Introduction: the right to food in the city

A city is an organised and differentiated agglomeration whose citizens, removed in a Marxian sense from their means of livelihood, must travel to access resources. Mere physical access of course is insufficient; the Marxian working class must also commute to obtain the money to access these necessary resources. As Sir James Mathew, 19th-century Irish judge, cynically observed, in England, justice is open to all, like the Ritz Hotel. Increasingly, however, cities are perceived as denying rather than providing access to life’s necessities, for many of their citizens. This is a serious accusation given that the majority of mankind, Global South and North, now live in urban areas. Back in 1968 Lefebvre asserted a need for a right to the city, which is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city (Harvey 2008). This right to the city has been expanded to cover a panoply of rights and injustices across the world, from alleviating poverty to providing affordable housing to environmental sustainability; there has even been proposed a digital right to the city (Shaw and Graham 2017). However, a fundamental human right must be the right to food. After air and water it is the third most essential requirement of life itself. The United Nations recognised this right in their 1948 Declaration of Human Rights. This right to food goes beyond merely enough calories to survive, with Article 25 of the 1948 Declaration stating, ‘Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food’. As Lefebvre notes, the urban economy is fed by people, and in producing the city, a large workforce is employed, in the maintenance and feeding of machines (dos Santos 2014); however, cities are not good so good at feeding their people.

The city of Glasgow, Scotland, was one of the earliest locales where the issue of a poorly-fed population became apparent. In a 1996 survey of deprivation in that city, the Low Income Project Team encountered a respondent who described the area as a ‘food desert’, meaning there was a lack of shops selling good-quality, reasonably priced food in the area (Cummins and Macintyre 2002). The term ‘food desert’ rapidly entered both academic research and the media,
as researchers found them in other cities. *The Guardian* on 17 March 1999 (cited in Shaw 2014: 105) wrote of the food deserts phenomenon in Britain:

On the poorer estates of Coventry, low cost, good quality food is not available to the poorest. These people either have to shop at expensive local stores or pay for transport and lug small children for miles and back with shopping.

Coventry, a former industrial city in the Midlands area of England is, like most cities, highly spatially segregated by class, and the least affluent districts have the poorest facilities, the lowest performing schools and doctors, and the most impoverished selection of fresh produce in local retailers; the inverse care law proposed by Hart (1971) as a pun on the inverse square law in physics is evident here. Social class intersects with urban space to continually deepen economic divisions.

**The class wars of food**

The space produced in cities is increasingly class-riven and divided; as Lefebvre (1991: 55) wrote, ‘today, more than ever, the class struggle is inscribed in space’. Superficially, however, urban food spaces appear to have no role, or even an inverse role, in this class struggle. The more deprived urban areas are often awash with convenience food shops, ethnic-minority-oriented stores, local supermarket branches, not to mention fast food outlets and other sources of ready-to-eat food.

Conversely, affluent suburbs have fewer food stores, just the local town centre and a peripheral hypermarket. The poor do not consume fewer calories than the wealthy; in fact, they have swapped places. In Brazil, for example, in 1975 women in the lowest income quartile were half as likely to be obese as those in the top quartile, but in 1997 these lower-quartile women were ten per cent more likely to be obese than their wealthier compatriots (Power and Schulkin 2009: 129–30). The same trend has occurred at all spatial scales, as poorer nations have become more obese, lower-GDP per capita regions within countries, and poorer social groups within societies all become more overweight.

