



**GUERRILLA GARDENING**  
*how to "green up" your neighborhood*



# Guerrilla Gardening

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- Guerrilla gardening is a global ecological movement.
- Guerrilla gardeners focus on caring for neglected public space.
- Ideally, they would like to see an increase of public space where gardeners can grow plants that are beautiful, functional, and/or tasty.

# Guerrilla gardening vs. eco-terrorism

- Guerrilla gardeners tend to work wherever a natural presence is needed. Sometimes they work outside of the legal system.
- As an environmental group working outside of the legal system, that can put them at risk of association with eco-terrorism.
- In the U.S. it is considered eco-terrorism only if it causes more than \$10,000 dollars in damages, or has the intent to inflict personal harm.
- To some degree, guerrilla gardening may be considered a movement within eco-terrorism. However, given the non-violent nature of the group, that association is questionable, along with the fact, that in many cases, gardening can hardly be called property damage.

# Framing

- framing is how humans view the world around them. Framing is the use of an unconscious, structured thinking process. This is sometimes called a schema in psychology.
- Environmental frames are the typically unconscious conceptual structures that people use to understand environmental issues. Words themselves are not frames, but words can activate a frame or a system of frames in the mind. This makes framing and establishing a frame a very powerful language tool.

# Overarching warfare frame

- The overarching frame of language used in guerrilla gardening is essentially that of guerrilla warfare.
- The environmental movement uses this pre-established frame to inform the public about their movement and ideals.
- While the guerrilla gardening movement's actions have a positive effect on the environment, the frame that they use is associated with a negative state of affairs.

# “Guerrilla”

- Guerrilla is the first term that comes into play, considering the movement is titled guerrilla gardening
- Its use is seemingly to explain the rogue nature of the movement
- “Guerrilla” can also bring to mind an illusion of movement. It evokes the idea of a rogue battle that can break out in different parts of a region
- With new gardens cropping up in the middle of the night, the movement does reflect similar war tactics, but with an emphasis on non-violence

# “War against neglect”

- The movement really focuses on rehabilitating neglected areas, and adding functionality and beauty, where it was lacking
- It uses guerrilla gardening to make a statement
  - E.g. the woman who filled potholes

# “Illicit” cultivation

- The movement has no qualms about gardening anywhere, public or private land
- They truly focus on putting beauty where the gardeners feel it is *needed*, regardless of whether or not it is *wanted* in a particular place.
- They have a bit of a sub-slogan “gardening without boundaries”
  - This slogan actually comes from a book, written by the founder of guerrillagardening.org, Richard Reynolds. His book is titled “On Guerrilla Gardening: a handbook on gardening without boundaries

# Join an existing “cell”

- This is the title for a tab on the movement’s main webpage, which will take you to an area that has links to Facebook pages, blogs and other ways to connect with people already participating in guerrilla gardening.
- Again, this metaphor taps deeply into the warfare frame and evokes the idea of a terrorist cell, although this is a non-violent group. In reality, it is just a way to connect those who are new or interested in the movement with others living in their area, or to find other general resources for starting a new group.

# “Growing arsenal”

- This metaphor is actually used in reference to the site [guerrillagardening.org](http://guerrillagardening.org), and refers even more specifically to the network that has come about as a result of the site.
- This can bring to question what exactly the weapon is.
- In guerrilla gardening, people can be considered a weapon because it is the members of the group who act as tools to implement change.
- Awareness can also be considered a weapon here.

# Seed “bombs”

- Seed bombs are a compact mass of organic peat-free compost and seed. They are handmade from recycled, organic and biodegradable materials.
- These are the easy alternative to high maintenance gardening. They can be easily put in medians, and other neglected areas. They are sold online
- These seed bombs are physically shaped like grenades and can be purchased with slingshots.
- So in this area, not only is the warfare frame reinforced in a literary sense, but the frame is transformed into a physical frame about the movement and their relationship with environmental activism gardening.

# “Horticultural front line”

- Another metaphor used within the movement
- The movement truly considers their cause to be a battle. It is a battle for awareness of ecological issues, it is a battle to beautify and repair neglected areas, it's a battle to unite a community, it is a battle to make change at a local level, and to create influence at a governmental level.

# “Battle”

- Battle is also a word frequently used throughout much of the literature related to guerilla gardening.
- Guerrilla gardeners consider their cause to be a battle for good.
- It is just another example of the terminology used within the warfare frame.

# Response to passivity

- I think the use of warfare terminology is a response to the passivity and responsibility shifting in government
- This terminology is designed to excite and activate individuals to make actual change
- A final reason to use the warfare frame is because it works towards breaking down a different negative frame. It can help break down the frame that man and humanity are above nature.
- If the presence of nature among humans is something worth fighting for, it establishes ecology as equal to humans.