Annotated Bibliography: SAP Workshops

Holton, Andrijka (Major: Liberal Studies, Emphasis: Sustainable Health & Nutrition)


Previous research on significant life experiences has lead to the study of obtaining a deep understanding of the nature and combination of influences with young people in regards to adult environmental beliefs and practices. Positive environmental attitudes, behavior, initiative, and involvement in multiple spheres of action were some of the required criteria that had to be met in order to be fitting for the study. From the mass study group, 12 young environmental leaders participated in semistructured, in-depth interview research to discover the past influences that they perceive have contributed to their current involvement in environmental action. It was found that parents, childhood experiences outdoors, friends, role models, teachers, and youth groups and conferences or gatherings made greatest impacts on the subjects. This may help us better understand what possible relations we can mimic to create environmental influences on our applicants.

The significance and influence of internal and external role-models, or "champions", in launching Farm-to-School (FTS) programs were analyzed on how they fostered civic engagement between a rural and an urban setting. Redressing poor food environments, improving student nutrition, health and well-being, and revitalizing rural community through support of local agriculture were the main goals of these FTS programs. This helped to illustrate the local connotation for such programs, even though specific concerns and emphases differed across the rural and urban cases. By concluding on the importance of frame bridging and frame extension as strategies for expanding the FTS movement, it will help us to understand the process in encapsulating sustainable values and practices for our target audience. We also see that by corresponding to the specific circumstances and possibilities of our social and geographic settings, we can better develop our proposal and plan to ensure a positive impact on the community.


This article shows the possible contacts between schools and their students, and the local farmers that supply to produce for their kitchens. The main concepts observed in this small study found that produce quality, food service staff, and the relationships with farmers helped create
influential links for students from the cafeteria and classroom to field trips. These connections have not only increased nutritional intake for students, but has left impressions of understanding the importance of sustainable practices and the countless benefits it provides, most importantly saving money and resources between schools and farmers.


Through grounded theory methodology, community development by school-based agriculture programs formed the study development for a substantive theory on the impacts of the social connections between a small group of community members and its students. Three non-metropolitan counties across a Midwestern state with school-based agriculture programs were analyzed with in-depth interviews and field observations, showing a positive social connections among community members and students. Through fundraising and student interaction, the program established positive reinvestment within participants and contributors. These resources then helped individual students in the agriculture program obtain necessary finances for higher education.

This study was conducted to examine the financial and ecological benefits to maintaining and supporting ‘local’ farms and farmers markets. An overview of these local food systems estimates market size and targets, describes the interactions with the producers and local consumers, and evaluates what the economic and health impacts of local food systems may imply. Impacts of local food systems on local economic development and better nutrition levels among consumers are still fixed in regards to recent research. Whether localization reduces energy use or greenhouse gas emissions, the dispersed information covering such implications are still inconclusive.


Urban agriculture has a growing relevance for struggling communities, and has become more prevalent globally in the Northeastern and upper-Midwestern United States, known as the “rust belt.” There is significant grassroots support for expanding the efforts in responding to food shortages and “political and economic instability” is such areas. These former manufacturing hubs that feature a shrinking population and an increasing number of vacant lots and blighted areas are where the prominent motivations are utilized. Although most urban farming proponents don’t focus on self-sufficiency as the ultimate goal, it does promote public health and social justice.
These urban projects are envisioned as a device for invigorating local economies and strengthening community bonds, a strong resource to reflect upon in establishing our goals, commitments, and achievements in our program.


This article provides the data collected when select CSA shareholders were monitored in their produce consumption as well as selection. Four major types of shareholders were targeted, the returning long term, new long term, returning seasonal, and new seasonal. Nearly all tests showed that produce consumption increased among all members, as well as acceptance of new and unknown produce. Additional findings include increased awareness of efforts towards CSA’s and their importance to the community, new knowledge of various produce and their relations to select seasons, and potential implementation on addressing food insecurities for low-income citizens.