So, the poor consume more calories than the wealthy. Are they choosing to do this? Unless someone is force-feeding them, how is this inequitable? The answer is that economics is forcing them to do this, through the mechanism of the ‘health premium’. Global food chain developments from vast container ships and industrial-scale farms to the consumer convenience of supermarkets and microwave meals have greatly reduced the proportion of income spent on food. However, it is the processed, sugar preserved, and cheaply flavoured foods that have reduced in price. The health premium, the extra cost of a healthy diet, with fresh fruit and vegetables over an unhealthy one, has increased across the UK from 18 per cent in 1988 to 48 per cent in 2007. In affluent areas the difference has widened from 16 per cent to 39 per cent; in deprived areas, from 20 per cent to 58 per cent (Shaw 2014: 119). Healthy food affordability and the cost of living are linked to wages, especially at the bottom end of the jobs market, when both capital and labour are highly mobile. The neoliberal necessity to maintain a low-paid reserve army of labour but the unwillingness of taxpayers to overly subsidise this army produces a basic state income of just enough to exist on; in turn the competitiveness of capital produces a state minimum wage only just above this level. One can exist, albeit on the borders of health, on ‘ridiculously cheap’ (Anonymous 2012) burgers and pizzas. A UK worker on the minimum wage, eating 2,000 calories a day and spending 20 per cent of income on food, can afford potatoes, meat and tinned tomatoes, but very likely not fresh broccoli or lettuce (Shaw 2014: 120). Increasingly the existence of a flexible zero-hours precariat is eroding even that slight financial advantage of employment over unemployment.
The shops in deprived urban areas may offer a small selection of fresh produce, but at higher prices than a distant supermarket, accessible in theory by all, but in practice a car is needed to bring fresh produce home, and at higher total cost than most local residents can afford. Transporting food is a major issue for the poor without cars because not only is fresh produce more expensive per calorie than processed pizzas, fresh food is also heavier in terms of weight per calorie. For those who shop by bus or on foot, there is a disposable carrying capacity, just as there is a disposable income. Poorer households will only spend on food once essentials like rent and electricity have been paid, because being evicted or having power disconnected is worse than filling a hungry stomach with cheap biscuits, and 2,000 calories of biscuits can be purchased for 30 pence, so they are always affordable; likewise, there is only so much food one can carry once the shopping bag is filled with toilet paper and washing up liquid. Perhaps the local burger outlet, always closer than the supermarket, obviates the need to carry much food at all, especially when one has children in tow, as The Guardian quote above (as cited in Shaw 2014: 105) pointed out.

Casualties of war

Wars produce casualties; injuries, deaths, also psychological trauma, and the food class wars are no exception. The primary effect of a diet high in cheap processed foods and low in expensive fresh produce is obesity. Physically, excess weight leads to diabetes, sleep apnoea, arthritis, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. In turn, these conditions predispose to osteoporosis, blindness, amputations, gallstones, and chronic fatigue. These are chronic conditions that do not kill straightaway, so the burden falling on both public and private healthcare costs can be considerable. Such costs are extremely hard to quantify, as some of these ailments would have occurred without obesity, and extra patients add to hospital costs in a non-linear way. However, in 2011 the UK Government estimated that obesity was costing the National Health Service around £4 billion a year, and other costs such as private medical care, informal care, and lost work days took the total annual cost to the UK to between £15 and £20 billion a year. Each individual may cost the UK economy between £1,500 and £2,000 extra for each year they are obese (Shaw 2014: 28). Being obese shortens the lifespan by around 11 years, reducing state pension entitlement by around £70,000, possibly outweighing the excess medical costs of obesity.

Less visibly, obesity has profound psychological effects, and these effects can begin much sooner than the physical complications, even in childhood. Obese children suffer lower self-esteem at school, reduced learning ability, and lower qualifications. Poorer educational performance perpetuates the very poverty that causes obesity down the generations. These children also are less able to participate in school games, which always seem to be competitive team sports, where they may be teased for ‘letting their own side down’; they might prefer non-competitive individual sports such as cross-country jogging. Obese adults lose out at job interviews and have lower earnings, as well as fewer social opportunities and networking chances (Härkönen et al. 2011; Reichert 2013), further perpetuating generational poverty. Their Lefebvrian social space shrinks, and they may find their main societal role is to be the anti-example, the bogeyman, in Global Northern societies that exalt svelte slimness whilst simultaneously making it economically and environmentally ever harder to reach this ideal.

