being a System of the Art, in its Various Branches*. Philadelphia: E.L. Carey & A. Hart (1837) 201. <https://ia600306.us.archive.org/32/items/directionsforcoo00lesl/directionsforcoo00lesl.pdf>.

conditions to fruit, and were therefore associated with black magic, witchcraft, and toads in early America,⁸⁸ as evidenced by Leslie's mistaken claim that mushrooms found in darkness should be avoided because they are "all poisonous."⁸⁹ Kaufman posits that this association could be behind Leslie's distaste for the general concept of fungi, which she does not consider to be "wholesome."⁹⁰ Also an author of books on etiquette, Leslie calls the taste for mushrooms "an acquired one," advising that it is "best not to acquire it."⁹¹

By 1890, however, the United States Department of Agriculture took notice of what a boon of a food source wild mushrooms could be, and therefore began publishing and distributing a manual outlining how to identify and prepare twelve different commonly found edible mushrooms.⁹² The manual begins by stating that the Department of Agriculture had received numerous reports from all across the Union of large amounts of edible mushrooms found growing in most every zone, but they go to waste due to people's general fear of being poisoned.⁹³ It then goes on to outline the nutrition content of mushrooms, emphasizing protein. Finally, the manual devotes most of the Introduction to giving an overview of how enthusiastically other cultures consume mushrooms, beginning with the French and covering Japan, China, New Zealand, Italy, Russia, Germany, and even the aboriginal Maori.⁹⁴ The overall message of the pamphlet seems to be that mushrooms are sophisticated, healthful, and abundant, and to not take advantage of this resource would be wasteful.

⁸⁸ Cathy Kaufman. "The Taming of the Shroom." *Wild Food: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, 2004*. Edited by Richard Hosking. Oxford: Prospect Books (2006). 156..

⁸⁹ Eliza Leslie. *Directions for Cookery; Being a System of the Art, in its Various Branches*. Philadelphia: E.L. Carey & A. Hart (1837) 201. <https://ia600306.us.archive.org/32/items/directionsforcoo00lesl/directionsforcoo00lesl.pdf>.

⁹⁰ Cathy Kaufman. "The Taming of the Shroom." *Wild Food: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, 2004*. Edited by Richard Hosking. Oxford: Prospect Books (2006). 160.

⁹¹ Eliza Leslie. *Miss Leslie's New Cookery Book*. Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson (1857). 322.

⁹² Thomas Taylor, MD. *Twelve Edible Mushrooms of the United States, Illustrated With Twelve Colored Types: How to Select and Prepare for the Table*. Washington: US Department of Agriculture Division of Microscopy (1890).

⁹³ Thomas Taylor, MD. *Twelve Edible Mushrooms of the United States, Illustrated With Twelve Colored Types: How to Select and Prepare for the Table*. Washington: US Department of Agriculture Division of Microscopy (1890). 5.

⁹⁴ Thomas Taylor, MD. *Twelve Edible Mushrooms of the United States, Illustrated With Twelve Colored Types: How to Select and Prepare for the Table*. Washington: US Department of Agriculture Division of Microscopy (1890). 5-8.

Today, there is a resurgence of this call for the dismantling of the United States public's general fear of all mushrooms that are not the common grocery store variety. As the USDA's 1890 pamphlet emphasized, some of the very same mushrooms that are indigenous to the United States are enthusiastically foraged and cultivated around the world. Now that the shape of United States' social landscape is becoming ever more international, mushrooms are becoming a cultural intersection. The 2013 survey at the SCPFF provides an example of this, as almost every ethnic group present mentioned mushrooms as something they regarded as an important feature of the forest.

Native American Mycology

Though the Puget Sound area is mycologically rich, featuring many of the same species enjoyed by mycophilic cultures worldwide, most Native Americans tribes are historically mycophobic.⁹⁵ Erna Gunther's *Ethnobotany of Western Washington* only lists "bracket fungus" as a species used by the Native Americans of the Puget Sound region, defining it as "Fomes sp.," and claiming that "only the Makah make real use of this fungus" as a medicine, since they powder it and use it as a "body deodorant."⁹⁶ None of the uses listed are for food, though the Chehalis and the Snohomish reportedly used the brackets as targets when they practiced archery. The Cowlitz are said to have used it as a surface for drawing pictures,⁹⁷ though I suspect somewhere in the translation *Fomes sp.* was mistaken for *Ganoderma applanatum*, a similarly shaped bracket fungus commonly called the "Artist's Conk" due to the fact that the white

⁹⁵ George Wong, "Wild Edible Mushrooms," University of Hawaii, Accessed August 10th 2014, <http://www.botany.hawaii.edu/faculty/wong/BOT135/Lect17a.htm>.

