

1    **Title:**

2    A microbial perspective on the life-history evolution of marine invertebrate larvae: if,  
3    where, and when to feed

4

5    **Running Title:**

6    Larval life-history and associated-microbiota

7

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15

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17    oceanography

18

19 **Abstract**

20 The feeding environment for planktotrophic larvae has a major impact on development  
21 and progression towards competency for metamorphosis. High phytoplankton  
22 environments that promote growth often have a greater microbial load and incidence of  
23 pathogenic microbes, while areas with lower food availability have a lower number of  
24 potential pathogens. Trade-offs between metabolic processes associated with growth and  
25 immune functionality have been described throughout the animal kingdom and may  
26 influence the life-history evolution of marine invertebrate planktotrophic larvae in these  
27 environments. Namely, to avoid potential incidences of microbial-mediated mortality  
28 and/or dysbiosis, larvae should regulate time spent between these two feeding  
29 environments. We describe here transcriptomic and microbiome data that supports this  
30 trade-off in larvae, where larvae in a well-fed environment upregulate genes associated  
31 with metabolism and may regularly enter a state of dysbiosis, resulting in mortality. To  
32 address the hypothesis that the environmental microbiota is a selective force on if, where,  
33 and when planktotrophic larvae should feed, we present a strategy for determining the  
34 specific interactions of larvae and microbes at a scale representative of their larger  
35 pelagic environment.

36

37

38     “*Life in the sea cannot be understood without understanding the sea itself*” – Alfred C.

39     *Redfield*

40

41     **Oceanography and larval evolution**

42     The evolution of life-histories in the sea has largely been shaped by a diverse and  
43     interacting suite of oceanographic features (Strathmann 1990; Burgess, Baskett et al.  
44     2015). The oceanographic environment can be divided into four tiers of potential  
45     selective pressures: physical, chemical, biological, and microbial. Among these, the first  
46     three – physical, chemical, and biological – have been the focus of a majority of life-  
47     history research, especially in studying the evolutionary ecology of marine invertebrate  
48     larvae (Carrier, Reitzel et al. 2017). For example, the sensory systems of larvae  
49     encompassing disparate phyla with distant phylogenetic relationships use physical  
50     features of the sea spanning magnitudes in spatial scale, such as sound, turbulence, and  
51     olfactory, for navigation (Hodin, Ferner et al. 2017). Additionally, some sea urchin larvae  
52     (*e.g.*, *Strongylocentrotus purpuratus* along the Northeastern Pacific Ocean) are capable of  
53     exhibiting signs of genomic and physiological adaptions to local ambient acidity and  
54     resistance to acidification (Pespeni, Sanford et al. 2013). Lastly, some echinod and  
55     mollusc larvae are polyphenic, whereby the biological oceanographic regime, namely  
56     high or low levels of phytoplankton, selects for the expression of phenotypes geared  
57     toward better feeding performance in each regime (McAlister and Miner 2017).

58         Pathogenic microbes are known to influence the survival of numerous marine  
59     species, particularly in coastal species exposed to anthropogenic encroachment as well as  
60     ongoing climate change (Harvell, Mitchell et al. 2002). To date, microbial oceanography

61 has been given little attention when linking the microbial oceanographic environment  
62 with life-histories of marine invertebrate larvae. However, recent efforts suggest that the  
63 microbiome of marine invertebrate larvae is species-specific and distinct from the  
64 environmental microbiota (Galac, Bosch et al. 2016), which is consistent with other  
65 animals and their developmental stages (e.g., McFall-Ngai and Ruby 2000). The  
66 composition and structure of this associated microbial community is also, in part,  
67 influenced by the abiotic and biotic environment experienced by the larva (Webster,  
68 Botte et al. 2011; Carrier and Reitzel In Review). The ways by which the environmental  
69 microbiota influences the structure and composition of the host-associated microbiome  
70 remains largely unexplored, which may be a significant omission in understanding larval  
71 life histories because associated microbiota have important impacts on physiology,  
72 resistance to pathogens, development, and stress tolerance (Rosenberg, Sharon et al.  
73 2009; McFall-Ngai, Hadfield et al. 2013; Bordenstein and Theis 2015; Gilbert, Bosch et  
74 al. 2015; Theis, Dheilly et al. 2016).

75 Here, we propose the hypothesis that the environmental microbiota is a selective  
76 force on if, where, and when planktotrophic larvae of benthic marine invertebrates should  
77 feed. We specifically emphasize roles for both pathogenic bacteria and a resultant state of  
78 dysbiosis. First, we discuss when and where larvae are likely to interact with pathogenic  
79 microbiota in the environment and, by analyzing transcriptomic data for one urchin  
80 species, show for the first time the trade-off of metabolic activity and immunity in a  
81 marine invertebrate larva. This is followed by a discussion on the influence of the  
82 environmental microbiota on the state of the hologenome, which we support with  
83 sequenced-based analyses of the microbiota associated with healthy and dying echinoid

84 larvae. Finally, we conclude with a sampling strategy for determining the specific  
85 interactions of dilute densities of larvae and variable concentrations of microbes in their  
86 natural environments.

87

88 **Larval oceanography and the plankton community**

89 Benthic marine invertebrates with planktotrophic larvae typically release their gametes in  
90 synchronicity with the initiation of the spring phytoplankton bloom, as a means to  
91 maximize the period of high food availability for developing larvae (Starr, Himmelman et  
92 al. 1990). Over the course of their planktonic period, planktotrophic larvae experience  
93 structural shifts in the phytoplankton community, as it varies dynamically in space (*e.g.*,  
94 distance from shore, alongshore, and with depth), time (*e.g.*, daily and seasonally), and  
95 diversity (*e.g.*, community members). On a finer scale, the most dominant contributor of  
96 the phytoplankton community differs on a per day basis over the course of a bloom  
97 (Needham and Fuhrman 2016). During this time, archaeal, bacterial, and likely viral  
98 communities exhibit similar daily succession patterns (Needham and Fuhrman 2016),  
99 implying that archaeal-bacterial-phytoplankton daily successional patterns are  
100 biologically coupled and subsequently contribute to the rapid microbial growth and turn-  
101 over during this period (Needham and Fuhrman 2016).