The shrinkage of Lefebvrian space, money, and time

As the belly gets bigger, Lefebvrian space shrinks around you. The Lefebvrian triad of produced space comprises l’espace perçu, the space perceived, experienced; l’espace concu, the space
conceived; and *l’espace vecu*, lived, social space. As noted earlier, the poor have to rely on public transport or walking to access food retail, whereas the wealthy drive. With childcare being relatively expensive, *l’espace perçu* shrinks further, and with heavy shopping to carry or lug on and off buses, distances are harder to cover. Less affluent areas are less attractive to walk in, suffer more pollution from industry, traffic fumes and noise, contain fewer trees and parks, and the crime risk is higher and *l’espace perçu* is reduced. For some, living in very deprived areas, even the places they can imagine going to, *l’espace concu*, are reduced. In 2016 the extent of deprivation, obesity, and barriers to healthy eating was investigated in the Welsh Valleys region of south Wales, UK, funded by the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA 2016). Life for some in this part of Wales illustrates all too well the restrictions imposed by poverty upon Lefebvrian space. In the Welsh Valleys, a former coal mining and now deindustrialised region immediately north of Cardiff, ‘there are some who have never left their home village’ (CURA 2016). On the Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil, a local authority housing area noted for its ill-health, short life expectancy, and poverty even compared to the rest of the Valleys, there is actually a free bus twice a week to the Asda supermarket two kilometres away. However, many less affluent shoppers, especially those with children, avoid large hypermarkets because they fear the temptation, or the nagging from their offspring, to buy more than they can afford. More insidiously, poverty, especially food poverty, reduces both the motivation and ability to entertain, to keep friendships going. A poor diet may lead to ill-health and ongoing fatigue, and then there is the shame of not being able to provide the same food treats as your neighbours. Cheap sugary foods may make children more hyperactive and tiring for the parents. Ultimately the stresses of poverty, of being unable to afford enough living space, can result in family break-up and divorce, so *l’espace vecu*, social space, shrinks.

If space is a socially constructed concept then surely money is even more of an artificial construct, and the financial situation of the poor can be analysed in Lefebvrian terms of *l’argent perçu*, *l’argent concu*, and *l’argent vecu*. As noted earlier, the concept of food deserts relies heavily on the spending power of households and the price of fresh produce relative to household income, as well as their distance, perceived and actual, from fresh food retailing. Otherwise, it would make little sense to regard a better-off household living in a deprived area as facing barriers to a healthy diet; likewise, very prosperous UK suburbs such as London’s Bishops Avenue or the affluent Four Oaks private estate in Birmingham, where there are houses over two kilometres from any shops, would count as food deserts. Purchasing food may require additional expenditure for travel as well as the actual purchases at the shop; even virtual travel, shopping on the Internet, carries costs in the form of buying a computer, subscribing to the Internet, and of course possession of a credit or debit card. Many less affluent households do not have the first two items, and the very poor may not even have a bank card, being restricted to basic bank accounts; any credit they need must come from expensive payday loans companies or pawnshops. Just as the United Nations has recognised food as an essential right, Baroness Neville-Rolfe in the UK’s House of Lords has defined the Internet as a crucial part of modern life, essential for full participation in society (Shaw and Shaw 2015: 236). *L’argent perçu* restricts shopping to the essentials, even to where some must choose between eating or heating, or must forego a decent meal to pay the rent. Then there is *l’argent concu*, what one can imagine doing with the funds one has to spend. The difference between *l’argent perçu* and *l’argent concu* is related to the famous researcher into poverty in Victorian Britain, Charles Booth. Booth investigated the finances of unskilled labouring households in York and distinguished between primary poverty, what Lefebvre might have called *l’argent perçu*, and secondary poverty, *l’argent concu*. Primary poverty was when household income was simply insufficient for necessities such as food, rent, fuel, clothes. However, Booth found that the unskilled labourer households of York were paid 20
Hillary J. Shaw

Table 39.1 A second triad: space, money, and time. Lefebvrian space, money, time: food purchasing and the constraints on the poor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>percu</th>
<th>concu</th>
<th>vecu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>l’espace (space)</td>
<td>Travel arduous, carry shopping by hand</td>
<td>Lack of motivation, fear of overspending</td>
<td>Shame, social stress, family stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’argent (money)</td>
<td>Fresh produce unaffordable, no car or Internet</td>
<td>Vice/gratification, spending over necessities</td>
<td>Unaffordability of conspicuous gift giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le temps (time)</td>
<td>Low wages</td>
<td>Short time horizons, so healthy food less important</td>
<td>Instability, future uncertainty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

shillings (one UK pound) a week, just enough for the bare necessities, except that many of them spent up to a third of that income on alcohol, creating what Booth termed secondary poverty (Scott 1994: 38). Fast-forward a century and ‘vice-spending’, on things like alcohol, smoking, and gambling, is still highest amongst the lower income deciles. Lack of financial resources then restricts social life and entertaining (l’argent vecu) in ways discussed above, especially in an age of conspicuous consumerism when social events become a competition as, for example, to who can bring the most expensive party gift.

