GROWING JUST FOODSCAPES: A CASE STUDY OF EAST NEW YORK FARMS!

by

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Abstract

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There is a growing literature focusing on the social problems of industrial agriculture and food deserts. The former critiques industrial agriculture for being environmentally unsustainable, putting small farmers out of business, and making people unhealthy. Instead, it looks to the alternative food movement and how small-scale local production and consumption networks can be a viable counter to industrial agriculture. The latter focuses on where and whether food deserts exist, the effects of living in food deserts, and how to increase fruit and vegetable consumption for residents living in food deserts. However, neither of these literatures have generally focused on how lower income communities are responding to the social problems of industrial agriculture and food deserts. Many lower income and nonwhite communities are self-organizing to address food deserts, food flight, and food redlining by re-building local food economies under the slogan of food justice, spaces I refer to as *just foodscapes*.

This research interjects into the literature on industrial agriculture, food deserts, and the alternative food movement through a case study of a food justice organization located in a lower income African-American and Caribbean community in Brooklyn, that of East New York Farms!, In focusing on how East New York Farms! is self-organizing to address inequities in the

food system, how race and class positionalities shape its food justice projects, and how its food justice projects attempt to realize social justice and environmental sustainability this research documents four major aspects of the food justice movement. First, food deserts are not natural but social products of particular political, economic, and racial processes. Second, public subsidy of farmers markets is necessary in order to produce these market spaces as a win-win for out-of-town farmers and lower income consumers. Third, race and class positionalities are central to the ecological, economic, and cultural processes embedded in food justice movements. Fourth, food justice organizations frame food justice as an alternative to both the corporate dominated conventional food system and the race and class privileged alternative food movement, one that seeks to create an anti-racist food movement as well as a food system devoid of institutional racism.

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Chapter 1 / Introduction

Within the last few decades a food justice movement has emerged within low income communities in the United States and interjected itself into the future of food debate by critiquing the dynamics of industrial agriculture and the conventional food system as well as the alternative food movement rooted in small farmers, farmers markets, and community supported agriculture. This introduction explicates the central factors shaping the emergence of the food justice movement and the role of the food justice movement in the future of food debate by locating this discussion in a case study of the food justice organization East New York Farms! in East New York, Brooklyn.

Welcome to East New York: Where the Local Food Movement Meets the Food Justice Movement

What we are doing here in East New York and the reason we are doing this is for the sake of kids, sake of women with children, sake of senior citizens…and this is what needs to be done.

Joanna Wilkens, community gardener in East New York

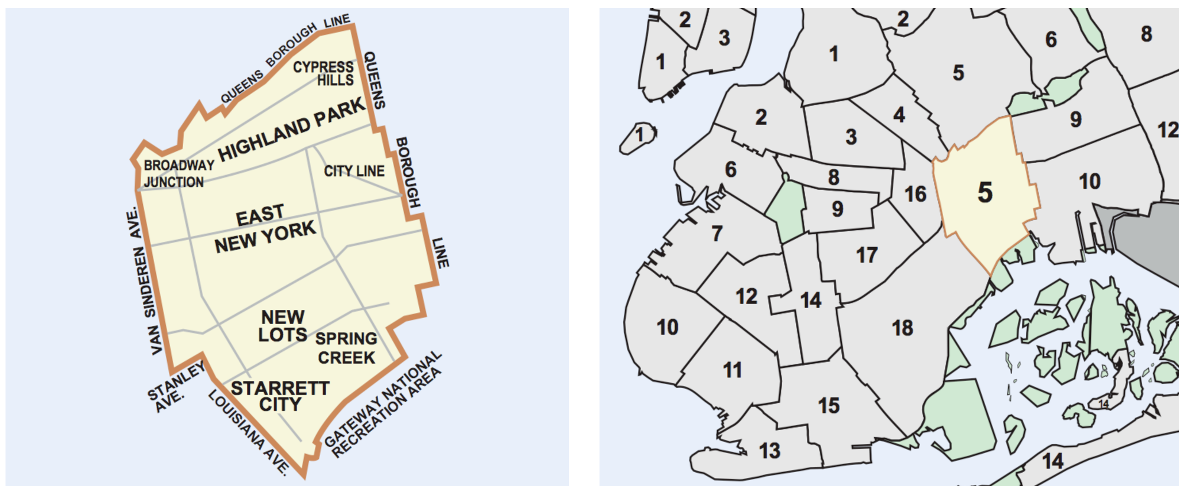

Illustration 1.1: East New York

East New York is the easternmost section of Brooklyn and is coterminous with Brooklyn Community Board 5, home to more than 183,000 people as of 2010. Geographically, East New York is made up of several neighborhoods, including City Line (central east), Cypress Hills (north east), New Lots (central), Spring Creek (southeast) and Starrett City (southwest) and encompasses 3,586 acres or 5.6 square miles. As one community, East New York is bounded to the north and south by green space, Highland Park and Jamaica Bay respectively. To the west are the neighborhoods of Brownsville (Van Sinderen Avenue) and Canarsie (Louisiana Avenue) and to the east are the neighborhoods of Woodhaven, Ozone Park, and Howard Beach, all of which reside in Queens County. Lying between these communities, East New York indicates the abrupt end of Brooklyn's Black Belt and clearly demarcates the residual boundaries of the post-war white flight into Queens and Long Island. In 2010 Brownsville, Canarsie and East New York were 70.8, 67.4 and 51 percent Black, 19.1, 9.4 and 39 percent Latino and 2.9, 15.7 and 2 percent white while Woodhaven, Ozone Park and Howard Beach were 5.3, 5.3 and 1 percent Black, 43.6, 33.6 and 9.2 percent Latino, and 48, 48, and 92.5 percent white (NYCDCP 2012a-f). East New York is therefore overwhelmingly black and Latino, but also a community of immigrants. One in three residents are foreign born as of 2000, with the top three countries of origin being the Dominican Republic, Guyana, and Jamaica, at 7.7, 4.7, and 3.4 percent of the total population (NYCDCP 2012a).

Accessible by the L, 3, A/C and J subway trains, the Long Island Rail Road, numerous bus lines, the Belt Parkway and the major streets of Atlantic Avenue, Linden Boulevard, Conduit Boulevard, Jamaica Avenue, and Flatlands Avenue, an individual traversing the area will experience firsthand the uneven environment of East New York. Several cycles of economic booms and busts, strong-armed city planning, and institutional neglect and disinvestment by

private and public actors since World War II have produced East New York has a "hyperghetto" (Thabit 2005). Ravaged by urban renewal, redlining, blockbusting, and white flight from the 1940s through 1960s and then by municipal disinvestment, crack, aids, and crime from the 1960s through 1990s East New York has become known as the murder capital of Brooklyn and a "no-go" zone for New Yorkers. During the 1970s "less than one-third of the housing stock was viable," "4,500 units in existing buildings" were vacant and "one-sixth of East New York's land was vacant" (Thabit 2005:207)." The city's solution was to bulldoze entire blocks into rubble and bide time until the market decided to reinvest in East New York, a process known as planned shrinkage. As private actors refused to invest in East New York, so did the city, rebuffing the community's demand for new housing, schools, hospitals, and parks. With state and private withdrawal of investment in the built environment or human capital of East New York the formal economy shrank and the informal economy and state assistance expanded. In East New York 45 percent of adults were employed, 45 percent were not in the labor force, and 10 percent were officially unemployed. Consequently, 40 percent of households had incomes under $10,000, the community contained the second highest number of welfare recipients in the borough and 91.4 percent of public school children received free lunch (Thabit 2005:230).

While the city ignored the community's pleas for investment in its physical and social capital it expanded the prison industrial complex and the penal state through the discourse of the "war on drugs" and "law and order" (Alexander 2010; Gilmore 2007; Parenti 2008; Wacquant 2009). The outcome was an entire generation of youth lost to the prison industrial complex and the breakdown of family and community fabric. During the 1990s close to thirty percent of East New York men between the ages of 16 and 35 were arrested and around twenty percent were either incarnated, on parole, or on probation (Thabit 2005). The 75th precinct ranked in the top

two or three citywide for violent crime, registering a record 340 homicides in a single year during the early 1990s, and in 1996 East New York was one of only four community districts that had more than 350 juvenile arrests (Thabit 2005). The flipside of this incarceration of male youth was the predominance of single mother families, 42 percent in 1990 (Thabit 2005).

The Production of Food Flight and the Emergence of Food Justice in East New York

Research on East New York and its next-door neighbor, Brownsville, have made strong connections to the educational, employment, housing, drug, and crime problems faced by these communities and the legacy of the color line, the failure of the civil rights movement and racial integration, and the private and public disinvestment in lower income Black and Latino communities fueled by neoconservatism (Eisenberg 1999; Posner 1977; Pritchett 2003; Ross 1996; Thabit 2005). At the same time, these books have historically ignored how this disinvestment and planned shrinkage shaped the foodscape of these communities. In East New York, as in many communities across the country, white flight and municipal disinvestment entailed grocery store flight and real estate redlining—where banks and public agencies drew lines around communities that were not investment worthy—and became de facto food redlining. As the upwardly mobile were pushed out of urban environments by federal transportation and housing policies and credit lines for urban businesses and residents in lower income communities were cut off food retailers followed the disposable income to the suburbs where land, labor, insurance costs, and taxes were less (Winne 2009). This out movement of grocery stores, which produced the grocery store gap in lower income communities, paralleled the expansion of fast food establishments post-war, whose business strategy depended on high volume, low prices,

and low labor costs, factors that attracted it to communities like East New York (Schlosser 2002).

These conditions produced East New York as a community with access and affordability issues in regards to fresh healthy produce. Within the public health literature areas such as East New York are often known as food deserts, an area where it is difficult to obtain produce that is both fresh and affordable, or food swamps, an area where healthy food options are crowded out by the predominance of cheap food choices that are high in fats, sugars, salts, and oils. At the same time, it was not as if all the grocery stores left East New York. A few remained, but those that did were poorly run and operated and specialized in what community residents call "second-hand foods." Produce was of the lowest quality, often past its sell by date, and spoiled.

Even today, East New York is still considered an obesogenic environment, an environment that incentivizes the consumption of calorie-dense nutrient-empty foods high in salts, sugars, fats, and oils while discouraging the consumption of fruits and vegetables and engagement in physical exercise (Lake et al. 2010; Lee et al. 2011). This is attributable to the predominance of cheap prepackaged, processed and ready to go foods, the small number of grocery stores in the area, the low quality of the grocery stores, the lack of park space in the community, and the reality that public space can be unsafe, which keeps people indoors. Consequently, East New York has higher rates of hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and sugary drink consumption and lower rates of fruit and vegetable consumption and weekly exercise than the Borough of Brooklyn or New York City (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Health Measures for East New York, Brooklyn

Category / 2010	East New York	Brooklyn	NYC
% who ate no servings of fruit/vegetable per day	15.1	12.6	11.6
% who drink one or more 12oz. sugary drinks	44.7	42.1	30.3%
% overweight	33.7	33.2	34.8
% obese	31.2	26.8	23.4
10 minute or longer walk to purchase fruit/veg per day	36.1	33.7	33.0
Hypertension	40.5	28.9	28.6
High cholesterol	26.1	30.7	29.9
Diabetes	13.0	9.7	9.3
Category / 2003			
0 days per week of exercise	53	47	43

NYCDPHMH, Community Health Profiles, 2003, 2010.

Despite the history of the community and all the obstacles it has had to face over the years, and still faces, there are notable signs that life in East New York is getting better. For long-term residents, East New York in 2013 represents a sea change from its nadir of the 1970s through 1990s. Crime rates have declined significantly since the 1990s, as has welfare, with the percentage of the population on AFDC/TANF down 66 percent (Table 1.2). Schools, health-care centers, affordable housing, community gardens, and even a suburban-style shopping mall have replaced empty lots and boarded up stores within the last two-decades.

Table 1.2: Crime Rates in East New York, Percent Change From 1993 to 2012

Category	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Felony Assault	Burglary	Grand Larceny	Grand Larceny Auto	Shooting Victims	Shooting Incidents
% Chg ‘12 vs. ‘93	-85.7	-38.5	-73.2	-.37.9	-64.6	2.2	-89.4	-94.8	-94.5

(PDCNY 2013).

Additionally, and most importantly for this research, the area is awash in guerilla and community gardeners and vacant lots are continually being converted into food producing community gardens and urban farms. The community has over 60 community gardens, the most in any community in New York City, and is home to one of the oldest food justice organizations in New York City, East New York Farms! Founded in 1999 East New York Farms! seeks to counter the disinvestment in the community and inequities in the food system through a network of over 30 food-oriented community gardens, a youth farm, two market-oriented urban farms, a farm stand, and a farmers market. In and through these spaces East New York Farms! expresses a politics of food justice emphasizing community-controlled food systems, interculturalism, and state-led redistribution of wealth.

The Future of Food Debate

East New York is therefore one of a multitude of communities within the United States that is contributing to the burgeoning food justice movement, which seeks to address race and class inequality within the food system by forcing a debate over the future of food, not just with industrial agriculture but also within the alternative food movement and its history of race and class privilege. In doing so, East New York Farms! and the food justice movement are attempting to shift the focus of food to include the urban as well as the rural, culture as well as economics, lower income consumers as well as upper income consumers, access and affordability concerns as well as environmental sustainability and small-farmer politics, and bottom up community-controlled food projects rather than top down technocratic food projects.

Historically, the debate over the future of food has generally been focused on rural rather than urban communities and the conflict between small-farmers and industrial agriculture. One

central question has framed the debate: *Which way forward for food?* Will the model be large-scale agribusiness or smallholder agriculture? Is a new green revolution necessary for feeding the world or can ecological methods meet existing and future need? Are genetically modified seeds the solution to poverty and hunger or a mechanism that allows companies to privatize thousands of years of genetic history? Should agricultural commodities be subject to global free-trade policies or regionally protected markets? Is market-led or redistributive-led land reform better at combating poverty and hunger? How should the food dollar be distributed between producers, processors, manufactures, and retailers? All these questions center upon who is in control *of,* who benefits *from*, and how democratic *are* agrifood systems? Within this debate over the future of food circulates two different paradigms shaping conceptions of development, agriculture, and the environment: global corporate industrial factory farming (agricultural modernization) and local food economies rooted in place-based communities and ecosystems (foodsheds) (Jarosz 2000).

The agricultural modernization paradigm, supported by most transnational corporations, nation-states, and wealthy philanthropists such as Bill Gates, calls for the continued expansion of large-scale industrialized agriculture, monocultures, cash-crop agriculture, and genetically modified seeds (Bello 2009; Holt-Gimenez 2009; Patel 2007a, 2007b). Redistributive mechanisms, either of land, wealth or state-supports for smallholder agriculture are rejected in favor of the privatization, liberalization, and industrialization of food systems (Rosset et al. 2006). In this model, industrial agriculture is claimed to be able to feed the world and counter hunger and poverty, but only if farmers embrace biotechnology alongside of mechanization, fossil fuel inputs, and specialization in cash crops for export to global markets. (Goodman et al. 1987; Kloppenburg Jr. 2004 Mgbeoji 2005; Shiva 1997; Smith 2007). This modernization

paradigm effectively views the peasant and small farmer, and with them, moral economies and localized food economies, as bygone relics of prehistory. Smallholder agriculture and ecological farming are framed as the cause of poverty, hunger, and famine, rather than as a solution to them. For the pro-modernization camp, small-scale farmers are preventing the globalization of a more "profitable" industrial agriculture and a more "efficient" global agri-food system controlled by transnational corporations in the production, distribution, and consumption channels.

The alternative food movement strongly rejects the claims of agricultural modernization's advocates: that it has been able to reduce poverty, hunger, and famine, that mechanization and monoculture farming increase food output, that biotechnology can increase the ecological sustainability of factory farming, that food is purely an economic commodity that can be disconnected from cultural lifeways, and that corporations should have control over organizing the food system (Allen 2004; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010; Hinrichs and Lyson 2009; Lyson 2004; Petrini 2010; Shiva 2005; Wittman et al. 2010). The movement itself is made up of a variety of oppositional food movements, such as sustainable agriculture, civic agriculture, slow food, locavorism, food justice, and food sovereignty (Table 1.3). Within the United States sustainable agriculture, civic agriculture, slow food, and locavorism have been most dominant. As a result, the alternative food movement within the United States is historically rooted in localizing food production by connecting small-scale farmers and affluent consumers through the economic spaces of farmers markets, farm stands, and community supported agriculture programs and the discursive frames of sustainable agriculture and agrarian democracy (Allen et al. 2003; Friedmann 1993; Feenstra 1997; O'Hara & Stagl 2001; Jarosz 2000, 2008).

Table 1.3: Movements within the Alternative Food Movement

Slow Food emerged from leftist communists in Italy who opposed the homogenization of culture bound up within fast food and fast culture. In opposition to fast food slow food and a slow life is proposed trough cultivating tastes and celebrating the pleasure of food and conviviality. Slow food advocates for support of artisanal production rooted in place-based cultures and ecological farming methods. It is predominantly located in the Global North as a market niche amongst affluent white consumers, restaurateurs, and small farmers.
Locavorism is primarily a consumer-based response to alienation from place and the fossil fuel intensity of industrial agriculture. Emphasizing a micro-politics of buying green and buying local it emphasizes environmental sustainability and personal health and is generally found in the Global North amongst affluent consumers and the farmers and restaurateurs who utilize the language as a market niche.
Civic agriculture contends that local food systems are environmentally sustainable, rebuilds the independent middle class, creates community, and reconnects people to place. The movement is primarily rooted in farmers markets, farm stands, and community supported agriculture programs and is a response to the globalization and corporatization of a food system that hurts small farmers.
Food Justice emerged out of environmental justice, civil rights, labor rights, and farmworker movements to address race- and class-based inequities within the food system. It is primarily found in lower income urban communities and rural farmworker communities and emphasizes social and economic justice, community development, culturally appropriate foods, and just sustainability.
Food Sovereignty emerged from the Global South out of indigenous, peasant and smallholder movements that oppose structural adjustment, free trade policies, and corporate control over the food system. Food Sovereignty demands people's control over the food system, state supports for smallholders, and advocates for direct action to realize these ends.

The alternative food movement's critique of agricultural modernization is three-fold: ecological, social, and physiological. Ecologically, industrial agriculture and monoculture factory farms have been critiqued for their dependence on fossil fuels, overconsumption of water, role in deforestation, desertification and salinization, employment of genetically modified seed, production and release of carbon and nitrogen, and destruction of biodiversity and ecological integrity (McNeil 2001; Manning 2004; Ponting 2007; Shiva 2005). In addition, industrial agriculture's extensive pollution of the landbase with pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers

and animal waste have drawn the ire of local communities, environmentalists, and consumers (Carson [1962] 2002; Edwards and Ladd 2000; Wright 1990).

The social critique of agricultural modernization is based on an ongoing rural exodus entailing billions of people, the collapse of millions of small farms globally, and hundreds of thousands of farmer suicides that have been directly attributed to the industrialization of agriculture (Araghi 1995; Bryceson 2009; Bryceson et al. 2000; Friedmann & McMichael 1989; McMichael 2008). Much of this social crisis is rooted in the expansion of free market policies to agricultural trade since the 1980s. Free trade and structural adjustment policies have deregulated commodity markets and defunded public subsidies for small farmers (Holt-Gimenez et al. 2009; Mazoyer & Roudart 2006; Rosset 2009; Rosset et al. 2006). Deregulation opens up foreign countries to cheap agricultural imports from heavily subsidized farmers in the United States and European Union, which destroys the markets for domestic producers, while the elimination of domestic supports for small-holders means that they are unable to obtain access to land, credit, and agricultural markets and therefore the means to remain as farmers. These policies have had disastrous consequences for the Global South, intensifying poverty, hunger, and inequality. While free trade was claimed to bring benefits to everyone involved within agriculture it has largely be used by transnational corporations to consolidate control over the food system by compelling the world to adopt an agricultural model organized around industrialization, large-scale plantations, and external fossil-fuel inputs (Bello 2009; McMichael 2005, 2006).

Besides these two longstanding critiques of factory farming a new physiological critique has been levied against industrial agriculture and corporate control of the food system, this is the obesity critique. With the increase in corporate power over the food system there was a push towards heavily processed food that is calorie-dense, nutrient-empty, and high in fats, oils,

sugars, and salts (Nestle 2007; Simon 2006). This was a deliberate move on the part of food manufacturers in order to turn the cheap inputs of corn and soy, amongst others, into the foundation of corporate profits (McMichael 2007). Yet, public health literature has found strong links between these heavily processed foods and increases in obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cholesterol, and hypertension (Nestle 2007; Simon 2006). Rooted in supporting small farmers, local food production, ecologically sustainable growing practices and healthy whole foods, the alternative food movement has subsequently utilized the triple crises of farmers, the earth, and the human body to popularize a critique of industrial agriculture and build support for an alternative food movement.

Food Justice: Shifting the Future of Food Debate

One place where the future of food debate is playing out is in New York City, which has long been seen as a mecca for the alternative food movement. It is home to the most farmers markets and community supported agriculture programs in one United States city, the largest community gardening program in the nation (GreenThumb), the largest food cooperative in the country (Park Slope Food-Coop) as well as the grassroots Brooklyn Food Coalition and the well-known food non-profits GrowNYC and Just Food, which support local food production through farmers markets, community supported agriculture, farm schools, and urban agriculture. Beyond these traditional spaces of the alt-food movement, New York City is also home to a growing rooftop farm movement, including Eagle Street Farms, the Brooklyn Grange, Bright Farms, and Gotham Greens. Ranging from under 10,000 square feet to over 100,000 square feet, these non-profit and for-profit farms seek to make urban farming a viable and "green" form of employment and have garnered national press from CNN, Reuters, and the Wall Street Journal.

As a result, if you were to ask people where local food is "hot" in Brooklyn and New York City you might hear people mention affluent farmers markets at Grand Army Plaza or Union Square, community supported agriculture in the gentrified neighborhoods of Park Slope or Fort Green, the rooftop farms of Brooklyn Grange or Eagle Street Farm, hipsters operating guerilla gardens in Bed-Stuy, or the numerous local food restaurants throughout the borough, most of which are operated or supported by whites with economic or cultural capital. Many would not connect the local or alternative food movement to East New York, a lower income community in Eastern Brooklyn that is predominantly Black, Latino, and Caribbean, or East New York Farms!, a food justice organization within the community that supports a network of community and backyard gardens and operates a farmers market, a farm stand, a youth program, and urban farms.