102 Phytoplankton blooms are tightly regulated by the environmental microbiota  
103 (Azam 1998; Needham and Fuhrman 2016). During phytoplankton blooms, dissolved  
104 (*e.g.*, dissolved organic material, DOM) and particulate nutrients (*e.g.*, phytoplankton)  
105 are two of the primary energy sources for bacteria. Additionally, daily archaeal-bacterial-  
106 phytoplankton succession mediate increases in bloom-associated environmental

107 microbial load and DOM (McKenny and Allison 1995; Azam and Malfatti 2007). Some  
108 of the environmental microbiota (specifically bacteria and bacteriophages) colonize  
109 phytoplankton cells, while others take up and metabolize DOM (Brum, Ignacio-Espinoza  
110 et al. 2015; Sunagawa, Coelho et al. 2015). Moreover, in high nutrient environments  
111 favoring growth, some bacteria express virulence factors and other pathogenic  
112 characteristics (e.g., McKenny and Allison 1995).

113 In addition to concentrating phytoplankton during feeding, planktotrophic larvae  
114 also encounter environmental microbiota. For example, *echinopleuti* are predicted to  
115 contact as many as  $\sim 2.0 \times 10^7$  bacteria•day<sup>-1</sup> by feeding alone (Hart and Strathmann  
116 1994; Azam and Malfatti 2007), a portion of which would be consumed directly (Jaekle  
117 2017). However, this estimate represents a fraction of the total environmental microbiota  
118 encountered daily, as bacteria may contact other surfaces of the *echinoplateus*  
119 (McEdward 1984). Thus, it is inevitable that larvae interact with and ingest  
120 phytoplankton bloom-associated microbes (e.g., Rivkin, Bosch et al. 1986; Gallagher,  
121 Waterbury et al. 1994), making it more likely for larvae to encounter pathogenic or  
122 virulent species of microbes (e.g., McKenny and Allison 1995; Azam and Malfatti 2007).

123 Phytoplankton, particularly during a spring bloom, can be concentrated and  
124 provided enhanced levels of both light and nutrients for growth at two common physical  
125 oceanographic phenomena: pycnoclines and frontal zones. Planktotrophic larvae, as well  
126 as phytoplankton communities, tend to aggregate in areas directly adjacent to these  
127 physical oceanographic features (Dekshenieks, Donaghay et al. 2001; Metaxas,  
128 Mullineaux et al. 2009). This is, in part, because larvae are capable of positioning  
129 themselves vertically in the water column despite being poor swimmers (Strathmann and

130 Grunbaum 2006; Metaxas, Mullineaux et al. 2009; Arellano, Reitzel et al. 2012).  
131 Physical mechanisms and/or behaviors that result in dense aggregations of phytoplankton  
132 and associated environmental microbiota may affect life-history trade-offs for larvae. By  
133 inhabiting zones that exhibit oceanographic characteristics favoring higher amounts of  
134 food, larvae may promote growth and developmental progression. Conversely, these high  
135 productivity areas may increase the incidence of interacting with potentially pathogenic  
136 microbiota, a potentially significant source of larval mortality (Young and Chia 1987;  
137 Rumrill 1990).

138 To avoid inhabiting positions in the water column where microbe-induced  
139 mortality would be higher, larvae may vertically position themselves in zones of reduced  
140 phytoplankton abundance and bloom-associated microbiota, including surface waters  
141 (incidence of photo-inhibition) and bottom waters (below the critical depth). In these  
142 areas microbe-induced mortality may be reduced, while the combined abundance of  
143 phytoplankton and alternative dietary options remain sufficient to maintain the larval  
144 structures or developmental progression, albeit at a slower rate (Rivkin, Bosch et al.  
145 1986; Manahan, Davis et al. 1993; Feehan, Grauman-Boss et al. In Review). This implies  
146 that the pelagic period for larvae would lengthen greatly, and although microbe-induced  
147 mortality is reduced, the incidence of mortality by predation or offshore transport would  
148 be higher, assuming time-dependent relationship (Young and Chia 1987; Rumrill 1990).

149 Together, planktrophic larvae in a phytoplankton bloom face two primary  
150 feeding environments: high particulate exogenous nutrients and high microbial load with  
151 pathogenic characteristics, or low particulate exogenous nutrients and low microbial load.  
152 To inhabit the former environment larvae would need to maintain an elevated metabolic

153 rate (that promotes an accelerated development) as well as an elevated immune system  
154 (to combat the higher incident of pathogens). On the other hand, the latter requires the  
155 opposite, where low particulate exogenous nutrients and the likelihood of pathogens  
156 suppresses both metabolic activity and the need for an elevated immune system. Previous  
157 research using a diversity of animals has shown a well-characterized trade-off between  
158 the metabolic cost for growth, development, and body maintenance and functional  
159 capacity of the immune system to fend against pathogens (Lochmiller and Deerenberg  
160 2000) (Figure 2).

161 Larvae in an environment with high food and a high microbial load are predicted  
162 to exhibit trade-offs between investing energetic input in growth, development, and body  
163 maintenance (*i.e.*, feeding) or the functional capacity of the immune system (*i.e.*, defend  
164 against pathogens), but not at maximum capacity for both. At present, research has, to our  
165 knowledge, yet to directly compare the trade-off of growth and immune function in  
166 marine invertebrate larvae, but a study with echinopleuti suggests this trade-off may  
167 occur (Carrier, King et al. 2015). Larvae of the sea urchin *Strongylocentrotus*  
168 *droebachiensis* were cultured in two different feeding environments: a high food  
169 reflective of the chlorophyll maximum and a low food which was phytoplankton-  
170 deprived, like surface and deeper water. Larvae in a chlorophyll maximum-like  
171 environment, as compared to diet-restricted individuals, exhibited higher levels of  
172 expression for genes involved with various metabolic processes. Genes involved in innate  
173 immunological response, on the other hand, were expressed at higher levels in larvae  
174 experiencing restricted diets, while other immune-associated genes were expressed at  
175 higher levels within the *ad libitum* condition (Figure 3). If these gene expression patterns

176 persist in the natural environment, it would suggest that larvae concentrated in regions of  
177 high phytoplankton (and high microbial load) are unlikely to defend against  
178 environmental microbiota exhibiting pathogenic characteristics and, thus, are more  
179 susceptible to microbe-induced mortality when relying on the innate immune repertoire  
180 alone.