Deprivation also brings short time horizons, a desire for immediate gratification. Almost everybody suffers from time myopia; ask people to choose between a gift of £100 now, or £120 in 12 months’ time, and most will pick the first option; in economics terms, they have just turned down an investment with a 20 per cent annual return. But poverty can bring desperation for immediate relief, which is why Booth found households where the man would prefer drunkenness now even if that meant hunger or eviction later. In some districts things have not changed much. With food, the case for taking a long-term view is even less clear; choose between sugary salty fatty tasty but unhealthy food now, or spend more and eat, perhaps less palatably, and you may live another few years. As George Orwell wrote in The Road to Wigan Pier, ‘A millionaire may enjoy breakfasting off orange juice and Ryvita biscuits, an unemployed man doesn’t’ (2001: 108). Fresh vegetables and other healthy food also carry a ‘time penalty’ in terms of cooking; it is much easier to microwave and do something fun whilst awaiting the ping; the same perceived time penalty now, for future uncertain benefits, applies to learning to cook (when one cannot afford these healthy foods, or even access them locally). Low wages, and lack of money to buy time-saving devices such as a car, mean the poor suffer reduced le temps percu, and their le temps concu is shortened by the attractiveness of scarce gratification now, versus an uncertain future. Future certainty is something else that money tends to buy, when one is not dependent on shifting rented accommodation, the whims of the State Benefits Office, or an employer who sees employees as casual disposable labour. This restricts the formation of stable social contacts and relationships, reducing le temps vecu of the poor. In terms of lifestyle factors, many of which impinge on the propensity to eat healthily, one can sum up the triad of Lefebvrian space and extend space into a further intersecting triad of space, money, and time. Table 39.1 summarises some of the factors bearing down on the disadvantaged in society.

Dantean Space: from precariats to cold boxes

In Dante’s Inferno there were concentric Circles of Hell, each one worse than the last. In extremely deprived areas, such as the Welsh Valleys, reported to be poorer than some regions
of Eastern Europe, one can find successive layers of poverty, descending to circles probably unimagined by the citizens of Cardiff, spatially close with its shiny St David’s Shopping Centre, ranked sixth in the UK by Experian. One respondent said (CURA 2016): ‘It’s expensive to be poor’; and those five words sum up the devastating synergies of flexible neoliberal capitalism, austerity government on the lives of the poorest in society. The poor pay more for transport; bus fares in the Valleys of £4 for a journey that would cost £1 by car are frequently necessary to access: work, interviews to claim state benefits, or even food banks. Because the poor are digitally excluded they must also travel to banks to pay bills, and if they fall into debt they pay the highest interest rates, and when the power bills are not paid on time they are forced onto the most expensive tariffs, charged by pre-pay meters.

‘Work remains the best route out of poverty’, said Iain Duncan Smith, Work and Pensions Secretary for the UK’s Conservative Government (Smith 2014). However, statistics say otherwise. In 2014, 53 per cent of Britons ‘living in absolute poverty after housing costs’ were in work, as opposed to 47 per cent of them having no work (The Economist 2016). The core of the ‘working yet poor’ problem is the zero-hours contract, where income falls short of the level needed to escape the Welfare Benefits system, so working-claimants of the precariat must report each week just how many hours they worked. Because the state benefits system responds to changing weekly income with the agility of a rhinoceros, weekly benefits are frequently under- or over-paid, and overpayments may be clawed back weeks later when work is scarce. Other events can tip someone into destitution through state benefits sanctions, basically the withdrawal of even a minimum survival income by the government; appointments missed because: the bus was late, an under-maintained car broke down, or the children caused the claimant to oversleep. An axiom amongst charities for the homeless is, we are all just two bad decisions way from the pavement. That is when the precariat needs the food bank for sheer survival, but it is a £4 bus fare away. Sanctions ‘are applied as a blunt instrument but should be applied as a last resort’ (Blackman 2017); the problem is, these two principles can co-exist. Sanctions are supposed to be a last resort, but are bluntly applied to all regardless of personal circumstances. Meanwhile food is one of the first expenditures to be curtailed; and some are deterred from food banks by the bus fare, others by the stigma of being seen to need charity: the l’espace vecu of hunger. Health is bound to suffer in the long run. Furthermore, the Trussell Trust (a UK food bank operator) does not want to become a free supermarket (CURA 2016) and limits any individual to a maximum five weeks’ usage of their local food bank in any 12-month period. However, some food banks will give out food in excess of this limit if, after checks with agencies, it is evident that the recipient will have no choice but to borrow, beg, or steal food or attempt to source it from churches. Churches are also often very limited in what they can do, offering perhaps just one hot meal a week. Food banks can only offer tinned or dried foods, not fresh produce, for logistical reasons, yet there are circles of poverty even below this.