This research seeks to explain why lower income communities like East New York have generally been written out of the alternative food movement, what the food justice movement is about, and the roots of the conflict between the food justice movement, the alternative food movement, and industrial agriculture. In fact, a shift in attention and research towards communities like East New York is necessitated by the convergence of several debates and movements: the poverty of sustainability, the missionary mentality of local food projects, the politics of obesity and food deserts, and the food sovereignty and food justice movements. All of these debates and movements have thrust communities like East New York and organizations such as East New York Farms! into the future of food debate and shifted the discourse towards addressing food inequities and institutional racism in the food system.

The Poverty of Sustainability

Despite the positivity of the alternative food movement, particularly its claims that it can save small farmers, the planet, and consumers from the ravages of industrial agriculture, there has been a growing critique of the sustainability discourse and green consumer politics of the alternative environmental and food movements (Allen 1999, 2008; Allen and Guthman 2006; Allen and Sachs 2005; Alkon 2011; Guthman 2008a, 2008b, 2011). Environmental sociology has long studied social system eco-system interactions, focusing on how communities are responding to the pollution and degradation of ecosystems and its effects on the quality of human life (Gould et al. 1996, 2008; Schnaiberg 1980). Of special interest has been the creation of a "metabolic rift" within industrial agriculture that ruptures the nutrient flow maintaining eco-system integrity and productivity (Foster 1999). This occurs through industrial agriculture shifting towards fossil fuel inputs rather than utilizing "organic" inputs of night soil and plant matter. The metabolic rift is part and parcel of the larger industrialization of agriculture, also known as the treadmill of production, which destabilizes ecosystem processes through intensifying both withdrawals of nutrients from the landbase and additions of toxic elements under the guise of economic growth and profit maximization (Gould et al. 2008). In doing so, environmental sociology has looked at the root causes facilitating the destruction of ecosystems, such as industrialization and economic growth imperatives, as well as the attempts to create more environmentally sustainable social systems, for instance, local food systems, recycling programs, and street science programs (Allen 2004; Corburn 2005; Pellow 2004). What environmental sociologists have found is that class and race relations not only shape the social distribution of environmental goods and bads but that the alternative food movement has long framed itself as a sustainability movement privileging preservation and conservation issues over social justice

concerns (Agyeman 2005; Agyeman et al. 2003; Bullard 1990; Allen 2004; Allen and Sachs 2005).

This critique, known as the poverty of sustainability, underscores that local food movements have reproduced many of the same inequities that shape the mainstream environmental movements (Allen and Sachs 2005; Guthman 2011; Slocum 2006, 2007). In stressing healthy eating through nutrition education and adjusting consumer behaviors through buying local campaigns these programs focus on a consumer-centric model of voting with your dollars. Consequently, the alternative food movement has become rooted in race and class privilege because their economic models ignore the unequal distribution of wealth where food access and affordability are correlated with race and class positionality: one cannot act on knowledge if one does not have voice in the market. There is therefore a feedback loop between the discourses, economic models, and memberships of the alternative food movement that reproduces institutional racism and inequity in the food system by effectively excluding lower income and nonwhite actors from these spaces (Alkon 2012; Alkon and McCullen 2011; Allen 1999, 2008; Allen and Sachs 2005).

This market centric model of paying more for food is subsequently claimed to not only be unjust but self-defeating in terms of building a social movement, as its membership will only ever be a small and privileged section of the population (Agyeman 2005). Without incorporating social justice concerns alongside of sustainability concerns the alternative food movement will only ever be a market niche rather than a social movement, one that will either coexist alongside of industrial agriculture or be coopted by industrial agriculture. To shift the discourses, economic models, and movement actors within the alternative food movement, environmental justice and food justice advocates suggest that there is a need to move beyond sustainability to

"just sustainability," which puts justice, equity, and redistributive politics at the core of sustainability politics (Agyeman 2005). In moving beyond an exclusive focus on stewardship the sustainability movement and environmental justice and food justice movements could be brought together into one large movement, one that is multiracial and interclassed (Agyeman 2005). But the emergence of a multiracial and interclassed just sustainability movement requires embracing the environmental and food justice turn away from preservation and conservation projects and rural farming communities, the traditional projects and locales of mainstream environmental and food movements, towards urban environments, lower income communities, and Black and Latino communities.

The Missionary Mentality of Local Food Projects

Recently, the alternative food movement has attempted to address these critics and become more inclusive by bringing local food to lower income communities through farmers markets and school gardens. However, Julie Guthman (2008a, 2008b; 2011) has underscored how these efforts often fail to realize just sustainability desires because they reflect a disempowering missionary mentality. These good food projects, which are often external to the community and operated by middle class whites, tend to express a politics that presumes lower income communities don't know what healthy food or environmental sustainability is, don't know how to grow food or be sustainable, and that "if they only knew" what "good food" is then they would eat it instead of fast food (Julie Guthman 2008a, 2008b; 2011). The import of consumer-based healthy food politics into lower income communities is problematic because it continues to prioritize nutritional education and voting with your dollars as central to alternative food politics, ignoring the class- and race-based barriers limiting local food purchases as well as

several reports on farmers markets in lower income communities that emphasize price points and limited disposal income as key barriers to patronage, not merely nutritional education (Briggs et al. 2010; Fisher 1999; USDA 2001). Additionally, in privileging outcome over process, these projects fail to address a central component of environmental and food justice politics, inclusion of the community into decision making processes. Lower income and nonwhite communities have had to live with asthma, cancer, and obesity, in food deserts and food swamps, and next to waste incinerators and petrochemical plants precisely because they have been marginalized from political power and had no voice as citizens, not consumers (Bullard 1990; Bullard and Chavis Jr. 1999; Bullard and Waters 2005; Luke and Foster 2000; Pellow and Brulle 2005). Unless local food projects restructure power relations between lower, middle, and upper income communities as well as white, black, and Latino communities they will continue to be paternalistic and inequitable and fail to realize just sustainability.

The Politics of Obesity and Food Deserts

Alongside of the alternative food movement's turn towards lower income communities the discourse of food deserts and obesity have thrust these very same communities into the national spotlight. Increasing ill-health, namely increases in the rate of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, and heart disease, have fueled a crisis where both public and private actors are extremely worried about the healthcare costs associated with an aging population. Based on a public health discourse that has named obesity as the central problem facing the country a sizeable literature on food deserts has emerged within the last decade (Hendrickson et al 2006; Larson et al. 2009; Morland et al. 2002; Thomas 2010; Treuhaft and Karpyn 2010). This literature has found that race and class positionality is strongly connected to

proximity to fast food restaurants, grocery stores, and supermarkets, and fruit and vegetable access (Block et al. 2004; Larson et al. 2009). The more affluent and whiter a community is the higher probability of their living by a grocery store or supermarket, having access to fruits and vegetables, and lower probability of living by fast food restaurants (Treuhaft and Karpyn 2010). The opposite relationship holds for lower income and black and Latino communities (Treuhaft and Karpyn 2010). Coterminous with this shift towards research on food deserts is the realization that access to and affordability of "healthy" food is not universal within the United States and that heavily processed and manufactured foods are oftentimes cheaper, not just more plentiful, than fresh fruit and vegetables. Therefore, the literature has emphasized that food inequities are not just spatial but economic as well, with barriers to healthy eating being rooted in the built environment as well as the political economy of food.

However, the majority of the food desert literature is focused on issues of measurement and asks questions, such as, What constitutes a food desert? Where do food deserts exist? And how many people live in food deserts? As a result, most of the food desert literature does not focus on the social production of food deserts. This literature gap can be addressed through environmental sociology and environmental justice literature that roots environmental inequities in political and economic processes, particularly institutional racism and racialized histories of marginalization and exclusion (Agyeman 2005; Pellow and Brulle 2005). This social history of food deserts serves as an important corrective to ongoing solutions to solve food deserts, many of which are targeted initiatives that seek to change peoples eating habits in lower income communities through building grocery stores, setting up farmers markets, creating school gardens, or greening food vendors and bodegas. While these projects are good natured many of these food projects are nonlocal projects operated by public or private actors with little input

from the community itself, reflecting a top-down paternalistic or technocratic solution to the public health crisis that ignores just sustainability goals of democratizing decision making processes. Without changing power relations inequity still remains, since consumer-based politics do not address the fundamental factors producing food inequities in the first place, the racialized economic and political processes of urban renewal, municipal disinvestment, and white flight.

The Food Sovereignty Movement

Overall, there is a strong push in the United States towards top-down technocratic solutions to food inequities that privilege consumer politics of buying green and healthy. While this is not uncharacteristic, given the American propensity towards individual-level solutions to collective-level problems, it does create conceptual and political barriers to understanding the framework of just sustainability and its relationship to the social movement of food sovereignty. The food sovereignty framework is important because the food justice movement shares many affinities with the food sovereignty framework, which create barriers between the food sovereignty and food justice movement and the alternative food movement in the United States.

Globally, the response to the ecological and social crises of agriculture, particularly in rural communities, has not taken the pathway of buying green or changing the points of food consumption in communities but the creation of one of the largest social justice movements today. Arising from existing peasant, indigenous, and smallholder movements in Latin America, over the past twenty years the food sovereignty movement has become global in scope by focusing on reshaping the political economy of agriculture and critiquing the current food system dominated by corporations and industrial agriculture. The food sovereignty framework moves

beyond merely conflating local or alternative food with Jeffersonian democracy, environmental sustainability, and healthy food. It is explicitly anti-corporate, privileges the agricultural producer over all other actors, and opposes free trade, structural adjustment, and the conversion of food into a mere commodity. Against a singular global market where food is treated as a profit maximizing activity, food sovereignty advocates for an alternative development paradigm oriented around the decentralization of economic and political power through democratizing control of the food system (Canada 2006; Desmarais 2007, 2008; McMichael 2008; Menser 2008; Patel 2007b). Central to this democratization is the demand for the localization of food economies in order to reconnect people and land, production and consumption, social justice and environmental sustainability (Bennholdt-Thomsen & Mies 1999; Bennholdt-Thomsen et al. 2001; Shiva 2005).

La Via Campesina best encapsulates this movement. Born in 1993, La Via is an international peasant, indigenous and small-farmer rights organization consisting of more than 200 million farmers in 150 member organizations in seventy countries. La Via pioneered and championed the concept of food sovereignty as the "people's right to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" (Holt-Gimenez 2009: 146). For La Via, food sovereignty—encompassing the rights to land, seed, water and food— necessitates state-led and people-led redistributive land reform and the restructuring of production and consumption circuits to facilitate the revitalization of small "multi-product" farmers and with them vibrant local rural community economies (Rosset 2009). Unlike the agricultural modernization paradigm, which is largely focused on increasing the profits of transnational corporations, food sovereignty is at its root a jobs program to counter the mass collapse of small farms globally, the

high rates of un- and under-employment in rural and urban areas of the Global South, and a political strategy to address hunger and malnutrition by producing for immediate human needs rooted in local, regional, and national populations rather than abstract and global commodity markets. Through blending "agroecological science" and "local knowledge," food sovereignty advocates that an alternative epistemological and ontological framework that privileges "socially just" farming can be produced. This entails rearticulating the relations between people, labor, place, and food to facilitate the democratization of the agrifood system. Food sovereignty therefore seeks to build more just and sustainable relations through re-localizing flows of nutrients, value, and power, and producing a new inclusive politics of place organized around social and ecological reproduction, subsistence, and autonomy. Therefore, food sovereignty moves beyond a food politics that is consumer centric, technocratic, or focused on nutrition education in favor a food system rooted in people's ownership of the means of food production, and centered on social livelihoods, culturally appropriate foods, and feeding people.

The Food Justice Movement

While there is a lot of research on food deserts, how to measure them, where and whether they exist, and the effects of living in food deserts (Block et al. 2005; Hendrickson et al. 2006; Larson et al. 2009; Morland et al. 2001; Segal 2010; Treuhaft and Karpyn n.d.; Thomas 2010), there is a dearth of material engaging with the bottom-up community-based local food economies that have arisen in racially oppressed communities. Many low-income nonwhite communities are ravaged by state and capital disinvestment, environmental pollution, and exclusionary processes linked to ghettoization (Hirsch 1998; Pellow and Brulle 2005; Pritchett 2003; Sze 2006; Thabit 2005; Wacquant 1994). Prominent outcomes of these processes are high

levels of un- and under-employment, collapsed household and community incomes, increased crime and poverty rates, and a legacy of polluted bodies and spaces. There has been considerable research on these problems but the economic restructuring of urban areas and the flight of capital out of nonwhite communities has also produced food flight, communities where fresh, healthy and affordable foods are nowhere to be found, as microwave meals, snack foods, fast food joints, and liquor stores dominate the consumption spaces of the "hyperghetto." In response to these practices, many communities of color are attempting to address food flight by re-building local food economies under the slogan of food justice, spaces I refer to as *just foodscapes*.

Just foodscapes often utilize the traditional spaces of the alternative food movement—community gardens, urban farms, farmers markets, and CSAs—but fuse them with anti-racist and anti-oppression pedagogies and forms of food production and distribution prioritizing social justice and social livelihood concerns (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Alkon and Norgaard 2009; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010; Holt-Gimenez and Wand 2011; Levkoc 2006; Sbicca 2012;). Within these communities local food is conceptualized as a bottom-up community-development conduit that can maintain and revitalize cultural identity, build intergenerational relations, provide "green" jobs, reduce crime and poverty, raise environmental awareness, generate independent income streams, and counter the production of unhealthy bodies in their communities. Food justice movements therefore aim to re-localize flows of nutrients, value, and power in order to challenge ethnic/race and class inequities within the current structures of the industrial food system and the alternative food movement. At the same time, food justice struggles shift the environmental justice movement away from reactive struggles that merely try and stop environmental bads from being located in lower income communities of color towards proactive

projects that aim to locate environmental goods within these very same communities. In doing so, food justice expresses the hallmarks of the just sustainability frame, decision making power and redistributional outcomes, and in doing so infuses the alternative food movement with many aspects of the global food sovereignty movement.

Why Food Justice and Why New York City?

These tensions within and among the alternative food movement, the food justice movement, and the system of industrial agriculture in relation to access and affordability, food deserts and food flight, sustainability and social justice, solidarity and paternalism, lead to three research questions that pushed the research project towards East New York and East New York Farms!:

- How are communities self-organizing to address inequities in the food system?
- How do race and class positionalities shape food justice projects?
- How do food justice projects attempt to realize social justice and environmental sustainability or "just sustainability" aspirations?

These questions are woefully understudied. Only a few studies, academic and non-academic, have been published that investigate the successes and failures in realizing food justice within low income nonwhite communities. Some of these studies focused on farmers markets (Alkon 2012), farm worker justice (Brown and Getz 2011; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010), closing the grocery store gap (Haletky and Taylor 2006; Sbicca 2012; Winne 2009), community gardens (Mares and Pena 2011), national-level coalition formation (Morales 2011), and the social production of food deserts (McClintock 2011). Many of these publications are found in one edited collection on food justice (Alkon and Agyeman 2011) and much of this work has focused on California

(People's Grocery), Massachusetts (Nuestras Raices), Connecticut (Hartford Food System), Milwaukee (Growing Power) and Florida (Coalition of Immokalee Workers).

This study expands on this research by bringing in New York City, which has long been a mecca within the alt-food movement but is also home to a vibrant and ever expanding food justice movement. Notables include Corbin Hill Farm (2009), La Finca del Sur (2009), and Taqwa Community Farm (1992) in the Bronx and Added Value (2000), Brooklyn Rescue Mission (2002), East New York Farms! (1998) and Ecostation: NY (2010) in Brooklyn. Despite several of these projects being over a decade old they have only received cursory press coverage or vignette exposure in academia. There are no in-depth case studies of food justice projects in New York and only one published article on East New York Farms, which focuses on the role of youth in building sustainable communities (Hung 2004).

The dearth of material on food justice projects in New York City is particularly interesting since it stands in such stark contrast to the environmental justice movement in New York City, which has been the focus of numerous articles and chapters (Angotti 2008; Checker 2001; Corburn 2002; Gandy 2002; Greenberg 2000; Miller et al. 1996) as well as a full-length book on the subject (Sze 2007). In addition to this, there are many articles, chapters, and books on community gardens in New York City and the struggle to maintain these spaces in the face of real estate development, certainly an environmental justice and food justice issue, although they do not frame it as such (Deutsch and Brusi 2005; Eizenberg 2008; Fox et al 1985; Lawson 2005; Mikalbrown 2002; Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny 2004; Schmelzkopf 1995; Smith and Kurtz 2003; Staeheli et al. 2002; von Hassell 2002, 2005). Since there is a strong relationship between community gardens and the food justice movement in New York it is particularly intriguing why food justice movements have not been written about before and in more depth.

Why East New York Farms!

This research aims to fill in this literature gap through a case study of the oldest food justice organization in Brooklyn, East New York Farms!, analyzing how the community-based organization is addressing racial inequity in the food system.

What Makes it Representative

East New York Farms is a valuable case study because it speaks to larger themes and trends within the food justice movement: community-based organizations, multi-functional local food projects, securing the means for cultural reproduction, and emphasizing a discourse of institutional racism.

The food justice movement can be better understood through East New York Farms! because the organization is not an external imposition designed to bring good food to others but an organic part of the community that emerged in 1998 out of a participatory planning process between local and borough level stakeholders. This internal development within the community is reflective of other food justice organizations in Minnesota, California, and Massachusetts (Alkon and Agyeman 2010; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010).

Likewise, East New York Farms! is not merely a stand alone farmers market or community supported agriculture program. Akin to other community-based food justice programs it combines many different local food projects under the roof of one organization, in this case, a Saturday farmers market, a Wednesday farm stand, a community supported agriculture program, a youth farm, and two market-centered community farms, as well as a mini-grant program to facilitate food production and distribution within the community and the provision of technical assistance and resources to 30 community gardens in East New York

In removing land from the market and placing it in land trusts for community food production East New York Farms! mirrors other urban food justice projects that are rooted in securing control over the means of cultural reproduction. East New York Farms! emphasis on creating a community-based food system is consequently more than a politics of consumer access and affordability but a politics of agricultural knowledge and cultural identity rooted in maintaining access to land and food production. While in East New York Farms! these practices are tied to a predominantly Caribbean population nationally we see this with Latinos, African-Americans, Southeast Asians, and West Africans, amongst others.

Finally, when East New York Farms!, discusses the history of East New York Farms! and East New York it roots this in the institutional racism of urban renewal, redlining, blockbusting, and the municipal disinvestment of planned shrinkage. In doing so, East New York Farms! speaks to the broader aim of the food justice movement to fuse racial politics and food politics, underscore that race matters, and explain how institutional racism continues to structure the organization of the food system.

What Makes It Unique

Alongside of East New York Farms! being able to speak to larger dynamics ongoing within the food justice movement it also expresses the particularities of place: specifically its location within a preexisting community center, its intercultural racial politics, and its struggle against Wal-Mart.

What makes East New York Farms! stand apart from other food justice organizations is that it is run out of United Community Centers (UCC), an intercultural community center in East New York with a long history of social justice organizing dating back to the 1950s. As the

parent organization United Community Centers provides East New York Farms! with a spatial footing in the community and a historical consciousness that can be lacking in other food justice projects that have not been institutional features within the community for nearly half a century. In fact, United Community Centers' struggle and ultimate failure to realize integration from the 1950s through 1970s and prevent municipal disinvestment from the 1970s through 1980s provides the background to understanding how food flight and food redlining occurred and how through East New York Farms! United Community Centers is continuing its intercultural and community organizing politics.

East New York Farms!, influenced by its location in United Community Centers, is explicitly anti-sexist, anti-racist, and intercultural, welcoming all those who believe in its principles of "unity through difference" (Eisenberg 1999). Not all organizations within the food justice movement embrace United Community Centers' or East New York Farms! politics of interculturalism though. For instance, food justice projects rooted in Black Nationalism emphasize black self-determination and black self-respect through a racial politics of segregation that eschews interracial cooperation (McCutcheon 2011). For instance, Black Nationalists ousted the famous sociologist Edna Bonacich from a local food project in Los Angeles because she was a white female.[1] East New York Farms! ability to unite whites, African-Americans, Caribbean's, and Latinos through a politics of food justice provides a different reading of the food justice movement than those bound up with racial segregation.

Another unique attribute of East New York Farms! is that it has had to directly address whether corporations such as Wal-Mart are part of the food justice movement. There is an ongoing debate within the food justice movement about the role of corporations, particularly Wal-Mart, in realizing food justice. While for many this is merely an ideological debate East

New York Farms! was part of a broad based coalition in New York City that fought against the siting of a Wal-Mart Supercenter a mere two miles south of East New York Farms! East New York Farms! staff can therefore speak directly about their conception of the in/compatibility of food justice organizations and dominant corporate food retailers, beliefs that can be situated within the ongoing discussion internal to the food justice movement of the role of corporations in the food justice movement.

Methods & Purpose

This dissertation began through contacting David Vigil, the farm manager and volunteer coordinator at East New York Farms!, and requesting permission to volunteer and write about what East New York Farms! was doing. After coming out to a volunteer day in the Spring of 2011 and speaking with David Vigil about my intentions I became a regular volunteer at East New York Farms! on every Saturday for the duration of the 2011 season and was eventually welcomed into the East New York Farms! fold. The volunteer days rotated between the United Community Centers youth farm, a one-half acre farm that is located adjacent to United Community Centers on Schneck Avenue and Livonia Avenue, and Hands and Heart garden, a one-half acre community garden affiliated with East New York Farms! that is located on New Lots Avenue between Georgia Avenue and Alabama Avenue. I volunteered at the United Community Centers youth farm the first and third Saturdays of the month and Hands and Heart Garden the second and fourth Saturdays of the month. My visits at East New York Farms! soon expanded beyond Saturday's to include regular Wednesday visits to Hands and Heart to assist community gardeners as well as the farm stand that ran from 3:30PM to 6:30PM. It was through these activities that I became acquainted, relatively quickly, with East New York Farms! staff,

the youth interns, community gardeners, and farmers market vendors—being a regular volunteer at a small community organization can do this. At the end of the 2011 season my volunteering had been acknowledged with a certificate for "outstanding efforts as a volunteer" by East New York Farms!, plots in the Hands and Heart garden for the 2012 season, and election to the position of facilitator for Hands and Heart board and general meetings.