181

## 182 **Larval dysbiosis**

183 Both host physiology (e.g., innate immunity) and associated microbial flora act as the  
184 primary line of defense against pathogenic invaders. The composition and structure of  
185 this community, referred to as the microbiome, has been shaped over time in concert with  
186 host evolution and serves as an adaptive character for acclimating to environmental  
187 variation (Zilber-Rosenberg and Rosenberg 2008; Bordenstein and Theis 2015; Alberdi,  
188 Aizpurau et al. 2016; Carrier and Reitzel In Review). In the face of abiotic and/or biotic  
189 stressors, the composition of this community changes following the onset of a particular  
190 environmental change, which could be a stressor(s) (Carrier and Reitzel In Review). In  
191 certain cases, environment-mediated shifts in the composition of host-associated  
192 microbiota confer physiological acclimation (e.g., recruitment of microbes for tolerance)  
193 while in other situations a shift in the microbiota promotes an increase in the abundance  
194 of pathogenic species. Moreover, the latter can occur in two primary fashions: microbiota  
195 previously associated with the host increase the expression of virulent gene products or  
196 microbiota initially not associated with the host dominate the microbial community. Both  
197 of these changes can result in the host entering a state of dysbiosis (Egan and Gardiner  
198 2016).

199        Whether dysbiosis and/or pathogenic microbes is a significant cause of death in  
200    the plankton remains to be empirically measured in the field, but decades of larval  
201    culturing suggest it could be a significant contributing factor to mortality. First, to  
202    eliminate the environmental microbiota and to control microbial growth, cultures of  
203    benthic marine invertebrate larvae are often reared in 0.22-0.45  $\mu\text{m}$  filtered seawater.  
204    Following the addition of exogenous nutrients to promote larval growth, incidences of  
205    unexplained larval mortality are sometimes observed, of which can be halted following  
206    the introduction of antibiotics (Strathmann 1987; Zhang, Chen et al. 2010); J Hodin,  
207    personal communication), suggesting a likely role for pathogenic microbes. Second,  
208    pathogens evading the immune system of planktotrophic larvae resulting in disease have  
209    been reported for ecologically important bivalves. For example, (Jeffries 1982) isolated  
210    three strains of *Vibrio* from diseased *Crassostrea gigas*, and determined that each strain  
211    can collapse cultures of *C. gigas* as well as *Ostra edulis* larvae within 48 h. The two  
212    examples above suggest marine bacterial pathogens can induce larval mortality, but may  
213    the environment (*i.e.*, feeding regime) mediate dysbiosis and subsequently mortality for  
214    marine invertebrate larvae?

215        A first attempt to determine if the feeding environment can influence larval  
216    microbial communities and dysbiosis suggest the answer may be yes. We reared larvae of  
217    the sea urchin *S. droebachiensis* in seawater containing the environmental microbial  
218    community (5  $\mu\text{m}$  filtering) under exogenous nutrient conditions reflecting the  
219    chlorophyll maxima (fed *ad libitum*) and less biologically productive areas (10% *ad*  
220    *libitum* treatment) of the water column. As predicted, larvae reared in a feeding regime  
221    mirroring less biologically productive positions in the water column saw little to no

222 mortality. On the other hand, larvae reared in a feeding regime reflective of the  
223 chlorophyll maxima exhibited high mortality over the course of development, such that  
224 most or all (~3,000) larvae died. In this latter culture, we sampled healthy (as indicated  
225 by active swimming and feeding) and dying (as indicated by exposed skeletal rods and  
226 degrading tissues, no swimming, and no feeding) larvae and assayed for their microbial  
227 communities (see caption of Figure 4 for methods).

228 In this experiment, healthy larvae associated with 42 operational taxonomic units  
229 (OTUs; species of bacteria) while dying larvae associate with 61 OTUs (Supplemental  
230 Figure 1), with four OTUs being found to only associate with healthy larvae, 23 OTUs to  
231 only associate with dying larvae, and 38 OTUs to associate with larvae in both states  
232 (Supplemental Figure 2). In focusing on associated OTUs representing  $\geq 1\%$  of the  
233 sequences (90.3% of healthy larvae data; 85.9% of dying larvae data), healthy larvae  
234 were dominated by *Vibrio* (60.4%) and *Flexibacter* (26.9%) while dying larvae  
235 associated most with *Vibrio* (25.0%) as well as nine OTUs between 4% and 13% (Figure  
236 4). Most notably, in the transition from healthy to dying, *Vibrio* and *Flexibacter*  
237 decreased in abundance by 2.4- and 26.9-fold, respectively, while *Colwelliaceae* and  
238 *Thalassomonas* increased by 34.9- and 76.0-fold, respectively (Figure 4). Moreover, of  
239 the 14 OTUs associated with healthy and dying larvae (at  $\geq 1\%$  of the sequences), all  
240 exhibited  $\geq 2.3$ -fold change in abundance, with most increasing coincident with disease  
241 and projected mortality (Figure 4). This shift in the composition of larval-associated  
242 microbiota in a feeding regime reflecting the chlorophyll maxima suggests that larvae  
243 may enter a state of dysbiosis, which subsequently leads to mortality or leave larvae more  
244 susceptible to pathogenic microbiota.