⁹⁶ Erna Gunther. *Ethnobotany of Western Washington: The Knowledge and Use of Indigenous Plants by Native Americans*. Seattle: University of Washington Press (1945) 50.

⁹⁷ Erna Gunther. *Ethnobotany of Western Washington: The Knowledge and Use of Indigenous Plants by Native Americans*. Seattle: University of Washington Press (1945) 50.

underside will stain dark brown when pressed, allowing one to make permanent designs on collected specimens. The resulting pictures look like ink on paper.⁹⁸ Gunther confirms my suspicion as she qualifies the section on miscellanea that includes fungi, saying that many of the species listed are not “well identified.”⁹⁹

My attention was then drawn to the Pomo and Kashaya tribes of California’s Sonoma Coast, because they were the only tribes listed as having any used for edible mushrooms in Daniel Moerman’s ethnobotanical dictionary *Native American Food Plants*.¹⁰⁰ I also noticed that these tribes report using berries as a sauce for dumplings or mashed with bread.¹⁰¹ The presence of bread, dumplings, and mushrooms sounded like a Slavic cultural influence to me, and upon further investigation, I found that the Kashaya’s first contact with the international community was with Russian explorers, who set up Fort Ross and thereby interacted with the tribe for three generations, during which they intermarried and exchanged culture with Russians.¹⁰² This could be the reason for the presence of mycophilia in Pomo and Kashaya cuisine, when almost every tribe around them was mycophobic.

This points to the fact that though many studies in Native American ethnobotany emphasize the historical use of plants before European contact, Native American culture has grown, adapted, and shifted alongside the numerous influences surrounding them. As the United States of America developed the land, a legacy of pollution was left behind as a byproduct of natural resource acquisition. More recently, the Squaxin Island Tribe of south Puget Sound

⁹⁸ Micheal Kuo, “Ganoderma applanatum,” Mushroom Expert, Accessed August 28th, 2014, http://www.mushroomexpert.com/ganoderma_applanatum.html.

⁹⁹ Erna Gunther. *Ethnobotany of Western Washington: The Knowledge and Use of Indigenous Plants by Native Americans*. Seattle: University of Washington Press (1945) 50.

¹⁰⁰ Daniel E. Moerman. *Native American Food Plants: An Ethnobotanical Dictionary*. Portland: Timber Press (2010).

¹⁰¹ Daniel E. Moerman. *Native American Food Plants: An Ethnobotanical Dictionary*. Portland: Timber Press (2010) 231.

¹⁰² Fort Ross Conservancy, “Kashaya People,” Accessed September 1st 2014, <http://www.fortross.org/kashaya.htm>.

joined with the Mason Conservation District and Paul Stamets of Fungi Perfecti to pilot a project using mycelium to filter pollution from the Puget Sound. This is in hopes of making the water healthier for salmon and shellfish populations, which are crucial sources of food and cultural identity for piscatory tribes of the Puget Sound area. A next step in the mycological design of the SCPFF may be the incorporation of mushrooms that can similarly work to restore the site's environmental health. This could be a point of intersection between the Puyallup Tribe and the SCPFF, and demonstrates one of the many ways in which science, traditional knowledge, and members of multiple cultural groups can connect through mycology.

Conclusion

Failing to see the Native American communities beyond their historical context is another way of erasing their identities. The SCPFF has made efforts to connect with the Puyallup Tribe, who has generally expressed support, but on the whole do not have the time or energy for involvement. Whether or not this is an endorsement of the SCPFF remains unclear, but it is an issue that needs to be clarified before the project proceeds. The SCPFF in its social position as a non-native project that has the local government's Pierce Conservation District's financial support has an obligation to learn about the communities they hope to work with, as well as the ways in which their own actions could be interpreted, even if they were carried out with good intentions. My hope for this paper is that it can serve to inform readers of the complexities at hand, and in doing so, inspire thoughtful questions that those involved in the SCPFF can ask community members, as well as each other. This paper is the beginning of a conversation, and the final authority on what is or is not okay in the development of this site rests on the communities it impacts. As I have demonstrated in this paper, sometimes the mere fact of who is impacted by a project is not immediately apparent, and a closer look is therefore warranted.