The 2012 season witnessed a dramatic increase in my level of participation at East New York Farms!. I spent three to four days a week during the spring and summer digging deep into the everyday life of East New York Farms!, prepping beds, planting seeds, building raised beds and chicken coops, maintaining beehives, laying irrigation, and of course, the ever necessary, sometimes relaxing, but usually redundant task of weeding. All of this was on top of attending and participating in East New York Farms! and Hands and Heart monthly meetings, weekly and monthly workshops, and townhall meetings. I no longer spent Saturdays volunteering in the gardens but at the farmers market instead. I would bike over in the morning, harvest my produce—kale and bok choy in the spring, zucchini and tomatoes in the summer, kale, tomatillos, and hot peppers in the fall—drop it off with the youth at the share table, and hang out with the vendors and gardeners for the rest of the day until the market closed at 3PM. It was during this time that I would take in the sights, smells, and sounds of the East New York Farms! farmers market, its produce, cultural events, and hot food and beverages. I chatted up Mike Rogowski about being a small farmer selling in East New York while buying his delicious sweet corn, apples, and peaches. I conversed with Johanna Wilkens about the history of East New York Farms! while enjoying her roasted sweet corn and herbal teas. I chatted up Dennis, Marlene, and Paulene about Jamaican food and culture while buying their hot sauces, hot peppers, lemongrass, and callaloo drinks and soups. I hung out with Janelle at the market

managers table, assisted with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) machine, and learned about the public income supports and purchasing power programs at the farmers market. I also enjoyed watching and cheering on all the musical and cultural events that transpired during the course of the season, from the hot pepper festival and the poetry slam, to the Puerto Rican musician and Afro battle.

Over these two seasons I spent countless hours at gardens and markets talking to community gardeners, the youth, neighborhood residents, and East New York Farms! staff about growing food: what they grew, how they grew it, why they grew it, the barriers to growing and selling food in East New York. I inquired about what they did with their produce, chickens, or honey. Whom did they give it to and how did they distribute it? Did they keep it for themselves, give it to family or friends, or sell at the market? What logic regulated what and how much they kept for themselves, gifted away, and sold? Since many residents grew up overseas and continued to maintain strong connections to their familial lands I asked about the relationship between their food practices and self-identity.

Through a blend of ethnography, open-ended interviews, and utilizing publicly obtainable demographic data, primary and secondary literature, and historical archives I was able to develop a theoretically informed description of what food justice in East New York looks like, its strategies and its barriers, by employing inductive research to find out how communities are self-organizing to address food access and affordability issues and race and class inequality in the food system. Through addressing the strategies of and barriers to food localization and a community food system in East New York this dissertation will elucidate in what ways East New York Farms! addresses re-distributional politics, counters class and race hierarchies, and provides an alterative food system rooted in community control. In doing so, this research

intends to benefit the food justice movement by providing helpful theoretical frameworks to understand itself and explain its movement to others, insightful illustrations of what *just foodscapes* can look like, and viable models for emulation. Since they exist at the margins of social power, food justice movements are thoroughly understudied. For this reason, a turn towards those at the margins of institutional power reconfigures and expands our understanding of "alternative" and "local" food movements. Moreover, in centering on food justice movements, comparisons can be made between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic food movements in addressing sustainability and equity within the food system. The intention of this work is to therefore engage in what is hopefully a critical yet reflexive and therefore a constructive dialogue with the alternative food movement to ensure that the alternative food movement and the food justice movement become one and the same.

Finally, this dissertation aims to open up a dialogue within academia between agrifood studies, environmental sociology, and the sociology of food and agriculture. An interdisciplinary framework between these areas has much to offer each other in terms of understanding and explaining the social world and facilitating the realization of food justice for everyone, be they farmworker, consumer, farmer, meat processor, dishwasher, kitchen chef, or community gardener.

Outline of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 / "The Future of Food Debates: Industrial Agriculture, the Alternative Food Movement, and the Food Justice Movement" explicates the rise and dominance of global industrial agriculture, the emergence of the alternative food movement, and the birth of the food justice movement. Food regime theory is drawn upon to document the different phases of the

expansion of global industrial agriculture and discuss the major political and economic actors and structures shaping this expansion as well as their social, ecological, political, and economic effects. The agri-food literature is then utilized to outline the emergence of the alternative food movement, its key actors and discursive frames, as well as its internal limits bound up with race and class privilege that have contributed to the development of a food justice movement. The chapter finishes by outlining the major discursive and political shifts within the food justice movement, compared to the alternative food movement, and how these shifts are rooted in its relationship to the environmental justice movement and communities that face race- and class-based inequities.

Chapter 3 / "The Social Production of Food Flight and Food Redlining in East New York" locates East New York's access and affordability problems in regards to produce and overall racial inequality in the food system within a history of the color line in the United States and white resistance to integrating Black America into the framework of the New Deal and post-war liberalism. Most of the literature on food deserts is focused on the problem of measuring food deserts, e.g. where they exist and how many people live in food deserts, rather than discussing the social roots of their existence. This chapter shifts the food desert discourse away from measurement towards social history through connecting East New York's food inequities to its political, racial, and economic history, which includes urban renewal, municipal disinvestment, the decline of the welfare state and rise of neoconservatism and the prison industrial complex. In doing so, the food effects of these political and economic processes will be brought to light to underscore the social conditions under which East New York Farms! emerged and was created to explicitly counter.

Chapter 4 “Access and Affordability Tensions at Farmers Markets: Local Food, Low Income Communities, and a Politics of Redistribution” articulates how East New York Farms! works to bring food justice to the traditionally white and privileged spaces of the alt-food movement, namely farmers markets. The tensions that exist within food justice movement between lower prices to achieve access for lower income consumers and higher prices to achieve economic viability for farmers are discussed to emphasize that price points and price consciousness, not necessarily nutrition education, is a key barrier to making farmers markets a win-win for consumers and farmers. The chapter focuses on how East New York Farms! attempt to make food prices more affordable for residents necessitates lower market prices and public assistance programs, such as income support programs and purchasing power programs. In making this case, this chapter underscores that farmers markets in lower income communities cannot be run as entrepreneurial initiatives and cannot rely solely on the market, they need public support to be economically viable and achieve access and affordability objectives.

Chapter 5 “Community Gardens in East New York: Spaces of Subjugated Knowledge, Cultural Resistance and Economic Alterity” explores the community gardeners of East New York, why, how, and what they grow, with particular emphasis placed on Hands and Hearts garden, aka New Lots Urban Farm, and Hendrix Street Farm, the two community farms most closely attached to East New York Farms! Through ethnographic experiences and interviews with gardeners community gardens are understood as a conduit for the reproduction of cultural identity, subjugated knowledge, and economic difference and framed as spaces that resist forced assimilation into the “second hand vegetables” and commodity-foodstuffs of corporate industrial agriculture, the epistemological and ontological premises bound up with industrial agriculture’s “monoculture of the mind,” and the singularity of wage-labor and the commodity-form of the

market that denigrate self-provisioning and gifting relations. The chapter underscores the culture, economics, and agricultural knowledge of community gardens and how these alternative agricultural practices are important in understanding food justice, community food systems, and social networks in marginalized communities.

Chapter 6 "Corporations, the State, and Hegemony: Recuperating the Food Justice Movement through the Discourse of Food Deserts" examines the tensions within and between the food justice movement, corporations, and the state over how to address inequality within the food system. Food Justice organizations, such as East New York Farms!, are generally bottom-up food projects prioritizing community control over the food system in order to realize racial equity in the food system. However, food justice organizations are not the only food projects focusing on lower income urban communities, there are other top-down technocratic food projects advocated by state and corporate actors, notably Michelle Obama's agreement with Wal-Mart to combat food deserts by locating Wal-Mart's in low-income communities. This conflict will be emphasized at the level of the movement itself, including the fallout of the alliance between Growing Power, the most prominent food justice organization, and Wal-Mart, as well as East New York, as East New York Farms! and numerous other community, labor, and civic actors fought against a proposed Wal-Mart that would be located a mere two miles south of East New York Farms!

Chapter 7 "Conclusion / "Food Justice: In and Against the Alternative Food Movement" summarizes the major arguments of the research. Through a discussion of Michelle Obama's white house garden the chapter underscores how the alternative food movement has historically marginalized food justice movements and a discourse of eating healthy local food still perpetuates this marginalization. Building upon this example of the race and class privilege of

the alternative food movement East New York Farms! is framed as an example of a food justice movement that brings race and class inequity to the forefront of food politics through bottom-up community-controlled food projects that emphasize the social roots of food deserts and food swamps as a form of institutionalized racism, rejects food as bare commodity in favor of food as culture, and utilizes state-facilitated redistribution of wealth to realize a just farmers market. The chapter closes by raising several potential limits or barriers to the food justice movement moving forward: the general limits of social movement organizations, tensions over the future direction of the movement, control over land, and hyperlocal politics. In discussing the internal limits of the movement the political potential of the movement moving forward is raised but left as an open rather than a closed question.

[1] Personal conversation with Carolina Bank Munoz, chair of the Sociology Department at Brooklyn College.

Chapter 2 / The Future of Food Debates: Industrial Agriculture, the Alternative Food Movement, and the Food Justice Movement

This chapter discusses the major factors shaping the globalization and industrialization of agriculture, the emergence of the alternative food movement and its critique of industrial agriculture as well as the birth of a food justice movement that critiques both industrial agriculture and the alternative food movement.

From Local Food to Global Food Back to Local Food Again

For the preponderance of human existence most people ate locally or regionally grown food that was made from scratch by family and kin, not because they wanted to but because they had to. This is hardly the case today. During the twentieth century the food system became increasingly globalized and corporatized, allowing many U.S. consumers to have access to food from around the world no matter the season, the capacity to choose between making it themselves or having others make it for them, and at historically low prices. Yet it is oftentimes less clear what social actors and economic and political factors are propelling the industrialization and globalization of food and towards what end these changes are being implemented. Moreover, given the transformations within the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of food during the twentieth century, what are the social, economic, and ecological effects of these transformations? Additionally, what explains the resurgence and growth of farmers markets, community gardens, and local food movements over the last forty years? Do these twin dynamics of globalization and industrialization and localization and sustainable agriculture express two divergent and oppositional food systems or are they mutually compatible? What exactly are the differences between the two movements in

terms of the social actors involved, how they think of and interact with the environment, and how they want to structure the food system?

Ascertaining answers to these questions and providing an understanding of the emergence of a global industrial food system and the countermovement against corporate agriculture by the alternative food and food justice movements is the aim of this chapter and is split into three sections. The first section draws upon the conceptual framework of food regime theory, explaining how the theory can help structure our understanding of social change within agricultural and food systems from the late 1800s through the twenty first century. The second section turns attention to the rise of the alternative food movement that emerged during the 1960s and 1970s with the intention of replacing the corporate food system with a more local, just, and ecologically sustainable food system. The third and final section focuses on the food justice movement by discussing its inner logics, discourses, networks, histories, and social actors as well as the roots of its critique of both the conventional food system and the alternative food movement.

The key argument for the chapter is that rather than being a liberatory alternative to the conventional food system the class and race privilege of the alternative food movement produces barriers that limit the alternative food movement's ability to base build and form coalitions, flex power against corporations, scale up from local to state and national politics, and expand beyond its white working class (farmers) and middle class (consumers) roots. Moreover, the limits of the alternative food movement enable its privilege to stand alongside of the conventional food system in a nonthreatening manner while simultaneously being profitably recuperated into the conventional food system, such as is the case of organic food. The internal limits of the alternative food movement are consequently central to understanding the fracture within the

alternative food movement between what I call the mainstream alternative food movement and the food justice movement.

Food Regime Theory: Understanding the Rise and Dominance of Global Industrial Agriculture

Within the sociology of food and agriculture food regime theory has become a dominant way of understanding and explaining the social processes and structures shaping the relationship between local, regional, national, and global food systems, and therefore the practices and processes shaping what food is grown, where it is grown, how it is grown, manufactured, and consumed, by whom and for whom, and who has power within the food system (Buttel and Goodman 1989; Friedmann 1982, 1992, 2009; McMichael 2005; McMichael and Buttel 1990). In its study of the food system food regime theory asks particular questions: What are the rules governing the behavior of social actors (states, corporations, consumers, etc.) within the food system? What social institutions provide the rules for particular food regimes and how do these rules differ from those of other periods? What normative order and discursive frames legitimate these configurations of the food system? What agro-food complexes (e.g. grain, soy, meat) are lynchpins to the accumulation dynamics of the food regime?

In asking these questions the theory is able to analytically crystallize the key pivots of each food regime in order to explain how it operates, for whom it operates, and the effects (economic, political, cultural, and ecological) of its operation, and also why its ordering patterns can weaken and suffer crisis. Guided by these questions, food regime's analysis of the food system has led it to conclude that food systems are not haphazardly configured or the outcome of the market's "invisible hand" but ordered by the intentional actions of nation states within an

interstate system and agrofood capitals (transnational corporations) within a global market system (Buttel and Goodman 1989; Campbell 2009). As a result, these two actors transform and organize agricultural techniques, trade regulations, environmental footprints, working conditions, commodity chains, property relations, national diets, industrialization and urbanization dynamics, and power relations within the food system in particular ways (Buttel and Goodman 1989; Campbell 2009; McMichael 1992).

Food regimes are therefore historically demarcated, specific, and temporary configurations of "institutional structures, norms and unwritten rules" that govern the patterns of food production and consumption at the international level (Pechlaner and Otero 2008: 352). Analysis of food regimes rests not just on the economic and political relations structuring the food system but also the cultural dynamics that undergird the political and economic relations (Friedmann 2009). Cultural beliefs, values, and norms provide the social legitimacy, the glue, which binds together and allows the food regimes to function and reproduce themselves through shaping social behaviors, "beneath the natural appearance of a working regime lie unstated assumptions that are in effect implicit rules guiding relationships, practices, and outcomes—such as which countries specialize in growing certain crops and which countries are importers (Friedmann 2005:234)."

Within food regimes there are generally periods of consolidation of power and movement behind one food regime that produce stability within the larger agrofood system (McMichael 2007). However, when the cultural norms break down or become visible through critique the social legitimacy underpinning the system declines or evaporates, the existing food regime becomes delegitimized, and the loss of authority in those currently shaping the food regime ushers in a crisis that threatens the food regime itself (Friedmann 2005). When crisis occurs

there is a corresponding period of instability and a confluence of multiple trajectories that seek solutions, propose alternatives, and vie for dominance in order to create a new food regime (Friedmann 2009). Generally one of these alternatives becomes the new food regime, imposes its normative and economic order on the agrofood system, and ushers in a correspondingly wave of stability (Friedmann 1993).

This theoretical framework has subsequently demarcated three distinct food regimes, the first food regime (1870-1914), the postwar food regime (1947-1973), the corporate food regime (1980s through today) as well as periods of crisis between the first and postwar regimes (1914-1947) and postwar and corporate regimes (1973-1980s) as well as the current tensions between the corporate regime and alternative food movement (1970s through today). While each regime pivots around different social actors, economic and political ideologies, and agricultural and trade practices, they have all played a role in shaping the global food system of the twenty first century.

The first food regime (1870-1914) coincided with and was spearheaded by the British Empire and laid the broad outlines of the international division of labor that still exists today (Friedmann and McMichael 1989). This food regime organized food trade between the colonial powers, colonies, and settler states under the twin ideologies of protected markets (monopolies for colonial states) as well as the competitive markets (free trade for settler states). Despite this difference in practice food trade was organized towards the same end, securing cheap foodstuffs to feed the growing urban proletariat. For colonial powers cheap foodstuffs were seen as central to jumpstarting the industrialization and urbanization of Europe by keeping low the costs of reproducing its workforce. Colonies in the global south were restructured as cash-crop export producers of tropical goods such as sugar, coffee, tea, cocoa, and bananas through slave labor

while the settler states of Canada, the United States, and Australia became food producers of the temperate staples of wheat and meat through household and kinship labor (Friedmann 2007).

The Postwar Food Regime

World War I and II, as well as the worldwide depression of the 1930s, threw the first food regime into crisis and after World War II a new food regime emerged. The postwar food regime (1947-1973) would be guided by the United States rather than Britain and focused on the intensive development project rather than the expansive colonial or settler state project (Friedmann 1982, 1992; McMichael 2007). The intensive development project replaced the free trade regime regulating settler state-mother country relations with domestic protectionism. Alongside of this shift in trade policies the colonial state-system underwent decolonization and ended the existence of monopolistic and exclusive trade markets between colonies and their mother countries.

While decolonization provided political autonomy to countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the international division of labor of the first food regime was maintained (McMichael 2007). Settler states would produce temperate staples of wheat and meat while newly freed colonies would produce tropical staples, both of which were grown as waged-food goods to feed the expanding global proletariat. At the same time as the international division of labor remained the industrialization of agriculture would usher in the shift from household to capitalist agriculture where wage labor replaced family labor as the dominant laboring relationship shaping food production in the settler states. Alongside of this transformation, farmer-tenants rather than farmer-owners would become more and more common during the postwar era in the United

States and Europe. In the decolonizing states the primary laboring relationship in agriculture would move from slave to a mixture of peasant and wage-labor.

The shift in laboring relations was rooted in larger changes in property and technological relations in agriculture. Farming became more capital intensive through the mechanization and corporatization of agriculture. Central to the transformation within agriculture during the postwar period was the push by the federal government and private actors towards "scientifically-managed continuous production systems" rather than "handicraft and extensive techniques of husbandry (Friedmann and McMichael 1989:106)." This meant the conversion of farms into factories and the rationalization of work rhythms on the farm. The temporality of the farm would shift evermore towards the growth imperatives and profit directives of industry and finance. This temporal shift required subsequent transformations within farming as to who controlled the labor process, who produced agricultural knowledge, and where agricultural knowledge was to be found. Rather than farmers being the producers of localized craft based agricultural knowledge, farming became relocated into the labs of public universities and private companies where agriculture was no longer a place-based art but an abstract science experiment (Goodman et al. 1997; Kloppenburg 2005).

The shift from handicraft to scientific-management was part and parcel of the transformation of farming from yeoman to corporate agriculture and the latter's practices of substitutionism and appropriationism. Both of these practices have become central to the growth and profits of agrocapitals during the twentieth century and were important in shifting power and value within the food chain away from farmers towards seed and grain companies as well as food processors and manufacturers. Substitutionism is premised on restructuring the process of agricultural production through capitalizing the farm and turning self-reliant farmers into

consumers of off-farm inputs (Goodman et al. 1987; Kloppenburg Jr. 2005; Shiva 2005). This occurs through replacing family labor and animal-power with machines, grass with cereals for livestock feed, green manure with synthetic nitrogen fertilizers, and common seed with privatized high-yielding varieties (Goodman et al. 1987; Lyson 2004; Kloppenburg Jr. 2005). The partner of substitutionism is appropriationism, which is when food processors and manufacturers seek to consolidate the majority of the food dollar within themselves by shifting food production away from final use, i.e. selling whole vegetables and fruits for direct human consumption, towards being inputs into higher-priced processed and manufactured foods found in grocery stores and supermarkets. Substitionism is therefore a way for off-farm production oriented corporations to turn the farm into a profit stream while appropriationism is a tactic for off-farm processing and manufacturing corporations to turn food into a profit stream.

The shift from final use food to food as an input bore witness to the rise of a "durable foods complex" as well as a "grain-soy-meat complex" that not only altered who held power in the food system and who appropriated the value of the food dollar but also radically transformed what types of food people ate. The durable foods complex was rooted in the emergence of an internationalized food system emphasizing mass manufactured and branded processed foods, which required durability and standardization requirements for longer shelf life as well as uniform grading and packaging criteria (Friedmann and McMichael 1989; Friedmann 1992). This shifted food consumption towards calorie dense, nutrient empty foods high in fats, oils, sugars, and salts. The "grain-soy-meat complex" structured grains and soy as cheap processed feed crops for livestock, which intensified the movement towards agricultural specialization and monoculture production patterns as farmers began to specialize in either feed crops or livestock

production. These changes cemented cheap meat as the foundation of the western diet (McMichael 2007).

Both the durable foods complex and the grain-soy-meat complex were responses by agricultural corporations to the perennial problem of food surpluses that depressed food prices (Friedmann 1982; McMichael 2007). Both tactics increased the value of inexpensive grains by diverting them from direct and cheap human consumption to more indirect and expensive methods of human consumption tied to eating meat and processed foods. But the rationalization of livestock production tended to recreate the problems of surplus disposal. Confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) significantly increased meat production and to ensure supply did not outpace demand and turn meat into a valueless product agrocapitals pushed for the creation of new domestic and global markets for all the meat being produced. This global commodity chain subsequently created new tendencies towards globally uniform standards in terms of feedlots, feedstuffs, antibiotics, and packaging (Friedmann and McMichael 1989).

Many of these dynamics were rooted in the structure of United States agriculture and its cash crop and commercial export orientation but they were also intensified and exacerbated by federal agricultural policies that emerged from the Great Depression and were oriented to maintaining farmer incomes, rationalizing agricultural production, and disposing of food surpluses (Poppendieck 1985). Food surpluses were a problem for the fifty years prior to the Great Depression and continued throughout the postwar era, shaping the domestic and foreign agricultural policies of the United States. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 gave the federal government power to "encourage exportation of agricultural commodities" and "encourage domestic consumption of such commodities or products by diverting them from

normal channels of trade and commerce" and that power became the foundation of the postwar food regime (Poppendieck 1985).

These food subsidy programs centered on recreating the market dynamics of scarcity because abundance within a market economy means low prices and that is not necessarily a good thing. Farmers wanted higher prices and processors wanted higher volumes. This pushed the government towards a program that sought to do both through disposing of the surplus through nonmarket means, which would push up prices on the market by readjusting supply and demand and keep processors in business since food continued to be produced in mass volumes. Internationally, nonmarket surplus disposal became based on food aid. Public Law 480 (PL 480) signed by President Truman in 1954 created the legal means to enable domestic food surpluses to be donated through relief channels to developing nations (McMichael 2007). "By 1956 almost half of U.S. economic aid was in the form of food aid the United States was exporting 80 percent of its wheat in the form of food aid (McMichael 2007:61)." Food aid was not merely a humanitarian measure though. It was part of a geopolitical strategy to consolidating the country's rising international power by bringing decolonized states into a pro-western capitalist world (market) order against the Soviet Bloc. It was also a corporate expansion strategy that would create new markets for U.S. farm inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, machines) and facilitate the internationalization of U.S. agriculture.