245

246 **Experimental sampling**

247 One of the most significant questions in the field of marine invertebrate life-history  
248 evolution is: why are reproductive modes used by species in their ecological niche? A  
249 common means to assess this question across the world's oceans has been by correlating  
250 reproductive mode (*i.e.*, brooding, lecithotrophy, planktotrophy) with abiotic  
251 (temperature) and/or biotic (feeding regime) environment (Thorston 1950; Mileikovsky  
252 1971; Marshall, Krug et al. 2012). Empirical studies of larvae in the natural environment  
253 are limited due to a number of factors, including their small size, their patchiness in the  
254 environment, and the large volume of water in which they may reside. However, in order  
255 to understand the intersection of larval biology, the feeding environment, and microbial  
256 communities, it is necessary to study these processes in the field. Laboratory studies  
257 would not accurately depict larvae physiology when feeding on complex food or the  
258 diversity of microbial assemblies because many species cannot be cultured in the  
259 laboratory (Carrier & Reitzel In Review). In addition, laboratory studies are not able to  
260 account for larval vertical position in the water column as this may also affect their odds  
261 of survival (Figure 1; Figure 2). Our understanding of the selective pressure pathogens  
262 and/or environment-mediated dysbiosis have on life-history evolution cannot broadly be  
263 assessed; however, proper experimental design would facilitate investigations of the  
264 contribution that the environmental microbiota and pathogens has on the planktotrophic  
265 life history.

266 Planktotrophic larvae develop from small, energy-poor eggs with only enough  
267 maternal input to complete embryogenesis and develop feeding structures, requiring an

268 energetic contribution from exogenous resources to reach competency for  
269 metamorphosis. Planktotrophs require longer periods in the water column, primarily  
270 because of the relatively large quantity of energy needed to complete development, thus  
271 resulting in an extensive dispersal often 10s to 100s of kilometers (Thorston 1950;  
272 Mileikovsky 1971; Strathmann 1985; Shanks 2009). Many groups of benthic marine  
273 invertebrates primarily reproduce via planktotrophy due to the low energetic investment  
274 per offspring to facilitate a broad geographical distribution, increase gene flow, limit the  
275 likelihood of exposure to benthic predators and local extinction (Signor and Vermeij  
276 1994; Pechenik 1999). These benefits are mostly offset by high rates of mortality,  
277 primarily from inadequate food conditions, temperature, offshore transport, and the  
278 inability to locate a suitable habitat for settlement (Thorston 1950; Young and Chia 1987;  
279 Rumrill 1990; Morgan 1995).

280 A source of mortality in the plankton not mentioned in seminal syntheses  
281 (Thorston 1950; Young and Chia 1987; Rumrill 1990; Morgan 1995) is microbe-induced  
282 mortality, whether directly by pathogen(s) or by dysbiosis. Our combined evaluation of  
283 the literature and empirical data suggest that feeding environment may mediate microbe-  
284 induced mortality in larvae through dysbiosis, and other studies suggest pathogen  
285 (*Vibrio*)-induced mortality. This is not to say, however, that microbes may not contribute  
286 to other sources of mortality in the plankton. For example, in the face of temperature  
287 stress larvae of the Great Barrier Reef sponge *Rhopaloeides odorabile* shift upwards of  
288 ~34% of their associated microbiota (Webster, Botte et al. 2011; Carrier and Reitzel In  
289 Review), but whether this results in *R. odorabile* larvae being more susceptible to  
290 pathogens or entering a state of dysbiosis remains unknown. This may be answered by

291 rearing *R. odorabile* larvae (or larvae from other species) to elevated temperatures,  
292 exposing them to known larval pathogens, and assaying for mortality.

293 For a majority of species, we suggest ship-based field work would be necessary  
294 for environmentally relevant studies of larvae-microbes interactions (Figure 5). The  
295 physical, chemical, biological, and microbial parameters of the water column are  
296 characterized (e.g., CTD), and larvae are subsequently sampled at the chlorophyll  
297 maximum as well as in less productive surface and bottom waters (Figure 5). To best  
298 preserve the larval hologenome, samples would be preserved (e.g., RNAlater)  
299 immediately at sea, then the genomic DNA is extracted, 16S rRNA gene is amplified and  
300 sequenced (e.g., MiSeq and 454-pyrosequencing), and microbiota are classified using  
301 bioinformatic programs (e.g., QIIME and mothur) (Figure 5) (Williams and Carrier  
302 2017).

303 This proposed fieldwork would aim to determine if vertical position in the water  
304 column and relative feeding regime would be an important initial step to determine  
305 whether oceanographic features of the sea influence the biology and ecology of marine  
306 invertebrate larvae and their associated microbiota, and further how this then contributes  
307 to mortality in the plankton. Going forward, it remains paramount to compliment current  
308 endeavors in larval ecology and life-history evolution with the study of associated  
309 microbiota towards a holistic effort to understand the evolutionary ecology of benthic  
310 marine invertebrates and their larvae. Approaches that address these questions may be  
311 best served at the intersection of oceanography and life sciences (Theis, Dheilly et al.  
312 2016; Carrier and Reitzel In Review).

313

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321

322

323 **Figure Legends**

324

325 **Figure 1.** Predicted encounters between environmental microbiota and larval types by  
326 feeding. Predicted encounters were calculated as the product of maximum clearance rates  
327 of larvae reported by Strathmann (1987b) and mean bacterial abundance in the sea  
328 reported by Azam and Malfatti (2007). Here, each data point represents a species of  
329 benthic marine invertebrate orginally presented in Strathmann (1987b) that was  
330 reproduced and summarized in Supplemental Table 1.

331

332 **Figure 2.** Metabolic-immune trade-off faced by larvae. Within the water column, larvae  
333 likely face two contrasting environments: high particulate exogenous nutrients and high  
334 microbial load with pathogenic characteristics, or low particulate exogenous nutrients and  
335 low microbial load. In the former environment, larvae would require an elevated  
336 metabolism for growth and development, and an elevated immunity to defend against  
337 pathogenic bacteria (bottom right). On the other hand, because both food and pathogens  
338 are lacking, the latter environment would require relatively much less investment in  
339 metabolism and immunity (top left). Because animals face a trade-off between  
340 investment in metabolism and immunity, the former environment is more likely to see  
341 incidences of mortality while the latter does not.