**Jacobs, Brittany (Major: Geography and Sustainable Planning)**


This was a very interesting and short article which provided information and tips for creating a school garden, which could become very useful for our project. The project that was
completed transformed a courtyard into a sustainable vegetable garden and native plant area. This article stated the reason to creating a school garden as: “Nature is our teacher, sustainability is a community practice, and sustainable living is rooted in a deep knowledge of place.” To start a garden for a school this article by Beckrich listed some steps to take. These steps were to first find a space, include parents and faculty, develop a maintenance plan, document the progress and celebrate, and last but not least eat! This gives wonderful insight when thinking about the plan to build sustainable garden workshops for the already existing Sustainable Agriculture Project.


This was a very informative article about how a community can come together to help young children and teens especially to stay safe, off of the streets, involved and employed. Teenagers were the main focus group for this project. The goals were to get young people “to engage in positive action and vision.” A program was created in Berkeley, CA in order to address the economic, social, educational, and security needs, while helping them become productive and contributing adults. Some techniques of training in the garden to learn about urban farming, that our group could implement as well are plant propagation, transplanting, soil amendments, preparation, composting, harvesting, sustainability, marketing, and product
development. This program is a great example to look into more about how successful community gardens have developed.


This was a very informative article about a program that was created from an Alabama university in 2007 for young children to become more involved in the environment. A few garden plots were used to serve as an educational tool of the environment to get children exploring the environment by conducting activities as in planting, watering, weeding, identifying insects, and harvesting crops during the Spring, Summer and Fall. The children got to explore the wonders of gardening and even sold some of their crops at a local farmer's market after harvest. About 20 to 30 children attended the gardening program regularly, and they were assisted by about 22 college students for the mentor program. For the days when the weather wasn’t pleasant there were programs held indoors for activities such as painting ladybug rocks, painting pine cones, building jewelry boxes and learning about crops and other insects they had found in the garden. This article is a wonderful piece to put towards our project, especially because it includes both student and mentor reflections.

This was a very interesting and informative article that I found that will become of great use for this project. In the introduction it explicitly stated that school gardens “bring living principles home to the children, and school is living - not preparation for life.” School gardens “enable the children to solve some of the most difficult problems.” Also within the introduction of this article were statements regarding the purpose of school gardens, which range from “enhancing learning in topics ranging from art, design and literature to math and physics,” as well as “improving a social bond among schools, families and neighborhoods with benefits to learning about food and other crops in sustainable agriculture.” An ongoing project at the University of Arizona has created internships in order for teachers and students to “build, maintain, and teach/learn from school gardens.” This came about through a graduate student's project to “develop and implement an internship program that allowed university students to earn credit while working in school gardens.” With this program (UACSGP or University of Arizona Community and School Garden Program), it has involved collaborative efforts from various university departments. This program revolves around the interdisciplinary education to involve K-8 students to “encourage the development and use of problem solving, collective learning, organizational, and social skills for the interns.” This program is a fantastic example that our project in Environmental Problem Solving could take on. Some of the topics that the program
coordinator involve at the sustainable gardens include: orientation to the sun, water supply, topography, soil types, harvesting, and composting.


This article was great in displaying a program that provides environmental education to K-8 students and teachers. A Program called SAVE (Strengthening Awareness and Valuing the Environment was created in order to “increase teachers’ knowledge of and interaction with the abundant and accessible natural areas in the region and to provide hands-on professional development experience.” Further into the article the author explains another goal to the program being “to have students apply some of the knowledge gained in the first part of the laboratory during ecology and environmental education based activities.” I believe this is a wonderfully explained goal and purpose for a program as such and we could use some suggestions from this previous work to use in our project development.


This was an interesting article with a focus on urban spaces for community gardens. It listed benefits of gardens in dingy cities where people were typically low income and affected by
drug use. The gardens implemented in a city, described in the article, have transformed the impoverished town from the negative to a more positive urban area. Society had changed and developed to become increasingly positive and social with the local community.