The penultimate level is the kettle box. The kettle box is designed specifically for the homeless poor, who may exist in hostels but have no access to a kitchen, just an electric kettle. The box contains items such as powdered soup, pot noodles, and pasta sauces that can be ‘cooked’, with no more facilities than hot water. They are nutritionally poor but provide some sustenance and avoid people going to bed hungry. Then, the ultimate level below kettle boxes is the cold box. As the Trussell Trust stated in 2014:

For even more destitute clients, a cold box food parcel has been created, containing three days’ worth of mainly tinned groceries that can be prepared without the need for heating or hot water.

(In Butler 2014)
This is the rock-bottom of poverty, the end result when the benefits of flexible capitalism all go to capital but the flexibility is suffered by the poor workers. Flexibility for the working poor becomes contortion almost to breaking point when the wage-depressing effect of the (near-destitute) reserve army of labour is added in.

Minimum wages, bare survival, the precariat, workers with just enough income for food as fuel, paid just enough to function until discarded at retirement; this is, from capital’s point of view, just what capital is supposed to do. Capitalism is always on the edge, exploiting the last tiny niche of profit, extracting the last sliver of value wherever it can. But workers are not robots; they have human value and dignity. As Harvey (2012: 129–30) argues:

Urbanization is itself produced. Thousands of workers are engaged in its production, and their work is productive of value and of surplus value. Why not focus, therefore, on the city rather than the factory as the prime site of surplus value production?

Lefebvre argues that the city must be reclaimed, for those who really produce it, its citizens; he calls this reclamation autogestion (Purcell 2002), where urban citizens manage collective decisions themselves rather than surrendering those decisions to a cadre of state officials (Lefebvre 2003: 187–8). Can urban food systems be reclaimed, even to the point where food banks and cold boxes become a relic of the past?

**Reclaiming the city: urban agriculture and the Foodfare state**

The socio-spatial infrastructure for reclaiming the urban food chain in fact already exists, in fragmented form, but is continually at risk of being dismantled or co-opted by capital interests. This infrastructure has three main elements: allotments, urban farms, and more radically, ‘Dig for Victory’ (see Granzow and Shields in Part 4 for another view of urban agriculture). Allotments still exist, but the UK has lost over 80 per cent of them since their peak of 1.5 million during World War Two (WW2). In the Welsh Valleys, waiting lists exist for allotments in some towns whilst elsewhere they lie derelict. With pressure for building land (why not utilise brownfield sites, often plentiful in deprived urban areas) and the squeeze on local authority finances, it is much more lucrative for local authorities to allow building on allotment land and then reap the local government property tax, the council tax. Most large cities now have urban farms, but these are essentially tourist attractions, places to take middle class urban kids to stroke the lambs after the Sunday roast has been consumed. ‘Dig for Victory’, originally a British campaign during WW2, to use every available scrap of land to produce food, and replicated in Cuba in the 1990s after support from Russia collapsed, appears today to lack an essential element of social solidarity and cohesion. Where the urban lawns of social housing projects have been converted to vegetable growing, problems of vandalism and theft have often emerged. In Britain, local authority housing of the 1930s through to the 60s often had large gardens, to facilitate the tenants growing some fruit and vegetables, but leisure opportunities, cheap unhealthy takeaway food, and lack of both gardening and cooking knowledge mean this ideal is seldom achieved.