342

343 **Figure 3.** Differential gene expression and Gene Ontology (GO) analysis for  
344 *Strongylocentrotus droebachiensis* larvae in high nutrient (*ad libitum* feeding) and low  
345 nutrient (restricted diet) environments. Bubble size corresponds to differential in average

346 GO expression (TPM) for each condition, with some of the more highly expressed GO  
347 groups labeled. REVIGO coordinates for GO groups correspond with semantic  
348 terminology with similar functional groups closer together (Supek, Bošnjak et al. 2011).  
349 (A) Transcripts associated with metabolism GO groups were significantly higher in  
350 larvae experiencing *ad libitum* feeding, with transcripts associated with diverse metabolic  
351 processes (lipid, lipoprotein, glutathione, etc.) having the highest expression. (B) Even  
352 though transcripts associated with the innate immune response were high for the  
353 restricted diet treatment, there were other immune related GO groups also expressed at  
354 high levels in *ad libitum* feeding environment. Although the experimental design for the  
355 data presented here (from Carrier et al. 2015) was not designed using the proposed  
356 hypothesis, the gene expression profiles of the host larvae follow similar predictive  
357 patterns as outlined by our hypothesis. For raw transcriptomic data see Supplemental File  
358 1.

359  
360 **Figure 4.** Bacterial communities associated with healthy and dying *Strongylocentrotus*  
361 *droebachiensis* larvae. Here, larvae of *Strongylocentrotus droebachiensis* larvae were fed  
362 *Rhodomonas ad libitum* in the presence of the environmental microbiota (5  $\mu$ m filtered  
363 seawater), upon which high incidence of mortality was observed following two weeks of  
364 rearing. Both healthy and dying larvae were collected and stored in RNAlater. The larval  
365 hologenome was extracted and the V3/V4 region of 16S rRNA gene was amplified and  
366 sequenced. Forward and reverse raw read files were combined using PEAR (Zhang,  
367 Kobert et al. 2014), sequences in combined raw read files were trimmed using  
368 Trimmomatic (Bolger, Lohse et al. 2014), Fastq to Fasta using custom code, and

369 taxonomically characterized using QIIME 1.9.1 (Caporaso, Kuczynski et al. 2010), with  
370 an OTU cutoff of 97%. Bar charts presented here, at the genus level, represent the  
371 microbiota associated with pools of approximately 50 healthy and dying *S.*  
372 *droebachiensis* larvae from the same culture.

373

374 **Figure 5.** Experimental approach to characterize the intersection and dynamics of the  
375 environmental metagenome and larval microbiome. The hypothesis proposed here  
376 suggests that a life-history trade-off exists between feeding environment (and, therefore,  
377 larval growth and time spent in the plankton) and exposure to virulent microbes. Being  
378 that the microbial load, with particular species being more virulent in that setting, is  
379 elevated in areas of high biological productivity and thus for larval growth, avoidance of  
380 microbial-mediated diseases is higher in areas of reduced productivity (*i.e.*, surface or  
381 deep waters). As such, to avoid microhabitats with elevated microbial load and  
382 subsequent virulence, larvae may have adopted different mechanisms to cope with this  
383 trade off, including behavioral avoidance, changes in expression of the immune system,  
384 or shifts from dependence on exogenous food. Empirically testing these hypotheses  
385 requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines profiling the water column for  
386 oceanographic properties (*i.e.*, CTD), sampling larvae in different portions of the water  
387 column (*i.e.*, plankton tows), identifying and comparing the microbial community with  
388 metagenomics (*e.g.*, Illumina MiSeq, QIIME) and experimentally testing larval  
389 performance and survival in laboratory cultures. This type of approach would test  
390 whether larvae in areas of high chlorophyll exhibit dysbiosis and a subsequent microbial-  
391 mediated mortality.

392

393 **Figure S1.** Alpha rarefaction of observed number of operational taxonomic units (OTUs)  
394 in each larval sample with diamonds representing dying larvae and squares representing  
395 healthy larvae. This analysis was completed using the alpha\_rarefaction.py script in  
396 QIIME 1.9.1 (Caporaso, Kuczynski et al. 2010), with the rarefaction curves being  
397 recreated in Adobe Illustrator CS6.

398

399 **Figure S2.** Shared and unique host-associated microbiota of healthy and dying  
400 *Strongylocentrotus droebachiensis* larvae. Healthy *S. droebachiensis* larvae associated  
401 with 42 operational taxonomic units (OTUs) while dying larvae associate with 61 OTUs,  
402 with four OTUs being found to only associate with healthy larvae, 23 OTUs to only  
403 associate with dying larvae, and 38 OTUs to associate with larvae in both states. OTU  
404 summaries were generated using the summarize\_taxa\_through\_plots.py script in QIIME  
405 1.9.1 (Caporaso, Kuczynski et al. 2010) and the shared and unique OTUs were then  
406 counted by hand. This Venn diagram summary was created using Adobe Illustrator CS6.