My final recommendation is that we repeat the survey, but instead of having all four groups convene at once, we should instead systematically go through the ethnic groups one at a time in order to increase acuity. I have modeled this process in this paper with the Ukrainian group, and suggest following up on this research with a series of in-person interviews. The new surveys could be based on pictures or even actual specimens whenever possible, and rather than have the interpreters translate into English, they should instead name the specimens in their own language, and this should be recorded and used for the purpose of creating multilingual signage. Wherever possible, we should also inspire conversation and listen for qualitative data in the form of emotions, desires, connections, and their implications. A better understanding of each culture and history will also result in better listening, and the ability to “read between the lines.”

Through my research, I began approaching an understanding of what an intimate experience it is to nurture a sense of place through cultivating and foraging plants and fungi. Increasingly, I am seeing that people who operate under a deep bioregional awareness are not simply connected to the land, they *are* the land. For those who have lived here for generations, the soil is quite literally rich with ancestral lineage. Those who have found a home more recently in this region converge to become a part of this lineage, and the landscape becomes all the more complex as new immigrants weave themselves and their own histories into the whole. Plants and fungi have demonstrated their capacities to both extend social struggles into the ecological landscape, and bring people together. Expanding our understanding of the layers of context and history in projects such as the SCPFF has the potential to help us avoid repeating earlier mistakes, as well as begin creating a new definition of globalization that recognizes multiple identities and honors traditional agrarian knowledge. As the SCPFF seeks to become a transcultural resource for food, medicine, connection, and ceremony, we have the opportunity to

learn a great deal from one another. Informed with the multiple histories, their tragedies, their celebrations, and most of all their numerous demonstrations of resilience in the face of adversity, I hope to continue this work, and begin interviewing the many people involved with this site to further refine our collective awareness.

Appendix I

Survey Results from Multicultural Meeting at Salishan on December 6th, 2013

Translators provided by the Community Health Education Foundation (CHEF) of Salishan

Ukrainian/American	Korean	Vietnamese	Cambodian	Korean
Figs	Garlic	mushroom	Asian Pear	Cherry
Gooseberry	Onion	herbs (mint, basil)	Persimmon	persimmon
blueberry	Mushroom	jam leaf?	Cherry	grapes
sour cherry	Salad	asian squash		chestnut tree
sweet cherry	Green vegetable	water chestnut		blueberry
rainier cherry	greenbeans	mustard green		basil
plums	cherry tree	cucumber		mushroom
apple (yellow delicious)	plum tree			apple

peach	strawberry			asian pear
pears	bamboo			fiddleheads
grapevines (green seedless and black grapes)	mint			sweet potato
Raspberry	tomato			
Lipa/linden	hot pepper			
currants				
mushrooms				
Benches, for sitting!				

In accordance with the requests from the Ukrainian group, currants, raspberries, gooseberries, and blueberries were among the first plants added to the site's original make up. These berries are fairly expensive at most grocery stores and farmer's markets, but the plants themselves require little work to keep up, and the berries they produce are both prolific and full of vitamins and are traditionally preserved for the winter months.¹⁰³

Appendix II

The Babushkas of Chernobyl

¹⁰³ John Round, Colin Williams and Peter Rodgers. "The Role of Domestic Food Production in Everyday Life in Post-Soviet Ukraine." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 100, No. 5 (2010): 1207.



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“Starvation is what scares me, not radiation.”

This is a quote from Hanna Zavorotnya, a woman residing in her family homestead that was deemed uninhabitable by the Ukraine government. A testament to the resilient human connection to a place-based sense of home, Zavorotnya is counted among the approximate 200 “babushkas of Chernobyl,” a sort of “sisterhood” of Ukrainian women who refused to evacuate the areas surrounding the 1986 nuclear disaster, the results of which are still emitting harmful levels of radiation to this day. It is the radiation that is taken up into the food chain that presents the largest risk, as many of the cases of thyroid cancer that have arisen in the years following the disaster can be attributed to milk that had accumulated radiocaesium and strontium through the cows’ diet of contaminated grass. After having lived through the forced famines of Stalin and

¹⁰⁴ Photo by Yuli Weeks of www.thebabushkasofchernobyl.com

Hitler, many Ukrainians were wary when officials came to dump milk tainted with an invisible contaminant. In fact, many of the villagers in the Exclusion Zone were temporarily relocated to the very land where people suffered and died during the Holodomor, which offered a grim reminder of the historical basis for what has become a culturally embedded suspicion of the motives of authorities. Zavarotnya herself was “nearly eaten” by her own family during the Holodomor, as cannibalism of one child “to save the rest” was not an uncommon measure taken to survive during that time.

