

It's Not What Defines Us, It's Just What We Do: An Investigation of Urban Homesteading and Identity



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Background

- Urban homesteading: localization, self-reliance and sustainability¹
- Participants desire to close the gap between food production and food consumption^{2,3}
- Joining the movement = joining larger collective of individuals with similar passions⁴
- Social occupations provide a space to create shared meaning
- Individuals gain a sense of who they are through what they do⁵

Research Aim: Investigate the experience of urban homesteading and its influence on identity

Methods

- Qualitative; phenomenology
- Convenience sampling
- Three urban homesteaders
- Semi-structured interviews
- Thematic coding & analysis

Findings



References

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Discussion

- Participation in urban homesteading influences both internal and external self⁵
- Participation and identity shifts did not happen with an "aha!" moment as originally anticipated
- Self-categorization and self-comparison was present as participants developed and acquired their social identity⁶
- Occupations are an instrument to building identities⁷

Conclusion & Implications

- The practices of urban homesteading vary widely
- The internal and external self can not be separated and is transactional in nature
- Provides insight into the process of meaning making
- Informs connection between social occupation and identity formation