407

408

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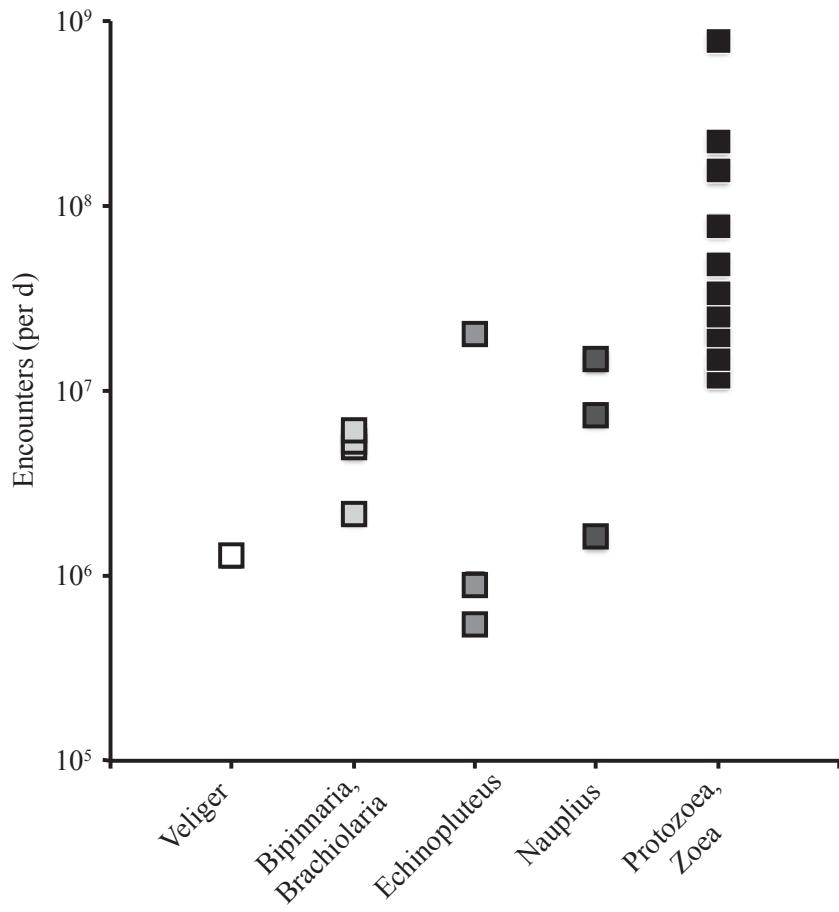
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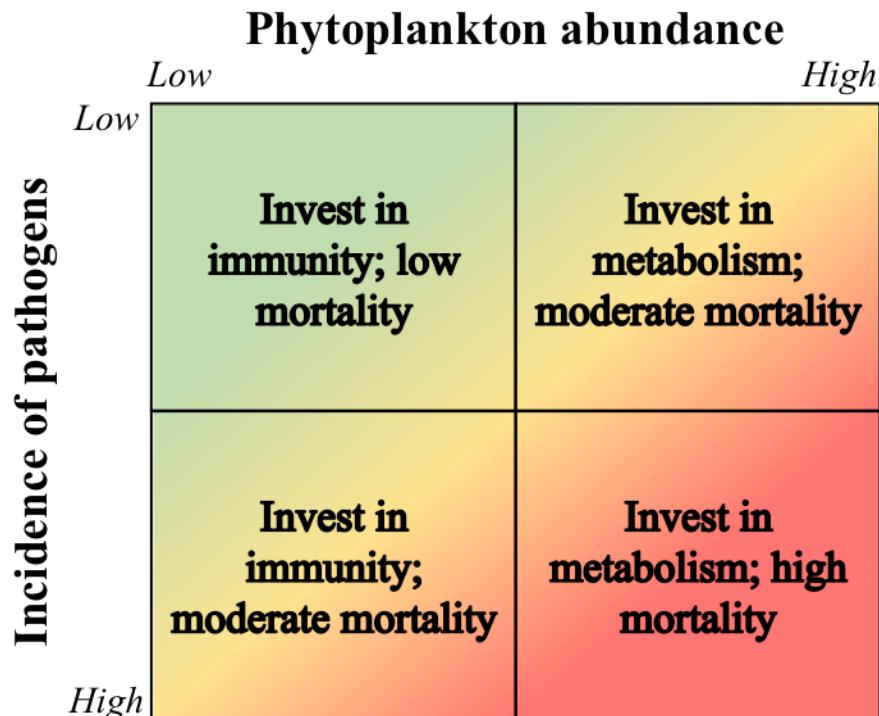
1 **Figure 1.**

2



6 **Figure 2.**

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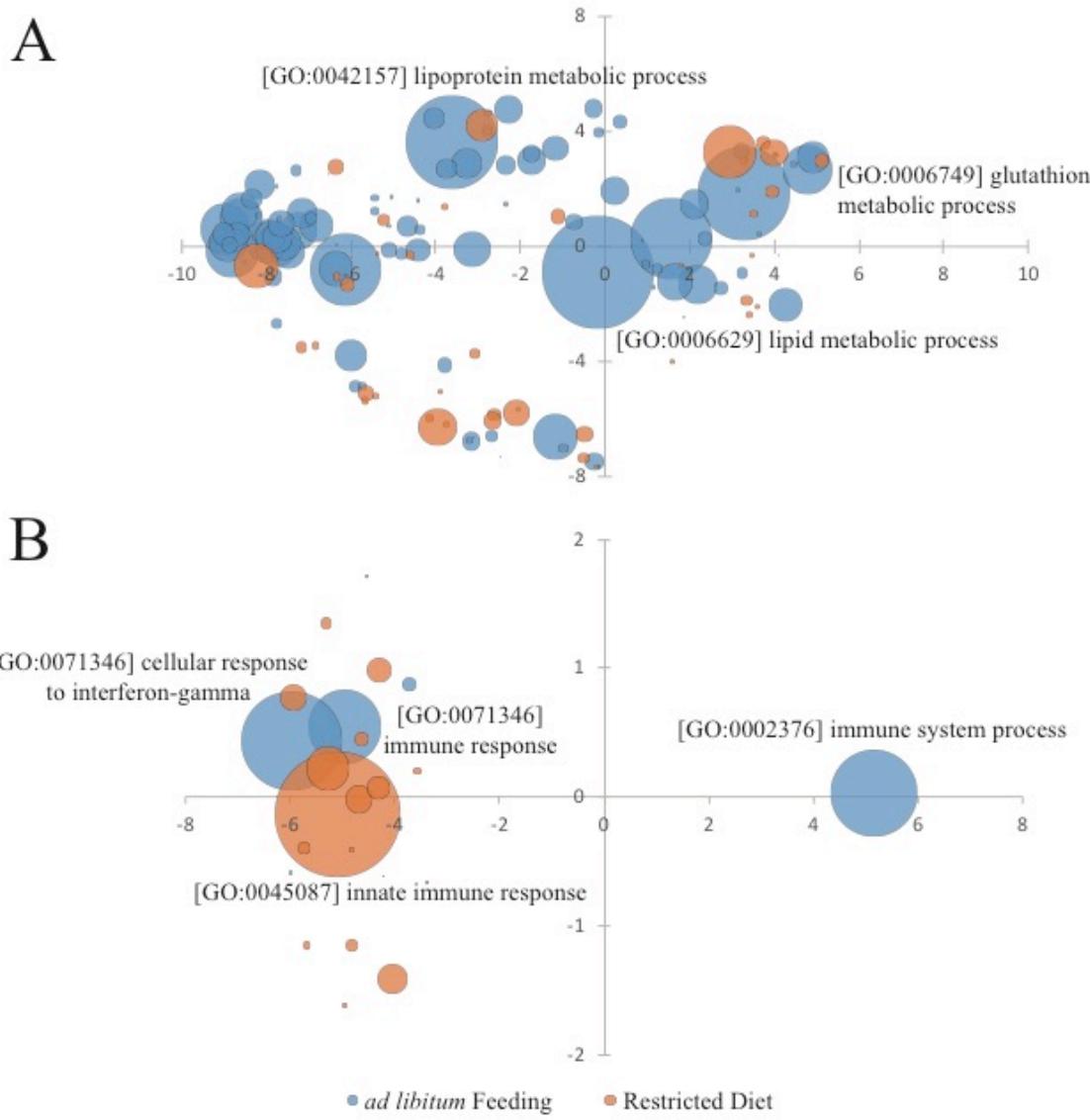
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11 **Figure 3.**