To understand why post-colonial developing nations openly embraced the United States food aid program requires understanding that the postwar food regime was premised on the geopolitics of nation-state building through protectionist policies of import substitution and food aid, internationalizing the United States agricultural model through the green revolution, and the creation of a pro-capitalist bloc (uniting the first and third worlds) against the communist

countries (the second world) (McMichael 2007). Decolonizing countries looked to the United States as the model platform for industrialization and urbanization. In order to develop like the United States decolonized states sought to increase food exports to the north to generate the trade balances necessary to jumpstart their industrialization and urbanization. Doing so entailed restructuring a "backwards" peasant agriculture through large-scale industrial farms that were capital intensive rather than labor intensive, monocultures rather than polycultures, and oriented to export crops for international markets rather than production of domestic staples. Central to this transformation within agriculture was the green revolution, which was a particular input package of seeds, fertilizers, and machines from the United States that was intended to facilitate the industrialization of food production. But while restructuring domestic agriculture would create the trade revenues to facilitate technology transfer and capital investment in industry and cities there was still the problem of keeping wage levels low enough to facilitate industrialization and urbanization. Foodstuff prices had been kept low during the modernization of Europe and with it, wage levels, due to cheap food imports from the colonies and settler states. The modernization of Africa, Asia, and Latin America sought to replicate this dynamic not through opening up new colonies or settler states but through importing cheap food through food aid from the United States.

The Corporate Food Regime

The development project's dependency on food aid as the solution to domestic food needs worked so long as global food surpluses continued in the form of cheap food aid. But when President Nixon signed an agreement in 1972-3 to sell wheat to Russia, previously not a trading partner with the free world, the grain surplus evaporated and the entire edifice of the

postwar food regime fell apart, provoking a food crisis. This food crisis led to significant transformations within the political economy of agriculture and food during the 1980s through today that were consolidated under the corporate food regime (1980s through today) (Friedmann 1982; Friedmann 2009; McMichael 1992, 2007). While the postwar food regime was nation state centric and protectionist oriented the corporate food regime is centered on the transnational corporation and free trade ideology. The national economy "development project" rooted in import substitution practices is rejected in favor of an export and outer-directed "globalization project" that prioritizes the internationalization, corporatization, and financialization of food commodity chains through a universal market (McMichael 2007).

While the food surplus initially disappeared during the 1970s with Nixon's "Great Grain Robbery" this was merely a temporary aspect of the crisis and rupture of the postwar food regime and not a long-term trend. Increased grain production by the United States, Canada, and others meant the reemergence of larger surpluses within the next decade, the dramatic decline of grain prices globally, and the continued effort to eliminate surpluses in order to keep market prices from reaching zero. While agro-capitals weathered these bubbles the ups and downs proved quite traumatic and catastrophic for both northern farmers and developing countries. The collapse of food prices alongside of sky-high interest rates ushered in the default and foreclosure of millions of small farms across the United States, echoing the collapse of rural communities during the Great Depression (Dudley 2002; Labao and Meyer 2001).

While in the United States the Midwest was particularly hard hit this was minimal compared to the pain inflicted upon the Global South during the debt crisis of the 1980s (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2009; Araghi 1995, 2009; Bryceson 2000). As the surplus evaporated, food prices skyrocketed, and interest rates reached double digits the Global South's development

project imploded at the seams (McMichael 2007). Developing countries were still dependent on food imports to feed their burgeoning populations of urbanized wage-laborers but this food was no longer cheap nor did it come in the form of food aid. Countries were forced to buy high priced food on the international market. As their export markets either shrank or dried up with the economic downturn of the 1980s their trade revenues declined at the same time that the cost of borrowing money to import food and the input packages of the Green Revolution increased. Countries struggled with sticker shock and balance of payment deficits and were unable to pay off their debts and it quickly became apparent that the development project had run aground and was sinking fast under a pile of mounting debt. For the Global South the 1980s would become known as the "lost decade" as life expectancy declined and inequality, poverty, and hunger increased (Green 2003). Unable to pay their loans during the 1970s the countries looked to the United States and Europe, as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, for assistance. In return for loans these northern countries and the international finance institutions enforced free market discipline upon the global south, a process known as structural adjustment.

The logic behind structural adjustment was that nation state sovereignty, protectionism, and public subsidies for agriculture created inefficient market distortions that prevented a capital-intensive industrialized agriculture from developing and with it economic development and the elimination of poverty, hunger, malnutrition, famine, and ecological degradation (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2009; Bryceson et al. 2000; McMichael 2007). Structural adjustment sought to intensify the export-oriented agricultural production of the Global South in order to facilitate the production of foreign exchange dollars necessary to pay back their debts. But this export-oriented model was not be controlled by the nation-state, instead, countries would need to open their borders and markets to capital and commodities from the north, including food imports.

Under free markets agricultural surpluses are no longer disposed of through nonmarket mechanisms of food aid, which are based on nation-to-nation agreements. Instead, food surpluses are disposed of through markets controlled by transnational corporations. The policy alternation that undergirds this transformation is the extension of the free trade policies of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to agriculture through the Agreement on Agriculture (AOA) in 1995, a practice that had been excluded during the postwar food regime.

The push towards the sovereignty of the market means nations are increasingly dependent on the whims of a handful of national corporations that control agricultural markets. This is extremely clear in the case of grain reserves (McMichael 2007). A central aspect of the new free trade price regime was the elimination of state controlled and protected grain reserves, which were used to address shortages, price spikes, and combat famine and hunger. These domestic reserves insulated the nation-state from price instabilities in the global market due to agro-inflation, speculation, and climatic disturbances. Yet, in an effort to generate foreign exchange dollars to pay back debt and enforce dependencies on global market price signals a large percentage of these reserves were sold off to private investors. This has increased hunger and famine globally, as the poor who lack money don't register as market demand, and increased the cost of food imports for nation-states as they can no longer protect themselves from the negative effects of price inflation, commodity speculation, and climatic disturbance.

For the majority of developing nations structural adjustment was a cataclysmic failure (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2009; Bryceson et al. 2000; Green 2000; McMichael 2007). Structural adjustment undermined the public subsidies necessary to support smallholder and domestic food production and facilitated the dumping of northern food surpluses in developing countries, which compounded processes of smallholder collapse and rural exodus as farmers were unable to

compete with cheap foreign imports. Since structural adjustment shrunk the state it eliminated programs and policies that were vital to enable small-scale producers to compete against larger-scale corporations, including state-backed pro-smallholder land reform, subsidized seeds, fertilizers, fuels, and machines, and state credit and insurance networks, buying groups, and marketing boards (Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck 2009; Magdoff and Tokar 2010; Rosset et al. 2006). Without these public subsidies and programs agro-capitals ignored peasants and smallholders in favor of selling inputs to and buying food from well-financed industrial farms and peasants and smallholders lost access to the inputs, credit, and agriculture markets necessary to remain agricultural producers.

Combined with the loss of public supports structural adjustment's attempt to intensify cash-crop export to the north to generate trade dollars to pay back debts was a disaster for many countries. Since these nation states often specialized in and exported the same tropical crops the massive increase in the production of these crops alongside of declining consumer demand during the 1980s recession translated into plummeting agricultural prices, shrinking trade revenues, and ballooning balance of payment deficits. In its quest to create a single unitary price regulation system for global agriculture free trade politics actually increased, rather than decreased, world inequality between the north and the south as well as poverty and hunger.

On top of these problems free trade policies were selectively applied to developing countries. The European Union and the United States, the two actors that were drawing up the rules of the corporate food regime, were allowed to continue their protectionist agriculture policies while weaker states in the global south had to eliminate theirs. This selective application of free trade policies incentivized and enabled the European Union and the United States to dump – sell below the cost of production – their agricultural surplus on the south and

“outcompete” southern producers.[2] Examples of dumping are the destruction of Jamaica’s milk industry, Sengal’s poultry industry, Ghana’s poultry industry, and Mexico’s corn industry by imports from the United States, the European Union and Brazil (Magdoff and Tokar 2010).

The corporate food regime therefore continues to maintain the international division of labor between settler states (temperate products) and colonial states (tropical products) that emerged over the last two centuries, embrace protectionist policies for the United States and European Union that damage smallholder agriculture, and intensify the movement towards corporately controlled farming, global sourcing, and oligopolistic markets. The dominant trend in agriculture in the twentieth century, one that weaves through the first, postwar, and corporate food regimes is the scaling up of food systems to the model of the factory (Lobao and Meyer 2001). Scaling up in processing, distributing, or retailing necessitates a feedback-loop in production. As a result, consolidation in processing, retailing, and farm input sectors has fueled consolidation within the farming sector as well and produced a path of least resistance for farmers during the twentieth century that was “get big or get out,” and getting bigger required more acreage, mechanized farms, monoculture production, and selling to agro-capital processors who sold the food nationally and internationally to supermarket chains.

Such an economic model meant making farming profitable through high-volume low-price per unit production. Getting big required standardization and uniformity of production: the same product, the same growing practices, a product that goes to harvest all at once, a product that is easy to mechanically harvest, a product that won’t be damaged in transport. For the twentieth century farmer if you didn’t play by these rules there were two other options: get out of farming or diversify the farm. Millions got out of farming, selling their farms to real-estate developers who turned prime agricultural farmland into shopping malls, housing developments,

resorts, and hotels. From 6.4 million farms in 1910 today there are less than 2.3 million farms in the United States (USDA 2007). Globally, these processes are mirrored by massive waves of rural exodus where billions of people have left farming behind for the hope of employment in swelling urban cities in the global south (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2009; Bryceson et al. 2000).

Thus, the twentieth century saw processors, distributors, and retailers as well as the sellers of inputs, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and animals consolidate power within themselves and control not just the farmer's outlets to consumers, or shift more and more of the food dollar away from the farmer into off-farm actors, but wrest control over the production of food itself from the farmer. In the United States fewer than ten companies control the respective sectors of farm machines, energy-additives, and seeds (Bryceson et al. 2000; Patel 2007; Shiva 2005), the four largest firms control 84 percent of beef packing, 64 percent of pork packing, 49 percent of pork production, 56 percent of broiler (chicken) production, 51 percent of turkey production, 34 percent of animal feed processing, 63 percent of flour milling and 71 percent of soybean crushing (Heffernan et al. 1999; Hendrickson et al. 2001; Hendrickson and Heffernan 2007.) This consolidation within the processing sectors is mirrored within food retailing. The 1990s was the decade of the "grocery wars," an outcome of which is that food retailing is now controlled by 5 major players: Kroger, Wal-Mart, Albertson's, Safeway, and Ahold USA. In the early 1990s these "Big Five" accounted for only 20 percent of retail sales, they now constitute over 40 percent (Lyson 2004:52-3). Expanding beyond the Big Five, the 10 largest multinational corporations account for over 60 percent of retail purchases of food in the United States (Lyson and Ramer 2000). An outcome of this oligopolistic structure is that farmers often earn less than 10 cents of the typical food dollar (Pretty 2002). 50 years ago, farmers in Europe and North

America received as income between 45 to 60 percent of the money consumers spent on food, today that proportion has dropped anywhere from 5 to 20 percent (Pretty 2002).

The Alternative Food Movement: Food From Somewhere

Despite the presumed triumph of industrial agriculture and the corporate food regime it has increasingly been subject to critique and contestation by a growing and networked group of farmers, environmentalists, and consumers (Allen 2004; Friedmann 1993). These oppositional movements reject the rise of a corporately controlled food system that subordinates food production to the unitary economic goal of maximizing profits and takes many different names: civic agriculture, slow food, locavore, food sovereignty, and food justice (Allen 2004; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010; Hinrichs and Lyson 2009; Lyson 2004; Petrini 2010; Shiva 2005; Wittman et al. 2010). For ease of use I will refer to these movements under the singular name of the alternative food movement. Despite the differences between these movements (Table 2.1), there are common themes that bind these movements together against the corporate food regime and they manifest in an ecological, economic, political, and physiological critique of industrialized agriculture (Table 2.2). In short, these movements claim that corporate industrial agriculture kills the planet, farmers, democracy, and our bodies. It does so by destroying ecosystems, the capacity for smaller agricultural producers to make a living, places control over the food system in the hands of a few faceless corporations, and gives consumers obesity, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and cancer. In the United States the oldest and most dominant movements within the alternative food movement have incorporated components of civic agriculture, slow food, and locavorism, consequently shaping the movement's logics, social actors, and discourses towards a politics that is pro-farmer, pro-sustainability, and pro-good food (Table 2.3).

Table 2.1: Vignettes of the Alternative Food Movement

Vignettes of the Alternative Food Movement
Slow Food emerged from leftist communists in Italy who opposed the homogenization of culture bound up within fast food and fast culture. In opposition to fast food slow food and a slow life is proposed trough cultivating tastes and celebrating the pleasure of food and conviviality. Slow food advocates for support of artisanal production rooted in place-based cultures and ecological farming methods. It is predominantly located in the Global North as a market niche amongst affluent white consumers, restaurateurs, and small farmers.
Locavorism is primarily a consumer-based response to alienation from place and the fossil fuel intensity of industrial agriculture. Emphasizing a micro-politics of buying green and buying local it emphasizes environmental sustainability and personal health and is generally found in the Global North amongst affluent consumers and the farmers and restaurateurs who utilize the language as a market niche.
Civic agriculture contends that local food systems are environmentally sustainable, rebuilds the independent middle class, creates community, and reconnects people to place. The movement is primarily rooted in farmers markets, farm stands, and community supported agriculture programs and is a response to the globalization and corporatization of a food system that hurts small farmers.
Food Justice emerged out of environmental justice, civil rights, labor rights, and farmworker movements to address race- and class-based inequities within the food system. It is primarily found in lower income urban communities and rural farmworker communities and emphasizes social and economic justice, community development, culturally appropriate foods, and just sustainability.
Food Sovereignty emerged from the Global South out of indigenous, peasant and smallholder movements that oppose structural adjustment, free trade policies, and corporate control over the food system. Food Sovereignty demands people's control over the food system, state supports for smallholders, and advocates for direct action to realize these ends.

Table 2.2: Critiques of Industrial Agriculture by the Alternative Food Movement

Ecological	Economic	Political	Physiological
Kills planet	Kills small food producers	Kills democracy	Kills people's bodies
Reduces ecosystem resilience and sustainability	Displaces billions from landbase and jobs	Citizen's lack control over how food is produced and consumed.	Poisons and maims workers in food chain
Pollutes landbase and water systems	Increases unemployment, poverty, and hunger.	Denies nation-state sovereignty over food systems	Produces ill-health in consumers
Monocultures harm wildlife populations	Exploits cheap workers	Land, water and seed controlled by corporations for profit maximization	Neighbors next o farm suffer ill-health

Table 2.3: Dominant Themes of the Alternative Food Movement

Pro-farmer	Pro-sustainability	Pro-good food
Nostalgia for Jeffersonian Democracy	Protects environment	Healthy food = whole food
Protects independent middle class	Reduces eco-footprint	Emphasize taste and pleasure of food

The mainstream alternative food movement is therefore reflective of its roots in civic agriculture, slow food, and locavorism and prioritizes certain problems with and solutions to industrial agriculture. Within these movements a dominant worry is of the negative effects of the depersonalization and alienation of the food producer and consumer from each other and the landbase. Today, we live in a world where food travels over 1,300 miles from production to consumption and passes through the hands of six people before it is consumed; a world where the end consumer is geographically and socially disembedded from the conditions of production (Kloppenburg Jr. et al. 1996). In such a world the worry for many in the alternative food

movement is how is a person able to root themselves in the land and the community? How can a land ethic or a moral economy not oriented around profit be produced when individuals are devoid of flesh and blood ties to the land or each other?

Within the alternative food movement non-locality is framed as the central factor making invisible food's social and ecological properties, a process that blinds people to the destruction and injustice bound up with their purchase of industrial food and prevents them from acting responsibly. Non-locality is the central impediment to achieving environmental sustainability and supporting small farmers. Given this framing of the problem, the solution is rather straightforward, relocalize and repersonalize food production and consumption. Local food will address the ecological, economic, political, and physiological problems rooted in the conventional food system that is corporate, industrial, and global. Ecologically, localizing food within smaller multi-product biodiverse farms will root food production within the landbase and improve the sustainability and resilience of food systems. In this manner local farms will move away from growing one large crop that is dependent on polluting fossil fuels such as fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides to increase yields. Instead, multi-product farms will emerge that rely on integrated-pest management solutions that minimize the use of fossil fuel inputs through crop rotations, cover crops, intercropping, and green manures that improve soil structure and organic matter, suppress weeds, fix nutrients in the soil, attract beneficial insects, and support wild plant and animal populations. Economically, these multi-product farms can utilize direct retailing, such as farmers markets, community supported agriculture, farm stands, farm to schools, and farm to restaurants to capture more of the food dollar that increasingly goes to food processors, manufacturers, and retailers. By moving towards a lower volume higher price model rooted in smaller batches of hundreds of different crops small farmers can become economically viable.

Politically, local food rooted in an economically independent middle class of small farmers is presumed to recreate "civic capital" and community relations and with it increased democracy at the town level as inequality in employment, income, and power is minimized through preventing the polarization of economic and political structures into wage-laborers and corporations. Physiologically, local food straight from the ground that is minimally processed is claimed to be higher in nutrients and lower in the added salts, sugars, fats, and oils of the heavily processed corporate foods found in grocery stores and fast food restaurants. Consequently, local food is healthy food and can combat the increase in obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and cancer related to a diet high in factory farmed processed foods.

The Limits of the Alternative Food Movement

Rather than a mass manufactured commodity exchanged for the highest amount of profit in an impersonal global market alternative food movements desire to build social, ecological, and economic relations that re-personalize and re-place food through localizing food systems (Allen 2004; Hinrichs and Lyson 2009; Friedmann 1993; Lyson 2004). In fact, "civic agriculture" (DeLind 2002; DeLind and Bingen 2008; Lyson 2004), "local" (Goodman and Goodman 2007; Laudan 2000, 2001, 2004) and "coming home" (Cotler 2009; Halweil 2004; Nabhan 2002) are the new watchwords of the alternative food movement.

However, in the production of a critique of industrial agriculture and the turn towards local food systems the alternative food movement has in fact created internal barriers to its own political power. This section details the limits of the local food movement, which are rooted in its nostalgia for the local community (gemeinschaft), economic model of voting with your dollars/fork, and missionary mentality of bringing good food to others, all of which are

byproducts of its politics of being pro-farmer, pro-sustainability, and pro-good food. Together, the practices, economic models, and discourses of the alternative food movement have overwhelmingly created itself as a bourgeois market niche for affluent consumers rather than a vibrant social movement prioritizing the fusion of environmental sustainability and social justice, that is, just sustainability.

Nostalgia for the local community (gemeinschaft)

Food localization movements do not exist in vacuums but are bound up with specific geographical (rural and urban), racial, class, and gender histories that are often complicated by land rent politics, public-private development strategies, residential segregation, income polarization, and the price-premium attached to local foods (Allen et al. 2003; Hinrichs 2000; Qazi & Selfa 2005). Yet the particularities and the importance of these situated histories within localization debates are often ignored and instead a false binary is employed juxtaposing global/local, large-scale/small-scale, industrial/sustainable, conventional/organic, and unjust/just. The global is presumed to be faceless, placeless, and nameless, the space of exploitation, capitalism, and an alienating market logic, whereas the local is claimed to be more equitable, sustainable and personalized, operating around extra-market logics and practices (Henderson 2000; Hinrichs 2003; Jarosz 2008).

These dualisms fail to adequately conceptualize and theorize how the local is bounded and who is part of this local, taking the meaning of local as pre-political—fixed in time—when they are continuously negotiated, contested, and transformed through place-based social struggles (Holifield 2001; Windfuhr & Jonsen 2005). Re-localization attempts do not inherently posses a more egalitarian or open politics of difference, but can be tied to nativist and

exclusionary "defensive localism" or "patriotic localism" (Dupuis & Goodman 2005; Winter 2003). It is therefore necessary to specify who is advocating for, controlling the implementation of, and expected to benefit from local food projects. Are localization strategies merely top-down technocratic projects aimed at ameliorating the ravages of economic marginalization and poverty or are they bottom-up community-led development projects that prioritize sustainability and equity? Political elites have long promoted subsistence or local food production during periods of social crisis in order to manage, rather than eliminate, poverty (Berlin and Morgan 1993; Burchardt 2000, 2002; Lawson 2005).

The relationship between re-localization strategies and an inclusionary or exclusionary politics of place and community should be determined through examination and not pre-supposed. Local autonomy, community control, state's rights and secession- or succession-based movements have long been utilized to maintain white privilege through ensuring the reproduction of race and class hierarchies (Katznelson 2006; Marable 1983 [2000]; Piven and Cloward 1971 [1993]). The power of slavery and Jim Crow rested on state and local autonomy from the federal government and community control discourse became the battle cry of 1960s conservatism in order to prevent racial integration. However, whites do not have a monopoly on localism. Black communities have also utilized localism, but primarily as a "safe space" from and a "space of resistance" to white oppression, not as a conduit to intercultural relations (Hinrichs and Allen 2008; Marable 1983 [2000]; Polsby 1963; Posner 1977). But the outcome of Black Power's community control efforts of the 1960s and 1970s are less than stellar; educational inequality continues because community control initiatives are unable to base-build, scale-up, and construct the interracial alliances necessary to counter the systemic defunding of the urban public education system (Henig 2001; Marable 1983 [2000]). Federalism, in fact, has

arguably been far more powerful and economically beneficial to the creation of a black middle class by forcing open educational, employment, and housing opportunities that were previously blocked at the local level (Piven and Cloward 1971 [1993]).

As a result, the localism embedded in notions of coming home must address the ongoing history of race and class relations within the United States. When the alternative food movement has tried to localize food to save small-farmers or the environment it rarely has engaged with whether or how local food could be a conduit to break down racial, class, and gender hierarchies. It rarely investigates the contentious relationship between federalism and localism within United States, how movements for localism have often been instigated to reproduce class- and race-based hierarchies, or why localism within Black and Latino communities during the 1960s and 1970s has generally failed to improve the community's economic and social conditions.

Not all communities will re-localize in the same manner, as they are place-based movements that must contend with local ecologies, cultures, economies, and power structures as well as positions within larger economic and political networks. Different peoples', different histories of marginalization and oppression, and specific place-based exclusions shape the practices, strategies, and structures employed to rebuild local communities through food. Communities may have a commonality in stressing food as central to community-led development but for cultural, economic, ecological and political reasons their movements often have distinctive origins, differentially emphasize the purposes of food re-localization, utilized food cultivation in diverse manners, grow different types of food, have different mechanisms of food production and distribution, employ diverse measures of success, and incorporate different social actors. Therefore, local food production does not have a singular universal meaning, affect, or aim for people because people are positioned differently within social relations. Local

food can be about freshness and taste, producing healthy bodies, saving an agrarian heritage, securing niche markets, breaking down racial and class barriers, or cultural resistance to fast food. These practices do not all coalesce in the same political projects, strategies, or tactics, let alone ideologies.