This article also gave interesting points about how a community garden can provide benefits for families and children. The article stated that gardens give great opportunity for language development and literacy development when children use keen motor skills and learning the names of plants and animals of gardens, count seeds, and record measurements such as rainfall, and growth. This article displayed that children will develop a plentiful amount of social learning experiences among a local culture, which aligns with the purpose of our project.

Swanson, Cassie (Major: Psychology)


This article touches on how exposure to nature and gardening in childhood shapes adult attitudes and environmental values. Because children are our future and what we teach and what they see will eventually affect the world in one way or another, I found this article relevant for explaining why our proposal is necessary. It explained that adults who had significant and
positive exposure to nature as children-experiences, often with significant adults, that socialize them to view nature in positive and meaningful ways-were more likely to be environmentally sensitive, concerned, and active. This will be a good example for our community educational class that invites parents and their children out to the Sustainable Agriculture Project at GVSU. This article also includes an assessment of learning impact of school gardening. In the study, experimenters compared students who gardened and those who did not. They found that those who did scored significantly better on science assessment and on their positive preferences for eating fruits and vegetables.


This is not a peer reviewed article, but I feel that it will be very beneficial to our project. It lays out multiple examples of workshops that had take place at the Great Park Farm in California. These examples are tailored for children ages 3-11, fitting into a part of our age demographic. This article lists times, prices, activities and explanations as to why the themes of the workshops are important.

Shows evidence of microbes in the soil reducing anxiety. They tested the impact of Mycobacterium vaccae on mice and found that those exposed to this microbe could complete a maze faster and show less anxiety than the mice who had not been exposed. Mycobacterium can be found in the soils and this article suggests that if it affects mice it affects people. This is a good scientific experiment that promotes exposure to dirt. In our case that exposure would be through gardening involvement at SAP. “From our study we can say that it is definitely good to be outdoors—it’s good to have contact with these organisms. It is interesting to speculate that creating learning environments in schools that include time in the outdoors where M. vaccae is present may decrease anxiety and improve the ability to learn new tasks.” (Not only good for the environment and awareness but also benefits the people involved physically and mentally!)


I will use this article to support the therapeutic benefits of gardening and community gardening. The most researched benefit of gardening has been increased health as a result of exercise and physical labors in the garden. More interestingly, gardening has also been found to foster an increased sense of well-being. This article not only explains therapeutic effects of gardening alone but in a community setting and with others. It states that the social interaction in
a community garden setting not only benefits the individual’s mental health but also the health and dynamics of the community.


This article really demonstrates our purpose. That through community gardening we are not only creating a better community for the people but a better relationship between the people and the earth. This article addresses how community gardens could ease the global climate change crisis. This paper presents a method for furthering well being on the levels of the individual, the social community and the natural environment. This is my favorite psychology related source because it touches on all three of these aspects with great detail and example. The connection between social health and health of the environment is greatly important in our idea/project.

Important quote:

“The definition of community is extended beyond human social ties to include connections with other species and the earth itself, what Berry (1988) has called an Earth community.”


This study demonstrates psychological effects related to outdoor activity and gardening can have on a child with ADHD. They found that children with ADHD who spend more time outdoors and in the garden have milder symptoms than those children who spent more time indoors. Previous research suggested that that isolated exposure to green spaces can reduce ADHD but Taylor and Kuo argue that it is through routine exposures that will have an effect. This is relevant to our proposal because we wish to create workshops that will last over a 6 month or more period. This suggest that there may be a greater benefit to those with attention disorders who may be involved at the SAP workshops in the future.


This will be a relevant citation because it explains and describes a community gardening system very similar to Grand Valley’s Sustainable Agriculture Project. This article addresses community involvement (focusing on the older student and adult demographic) and workshops that would take place at the university garden (their plan was to implement a community garden). Because our proposal is to implement a community education class for children and adults at GVSU’s SAP, this would be a good reference to see what other universities have done and could be used as an example.