Berries, wild mushrooms, and game remain highly contaminated, and it is not entirely understood why the women who remain in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone are able to regularly and heartily consume these foods with little or no ill-effects. Indeed, the effects of mass-radiation will take decades to fully reveal themselves, as they will likely be multi-generational. The overarching statement of these women’s lives, however, is that their homeland is their lifeblood, and gardening, hunting, and foraging are expressions of their culture and their will to survive, even in the face of terrors both visceral and unseen.

Appendix III

The Holodomor

In 1930, Joseph Stalin announced that farms in Ukraine would be collectivized as the Soviet Union sought to consolidate and redistribute agricultural production. Farmers were to

submit what they grew, getting 'paid' in produce and grain in exchange for each day of work they had completed. During the initial two years of the program, however, farmers received little compensation, if any. This was because most of the food produced was exported to cities or sold for the purpose of acquiring materials for construction set to further industrialization across the region, which Stalin saw as a major priority for the USSR. Ukrainian farmers thus began to focus on their own homesteads in lieu of meeting agricultural quotas, resulting in the "unorganized sabotage" of the Soviet Union's food supply, which was felt as famine in many parts of the Union in 1932.

In May 1933, a chilling message from Molotov and Stalin was sent to all heads of state, judicial workers, and administrative personnel across the Soviet Union. It read, "Now the task lies in meeting halfway the growing appeal of collective farms among independent laboring peasants and helping them join the collective farms, the only place where they can protect themselves from the dangers of impoverishment and famine." Though it is not explicitly stated, this message was a threat, as the dangers of impoverishment and famine from which the farmers were to protect themselves were engineered by the Kremlin itself in retaliation for the farmers' resistance to collectivization. Not only agricultural produce and grain, but all food was seized from the gardens and pantries of Ukrainian farmers, and the borders were closed to prevent the starving population from seeking food in other regions. Though the Kremlin to this day does not admit that the Holodomor was intentionally imposed, many governments place the Holodomor squarely in the realm of genocide, and indeed, between 7 and 8 million people died during that year alone.

Stinging Nettles (*Urtica dioica*)



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Holodomor survivor Nina Karpenko recounted with the BBC News an inside look at what it was like to live through a terror-famine. During the interview, she recreated a recipe that helped her and her family survive through the winter in central Ukraine's Matskivtsi: stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and other assorted weeds, wheat chaff, and cornmeal, mashed and formed into a loaf, then baked using wax shavings to prevent it from sticking to the pan. According to Karpenko, this loaf along with pieces of boiled horsehide allowed her family to survive until spring, when there were fresh edibles they could forage growing in the forest nearby.

Stinging nettles actually have a greater nutrient content than cultivated greens like spinach or even kale. Just one cup of the leaves contains or bests the USDA recommended daily allowances of minerals like iron and calcium, or vitamins like vitamin A and vitamin C. Interestingly, nettles are the primary ingredient listed in survivors' accounts of concentration camps during WWII, including Majdanek and Auschwitz.

The Psychology of a Post-Genocidal Society

Though famine is a common part of human history such that it is woven into yearly rituals and ways of relating to food (such as ritualistic fasting and seasonal periods of

¹⁰⁵ Photo credit: BBC News.

hypoactivity), unexpected and prolonged famine wears away at the edges of the society, weakening social bonds and at times even pitting kin against one another in the struggle for sustenance. Citing the Holodomor as a process of “dehumanization,” survivors recount theft as being “the sole means of resisting the state’s violence,” and Ukrainians were thus left with a “total lack of respect for the law.”

The trauma of the human-engineered famines in Ukraine was compounded by the fact that Ukrainians risked imprisonment or even execution if they spoke about what happened in the years that followed. Beyond that, the effects of the trauma were such that many survivors did not want to remember what happened, though some believe that Ukraine would be “incapable of further development until the entire truth of the famine was told.”

Unfortunately, the Holodomor was not the only deliberately imposed mass starvation in Ukraine. Between 1941 and 1945, the Nazi civilian occupation of Ukraine repeated the pattern of the Holodomor, putting up blockades to prevent citizens from leaving and confiscating everything edible from their homesteads. Ukrainians were further traumatized as this resulted in the deaths of millions more. Later, failed agricultural policies and the fall of the Soviet Union itself worked to solidify this trauma across generations.

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