Economic model of voting with your dollars

The alternative food movement is at its root premised on economics. In trying to connect farmers to consumers the movement is unlike other social movements in that it is trying to build an economic or market alternative to the conventional food system. In doing so, it is market-centric rather than state-centric. The movement is not demanding rights, be they voting, educational, employment, housing, or reproductive. In doing so, the discourse is shifted towards the individualizing language of personal choice and capacity to pay. Unlike a citizen oriented rights-based discourse a consumer oriented market-based politics emphasizes a platform of voting with your dollars. In privatizing social movement politics away from collective action to individual choices the alternative food movement becomes numerically limited, as only those with the capacity to pay are included. If local small farmer produce were cheap than this consumer-centric social change model would be very inclusive. However, the economics of small farming are premised not on the high-volume low-price model of the conventional food system but a low-volume high-price model. This limits the inclusivity of the movement as it steers farmers markets towards where the disposable income is, which are generally more affluent and whiter communities.

Because the alternative food movement within the United States has framed local and organic food as a consumer preference rather than a social right the movement has privileged the

economic viability of farmers and environmental sustainability of the rural landscape over social justice concerns, particularly farmworker rights and access and affordability concerns for lower income customers. As a result, this individualist market-centric model treats everybody as the same, presuming that everybody can and should pay more for food that is local, grown sustainability, and benefits working class farmers. Such an economic model emphasizes market expansion for small farmers through changing consumer preferences, which requires educational efforts into why consumers should pay more for produce. But this universalist frame ignores inequities in the distribution of wealth between classes and races and that not everyone can afford to pay more for healthy food. In fact, lower income families already pay a higher percentage of their income on food at home than do middle and upper income families, 10.2 percent compared to 7.7 percent and 5.4 percent (Lam Thuy Vo 2012). And research on farmers markets in lower income communities has found that price points and limited disposable income are key barriers to consumption of local produce, not lack of knowledge of healthy food (Briggs et al. 2010; Fisher 1999; USDA 2001). The alternative food movement's model of paying more for food regardless of race and class positionality subsequently reinforces inequity in the food system by making local food a high-end market niche.

The limits of a consumer-preference and market niche "social movement" model are apparent by the conventionalization and industrialization or organic food (Allen and Kovach 2000; Delind 2000; Guthman 2004; Howard 2009; Johnston et al. 2009). Once rooted in small-farmers and biodiverse farming practices, the price-premiums of organic became reduced from an ecological growing process to a mere off-term input through federal certification (Allen and Kovach 2000; Delind 2000). With organic certification, heavily influenced by agrocpaitals, organic farming was watered down to entail using green inputs for fertilizers instead of fossil

fuel based inputs. Lost were all the ecological processes that support ecosystem integrity and resilience, including crop rotations, intercropping, cover cropping, and integrated pest management. With organic farming being reduced to a mere input it became much easier to scale up organic farming to the factory model, which enabled agrocapitals in processing and manufacturing to buy up and consolidate control over organic food products (Howard 2009). Organic products became merely another revenue stream for the agrocpaitals who now control not only the conventional food system but also increasingly the most profitable sectors of the alternative food system (Allen and Kovach 2000; Guthman 2004). Through organics the recuperative capacity of the treadmill of production to subsume all market relations underneath industrial production processes and the imperatives of economic growth and profit maximization becomes quite clear and underscore the limits of an market-centric model of social change (Gould et al. 2008). Additionally, with supermarkets, such as Wal-Mart, attempting to tap the price-premium of local food by selling local produce at their stores there appears to be no reason why local food can't become just another revenue stream for the major companies in the conventional food system, further limiting the capacity for the alternative food movement to become an alternative

Bringing Good Food to Others

The alternative food movement's motto of "voting with your fork" has not only produced a local food model where everyone is expected to pay more for local food regardless of their class and race position but it has also produced a missionary politics of "bringing good food to others." In these missionary food projects non-local middle and upper class whites emphasize making proper food choices through nutrition education while popping up a few farm stands and

farmers markets in lower income communities (Guthman 2008a, Guthman 2008b, 2011). Such projects are framed as the solution to food inequity issues since these are seen primarily as problems for consumers.

These practices reflect a long line of liberal social reformers, generally white, who sought to improve the lives of lower class white ethnic or black communities by altering their social behaviors, that is, by making them as middle class and white as possible (Anderson 1988; Jewel 2007; Link 1992). It continues a white paternalism that manifests in the "combination of the impulse to uplift and a certainty of the inadequacy of the uplifted (Link 1992: 91)." Such a local food politics presumes that lower income people do not want local fresh produce, do not know how to buy or prepare fresh produce, and need to be educated about the benefits of eating fresh produce. At the same time, these projects educate communities about the importance and need of environmental sustainability, a topic that is presumed to be foreign to them.

Within this model the recipients of white largesse play a passive role, since they need to be saved, a practice that denies them any agency and the skills and resources to build local food networks by and for themselves. As a result, these missionary food projects, under the pretense of reducing inequities, actually serve to reinforce an individualist and consumerist framework that limits the power building capacity of lower income communities. Just as "early twentieth-century reformers sought to remake social and political institutions in such a way as to readjust them to the changing conditions of the market revolution (Link 1992:95)" the bringers of good food seek to change the food landscape in communities facing deindustrialization, the withdrawal of state and corporate actors, and the emergence of food deserts and food swamps to address the obesity epidemic. This raises the question of who is really deciding what is in whose best interests, the reformers or the community?

Additionally, since these good food projects emphasize nutrition education and consumer choice they often map over or work alongside of top-down corporate and state initiatives that frame food inequities as principally an issue of access and affordability, one that can be solved through bringing in supermarkets and grocery stores, such as Wal-Mart. While shopping at farmers markets is a different economic space than that of the supermarket, the logic shaping the location of both in lower income urban communities is very similar and generally leads to a rather limited politics of integrating these communities into food systems designed by and for people outside the community. Neither generally prioritizes urban communities as having control over or input into how their food systems should be organized, ignoring demands for just sustainability.

Food Justice: An Alternative Within and to the Alternative Food Movement

The relationship between paternalism and autonomy, multiplicity and hierarchy, localism and federalism is central to understanding the emergence of, strategies of, and barriers to food justice movements within the alt-food movement. Just as the alt-food movement emerged to counter the power of industrial agriculture and an agrifood system dominated by corporations, food justice emerged within the alt-food movement to counter the institutional racism that it saw occurring within both. Food justice can therefore be framed as an "alternative within and to the alternative." Food justice incorporates many aspects of the alternative food movement's critique of the dominant agrifood system: its ecological unsustainability, its pro-corporate and pro-global market orientation, the lack of democractic control over the food system, and its production of food high in fats, oils, salts, and sugars. However, food justice builds upon the work of the alt-food movement by expanding the discursive critiques, constituencies, tactics, and strategies of alternative food movements (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Allen 2008, 2010; Holt-Gimenez and

Wang 2011; Levkoc 2006;). These alterations are based on *where* food justice emerges, *who* articulates food justice frames and *why* these groups demand justice (Alkon and Norgaard 2009; Gottlieb and Anupama 2010; Sbicca 2012).

Food justice movements do not emerge out of a vacuum, they are not "new." Rather they are a process and product of long histories of social justice and environmental justice organizing against institutional racism. They can be found in rural and urban areas, lower income and nonwhite communities, amongst food workers struggling against worker exploitation and consumers struggling against food flight and food redlining (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Gottlieb and Anupama 2010). These movements are generally rooted in community based organizing and grassroots mobilization emphasizing self-reliance, alternative food structures, state-led redistribution of wealth, and direct action strategies. It moves beyond a consumer or market centric model towards a social right framework tied to community organizing. In contrast to the mainstream alternative food movement, food justice emphasizes a "perspective from below" that prioritizes the needs of those at the bottom of the social hierarchy and an alternative development paradigm that critiques agricultural modernization and the privilege of the alternative food movement. It does so through five shifts that alter the discourse and organizational strategies of local food projects (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4: The Discursive Shifts of the Food Justice Movement

Frame Shift	Substance of Shift
Farmers to Producers	• From the singular to the multiplicity • From white (farmer) to all agricultural producers and food workers in the food chain
Personal to Structural	• Food choices are not rooted in personal choice or lack of education but structural forces of institutional racism • Taps into racial, immigrant, labor rights, and civil rights movements
Multifaceted Politics	• Blends systemic reformism and building alternatives: is non-retreatist. • Works for labor rights and equity within conventional food system as well as building community controlled food alternatives.
Redistributive Consumer Tactics	• Moves from affluent (whites) to lower income and nonwhite consumers • Moves from pay-your-own-way high prices to public subsidy and increasing the purchasing power of lower income communities
Cultural Lifeways	• Food is not a bare commodity but rooted in cultural identity • Struggles to prevent processes that divorce urban people from control over the means of cultural reproduction (land and food). • Rejects integration into second hand foods of industrial agriculture

From Farmers to Agricultural Producers

First, it moves beyond the singularity of the (white) farmer towards all agriculture producers, incorporating peasants, smallholders, and the indigenous as well as backyard, community, and urban gardeners. In addition to all food producers, the food justice frame incorporates workers throughout the entire food system, those in processing, distribution, preparation and sales. It makes visible all the food workers necessary to get the food on your table but who are generally made invisible through the slogans of “Buy Local” and “Support Local Farmers.” I frequently see shirts, stickers or pins that say, “Do you know your farmer?” I have yet to see a button that says, “Do you know your tomato picker?” or “Have you met you industrial meat slaughterer lately?” By recentering the food debate around the entire food chain and all the workers within it food justice counters the westward orientation of Euro-Americans, which reinforces a yeoman small-farmer bias within the alt-food movement (Allen 2004). This

recentering is ideological, privileging economically, politically and culturally marginalized populations, but also practical, not everyone wants to or is able to be a small-farmer (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010). A farmer-centric politics ignores the reality that the majority of exploited people within the food system are not farmers but wageworkers in the food industry. There are over twenty million workers within the U.S. food chain, eleven million full-time, while there are less than two million farmers and less than 350,000 are full-time (Liu and Apollon 2011; Imhoff 2007). Moreover, the working conditions and pay for these food chain workers are generally the worst, not just within the food chain, but the national economy (Liu and Apollon 2011; Schlosser 2002). For instance, the average tomato harvester in Florida is paid a piece rate of 50 cents for every 32-lbs of tomatoes they pick. This rate has not changed since the 1980s and requires the picker to pick almost twice the amount they had to pick thirty years ago merely to earn the minimum wage for a 10-hour workday. Overall, most farmworkers today earn less than $12,000 a year (CIW 2012).

From the Personal to the Structural

Second, by framing inequities in the food system as a form of institutional racism food justice movements are able to tap into a long history of racial, immigrant, and labor rights organizing, from abolitionist struggles to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, from the National Farm Workers Association to current struggles by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010). This labor and civil rights organizing strategy is another corrective to the agrarian mythology that envelops the alternative food movement. It reminds alt-food adherents that Jeffersonian democracy and Lincolnian long-cabin self-reliance were largely foreclosed to Blacks through slavery and sharecropping (Jones 1986;

1993; Marable, Manning 1983 [2000]). Additionally, farmers have long employed farm workers as a surplus pool of cheap labor to hire and fire at will (Edid 1994; Hahamovitch 1997; Mitchell 1996;). Rather than being peoples rooted in the supposed political and economic autonomy of farm ownership, state-capital relations have sought to produce nonwhites as a cheap and docile labor force for white small-farmers, factory farmers, and plantation owners (Hahamovitch 2008; Rothenberg 2000; Wells 1996). This history therefore underscores that the presumed independence of (white) farm ownership is actually based on the exploitative dependencies of (nonwhite) wage-labor.

Multifaceted Politics

Third, focusing on food workers requires not withdrawal from but confrontation with the existing agrifood system to restructure the flows of nutrients, value and power. This generally takes the form of organizing for workers rights to join unions, collectively bargain, and earn a living wage. Additionally, it has meant engaging in media and public relations campaigns to pressure institutional food purchasers—McDonalds, Yum! Brands, Trader Joe's—to flex their power and ensure that farmers pay their workers more and treat them with dignity (Gottlieb and Joshi 2010). These movements do not seek to cut out the "middlemen" between the producer and consumer but improve the working conditions of millions of low-wage workers employed in the conventional agrifood system, many of whom are immigrants and Black or Latino/a. Additionally, this movement realizes that while some people and groups will try and re-localize food production, geographical and climatic features continue to concentrate certain types of production in specific locales, necessitating a worker rights movement within the conventional food system. Oranges, avocados, pineapples, coffee and chocolate production, amongst others,

are not coming to the Northeast or Midwest United States any time soon, thus, a politics beyond the local is necessary in order to realize justice for these growers and the workers involved in getting them onto our plates. This generally takes the form of fair trade certification, which ensures that the products meet certain environmental and labor protocols, generally sustainable yield practices and living wages for the agricultural producers (Fridell 2007; Nicholls and Opal 2005; Raynolds et al. 2007). A food movement that privileges justice for local food and small-farmers at the expense of ecological degradation and labor exploitation in far-off fields merely reproduces injustice in the food system.

Redistributive Consumer Tactics

Fourth, food justice moves from emphasizing the customer base of wealthier and white consumers who can afford the price premium of local and organic to low income primarily nonwhite peoples who live with food flight and food redlining, areas either devoid of fresh food and produce or overrun with bodegas, liquor stores and fast food (Alkon and Norgaard 2009; Sbicca 2012). The turn towards low-income peoples occurs alongside the framing of food as a social right, not a privilege based on capacity to pay. In doing so, it rejects the individualized and market-centric framework of food security in favor of a community level analysis and moves from improving the mere ability to purchase food (security) to having a say in how the food system is organized (food sovereignty). This change of scale and degree of voice within the food system is due to food justice's connection of the development of food flight and food redlining with institutional racism, white flight, and municipal disinvestment in nonwhite communities after the 1950s.

Urban food justice primarily takes the form of reducing food inequities for low-income people through a combination of developing community self-reliance, alternative food networks, and state funded non-market subsidies. These initiatives aim to restructure power relations within the food system and increase community control over the food system, and truly express the heart of the food justice movement. This generally takes the form of having the community produce their own food items through community gardens, backyard gardens, and urban farms as well as getting rural farmers to sell at local farmers markets or through community supported agriculture programs. The price barriers at farmers markets and community supported agriculture are reduced through a combination of charging lower prices and enlarging purchasing power by increasing food stamp (EBT) allowances and creating healthy food coupons where for every 5 dollars spent through food stamps the customer receives free coupons, these can be in 1, 2 or 4 dollar denominations. Another strategy is to create alternative grocery stores, generally food cooperatives, which allow for lower prices and community control over the conditions of food retailing.

Cultural Lifeways

Fifth, food production is rooted within the reproduction of cultural lifeways and explicitly or implicitly struggles to stave off processes of cultural assimilation and deculturation that divorce people from control over the means of food production (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010). Struggles for land and cultural autonomy are central to food justice projects that must contend against state- and market-led development projects, the pressures of assimilation into corporate commodity foods and histories of environmental pollution. Foodways have long been central to ethnic and regional identity, with practices of food

cultivation, preparation and consumption being central to the cultural reproduction of community (Brown and Mussell 1984). This was clear with the indigenous and was also apparent with each new mass migration of European agricultural laborers to the United States (Kurlansky 2009; Willard 2008). Italians, Irish, and Germans all grew their own ethnic foods upon arrival to the United States and sought to preserve their cultural foodways against the emergence of corporate commodity foods (Diner 2003; Gabaccia 2000; Rosenzweig and Blackmar 1998; Ziegelman 2010). This was the same for African-Americans, with food becoming a space of resistance to assimilation and oppression (Bower 2008; Harris 2011). This history continues today as immigrants from the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa and Asia struggle to maintain their cultural identities within the United States by growing their own food (Hynes 1996; Klindienst 2006; Lawson 2005; Lynch and Brusi 2005; Martinez 2010; Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny 2004; von Hassel 2002, 2005).

Each new immigrant community has had to struggle to maintain their cultural identity through food production because the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ushered in a development trajectory organized around industrialization, urbanization and the singularity of wage-labor (Aglietta 1979 [2000]; Braverman 1998; Baran and Sweezy 1968; Dickinson 1995; Foner 1970 [1995]; Lawson 2005; Negri 1988). This development narrative framed urban food production as anachronistic and backwards, a rural activity, a producer of disease, but also a consumer of valuable real estate for housing, offices or factories, all of which provided higher economic returns (Linder and Zacharias 1999). By denying immigrants access to land and criminalizing their food production processes the modernization project sought to eliminate foodways as a practice of racial difference, cultural resistance, and economic survival and integrate them into the mass culture of consumer society. In this sense, food justice seeks to

maintain subjugated knowledges and cultures that modernization seeks to eliminate by removing land from the market and development and keeping it as a space for the reproduction of food and cultural identity.

Food Justice, Environmental Justice, and a Critique of Privilege

Food justice therefore critiques the alternative food movement for whom it privileges, how it privileges them, and why it privileges them. But this critique does not emerge out of thin-air; it is historically rooted in the environmental justice movement's critique of the race and class privilege of the mainstream environmental movement (Dowie 1995; Gottlieb 2005; Bullard and Chavis 1999; Bullard and Waters 2005). The environmental movement has long been the domain of white men seeking to protect and preserve the environment and wildlife from a destructive humanity, e.g. Henry David Thoreau, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and John Muir. Subsequently, environmental fund-raising has targeted the middle and upper classes, their money and power, to ensure nature's preservation through a system of public parks and wildlife reserves as well as privately funded but publically utilized open spaces. Within this movement the environment is framed as separate from the built environment and humans, reflecting a western mentality that bifurcates wilderness/civilization and nature/culture. Moreover, mainstream environmental politics has traditionally privileged legislation and litigation over direct action, national dues-paying membership over grass roots mobilization, the regulation of chemicals and toxins rather than their elimination, "established" science rather than community based participatory knowledge-production, and market-based environmentalism that emphasizes green consumerism over de-growth and steady-state economics (Dowie 1995; Gottlieb 2005).

Emerging in the late twentieth century, the environmental justice movement critiqued the corporatization and conservatism of the mainstream environmental movement as well its conceptions of the environment and sustainability. Environmental justice moved beyond the language of wild nature and environmental sustainability by reframing both the *place* and *form* of environmentalism (Agyeman 2005; Holifield 2001; Schlosberg 2009; Shrader-Frechette 2005; Taylor 2000; Walker 2012). The environment was no longer an object "out there" in the distance, a pristine area devoid of human life, but brought home to everyday life as anywhere you lived, worked, or played. Environmental justice emphasized "second nature," the built environment, rather than first nature (Lerner 2006; Pellow 2004; Pellow and Park 2002; Sze 2006). This remapping of what constituted the environment subsequently shifted the focus of environmental activism away from preserving or conserving non-human life towards social justice and equity issues involving the spatial layout of communities (Agyeman 2005; Agyeman et al 2003; Pellow et al. 2005). Environmental justice discourse did not talk about saving polar bears or bald eagles or preserving far off spaces as an end in itself. It emphasized how inequalities in power lead to inequities in the distribution of environmental benefits and harms, geographically and physiologically (Bullard 2000; Corburn 2005). Power structures were siting environmentally polluting practices within low income and nonwhite communities, which concentrated environmental pollutants and toxins and their adverse health effects within these communities – cancer, birth defects, and asthma. On the flipside, wealthier and white communities had more green space, less waste dumps, cleaner levels of air and lower levels of asthma.

The difference in the spatial makeup of the communities was not explained away as due to personal choice or market dynamics but institutional structures that marginalize lower income

and nonwhite communities from political decision-making processes (Carmin and Agyeman 2011; Cole and Foster 2000; Harrison 2011; Holified et al. 2010; Pellow 2007). Environmental justice therefore emphasizes that the benefits and costs of environmental protection and pollution are unevenly distributed throughout society based on location within and power relations between social groups and social institutions. Moreover, the key variable determining the location of noxious facilities in communities was not the class position but the race of the community, which lead the movement to call environmental inequality a form of environmental racism (Bullard and Chavis 1999; Bullard and Waters 2005; Holifield 2001). Undoing environmental racism subsequently requires the inclusion of marginalized groups into the decision-making structures that create and allocate environmental benefits and harms (Agyeman 2005). Framing environmental justice in this way ensures that equity is not just about who gets what, *an issue of outcome*, but who decides what that what is and how that what is distributed, *an issue of process*. In doing so, the movement linked environmental issues with civil rights, social justice, and participatory democracy. To capture the fusion of justice and sustainability that environmental justice represents, Julian Agyeman (2005) has coined the term "just sustainability." Just sustainability privileges equity within the three dimensional concept of sustainable development – environmental, social and economic – since "equitable development is about who receives the benefits and burdens of development as well as where the development happens (Agyeman 2005:178)" and who decides what development is. Accordingly, to actualize just sustainability requires the redistribution of political power in order to redistribute land, income, and wealth and with it the conditions for community-led development.

Despite the life and death issues that environmental justice movements struggle against the funding models, internal culture, organizational structure, customer base, and discursive

frames of the environmental movement remain rooted in preservation, conservation, wildlife management and ecological modernization/reform environmentalism (Brulle 2000; 2009; Dowie 1996). The ongoing conflict between the mainstream environmental movement and the environmental justice movement is replicated within the alternative food movement and food justice movement, with the fault line being, once again, one's class and race positionality. Following in the footsteps of the environmental justice movement that linked the "preexisting frames of racism and civil rights (Agyeman 2005:28)" with the environment, food justice has sought to link these frames to food. Just as environmental justice sought to shift the spatial lens of the environmental movement to the built environment food justice has sought to do the same within the alternative food movement. Much like the environmental justice movement brought race and racism to the forefront of environmental pollution discourse food justice has sought to bring race and racism to the center of food politics. Yet, there are two strong differences between the environmental justice and food justice movements. Environmental justice has generally exemplified a reactive politics that tries to stop environmental bads while food justice has largely had a proactive politics focusing on producing beneficial food alternatives. And environmental justice has been able to scale up from the local to state and national legislation and policies while the food justice is still overwhelmingly rooted in local politics.

Conclusion

Within the debates between the conventional food system, the alternative food movement, and the food justice movement, several tensions within the movements stand out that can be illuminated by a case study of East New York Farms!. The ever expanding industrialization of agriculture appears to be making inroads into the price-premium market

niches of organic and local that the alternative food movement has cultivated to support small farmers and environmental sustainably. Can community controlled food justice organizations withstand corporate inroads into their local food projects? At the same time, the alternative food movement's race and class privilege has made it invisible to issues of institutional racism within the food system, the social justice barriers that are rooted in its business models, and the paternalism bound up with its good food projects. Can the food justice movement build alliances with the major actors in the alternative food movement in ways that actually empower historically marginalized communities? The alternative food movement has long critiqued industrial agriculture for its environmentally unsustainable production practices while the food justice movement has critiqued the local food movement for failing to prioritize social justice. If food justice is about both sustainability and justice how do food justice projects juggle social justice and environmental sustainability goals?