Notable quotes from this article:
“The community garden will provide a space for permaculture demonstrations and community engagement.”

“The event aims to teach students and community members low-maintenance, sustainable cultivation techniques that will be used in the community garden.”

Swanson, Hannah (Major: Liberal Studies):


This article delved into an extensive definition of what “workshop” means in the agricultural world. “Workshops are designed to give those who attend an opportunity to work on important problems without the interruption of the telephone, classroom lectures, seminars, and the like.”

I loved this article because it propels us to think very intentionally about what kind of workshops we are trying to create. What does a “workshop” mean? How can it help? How should it be structured? I think this resource will be invaluable to us because it challenges us to truly think about the construction of our workshops and what would be most helpful and for whom. It helps us to ask questions which is a HUGE part of complex problem solving!


Campbell did a wonderful job with this article because he helped us delve into the idea of
“on-farm”-non-industrial education surrounding the topic of agriculture. It helped us understand what “on-farm” education means, how it is used, and the benefits to the surrounding communities. I chose it specifically because of the composting workshops that it discussed, while also incorporating strategies used to help adults learn about bees.

This could be a fairly useful resource to us, especially because it is directly appointed toward adult education surrounding the topic of agriculture. It could, potentially, be able to help us understand how to construct/create workshops that are effective in teaching adults how to heal our lands.


Great article about family farms and how they utilize specific tools/techniques/strategies in order to build their resilience. “Resilience thinking offers a framework to emphasize dynamics and interdependencies across time, space and domains. It is based on understanding social–ecological systems as complex, and future developments as unpredictable, thus emphasizing adaptive approaches to management.” With this in mind, family farms were able to create workshops based on these ideas, learn from each other, and then understand how to adapt and be flexible in moving forward with the ever-changing times.

This could be a great resource for us! Because we want to design our workshops in the most intentional way possible for the S.A.P., having this article in mind will help. Actively
engaging tools/lessons in the workshops in order for farms to be adaptable and flexible will hopefully help them for years to come.


PHENOMENAL article about the pros and cons of experiential learning. It talked about departments in higher education and how professors are encouraged to help students apply their skills that they are learning through their classes. What I love most about this is that it specifically encompasses experiential learning (definition, the good, the bad) within the topic of agricultural economics.

Since our initial problem statement, as well as the idea for our project explicitly surfaces the point of experiential learning within our concept, this article is of great support. Since the topic (agricultural economics) and the experiential learning concept were both laid out in detail within this article, it helps us to recognize how we should frame our workshops while creating them.


“He believes that most of our citizenry have become refugees from the natural world and the environmental crisis we face is a result of that separation.” This quote speaks volumes in
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terms of what we are trying to do! It talked about Michael Ableman who has worked on a farm
(Fairview Gardens Farms) for the last 15 years. By developing the farm, he has helped create it
into a “sanctuary for the surrounding community” by providing non-toxic foods, giving tours,
and holding workshops.

This is a phenomenal article because it allows us to understand Ableman’s story and how
he has helped the surrounding community by doing what he is doing. We can also snag some of
his methods he has used that will help us to create effective, beneficial, and experiential
workshops. I think the hardest part about our project is going to be the actual creation of the
“curriculum”/strategy/layout of the workshops we want to hold. By having this kind of article, it
supports us that much more.

Maryland Department of Agriculture. (2013). Officials kick-off Maryland homegrown school
lunch week in Washington Co.; Governor O’Malley declares Sept. 23-37 as homegrown
school lunch week. States News Service: Academic Onefile.