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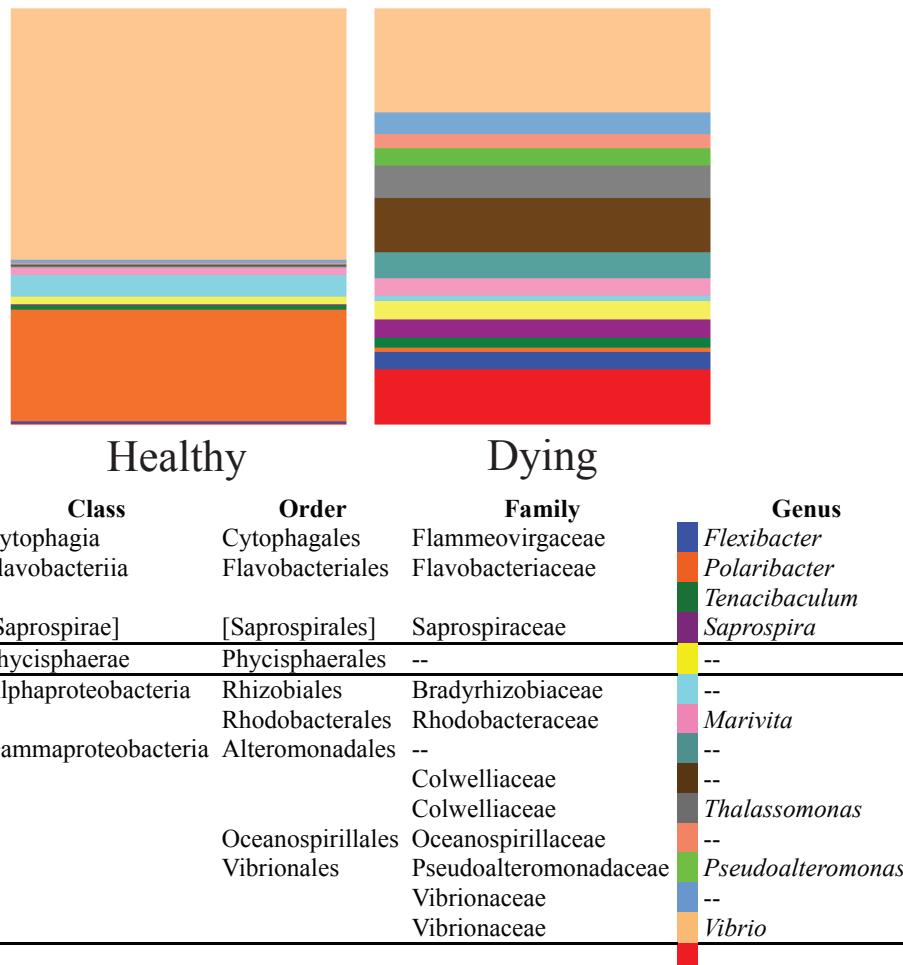
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16 **Figure 4.**

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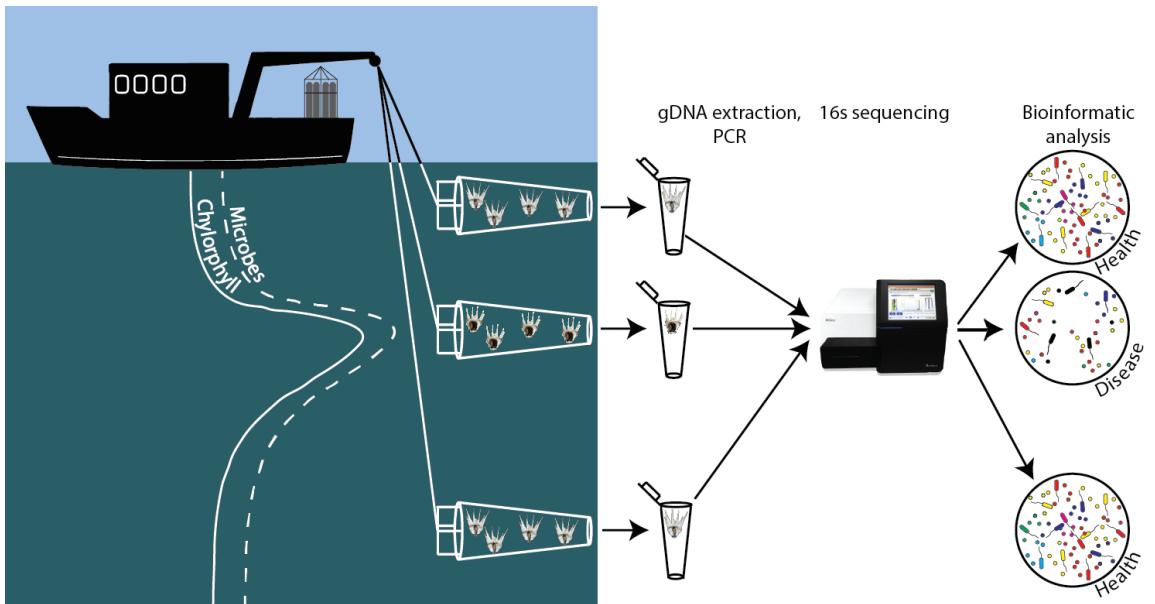