The subsequent chapters seek to address different questions that emerge from the literature review:

- What social, political, and economic factors contributed to the production of food flight, food redlining, and food deserts in East New York? (Chapter 3)
- How does the food justice organization East New York Farms! create farmers markets that are a win-win for out-of-town farmers and lower income consumers? (Chapter 4)
- How do race and class positionalities affect the politics of local food projects, in this case community gardens in East New York? (Chapter 5)
- How does the food justice organization East New York Farms! frame food justice? Can corporations be part of the food justice movement? (Chapter 6)

[2] Dumping is a practice whereby goods are sold below their cost of production through subsidies that make up the difference between the sale price and production price for the agricultural producer. Dumping is therefore a process and product of the dynamics of capitalist production, protectionist policies, and the imbalance in power between nations within an interstate system.

Chapter 3: The Social Production of Food Flight and Food Redlining in East New York

Over the last decade a considerable body of scholarship, primarily within public health, has been produced that focuses on food deserts. Most of this research is oriented to problems of measurement: where do food deserts exist, how many people live in food deserts, and the effects of living in food deserts. This chapter moves beyond measurement to emphasize the social production of food flight and food redlining in East New York, situating the rise of East New York Farms! within a social history incorporating the color line, the rise and fall of civil rights and integration-based movements, and the consequent municipal disinvestment in lower income and nonwhite communities.[3]

Introducing East New York Farms!

If you get on the 3-subway train headed to Brooklyn on a Saturday morning during the summer and ride it to the end of the line you will find yourself in East New York, a predominantly lower income African-American and Afro-Caribbean community. As you approach the last stop on the subway train and look south you will see a vibrant farmers market adjacent to an urban farm. If you only take a quick glimpse you might presume the market and the farm as merely another local food project that seeks to bring "good food" to a food desert. However, if you look closer and come visit the farmers market, volunteer at the farm, or spend time in the community you will soon realize that this farmers market and urban farm are not merely about "good food" nor is it an import to the community. When it comes to food inequity the farmers market and urban farm in East New York are reflective of a much larger, broader, and community based food movement known as food justice, one that seeks to produce an alternative food system to the corporate dominated food system, underscores the role of

institutional racism within the operations of the conventional and local food movements, and invokes the discourse of people's control over land, seed, and food (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010).

Recently, there has been a lot of focus on food inequities in urban food environments, both within New York City and across the country, as attention has been placed on food deserts, food swamps, the grocery store gap, obesogenic environments and the effects of the overconsumption of heavily manufactured and processed foods on public health (Block et al. 2004; Larson et al. 2009; Rose et al. 2009; Treuhaft and Karpyn n.d; Winne 2009). Much of this discourse centers on how to bring "good food" or "healthy food" to lower income communities and therefore how to address the inequity of access and affordability in relation to fresh fruits and vegetables. This discourse manifests itself in many ways, but it generally seeks to bring grocery stores, farmers markets, or fruit and vegetables vendors into these communities or restructure what corner stores and bodegas offer. The problem with many of these initiatives is that they are consumer-centric, technocratic, and manifest a "missionary mentality" where non-local people with the cultural, economic, and political capital come into these communities to save poor people from junk food (Guthman 2008a, 2008b, 2011). This paternalistic logic within the good food, local food, and healthy food movements creates problems from a social justice and social movements perspective because it disempowers communities from self-organizing to address these goals, presumes that lower income communities don't know what good or healthy food is, and frames food inequities as solely or primarily about being able to buy this food (Allen 2008; Allen and Sachs 2005).

East New York Farms! is different from these projects. It is a community-based organization that emerged internally from within the community as part of a participatory

planning project to address decades of institutional racism, urban renewal, and municipal disinvestment. This chapter tells the story of East New York and East New York Farms! in two sections. The first section begins in East New York during the 1990s when it was already a food desert suffering from food flight and food redlining. It details the social conditions of East New York as a hyperghetto and how they instigated the emergence of East New York Farms!, a food justice organization dedicated to a community-controlled food system, long before food deserts, the obesity epidemic, and access and affordability problems became mainstream news or the pet project of the first lady Michelle Obama. The second section takes a longer view of East New York and locates the social production of East New York as a food desert within the great migration, the civil rights and integrationist movements of the 1960s, and the rise of neoconservatism. This narrative is told through the history of United Community Centers, the parent organization of East New York Farms!, and a community based social justice organization that has fought for an intercultural East New York since the 1950s.

East New York During the 1990s: The Immediate Context for East New York Farms!

Under the guise of free market capitalism, fiscal discipline, and law and order Reaganomics legitimated public and private disinvestment in the built environment as well as the people of lower income nonwhite communities, such as East New York. Jobs and income disappeared. Housing, schools, and parks fell into disrepair. New housing, schools, and parks were not built, even though they were desperately needed. Trash and fire services were withdrawn. Entire blocks of burned out buildings were bulldozed, becoming vacant lots overnight and leaving vast swathes of open land ripe for dumping. Community destabilization facilitated the crack and aids epidemics that ravaged East New York. Needles were strewn

across sidewalks, burnt out cars lined the street, and previously vacant buildings were now home to crack dens. Automobile theft skyrocketed and drug deals occurred in plain sight on street corners. Clinton's roaring 1990s did not change the landscape of East New York either. The president's promise to lift all boats through housing, technology, and stock market bubbles failed to bring up-lift to East New York, the grim life of "getting by" reigned supreme (Prichett 2003; Thabit 2005).

While the mechanisms of upward mobility were cut off in East New York through private and municipal disinvestment the community did receive massive public investment via the prison industrial complex, reflecting the national turn away from the welfare state towards the warfare or penal state (Soss et al. 2011; Wacquant 2009; Gilmore 2007). The area was deemed a "no-go" zone and the war on drugs was brought to the doorsteps of East New Yorkers, foremost in the federal Weed and Seed program. The federal Weed and Seed program attempts to reduce crime by "weeding" out criminals and seeding "rehabilitative" programs, the former practice emphasizes an intensive police presence in the community while the latter attempts to rebuild civic and social capital.[4] In East New York the program has been much more effective at weeding than seeding.[5] The 75th precinct ranked in the top two or three citywide for violent crime during the 1990s, registering a record 340 homicides in a single year (Thabit 2005). And in 1996, East New York was one of only four community districts that had more than 350 juvenile arrests (Thabit 2005). A whole generation of Black and Latino youth was lost to the prison industrial complex, mirroring the national war on poor black males (Soss et al. 2011; Wacquant 2009; Gilmore 2007). During the late 1980s, seventy-five percent of New York State prison inmates came from seven black and Latino neighborhoods in New York City, principally Harlem, the South Bronx, East New York, and Brownsville (Wacquant 2001). 28 percent of

East New York men between the ages of 16 and 35 were arrested in 1998 and 22 percent were incarcerated or supervised by law enforcement authorities (Thabit 2005:206). In the special "Weed and Seed" area, constituting 20 percent of East New York's geographic expanse, up to 50 percent of the male population between 16 and 35 was arrested in 1998 (Thabit 2005:266).

The flipside of this incarceration of male youth was the predominance of single mother families, 42 percent in 1990. Just like in cities suffering from deindustrialization and white flight across the country, these women struggled to balance the conflicting demands of motherhood, the low-wage labor market and punitive state assistance, oftentimes losing the battle (Collins and Mayer 2010; Hays 2004; Morgen et al. 2010). With state and private withdrawal of investment in the built environment or human capital of East New York the formal economy shrank and the informal economy and state assistance expanded. In East New York 45 percent of adults were employed, 45 percent were not in the labor force, and 10 percent were officially unemployed. Consequently, 40 percent of households had incomes under $10,000, the community contained the second highest number of welfare recipients in the borough, and 91.4 percent of public school children received free lunch (Thabit 2005:230).

These were the conditions within which East New York Farms! was born. Several community-based organizations that were involved with the Weed and Seed program got together after the program ended and wanted to continue projects that emphasized seeding, particularly since this part of the program was often marginalized in their view. These organizations included, United Community Centers, Genesis Homes, the Local Development Corporation of East New York (LDCENY), Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development (PICCED), and the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE). In 1995 they formed the East New York Planning Group, a participatory and community based planning

project that utilized an asset and needs based development model. Regular meetings occurred over several years and sought to map out what the community had, its assets, as well as what the community lacked, its needs. The project combined a GIS component to map assets within the community, meetings with community organizations to ascertain the relationship between needs and assets, and neighborhood forum and visioning sessions.

The planning group found that the community had a lot of community gardens (over 106 in all and the most for any community in New York City), many community gardeners growing food, lots of vacant land (15 percent of the land in the community), as well as a disproportionate percentage of the population that was under 18 years of age (32.6 percent). But there were needs within the community as well. While there were many youth in the community, they lacked job opportunities given the community's marginal relationship to the formal wage economy. Fresh and affordable produce was also hard to find because the community either contained bodegas that sold no produce at all, was dominated by fast food restaurants, lacked grocery stores, or had a few grocery stores that primarily sold expired, moldy, and spoiled foods (Pratt Institute Studio Planning 1996; Ross 1996). East New York was suffering the negative effects of food flight and food redlining related to urban renewal, municipal disinvestment, and white flight. The study found only two small supermarkets in the central area of East New York, numerous bodegas that did not sell produce at all, and that on the major thoroughfare of central East New York, Pitkin Avenue, the 54-block retail strip received a mere half of all grocery expenditures by area residents (Pratt Institute Studio Planning 1996). Many community residents were leaving East New York to go grocery shopping (Pratt Institute Studio Planning 1996).

Another need was to institutionalize the community gardens as protected spaces for the long-term. During the 1990s, New York City, under Mayor Giuliani, was heavily invested in

selling off city-owned land for development purposes (Schmelzkopf 1995; Smith and Kurtz 2003; Staeheli et al. 2002). The mayor sought to end the temporary use of the land for community gardens—most were either squatted or had only one-year or five-year leases—and bring the land back into the "market." But community members had invested a lot of time and effort into these spaces and wanted them preserved because they did not see the community gardens as empty worthless plots of land but assets, strengths of the community, safe spaces, and places for socializing, food production, and cultural identity. Additionally, within the community these gardens were in fact treated as de-facto open space since few parks and playgrounds existed in East New York.

Therefore, there was a particular need for jobs for the youth, access to fresh produce, and maintaining existing green spaces. ENYF! would emerge as the organization, the conduit, utilizing existing assets to address existing needs, a community-driven initiative to combat the food flight and food redlining that was produced by white flight, fiscal austerity, and Reganomics. Community gardens would grow produce for sale at a farmers market, which would legitimize the community gardens in the eyes of the city and protect them from development through connecting them to community food security initiatives. To ensure high levels of food production though and to deal with youth unemployment ENYF! would hire youth as interns and pay them stipends to grow food and run a farmers market, providing youth with knowledge and skills rooted in agriculture, the environment, as well as business.

East New York Farms! beginnings were humble. It began in November of 1998 with one community gardener selling produce on a door propped up on two chairs in front of United Community Centers. Close to fifteen years later everything is bigger, if not better, at East New York Farms!, as it continues to build a community gardening and farming network in East New

York to combat the "second hand foods" found in neighborhood bodegas, fast-food restaurants, and grocery stores. The staff has gone from one (project director) to five (project director, youth program director, agriculture director, markets and outreach coordinator, and community organizer). The youth program has expanded from 10 to 33 youth and receives around 100 applications for 20 new spots each year. The organization has expanded food production from its youth farm, which is half an acre, to the Hendrix farm, a quarter of an acre, and also grows food on temporarily vacant lots as well, which generally range around a quarter of an acre.

Alongside of these growing spaces attached to the organization East New York Farms! regularly interacts with over thirty food producing community gardens and twenty food producing backyard gardens. Much of this produce grown in community and backyard gardens are grown for household consumption but it is also sold at the two market spaces operated by East New York Farms! The major market space is the farmers market, which occurs every Saturday from 9am to 3pm June through November. At the farmers market you can buy produce from the youth farm, community and backyard gardeners, as well as two upstate farmers, Mike Rogowski of W. Rogowski Farm and Alex Kravets of Alex's Tomato Farm.[6] The farmers market is also home to food vendors selling hot Caribbean foods, a local fisherman selling fish from the Long Island Sound, people who sell flavored waters, jewelry, teas, and clothing, and numerous cultural festivities, including a hot pepper competition, bitter melon festival, afro-battle, Michael Jackson look-a-like contest, corn roast, and poetry slam, amongst others. On top of the Saturday farmers market ENYF! Started a Wednesday farm stand in 2009 to increase access to fresh local produce throughout the week. This farm stand operates from July to October from 3:30pm to 6:30pm at Hands and Heart Community garden, a community garden that is co-managed by East New York Farms! and sells produce from community gardens, the

youth farm, as well as El Poblano Farm, a local farm in Staten Island operated by Gudellio, a Mexican immigrant. At both of these markets East New York Farms! addresses access and affordability issues through selling produce at lower prices than many other farmers markets in New York City as well as accepting food stamps and utilizing purchasing power programs (see chapter 3).

United Community Centers: The Roots of East New York Farms!

To understand the social justice and intercultural politics of East New York Farms! as well as its emergence to combat food flight and food redlining requires locating its narrative within the history of its parent organization, United Community Centers, and its struggle since the 1950s to realize an intercultural East New York. For in detailing the failure of United Community Centers to realize its aspirations, specifically the roadblocks of community control, black power, white resistance to integration, the rise of neoconservatism, and municipal disinvestment, the foundation is laid for understanding how East New York was produced as a "hyperghetto" ravaged by poverty, unemployment, drugs, and crime. All factors that contributed to the production of food flight and food redlining and subsequently East New York Farms!

United Community Centers emerged in East New York during the 1950s to provide programs, activities, and services to the children and youth living in newly created public housing for low- and middle-income families that were predominantly white.[7] By the 1970s United Community Centers had moved out of public housing to a stand-alone community center, where it still resides, and continued to focus on blending activism and service-provision through daycare (preschool, universal pre-kindergarten), after-school programs, English as a second language classes, immigration assistance, and HIV/AIDS education. In moving out of public

housing into the heart of the New Lots Section of East New York United Community Centers was put into direct contact with a dramatic demographic change within the community, where the community went from around 80 percent white to 64 percent Black and Latino in less than a decade.[8] Likewise, United Community Centers staff and community members became less white and Jewish and more black and Caribbean, a change that continues through today. This racial change within United Community Centers was not due merely to demographic change within the community but the ideology and organizing efforts of United Community Centers, which embraced civil rights, pushed for interculturalism, and became a space within East New York where liberal and left parents, both black and white, could go to create a community where children could "learn to live across racial difference (Eisenberg 1999:61)."

During this period United Community Centers not only continued to focus on youth programs but organized block associations, fought for integrated public education, and waged campaigns against Vietnam, segregation, budgets cuts, and community control. The blending of social programs and social movement organizing emerged out of United Community Centers ideological framework emphasizing "non-sectarian" politics "to develop class conscious community activism committed to racial integration (Eisenberg 1999:61,12)." This interracial politics necessitated embracing the "richness of difference" and entailed rejecting cultural pluralism for interculturalism, the development of cultural identity through interaction with rather than separate development of cultures (Eisenberg 1999:61). In rejecting an assimilationist or pluralist conception of integration, United Community Centers put forth the concept of integration as

> a process of struggle, the living experience of dealing with the crucial conflicts of our world together instead of trying to escape them separately. Integration is the recognition

of the richness of difference; of the right of different people, with different histories and experience, to influence and change one another during the common struggle to end oppression and war, racism and exploitation (Eisenberg 1999: 258).

United Community Centers discourse and practice of interculturalism is apparent in their efforts to integrate public education during the 1960s and how they navigated the clash between civil rights, black power, neoconservatism, and the war on poverty. In 1965 UCC won a federal grant funded by the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development (OJDYD). This funding stream came out of the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act of 1961 and was part of the federal government's anti-poverty initiatives focused on youth employment—targeting federal funds to existing community groups for "delinquency prevention." This injection of funds allowed an expansion of staff, programming, and organizing at United Community Centers and included an interracial summer camp where youth were involved in organizing for state funds, integrated education, school construction, and the anti-war movement, both at the city-, state- and community-wide level. Two youth from United Community Centers summer camp were attending Franklin K. Lane High in the City Line neighborhood of East New York—the Northeast section of East New York. While in the late 1950s and early 1960s the school was still working class and white by the 1966-7 school year the student population was 80 percent black and 20 percent white with segregated entrances, cafeteria tables, sports teams, and clubs. Racial tensions ran high. Fights were constant. White flight intensified and the militarization of public schooling was put forth as a solution, much like it was in neighboring Canarsie. This was mirrored across New York City as protests, marches, and occupations by blacks and whites for and against integration threw the public school system into crisis during the 1960s (Ballard 1973; Podair 2004; Ravitch 2000; Traub 1994).

To address the racial conflict engulfing New York City, United Community Centers organized alongside of other integrationist groups in the 1960s and put forth a proposal for an integrated educational complex in East New York on the Spring Creek urban renewal site. This effort sought to unite a white Canarsie, a black and Puerto Rican Brownsville, and a racially mixed east Flatbush and East New York under one educational space. The plans, first put forth in 1963 to the Board of Education, were rejected in favor of four segregated schools, one in each community, a proposal designed to appeal to both anti-integrationist white contingents in Canarsie and black power demands in Brownsville and East New York (Posner 1977). As the struggle over the educational park dragged on for well over a decade no new schools were built in East New York from 1965 to 1975, despite massive overcrowding in the local school system. During this time period most students were attending mandatory half-days so all students could receive some education, one factor amongst many that lead to a dropout rate approaching fifty percent (Thabit 2005). In the end the integrated educational park was never achieved, neither was an intercultural New York, in the sense of a Black-White alliance.

The Failure of Integration and the Production of Food Deserts

Understanding the failure of United Community Centers attempt to realize integrated education lies at the heart of connecting the dots between the social upheaval of the 1960s, the racialized politics that emerged from this upheaval, and the social production of food deserts such as East New York. Four factors are central: the limits of the war on poverty, white resistance to integration, community control as a way around integration, and blaming the fiscal crisis on lower income nonwhite communities like East New York.

The Limits of the War on Poverty

In the summer of 1966 New York City's attention shifted from the "negro riots" ongoing in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant—the respective Black centers of social life for Manhattan and Brooklyn—towards the far eastern corner of Northern Brooklyn. There, in East New York, a predominantly Italian and Jewish community was quickly becoming principally Black and Puerto Rican. Social tensions between the more established white community and the newer black community had been bubbling up over the previous decade and racial clashes between white, black and Puerto Rican youths were occurring regularly on New Lots Avenue, Livonia Avenue, and Ashford Avenue throughout 1966. But all these simmering feelings were brought to a head on the twenty-first of July. On this day white Italian youth held a protest march with banners that read "You may take Watts, but you'll never take New Lots" (Connolly 1977:134) and "Go Back to Africa, Niggers" (Reider 1985:23). Within the community these white youths were better known as SPONGE (Society for the Prevention of Negroes Getting Everything), a street gang that sought to protect white East New York from Blacks and Puerto Ricans through verbal intimidation and physical violence, practices tolerated by many elder whites within the community. Black youth responded in kind with bottles and soda cans and were subsequently chased by the white youth. During the ensuing pursuit gunfire erupted from one of the neighborhood rooftops, missing SPONGE members but striking and killing an 11-year-old black child. New Lots was quickly awash in rioting, looting and the mass destruction of property. Objects not moored down became projectiles. Garbage cans were sent through store windows. Fire hydrants were opened. Clothing and shoe stores had spontaneous "five finger" discounts. Sidewalks became littered with shattered glass. Hundreds upon hundreds of policemen descended upon the area to regain order and restore peace, some accounts even placed it at one

thousand officers. When Mayor Lindsay came to see the destruction he was told by white protestors to "go back to Africa" and his car was pelted with rocks. A portion of the white community clearly felt that Lindsay and other liberal politicians were pro-black and anti-white and that they were not wanted.

The riot in 1966 merely hastened the already dramatic racial transformation of East New York. By the end of the year the community had undergone a racial change of over 60 percent in just under a decade and by the end of the decade what housing and shops were still white before the incident were no longer. Many whites who had initially held out and refused to move packed up and followed the exodus to Canarsie, Long Island, New Jersey, Staten Island or sections of the Bronx and Westchester. Business flight was endemic. Streets that were once bustling with family-owned mom and pop stores, employment opportunities, small-scale entrepreneurialism and foot traffic became shadows of their former selves. Synagogues and Churches departed. Community centers were vacated. New Lots, Blake, Sutter, Belmont and Pitkin avenues, once the heart of the central section of East New York, were becoming ghost towns. Movie theaters shut down. The famous Fortunoff's Jewelry store left town. Candy, furniture and grocery stores closed their doors. This exodus of retail shops and civic institutions compounded East New York's already bleak future, which had lost numerous jobs, factories and industries after the wartime economy ended.

As popular and official attention turned away from Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant towards Brownsville and East New York the conversion of East Brooklyn into a "hyperghetto" produced a plethora of voyeuristic descriptions. A community leader in Brownsville during the 1950s stated, "where Brownsville meets East New York…there is a tortured spot of the city, rampant with ugliness…a stagnant slum, dead in the daytime and ominous at night (Upon this

Rock:151).” The NYC planning commission referred to the area as a “ghost town” and one HUD study stated that the area “suggested death (Connolly 1977).” Brownsville was called the “second Hiroshima” (Connolly 1977:143) by some and Mayor Lindsay called in “bombsville.” On one visit, the Mayor of Boston called East New York “the beginning of the end of civilization” (Sleeper 1990) and when E.P. Thompson, the great British cultural historian, came to visit East New York for a talk in the 1970s he compared East New York to London after the German Blitz bombing in World War II (Eisenstein 1999). This reference was a favorite, as many called the area a “bombed out German city” that was “shelled by heavy artillery” (Connolly 1977).