This article is absolutely wonderful because it directly correlates with what we are trying
to do: build community, educate by experience, and help people eat in more nutritious directions.
Through the incredible facilitation of building connections, Pangborn Elementary began working
with local farms in order to bring fresher foods to their students. And with the help of Governor
O’Malley, Pangborn Elementary now has a week dedicated to “Homegrown School Lunches.”
By doing this, students have access to fresh/nutritious foods like: peaches, squash, pears, apples,
locally raised beef, zucchini and more! The schools also allowed for the students to have field trips to the farms so that the children can find the imperative correlation between sustainable food systems and nutritious foods vs. our current, mass food system in America and how it is directly related to health problems. The school has found tremendous benefits from incorporating this type of concept/activity into their institution, so much so, that surrounding schools are also adopting the same ideas into their institutions.

This creates a sort of “leader” article for us by providing information that interests us enough to dig deeper into the story. The article hit on some great points, but there wasn’t enough in-depth information to really understand how the students have transformed since the implementation of the local farm ideas. That said, it is enough information to help us feel supported in what we are trying to do, and by digging deeper, I think we can grab some of their methods in order to help us progress forward in our project.


Great read on this New York farm that specializes in community development through youths. While utilizing youth-interns, this farm helps to engage the youths in the surrounding community in order for them to understand gardening, food systems, community, care, etc. Most importantly, they empower them by giving them the foundational tools they need in order to help
build their community into a more sustainable future.

Since we have a specific youth component to our project, this could help us create the curriculum for the K-6th grade workshops. From this article, we can filter in insights from what that New York farm has discovered in order for us to help empower our youths in our surrounding community. We know that the S.A.P. would be a perfect place for them to be empowered, so I integrated this article in because I think it will be an invaluable resource to help the S.A.P. become that “catapult” we talked about in our problem statement.

Young, Taylor (Major: Statistics)


This guide offers tips from experts on how to design gardens for children and planning programs. It also summarizes some projects that are currently conducted by other agencies and organizations. The last part of the manual gives references for books, supplies, websites, and organizations that concern children gardening. I believe this guide will also be helpful in designing our workshops at the SAP.

This guide explains how to manage many safety concerns such as allergies, dangerous equipment, group sizes, rules, etc. It also suggests activities to do with the students along with recommended times and lesson plans. I think this guide will be helpful for planning the workshops at the SAP.


This article reviews a study of thirty-eight Farm-to-School programs and explains the behavior outcomes, dietary changes, and consumption patterns, associated with farm to school programs. They also found that students showed an increase in knowledge about growing cycles and sustainable agriculture. For example before a farm trip only 33% of students were aware of where their food come from, but 88% knew after the trip. It was also found that farm-to-school programs that included nutrition education saw positive changes in the students attitudes about trying new/ healthy foods. This article will be helpful in determining if we should include nutritional education in our workshops.

This article reviews the many benefits associated with outdoor learning and child development. Students who are involved in outdoor educational programs scored higher on measures of knowledge transfer, performed better on standardized tests, and earned higher GPAs. Studies have also examined the impact of outdoor learning on social and emotional development, although some of these studies validity is questionable they also suggest outdoor programs improve these areas of development. I believe this article supports the possible cognitive advantages to children if we build learning-based workshops at the SAP.


This research is based on data collected from 22 projects (such as farms, gardens, stables) across Northeast England, and Cumbria. Their findings show that community-growing projects increase the wellbeing of individuals as well as their communities. Community farms and gardens encourage local people to become more social and develop ties to an area through environmental improvement, which promotes eco-friendly practices. This proves there could also be many social benefits to creating workshops at the SAP.

This article reviews eleven studies that included children aged 5-15. The findings from these studies suggest that garden-based nutrition programs can promote an increase in fruit and vegetable intake among children. They can also increase their willingness to try new fruits and vegetables. Although they note that research in this area is very limited this could also prove to be another benefit to bringing more youth to the SAP.


This article evaluates how farm-to-school programs have improved health and nutrition for young children. It also reviews how these programs can help reduce sprawl-inducing developments by helping preserve farmland. They also establish a community food system that reduces global dependency. These programs not only benefit the children, but also the local farmers involved. This article not only supports our decision to do learning based workshops at the SAP, but can also help us persuade the SAP why it is a good idea and how it will also benefit them.