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21 **Figure 5.**

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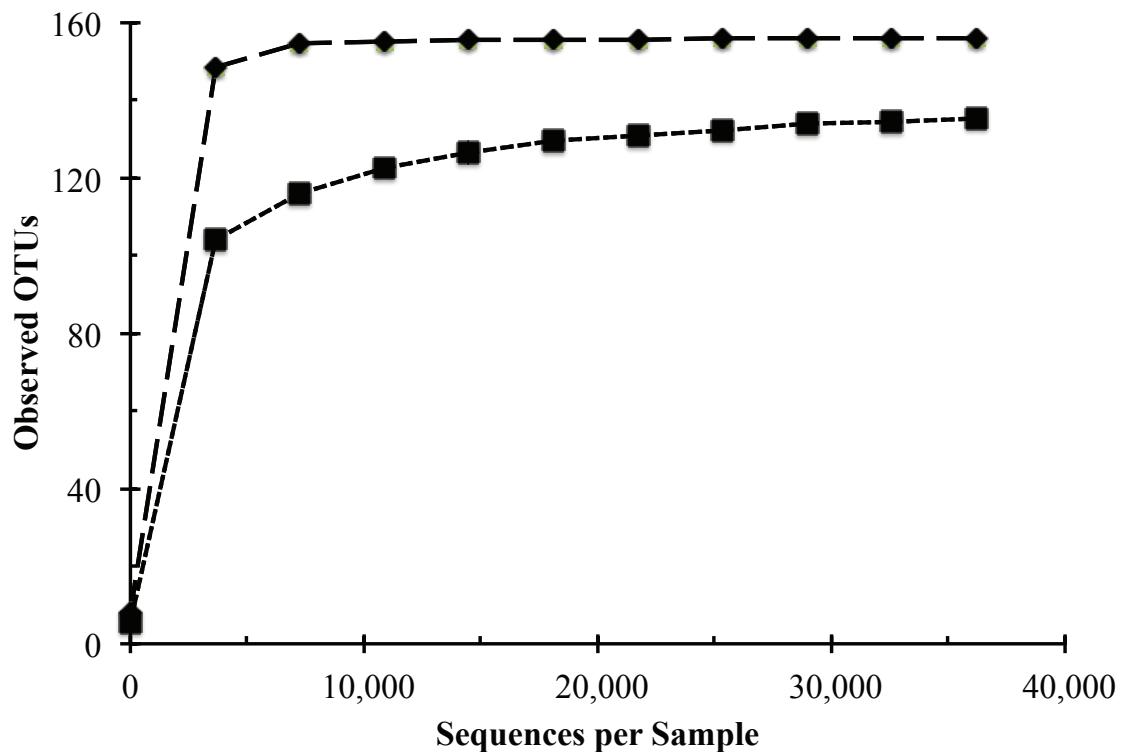


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1    **Supplemental Figure 1.**

2



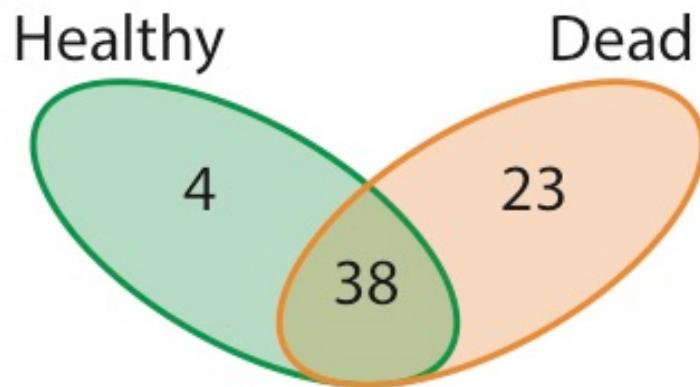
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6 **Supplemental Figure 2.**

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<b>Species</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Clearance (mL/d)</b>	<b>Encounters (per d)</b>
<b>Veliger</b>			
<i>Mytilus edulis</i>		1.3	$1.3 \times 10^6$
<i>Crassostrea gigas</i>		0.1	$1.3 \times 10^5$
<i>Ostrea edulis</i>		0.9	$9.0 \times 10^5$
<i>Teredo navalis</i>		4.1	$4.1 \times 10^6$
<i>Illyanassa obsoleta</i>		1.8	$1.8 \times 10^6$
<b>Bipinnaria, Brachiolaria</b>			
<i>Acanthaster planci</i>		5.0	$5.0 \times 10^6$
<i>Luidia foliolata</i>		6.3	$6.3 \times 10^6$
<i>Evasterias troscheli</i>		2.2	$2.2 \times 10^6$
<i>Pisaster ochraceus</i>		5.3	$5.3 \times 10^6$
<b>Echinoplateus</b>			
<i>Paracentrotus lividus</i>		0.9	$9.0 \times 10^5$
<i>Arbacia lixula</i>		0.5	$5.4 \times 10^5$
<i>Dendraster excentricus</i>		20.2	$2.0 \times 10^7$
<b>Nauplius</b>			
<i>Calanus pacificus</i>	N3	1.6	$1.6 \times 10^6$
	N4	7.5	$7.5 \times 10^6$
	N5	15.0	$1.5 \times 10^7$
	N6	15.0	$1.5 \times 10^7$
<b>Protozoea, Zoea</b>			
<i>Penaeus indicus</i>	P1	12.0	$1.2 \times 10^7$
	P2	12.0	$1.2 \times 10^7$
	P3	26.0	$2.6 \times 10^7$
	Z1	34.0	$3.4 \times 10^7$
	Z2	20.0	$2.0 \times 10^7$
	Z3	20.0	$2.0 \times 10^7$
<i>Sergestes similis</i>	P1	14.7	$1.5 \times 10^7$
	P2	49.0	$4.9 \times 10^7$
	P3	157.0	$1.6 \times 10^8$
	P3	79.0	$7.9 \times 10^7$
	Z2	800.0	$8.0 \times 10^8$
<i>Chionoecetes bairdi</i>	Z2	221.5	$2.2 \times 10^8$