The social conditions that produced the 1966 riot in East New York are exactly what the War on Poverty was designed to counter. After seeing the devastation first hand, Lindsay went to “a senate hearing on the problems facing America’s big cities” in August of the same year and stated that the city would need an additional $50 billion over the next ten years, on top of the $600 to $700 million it currently spends, in order to make the city “a thoroughly livable and exciting place in which to live,” an amount that was necessary in order to counter the violence of “slum dwellers” born in the “face of an invisible, uncaring government (Cannato 2001: 226).” Federal government funding was vital because New York City had reached the limits of its own taxing power.[9] In the eyes of Mayor Lindsay the federal government chose Vietnam over East New York and the two options were mutually exclusive, “for the truth, I’m afraid, is that we cannot achieve either the cities or the society we would like as long as we continue the war in Vietnam. We cannot spend more than $24 billion a year in Vietnam and still rebuild our cities (Cannato 2001: 227).” Senator Robert F. Kennedy said this figure was “totally unrealistic” and journalist Jack Newfield best summarized the reaction of the subcommittee members, it was “as

if [Lindsay] were Allen Ginsberg requesting the legalization of LSD (Cannato 2001: 227)." The federal government's rejection of Lindsay's request and its refusal to fund or denial at how much it would take to adequately address the color line within New York City was a foreshadowing of President Ford's response to the New York City fiscal crisis of the 1970s, emblazoned on the front page of the New York Post, it read, "Drop Dead."

Lindsay's inability to scale-up to the federal level signaled the limits of municipal-level reform.[10] If New York couldn't afford to "save" East New York and the federal government was unwilling to lend its helping hand, it signaled that the War on Poverty wasn't all it was built up to be. The refusal to fully fund the War on Poverty was based on the politics of the Great Society. For some it was a mechanism of poverty alleviation and racial integration, but for many within the state and the Democratic Party it was a tactic of integrating poor Blacks and Latinos into the political and civic apparatus (Katznelson 1982). This strategy was premised on being able to counter the poverty of these groups by bringing them into America's pluralistic electoral model emphasizing competing voting blocs while also benefiting the Democratic Party by building bases of political support through machine-style patronage politics (Posner 1977; Eisenberg 1999). Rather than a social movement employing direct action to achieve "non-reformist reforms" antagonism could be guided within the urban/democratic political machine. Within the War on Poverty this took the form of channeling millions of federal dollars to anti-poverty agencies that sought to produce power structures within the new ethnic ghettoes that linked residents to resources, specifically jobs, education, healthcare, and housing (Piven and Cloward [1971] 1993).

The recuperative logic of the War on Poverty was clearly present in East New York as a new black elite emerged through political office, the community board, the school board, and

anti-poverty agencies (Posner 1977). In East New York, rather than building a grass roots movement for social change the precarity of funding for community based organizations lead to infighting amongst organizations as they sought to secure anti-poverty funding and maintain their institutional reproduction through control over patronage and jobs. In this sense, the mundane politics of institutional reproduction became preeminent amongst anti-poverty organizations and pushed them away from community mobilization to service provision and referral agencies as part of a welfare state apparatus. In East New York this took the form of East New York Community Corporation (ENYCC) fighting amongst others anti-poverty programs for control over urban renewal funding and the Council Against Poverty (CAP) renaming itself Council for a Better East New York (CBENY) as it shifted from a community action program to a service-oriented program (Posner 1977:74-96). What the war on poverty did was to link upwardly mobile blacks and Latinos with municipal, state, and federal agencies. Consequently, a white political machine continued to rule East New York through Black allies, all the while being investigated, tried, and convicted of corruption, extortion, and conspiracy (Thabit 2005). As Ana Aguirre, current director of United Community Centers put it, "if you wanted a certain job in the school system, with the city or a local development agency than you needed to support certain officials to get that job."

White Resistance to Integration

As the Great Society Program sought to produce and incorporate a black elite in the state, convert social movements into electoral voting blocs, and create poverty management programs, white communities began to viscerally reject the major tenants of the civil rights movement and intensify their demands against integration and for segregation. The maintenance of racial

segregation after the civil rights movement would play a strong role in producing East New York as a food desert, since it would enable municipal disinvestment in these communities during the culture wars of the 1970s through 1990s when Blacks were framed as lazy and violent people who were un-American.

Once Black America was to be written into the architecture of the New Deal northern liberalism buckled under the pressure and the newly minted whites—Germans, Italians, Polish, Jewish, and Irish—rejected this extension of the New Deal to Blacks as they sought to secure and consolidate their recent gains at the expense of Blacks (Kruse 2007; Lassiter 2007; McGirr 2002; Rieder 1987; Sokol 2007). For many white communities integration became a zero-sum game: Black gains could only come at the cost of whites. As a result, post 1960s the racial animosity of whites against blacks reaches a new pinnacle, as northern (sub)urban populations manifest anti-black sentiments in their practices, discourses and politics to a level not witnessed before the 1940s, largely because blacks were not a majority of the five boroughs nor was there a period of economic contraction. The white backlash against Blacks and Latinos occurred in community after community across the country and an entire generation of politicians curried white anger into votes for a suddenly resurgent Republican Party and a political project now known as neoconservatism (Crespino 2009; Olson 2008; Schulman and Zeliezer 2008). With the support of federal assistance, not "welfare," many whites voted with their automobiles to take advantage of federal highway, gasoline, and mortgage subsidies to make life anew in the suburbs by making them like the old urban communities they had lost, lily white (Cohen 2004; Freund 2010; Jackson 1985).

Yet, not all whites could leave for the suburbs, this was the case for many in Canarise, the Brooklyn neighborhood to the south of Brownsville and southwest of East New York; a reality

well documented by Jonathan Rieder in his book *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism* (1985). By the post-war period Canarsie had risen from Jamaica Bay on filled in swampland and was populated by Italians and Jews who had left Brownsville and East New York for home ownership and the class mobility offered by the post-war boom. The mass migration of Blacks and Latinos to Northern and Central Brooklyn, particularly Brownsville and East New York, brought great anxiety to the children and grand children of immigrants who witnessed first hand the movement from working to middle class. Having recently moved out of the ghettos of Brownsville and East New York to Canarsie these new entrants to the lower middle class could not up and leave, large mortgages and low savings fixed them in the community. Carnarsie perceived itself as under threat, as a victim, seeing "the shifts in Brooklyn's racial complexion as an invasion by a hostile army (Rieder 1985:26)" that ultimately ended up in opposition to integration as a "form of ethnic succession (Rieder 1985:189)."

This ethnic succession became front-page news when in the Fall of 1972 the Board of Education's proposal to bus children from Brownsville to Canarsie instigated a weeklong boycott. The white student boycott was 90 percent strong, with 1,500 protestors waving signs reading "Canarsie schools for Canarsie children (Rieder 1985:2)." White Students at Canarsie high demanded the "expansion of surveillance, to deprive students of rights of access and movement, to search and seize property (Rieder 1985:189)" in order to quell racial fears and unrest. They also wanted quotas for white guards, since black guards did not protect "their interests" and favored blacks over whites. Beyond this, individuals in the community turned to arson, vigilantism, crime patrols and neighborhood watches to halt busing. For those in Canarise community controlled education was part-and-parcel of an attempt towards a community-controlled landscape, as parents pushed against liberalism's insistence for a housing market open

to all. Housing was to be locally controlled to ensure "racial monopoly (Rieder 1985:193)." Reflecting the family-centric form of Italian culture, particularism was prioritized over American universalism. They created neighborhood-buying services to filter the demands and needs of buyers and sellers through the community protocol of "whites only" and whites who tried to sell to blacks because they would pay more than whites were terrorized and threatened verbally and physically by neighbors, some were almost fire-bombed.

That educational integration was central to Canarsie's fears of loss of status is understandable, as busing was seen as the tipping point of residential mixing, which would bring with it crime, drugs, race mixing and lower property values. There was little benefit of living in a homogenous neighborhood if your children had to go to school with Blacks, for school integration meant cultural integration and the stigma of blackness would rub off on your children's education, demeanors, and status claims. They did not want Canarise to become the East New York or Brownsville of before the war, which was full of tenements, overcrowding and crime before Blacks and Latinos ever arrived. Canarsieians were determined not to go back to being poor and were more than willing to use political protest, physical intimidation, violence and community groups to control education and housing markets by Canarsieians for Canarsieians, meaning by and for whites be they Italian or Jewish.

Canarsie's fight for local control over its school and housing system and its struggle to keep the state out of its community fueled a rightward and republican turn within the community. From 1920 to 1932 the community had moved from a mixture of Democratic, Republican and Socialist to "staunchly Democratic" but the community voted for Nixon to the tune of 60-70 percent in 1968 and in 1980 the community voted overwhelmingly for Ronald Reagan (Rieder 1987). But Canarsie was no anomaly, it was reflective of the larger national turn where

supporters of liberalism and the New Deal turned conservative and Republican when faced with civil rights, integration, dismantling the color line and undoing the vestiges of racial hierarchy (Freedman 1998; Schulman and Zelizer 2008).

Whites supported the concept of equality of opportunity for blacks. Blacks could have the right to vote, the right to an education, housing and jobs, but none of these rights were to infringe upon or reduce the existing quality of life of white communities, which in the minds of many whites meant continued racial segregation. Numerous polls provide insight into this polarity. 75 to 93 percent of northern and southern respondents favored fair housing, school desegregation, equal voting rights, and fair job opportunities, yet none favored government implementation of these changes by more than 45 percent (Jacoby 1998:60). Other polls in the 1960s found that 41 percent thought the president was pushing integration "too fast" and 42 percent thought the civil rights act was "too strong" (Jacoby 1998:60-1).

As a result, we see at the national level the problem of the desire for change but at a pace tolerable to whites and generally enforced at the local level where white communities in control of their local political and educational offices could forestall or limit the pace and scope of integration. Canarise, like many other communities across the country during the 1960s and 1970s, no longer invested hope in the liberal ideal of equality of opportunity by way of integration nor even practiced a politics of "waiting" for black civil rights. The new politics was to secure the community's borders at all costs, legal, litigative, or direct action. It rejected integration outright as too caustic and destructive to the social fabric of white communities, which turned Canarsie into a hotbed of neoconservatism.

A counter to the federalism of the New Deal, neoconservatism recuperated the critique of state interventionism emerging from white communities against integration and channeled this

racial angst and fear of downward mobility into an electoral voting bloc that would support privatization, deregulation, lower taxes, and corporate power (McGirr 2002; Olson 2008; Self 2005). Whites who voted republican knew exactly what they were voting for. Republican Party assertions of the need for "law and order," a "get tough" on crime approach, to get government "off our backs", and enforce "personal responsibility" were explicitly racialized; it was code for blackness (Gilens 2000; Quadagno 1996; Tonry 2011).[11] Brought into the fold through the New Deal and post-war growth boom, the grasp of white-ethnics on middle class status and upward mobility was tenuous, fraught with despair of downward mobility, they turned to the Republican Party to shore up their existing class status, at the expense of Blacks (Kruse 2007; Sokol 2007).

Community Control as a Way Around Integration

The resistance of white communities to integration was firmly rooted in the attempt to maintain the class and race privilege that was bound up with the New Deal. In New York City, the movement of Italians, Irish, and Jews, amongst others, into the status of white was a conflicted, traumatic, and lengthy process, but one that was ultimately rooted in distancing themselves from being black. The attempt to create distance between themselves and Blacks manifested in strong opposition to integrated public education and pushed the power structure of New York City towards community control as a solution, which reinforced racial difference and ushered in the devolution of administrative but not fiscal power to communities. Community control, in the vein of the War on Poverty, therefore created another series of projects that emphasized patronage and jobs within existing political structures as an end run around addressing the relationship between racial segregation and systemic underfunding of black communities. Without fiscal power or interracial alliances black communities were left to

themselves to struggle against municipal disinvestment, food redlining, and food flight in their communities.

During the 1950s and 1960s the battleground of integration and a central focus of the civil rights and black power movement was the education system, as it opened up or foreclosed social mobility for blacks as a class (Ballard 1973; Podair 2004; Ravitch 2000; Traub 1994). Maintaining the existing educational system based on racial segregation would confine another generation of nonwhites to the bottom of the political, social, and economic hierarchy while integrating public education would create avenues for blacks, both as individuals and as members of a social group, to reap the benefits of increased educational, economic, and political opportunity. But integrated public education was never really achieved because from the point of view of many within the New York City power elite integration had to be avoided at all costs, it was too politically caustic (Podair 2004; Posner 1977; Ravitch 2000). Integration struggles were flaring up all across New York City, as well as the nation—Boston, Detroit, and Denver were other northern epicenters (Baugh 2011; Formisano 2003; Gaillard 2006; Posner 1977; Ravitch 2000; Rubin 1973). Within New York City, many of these local struggles over integration were beginning to scale up from neighborhoods to the Department of Education and City Hall. As the politics scaled up, so did the stakes at play, and the tactics of pro- and anti-integrationist coalitions. The school system was thrown into chaos by stay-at-home or walk-out strikes, sit-ins, sleep-ins, pray-ins, hunger strikes, marches, protests, and boycotts, by both pro-integration and anti-integration advocates as well as the teacher's union, United Federation of Teachers (Podair 2004; Ravitch 2000). These battles were emblematic of the larger racial tensions of the era. There were weekly riots dispersed throughout New York City during the

mid-to-late 1960s, as well as nationally: Watts (1965), Chicago (1966), Newark (1967) and Detroit (1967) in particular.

The Department of Education's solution to both the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruling in 1954 and the local educational conflicts bubbling up during the 1950s and 1960s was released in 1967 and named the Bundy Report. The Bundy Report put forth "community control" or decentralization of administrative power as a solution to the intensified confrontations and strikes that had torn apart the New York City schools over the last decade. New York City school decentralization plans essentially sought to manage and pacify struggles over integration that were scaling up to the municipal level by pushing them back down to the local or neighborhood level. In putting the focus of education on "community control" the integrationist struggle could be controlled and made less threatening, since whites opposed to integration and blacks in favor of black-controlled education could see it as a "win-win." Both groups would have buy-in to decentralization plans since each would be able to have control over their own school district. This strategy was clearly elucidated by Estelle Hertzberg, Ford Foundation staff member, "in the past ten years, education issues have brought more and more Negro and white parents face to face, in battle dress. Decentralization will, in a manner of speaking, disperse the troops and send them back into their own districts to fight among themselves. This may somewhat reduce the level of negro-white tension in the city (Posner 1977:197)." Such matter-of-fact statements were supported by the work of Alan Altshuler (1970), who wrote on community control initiatives in the 1960s, and Ira Katznelson's (1981) own research on the Washington-Heights-Inwood neighborhood of Manhattan during the 1960s and 1970s. Katznelson affirms that "decentralizing concessions by city elites would be substitutes for other substantive changes, rather than means to redistributive ends…carefully

implemented decentralization could shatter the global challenge that race presented to the urban system and restore the territorial boundaries of regular urban conflict (1981:179)."

The Board of Education's proposal, and its support by white residents in Canarsie and black power organizations in East New York effectively closed the door on United Community Centers own proposal for an integrated education complex uniting East New York, Canarsie, East Flatbush and Brownsville. Within East New York, the urban renewal focused Model Cities program, and the anti-poverty organizations of East New York Community Corporation and East New York Alliance, all supported the Department of Education's decentralization proposal in the Bundy Report, as it could be used to support their Black Power demands. United Community Centers was relatively unique in East New York in that they opposed the Bundy Report and community control initiatives as a pacification strategy that reinforced segregation, negative racial difference, and prevented a fully funded public education system, the central avenue through which both working class whites and blacks could gain upward mobility in an economy increasingly dependent upon higher education.

In the eyes of United Community Centers the decentralization strategy would inhibit "city-wide organization" for "city-wide educational objectives" because each community "would see their interests as opposed" and "community level control of the schools would turn district against district in a competition for advantage (Eisenberg 1999:159)." In doing so decentralization "diverted attention from the shared need for additional resources obtainable only through the coordinated mobilization of communities throughout the City (Eisenberg 1999:216)." As a result, decentralization would reproduce the existing de-facto racial segregation of the city's public education system. This claim has born itself out in East New York and New York City at large. As Prudence Posner (1977) underscores in her study of the

integrated educational park conflict, the major problem with community control is that it contends “there can be no community of interests between blacks and whites (31).”

The calls for community control reinforced in-group out-group dynamics organized around the cleavage of race and subsequently conceptions of negative difference and replaced interracial class identification with ethnic identification and an identity politics that encouraged local-based turf wars that could be contained at that level. Despite decentralization white flight continued and the conversion of administration and teaching into black hands did little to counter the institutional disinvestment in East New York public schools and the surrounding community. Black control of a school district without any fiscal powers meant little beyond symbolic power and patronage positions. United Community Centers understood this but was ineffective in building a strong enough and vibrant enough grassroots movement to create an intercultural East New York. A key reason for this was that United Community Centers was unique in East New York, maintaining its integrationist vision long after the dominant currents within organized white communities had moved from mild support of civil rights to hardened anti-integration and black communities had moved from civil rights and integration to Black power and community control.

Moreover, United Community Centers continued support for integrated education past its peak in popularity produced many problems in securing and maintaining funding from private and public actors. While United Community Centers had initial success with federal funding, receiving praise and being seen as a model for youth empowerment, this reputation quickly soured. By 1969 the Ford Foundation would reject a United Community Centers grant application because they were “militant integrationist” (Eisenberg 1999: 224). In less than two decades integration has been thrown under the proverbial bus in favor of decentralization and

community control and with it the funding for organizations such as United Community Centers that sought to realize the dream of an intercultural and interracial United States rather than one organized around racial segregation under the guise of community-level empowerment.

Urban Renewal

The racial and class transformation of East New York, New York City and most northern cities was aggravated by neighborhood, citywide, and national-level programs of urban renewal and slum clearance, which framed the entire destruction of existing communities and their redevelopment from the ground-up as the solution to both white middle class flight and the in-migration of poor nonwhites (Anderson 1964; Bellush and Hausknecht 1967; Hirsch 1998; Gioielli 2011; Schwartz 1993; Thomas and Ritzdorf 1996; Zipp 2010). In reality, rather than solving the problems of this transformation, urban renewal and slum clearance only magnified them, intensifying flight, poverty, inequality, and disinvestment. This may seem counterintuitive, investment producing greater disinvestment, but it was the lay of the land for places like East New York and Brownsville. A primary reason for this is that urban renewal, which was supposed to replace older buildings with new construction, built less housing than it destroyed, which intensified the overcrowding and low quality housing that it was supposed to eradicate. It was much easier for the city to tear down a building than incentivize a private builder to develop an area perceived to be a slum or encourage a bank to lend money to redevelop a slum.

Announced in 1961 for Brownsville, by 1973 urban renewal had "leveled dozens of buildings, but built only a small number of low income units and not a single unit of the middle income housing promised (Macchiarola et al 1973:2)." Similar events were reproduced in East

New York within the Model Cities urban renewal area between Van Sinderen and Pennsylvania. After the area was marked for renewal, flight, decay, vacancy, foreclosure, arson and city repossession occurred (Thabit 2005). Urban renewal at the national level was no better. As of June 30, 1967, over 400,000 residential units had been demolished and only 1,670 low-rent public housing units had been built on the same sites (Fullilove 2005:59). This is why urban renewal was called "negro removal" by black communities. When black communities were not replaced with vacant lots urban renewal was often utilized to move black communities out of the way for the white middle class who had fled to the suburbs. In these cases, black communities were replaced with museums, universities, office complexes, and sporting arenas or highway systems to make it more efficient for white suburbanites to access work and consumption spaces in the urban core (Caro 1975; Fullilove 2005; Gioielli 2011). Either way, urban renewal was generally not implemented in a manner to make a better built environment for black communities to live in.

A process advocated for and called "progress" by downtown merchants, bankers, corporations, realtors, and developers, urban renewal essentially created hyperghettos that socially segregated nonwhites from whites and concentrated them in populations that magnified the problems associated with poverty and social isolation. In 1965 New York City had 111 middle-income projects accommodating over 80,000 families. 79 percent of these projects were segregated, that is, they had occupancy rates that were 90 percent or more black or white. (Thabit 2005:39). Although Blacks constituted only 14 percent of the borough's population in the mid-1950s they made up 40 percent of Brooklyn's public housing residents and by 1973 Brooklyn had 60,000 public housing occupants, of which 62 percent were black, 19 percent were Puerto Rican and 19 percent were white (Connolly 1977:198-9).

At the same time as federal policies cut off investment in lower income nonwhite communities, and consolidated poverty and unemployment in public housing projects, federal subsidization of suburban homeownership pushed the upwardly mobile whites out of public housing and urban environments (Massey and Denton 1993). By 1965 the "federal government had subsidized 10 million" suburban units, of which, "only 2 percent were available to nonwhites (Thabit 2005:38)." This was the same year that President Johnson ordered desegregation through an executive order, which the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) subsequently exempted one- and two-family homes from, thereby maintaining the suburbs as for "whites only." Such policies continued a long history of a public-private alliances to channel investment and wealth to white communities while maintaining class and race segregation—the white middle class obtained subsidized suburban home ownership and Blacks and Latinos were confined to a decaying urban core (Massey and Denton 1993).

On top of the failure to build new housing and the halt of investment that came with urban renewal, the major problem with these programs was that they failed to address the root causes of poverty—the institutional factors that produced "slums" in the first place: deindustrialization, educational segregation, agricultural modernization, institutional racism, and the real estate practices of redlining, blockbusting, flipping, and milking.[12] Instead, urban renewal intensified the processes shaping the production of slums through intensifying racial segregation and social isolation by employing environmentally deterministic conceptions of poverty alleviation where science and state power was employed to change the culture and behavior of black people. A rigidly ordered and defined neighborhood was presumed to automatically produce an ordered, obedient, and self-regulated population. Therefore, the "chaotic" neighborhoods that combined multiple forms of housing—single- and multiple-family

homes, brownstones and tenements—and multiple forms of land usage—residential, commercial and industrial—were to be replaced with high-rise housing projects and clearly demarcated and segregated industrial, commercial, and residential zones. These sanitized spaces were expected to, in and of themselves, reduce social disorder and produce middle class civility amongst the black population.

Urban renewal therefore represented a form of "authoritarian high modernism" articulated by James C. Scott in *Seeing Like the State* (1998), a "strong (one might even say muscle-bound) version of the beliefs in scientific and technical progress…about continued linear progress, the development of scientific and technical knowledge, the expansion of production, the rational design of social order…an increasing control over nature (including human nature) (89)." Scott contends that the "most tragic episodes of state development" occur through the coupling of three elements. One, the "aspiration to the administrative ordering of nature and society" exemplified by engineers, planners, technocrats, administrators, architects and scientists (88). This is the high modernism. Two, the "unrestrained use of the power of the modern state as an instrument for achieving these designs (88-9)." This is the authoritarianism. Three, a "weakened or prostrate civil society that lacks the capacity to resist these plans (89)." This is what makes authoritarian high modernism effective. The combination of these three processes produces a scenario where "ruling elites with no commitment to democracy or civil rights…use unbridled state power" against a community that "lacks the capacity to mount a determined resistance (89)."

