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Volume 47, 2016 - [Issue 4](#)

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“Growing” communities with urban agriculture: Generating value above and below ground

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Pages 530-545 | Published online: 11 Mar 2016

🗨️ Cite this article 🔗 <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2016.1158198>



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Abstract

Drawing upon original research examining urban agriculture projects in Denver, Colorado, this article explores the “growing” metaphor used in community development circles, especially those involving food-growing schemes. The authors propose the following analytic distinction: above ground/below ground. The former refers to those capitals we count as community development scholars, whereas the latter speaks to the values shaping the capitals that community members feel ought to count. The article also brings together previously disparate literatures that have more in common than their respective track records suggest – the (above ground) community capitals and (below ground) diverse economies approaches. While explorative, this article aims to help others understand the complex processes involved in not only the

generating of community capitals but in the practices and discourses that lead to them being valued by stakeholders.

Keywords:

Community capitals diverse economies food justice social capital urban agriculture

Acknowledgments

The authors want to thank Dr. John Green and the anonymous referees for their helpful comments and suggestions. Thanks also to all those who participated in this research. Finally, the authors are deeply grateful to Dr. Cornelia Flora and Dr. Jan Flora for their support and collegiality (which was on full display on May 21, 2015, when they led an all-day Community Capitals workshop on the campus of Colorado State University at the request of Michael). The arguments herein contained, however, are the authors' own.

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