Britain also has a history of preventing the poor from being too self-sufficient in food. Thomas Rudge, in his 1813 work *General View of the County of Gloucester*, encouraged landowners not to allow edible fruits to grow in hedgerows, as this would discourage the idle poor from seeking work. The 19th-century owners of Stiperstones mine, Shropshire, England, resented the fact that mine workers’ cottages had vegetable plots, ‘reducing their dependence on earnings at the mine’ (Francis et al. 2000: 59). However, when political food restrictions such as the 19th-century Corn Laws begin to work against the industrial economy, they were soon repealed. The
early 19th-century Corn Laws benefitted the rural gentry, preventing imports from lowering bread prices, but by the second half of the 19th century they had been repealed, as they increased the necessary wages that urban factory owners had to pay. Furthermore, the Corn Laws were precipitating urban discontent, a famous example being the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester, England, in 1819, where 15 protestors were killed and hundreds injured by the army during a protest partly caused by high bread prices. In the 20th century, state and capital were willing to finance Beveridge’s Welfare State, set up from 1942, because slaying the Five Giants of Want, Disease, Squalor, Ignorance, and Idleness was of mutual benefit to the nation, society, and the economy, improving the health and productivity of the workforce during WW2 and the post-war recovery period.

A similar list of Five Giants could apply to today’s food situation amongst the urban poor. We have Want (poverty, unaffordability of healthy food), Disease (obesity, diabetes), Sugar (excess in cheap food), Ignorance (of cooking, nutrition), and Idleness (not cooking, not growing food where possible). To fulfil the United Nations Right to Food, our cities need a 21st-century Foodfare State, which would be a sort of partnership between the citizen and state. An important consideration would be to allow benefits claimants to sell surplus fresh produce they might grow in gardens or allotments, without their benefits being reduced pound for pound as at present. That would encourage a culture of food production and healthy eating, besides all the environmental benefits. Concomitantly, the government could provide food preparation and cooking advice, such as leaflets and even household food budgeting tips, given out at Jobcentres and other benefits offices. These educational initiatives could also be usefully extended to other state service points such as schools, doctors’ surgeries, and hospitals. If one has both motivation and knowledge, it is possible to eat both healthily and cheaply now, by sourcing fresh produce at street markets, by ignoring the arcanities of fancy TV chef programmes and discovering that many fresh vegetables can be cooked quite simply, and that halfway houses to healthy eating do exist, for example adding some fresh vegetables to microwave-ready meals. The level of benefits and the minimum wage should be revised to allow for the health premium cost of eating healthily, not just eating enough calories. In practice the health premium should reduce over time if the other measures kick-started demand for fresh produce and local independent retailers then discovered they could gain economies of scale through wholesale purchasing. On the fiscal side, local government could be given incentives to retain allotments, and central government could apply variable Value Added Tax rates to food and even garden centres; lower rates for fresh produce and gardening equipment, higher rates for non-productive garden ornaments and unhealthy food. Local business rates could be raised or lowered according to the contribution of the business to health and diet, and land taxes could be utilised to encourage food production and discourage disuse of brownfield sites. Tax incentives could be given to employers to promote healthy eating amongst their employees, also moderate exercise such as using the office stairs and not the lift. Further information dissemination of these initiatives could be done through household leafleting and television channels, both direct advertising and via programmes that encourage gardening and healthy simple cooking, perhaps utilising popular soap operas for this as well as children’s programmes. A programme for reconnecting the urban poor, and indeed all urban citizens, with healthy food should be no less radical or comprehensive than was Beveridge’s Welfare State in 1942.

Conclusions

The degree of poverty and malnourishment in British cities has reached levels that are unacceptable. The Welsh Valleys are an extreme, but sadly by no means unique, example of this poverty.
Food banks should not exist in UK cities, let alone food banks that also provide kettle boxes and cold boxes for the ultra-poor. History has shown that, left to the powers of state and capitalism alone, human suffering is insufficient to trigger change; rather, there is strong, perhaps violent, state resistance to change, for example at Peterloo as noted above. Lefebvre calls for a better system, a reframing of the urban system so that those who produce the city also have a right to frame the decision-making of the city: autogestion rather than surrendering those decisions to the state. Unfortunately, that surrender has already taken place, perhaps at the ballot boxes of 1979 when the vanguard of flexible neoliberal capitalism was ushered in by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (and US President Ronald Reagan) (Shaw and Shaw 2016). It is always harder to regain than to not surrender, but with rising poverty and discontent, even the current wave of populism that threatens globalisation itself, there may be the political will for the re-empowerment of autogestion. Perhaps rising diet-related health costs will compel the institution of something like the Foodfare State proposed above. Hopefully we will not have to wait until 2042 to see this happen.

References