Urban renewal is a prime example of this. From 1949 to 1973 urban renewal uprooted more than 2,500 neighborhoods in 993 cities across the United States, including Harlem, Brownsville, and East New York, and dispossessed more than one million people, predominately

Black (Fullilove 2005). Across the United States jazz venues, beer gardens, barbershops and churches, amongst other black cultural spaces, were demolished by urban renewal as were entire black communities, forcing people to uproot themselves and find new homes, new workspaces, and new communities. Black America was required to rebuild what takes generations and generations to create, the feeling of home and the belonging to a community. Urban renewal's demolition of entire neighborhoods destroyed them from the outside in. When the wrecking ball took down church steeples, shop awnings, front porches, and apartment balconies, when bulldozers knocked down the frontages of fully functional pharmacies, furniture stores, movie theaters, and grocery stores these machines and the white men pulling the strings were also physically assaulting the heart and mind of the black residents who grew up and lived in these areas. It told them, very violently, that where they lived, and by extension, their own families and communities, were unwanted and could be cast aside as easily as one tosses a gum wrapper on the street. Urban renewal clearly informed Black America that white America still say them as a second-class citizen.

Mindy Fullilove has named the scars of living through urban renewal "root shock," the "traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of all or part of one's emotional ecosystem…the loss of a massive web of connections—a way of being—that had been destroyed," a process that "does not end when the event is over" but "lives with us" forever (2005: 11). Root shock has severely negative repercussions on the individual and the community that suffered the destruction of their home. Root shock "ruptures bonds…undermines trust, increases anxiety about letting loved ones out of one's sight, destabilizes relationships, destroys social, emotional, and financial resources, and increases the risk for every kind of stress-related disease, from depression to heat attack (14)." These manifestations of loss and anger at having one's home

destroyed was a collective experience for Black America that "disabled powerful mechanisms of community functioning, leaving the black world at an enormous disadvantage for meeting the challenges of globalization (20)."

Interconnectedness, trust and reciprocity declined as people were scattered to the wind and the built environment, social networks, and civic life decayed. The rapid race and class transformations within East New York when combined with urban renewal had grave consequences for the incoming Black and Latino community in terms of its access to, cultivation of, maintenance of, and expansion of community-level institutions, self-help organizations, civic groups, and political institutions. Many of the institutions that undergirded Jewish and Italian East Brooklyn left, leaving a political vacuum where Black and Puerto Rican population did not have organizations, groups, or individuals to seek out and help them navigate the ropes, organize, and articulate their grievances and demands. More directly, the decline of social bonds within communities produced an inability to or weakness in fending off the onslaught of private and municipal disinvestment, the neoconservative assault on civil rights, and the rise of drug use, crime, and broken homes that emerged after the 1960s. On top of all this, root shock created a strong feeling of alienation and anger within Black America that was initially directed at White America but would later be directed not against the white power structure but against their own neighborhoods, manifested through the emergence of a "code of the street," a hyper-masculine propensity towards violence.[13]

Blaming the Victim: The Fiscal Crisis in New York City

United Community Centers, one small community center, could not counter the weight of white resistance to integration, the push towards decentralization, or urban renewal programs and

its staff members, volunteers, and community residents watched as the community crumbled in on itself. By the 1970s United Community Centers was fighting an uphill battle. It not only had to struggle against segregation, redlining, deindustrialization, poverty, and political marginalization but the fiscal crisis of New York City, which was blamed on communities like East New York.

The fiscal crisis was part of a national problem rooted in domestic and international economic restructuring (Bluestone and Harrison 1982; Magdoff and Sweezy 1981; Magdoff and Sweezy 1987; Stein 2011). Deindustrialization was hollowing out the tax base of New York City at the same time as millions of agricultural immigrants flooded the social service programs of the city (Freeman 2001; Piven and Cloward 1971 [1993]; Tabb 1982). The outcome for the city was lower receipts and higher payments. These lower receipts were compounded by failed urban redevelopment strategies that incentivized luxury office and condominium projects while providing massive tax breaks for these projects, which lowered the tax base even more (Greenberg 2008). Additionally, the withdrawal of federal assistance for municipal liberalism intensified the gap between receipts and payments because the federal government was no longer picking up the tab for social programs and infrastructure that it provided during the 1940s through 1960s (Tabb 1982). While union wages and pensions had gone up this was not the major factor in the fiscal crisis, the major factor was that the banking industry went on a "capital strike," refusing to invest in the city until it pursued a political program that was business friendly, which included lower tax rates, deunionization, the retrenchment of union pensions and salaries, cutting back on municipal services and social services for the poor, and as well as significant budget cuts for and the imposition of tuition at the City University of New York (Lichten 1986; Tabb 1982).

At the same time that the banking sector refused to invest in New York City until the standard of living for the working class was drastically downgraded the power elite also launched a public relations campaign that attributed the fiscal crisis to municipal liberalism, the war on poverty, and the "nanny state." Particular blame was placed on the claim that liberalism and the welfare state coddled nonwhites who embodied an alternative and destructive culture of poverty that threatened a hard working and civilized white America (Gilens 2000; Quadagno 1996; Tonry 2011; Wacquant 2009a). Subsequently, proposing a solution to the fiscal crisis meant proposing a solution to the "negro" problem. That solution was fiscal austerity, the imposition of law and order, and disinvestment in non-white communities, in other words, municipal redlining and the prison industrial complex (Lichten 1986; Tonry 2011; Wacquant 2009a).

Consequently, the negative effects of the fiscal crisis of New York City were not equally distributed throughout the city but targeted on nonwhite populations and their neighborhoods (Pritchett 2003; Thabit 2005). The official policy of New York City, as promoted by the city's housing commissioner Roger Starr, was "planned shrinkage." The withdrawal of city services and investment from "blighted" areas. For East New York this meant a 50 percent reduction in the parks department workforce and a lay off of 50 percent of the guidance staff in the school district along with 200 teachers. Both layoffs lead to institutional disinvestment in youth, as parks became dumping grounds and larger class sizes and less student support lead to lower scores and higher dropout rates. Compounding the geographical distance between East New York and Downtown Brooklyn, the MTA dropped two buses from the B-83 line, leading to overcrowded buses. This was part of overall retrenchment in public transit, with massive cuts in bus service across the five boroughs and the elimination of 4,500 transit jobs. Trash pickup was

supposed to have a six-day a week schedule, but was cut to two days in southern sections East New York and three days in northern section of East New York. By 1977, the 75th precinct had lost seventy policemen, leading to a lack of foot patrolmen, which compounded the existing problems of a lack of community policing and civilian compliant review procedures. Across New York City 27 of the 35 fire departments closed down were in poor minority areas, which amplified the problems of arson that were higher in areas with municipal redlining.

The cuts to the City University of New York (CUNY) were particularly harmful, as it closed off upward mobility to East New York's youth at a time when the service sector and knowledge economy were expanding. Free-tuition, in existence from CUNY's founding in 1847 was eliminated in 1976, 3,300 faculty were laid off, and Hostos Community College, Medger Evers College and York College (in neighboring Jamaica Queens), predominately nonwhite institutions, were subject for closure. In Fall of 1974, right before the fiscal crisis, enrollment at CUNY stood at an all-time high of 253,237. By 1980, with the imposition of tuition and budget cuts, enrollment had declined to 172,000.

The negative outcomes of racial segregation, if not already apparent, clearly became so during and after the fiscal crisis of 1973-5. The discussion of taxes, public services, and state redistribution of wealth became explicitly racialized. Addressing the roots of underdevelopment within nonwhite communities would require their inclusion into decision making processes and the transfer of wealth from more affluent white communities through higher taxes. Such a strategy was increasingly non-viable given the backlash against integration and civil rights, one that had shifted into an anti-tax and tax-reduction movement that effectively cut blacks off from the vital services that were required to realize desegregation, equality of opportunity, and a decent quality of life (Kuttner 1980; Lo 1995; Self 2005; Sears 1982).

White resistance to paying for the improvement of black areas was politically viable because of the framework of electoral districting in New York City, which were generally racially homogenous. This segregation shielded white voters and white politicians from the civic, electoral, and social backlash bound up with public disinvestment forced upon nonwhite populations. Politically, cutting services in lower income communities, particularly East New York, made sense since these areas had lower voter turnout figures, were less politically organized and mobilized than more affluent white communities, provided little to no income for campaigns and elections, and generally provided marginal amounts of revenue to the city. Consequently, cities were pushed to drop the axe on areas like East New York since they took more from the city coffers than they paid into them and making the cuts would not harm their power base. And as the axe fell the prison industrial complex was brought in to police the social fallout when both the market and the state deserted communities like East New York, which pushed people towards a whole ensemble of make shift strategies to survive when work disappeared, many of which were deemed illegal by the very same actors that removed "above board" employment opportunities from East New York.

Conclusion: Connecting the Dots of Disinvestment and Food Redlining in East New York

Research on East New York and its next-door neighbor, Brownsville, have made strong connections to the educational, employment, housing, drug, and crime problems faced by these communities and the legacy of the color line, the failure of the civil rights movement and racial integration, and the private and public disinvestment in lower income Black and Latino communities fueled by urban renewal, institutional racism, and neoconservatism (Eisenberg 1999; Posner 1977; Pritchett 2003; Ross 1996; Thabit 2005). At the same time, these books have

historically ignored how this disinvestment shaped the foodscapes of these communities. In East New York, like in many communities across the country, white flight entailed grocery store flight and real estate redlining—where banks and public agencies drew lines around communities that were not investment worthy—that became de facto food redlining. The upwardly mobile were pushed out of urban environments by federal transportation, housing, and gasoline policies while credit lines for urban businesses and residents in lower income communities were cut off and the population became ever more concentrated in massive public housing programs that intensified social isolation. Food retailers followed the disposal income to the suburbs where land, labor, insurance and taxes were less and product turnover and prices attached to premium services were higher, increasing profits (Winne 2009). This outmovement of grocery stores, which produced the grocery store gap in lower income communities, paralleled the expansion of fast food establishments post-war, whose business strategy depended on high volume, low prices, and low labor costs, factors that attracted it to communities like East New York (Schlosser 2002).

These conditions produced East New York as a community with access and affordability issues in regards to fresh healthy produce. As grocery stores left and bodegas and fast food restaurants either remained or set up shop the community was left with "second hand" foods, foods that are either heavily processed, of low quality (damaged, spoiled, past the sell-by date) or overpriced, as well as fast food restaurants emphasizing "dollar meals," as they cater to low-income populations with limited disposable income. Within the public health literature areas such as East New York are often known as food deserts, an area where it is difficult to obtain produce that is both fresh and affordable, or food swamps, an area where healthy food options are crowded out by the predominance of cheap food choices that are high in fats, sugars, salts,

and oils. In short, in a food desert there is absolute lack of produce while in a food swamp the produce is flooded out by unhealthy options.

Overall, food shopping was a less than pleasurable experience in East New York. There were four responses to this situation: protest for change, shift to processed and fast food, shop outside the community, and grow your own food. Eastern Brooklyn Congregations, a network of religious and civic foundations in East New York, Brownsville, OceanHill and Bushwick, took the protest and change route.[14] Food quality at the local grocery stores was a recurring issue at EBC's community meetings in East New York, Brownsville, Ocean Hill and Bushwick. EBC trained 100 community members to be citizen food inspectors and went into 10 stores one Saturday morning. During their inspections customers showed them "green meat…rat holes…rusty cans…spoiled milk…and fuzzy grapes (Terkel 2003:355)." [The Discovery of Power, 341-357 Mike Gecan]." These types of community actions forced seven of the ten grocery stores to sign agreements to fix what was wrong that very morning, the other three eventually signed on as well.

Yet, given the scarcity of grocery stores within the community and the continued existence of poor quality produce at the stores community residents, like most Americans, increasingly purchased food that was prepackaged and processed or bought hot foods at many of the local fast food restaurants that vastly outnumbered the grocery stores. Another option, which many people employed, was to leave East New York to go shopping in Long Island, Queens or areas of western Brooklyn that had decent grocery stores or even supermarkets, which generally had lower prices as well as better produce than stores in East New York. Today, this remains the case, as there is a grocery store gap in East New York that creates an annual grocery retail leakage of $44.1 million – money spent on groceries outside of the community (AECOM 2010).

This leakage leads the city to conclude that a total grocery retail potential of 84,144 square feet exists for East New York, allowing for a possible combination of several small (5,000 sq. ft), medium (15-25,000 sq. ft) and large-size (40,000 sq. ft) grocery stores (AECOM 2010).

The fourth and final tactic was to grow your own food in backyards or community gardens. For residents this was both a continuation of activities they did while growing up as well as a rejection of the low grade produce at the grocery stores, which wasn't local, fresh, or grown without fossil fuel based fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides. Local food production was thus not only a way to maintain cultural identity but a response to the lack of produce in local grocery stores. The fourth solution is also where East New York Farms! came into the picture. East New York Farms! was not the first food producing entity in East New York. Community gardeners were already growing food for themselves, neighbors, and community residents. Food was being grown for household consumption, neighborly giving, and independent income generation before East New York Farms! existed. What East New York Farms! has been able to do though is to scale up this production and became a central actor connecting and supporting East New Yorkers who want to grow, sell, and buy local produce. In 2013 this entails a local food network consisting of a youth farm, an urban farm, and over 30 community gardens and 20 backyard gardens producing food, regular workshops on how to grow food, raise chickens, and keep bees, and a farmers market and farm stand. East New York Farms! is therefore emblematic of a food justice movement that emerges organically from within that community to address race and class inequity in the food system through utilizing the assets of that community, vacant land, community gardeners, and youth, to work towards a community controlled food system.

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[3] There has been a critique of food desert and food swamp discourse from within the food justice movement, not all movement actors subscribe to this critique though and many do use the language of food deserts or food swamps but contextualize these words within racialized

histories. The critique of food desert and food swamp discourse rests on the presumed "naturalization" bound up with the discourse of deserts and swamps and how this discourse leads to top-down technocratic solutions to address food inequity. Food justice actors therefore claim that the framing and naming of the problem is connected to the proposed solutions. Just like a desert suffers from a "moisture deficit" the term food desert is used to signify an area experiencing a "food deficit." The two terms are linked through their absence, the first of water, the latter of food. The problem with using the language of food desert is that it naturalizes what is a social production rooted in particular economic and political policies that are racialized and produces food inequity through urban renewal, institutional disinvestment, and white flight. There is nothing natural about West Oakland, East Saint Louis, or East New York being a food desert. But it is the logical outcome of how state, market, and white actors responded to civil rights and Black Power movements from the 1950s through today.

Moreover, it is not as if East New York, New Orleans, Detroit or the south side of Chicago are devoid of food, there is food there; it just tends to be fast food and junk food. This reality has lead to the utilization of the term food swamp, to signify that healthy food options within these communities are usually crowded out by fast food and junk food options (Rose et al. 2009). Just like swamps are forested wetlands "flooded" by slow moving water food swamps are urban environments "flooded" by fast food restaurants and bodegas. However, food justice actors claim that this metaphor is equally problematic and suffers from the same faults as food desert. It naturalizes what is a social production, with particular economic, political, and racial practices situating few healthy food options and many unhealthy food options within lower income nonwhite communities. Food desert and food swamp language fails to explain how that geographic space became socially produced, one emphasizes the lack of food another the excess of food, both lead to calls to close the grocery store gap by publicly subsidizing their return to the community.

Consequently, food justice advocates may not use either of these terms because they engage in symbolic violence against food justice movements and the lower income nonwhite communities from which they emerge. Hank Herrera, a longtime food justice activist, explains this logic of refusal, communities

> "that lack access to fresh, healthy, affordable food…result from structural inequities, deliberate public and private resource allocation decisions that exclude healthy food from those communities. That kind of inequity is food apartheid. The desert metaphor is inappropriate for conditions deliberately constructed by people. The desert metaphor only diverts attention from the inequitable, unjust condition (Cook 2011)."

If apartheid is framed as state backed structures that segregate people by race to maintain the privilege and power of one group over another and do so through channeling the distribution of resources towards one group over another, than food apartheid is an appropriate descriptive term. Why? Because the concept underscores the political and economic structures—the state and market based strategies—that racialize food access by channeling wealth, income, land and cultural and political resources to whites while denying it to blacks. Food apartheid reflects the social production of marginalization, the second-hand foods, and the second-tier food system that exists in lower income nonwhite communities, based on existing state and market investment decisions. Food justice activists and scholars have therefore sought to denaturalize the language of food deserts and food swamps by injecting racial politics into food politics, which has required drawing upon the discourse of institutional racism, urban renewal, planned shrinkage,

neoconservatism and white privilege (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Alkon and McCullen 2011; Slocum 2006, 2007).

[4] "Weed and Seed is a strategy that aims to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in designated high-crime neighborhoods…The strategy involves a two-pronged approach: law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cooperate in 'weeding out' criminals who participate in violent crime and drug abuse, attempting to prevent their return to the our area; and 'seeding' brings human services to our area, encompassing prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood revitalization (East New York Weed and Seed 2013).

[5] Personal conversation with Anna McGuirre, project director of United Community Centers.

[6] Mike Rogowski's farm is located in Pine Island, New York. He is Polish. Alex Kravet's farm is located in Orange County, New York. He is Ukrainian.

[7] The history of UCC is derived from the dissertations of Prudence Posner (1977) and Martin Eisenberg (1999), both of whom worked at UCC, as well as conversations with Ana Aguirre, current director of UCC.

[8] Agricultural modernization, specifically mechanization and cash-crop export, was central to the dramatic escalation of northern migration from the 1940s through the 1970s, for both the South in the United States as well as the Caribbean. In the American South during the period from 1950 to 1969 farm output increased by and farm employment decreased by 45 percent (Piven and Cloward 1971 [1993]:201). Mechanical pickers replaced hand pickers, crop-dusting planes replaced cotton choppers, and small subsistence gardens of farmworkers were replaced with "hedgerow to hedgerow" cash-crop cultivation. The outcome was mass unemployment amongst black farm workers in the south. Here we see another effect of the treadmill of production, the replacement of human labor with machines and chemicals in the name of efficiency and profits, which in turn creates jobless growth, mass unemployment, and poverty. The Caribbean had long been structured for colonial production, with its population suffering the ravages of monoculture cultivation for a global market desiring sugar, coffee, and tobacco, amongst other tropical products (Mintz 1985; Tomich 2004; Turner 1995; Willliams 1944 [1994]). Dominated by European states and their corporate proxies, these populations were transformed first into slaves and then into an agrarian proletariat by the twentieth century, one subsequently made surplus by the mechanization of agriculture during the post war period (Gonzalez 2000 [2011]; Williams 1970 [1984]).

[9] In this respect, New York City was not abnormal. No city is self-sufficient in terms of funding just as many states require federal funding to keep themselves afloat. "Combined federal and state aid comprised 45 percent of the city's total revenues in 1979, making it not the first but the seventeenth most dependent city in the US (Tabb 1982: 107).

[10] Lindsay's figures were not out of line with reality though. Walter Thabit, a city planner who worked on projects to rebuild East New York during the 1960s and 1970s, contended that merely to counter East New York's decline would take $400 million: $300 million for new construction, $50 million for rehabilitation and repair of 6,000 units, $10-20 million for foreclosure prevention, and $20-40 million for community facilities. This is just for the built environment, not jobs, education, food, and so on. None of the $400 million would realize a solid working or middle class quality of life for East New York, let alone Brownsville, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Harlem, Washington Heights and the Bronx. The close to half a million was just to rebuild the infrastructure, not the people.

[11] The 1960s and 1970s, almost a century after reconstruction, echoed strong and eerie parallels to W.E.B. Dubois' explanation for why a racial alliance between poor and wealthy whites triumphed over a class alliance between poor blacks and poor whites. In *Black Reconstruction* (1935) Dubois sought to answer the question of why no working class-for-itself in the south emerged and no organized struggle, let alone revolution, developed against the political and economic elite of the South after the Civil War. When the majority of the southern population was poor white and black agricultural laborers economically and politically subservient to the landed aristocracy—be it newly freed slaves, tenant farmers, sharecroppers or independent small-farmers—why did they not organize based on their class interests? His answer is that a racial alliance emerged that lead poor whites to identify with the white plantation aristocracy because of the psychological wage of whiteness. This psychological wage, explained DuBois, was a non-economic and non-class factor that at the same time fundamentally shaped class-alliances since it developed an intra-class inter-racial bond between poor whites and rich whites. Despite the economic similarities between poor whites and blacks and the reality that organizing around class interests could materially improve their quality of life in terms of income, access to state services, and electoral power, whites choose the socio-psychological racial interest because of its noneconomic and non-class aspects. The psychological wage of whiteness was a central tactic of the southern power elite in its prevention of a labor movement in the south, as it stultified class-consciousness by pitting poor blacks and whites against each other, dividing the working class and fueling conservatism, "the result is that the South in the main is ranged against liberalism (Dubois 1935: 704)." The same could be said for middle America during the 1960s and 1970s, rather than being confined to the south, race-consciousness and race-based alliances were utilized to rebuild the Republican party around a coalition of a free market white business elite with working and middle class whites fearful of downward mobility due to integration, stagflation, and increased global competition. The strategy sought to maintain good housing, education and jobs for whites in exchange for their support of an economic and political restructuring that favored corporations, Wall Street and the business-finance elite. Blaming the victim became a dominant strategy of reactionary white populism (Ryan 1972). The fear of downward mobility of working and middle class whites mirrored the fear of corporate America losing control over the state, the university and the educated middle class, out of this mutual anguish a race-based politics emerged uniting both groups in a war against liberalism and Blacks.

[12] Alongside of the city's role in urban renewal, private and public policies facilitated the power and centrality of slumlords in areas such as East New York and Brownsville, replicating processes in other northern cities, such as Baltimore and Chicago (Anderson 1964; Bellush and Hausknecht 1967; Hirsch 1998; Pritchett 2003; Thabit 2005). Slumlords contributed to the decay of the housing stock, overcrowded housing, excessively high rents, and eventual foreclosure, abandonment, and arson, but not without city, state and federal policies that incentivized such behaviors. Slumlords engaged in many practices that would be seen as less than honest, one is "milking." In this activity, landlords seek to maximize income through increasing tenant numbers within the existing space, avoiding repairs and charging higher rents (Ross 1996). A financial factor incentivizing milking by landlords is the refusal of the state and private banking system to provide rehabilitation or purchase loans in nonwhite or racially mixed areas, a practice known as "redlining," one that disincentives landlords from building maintenance since they lacked access to the money to make that investment possible and had

little opportunity to sell the property to another prospective buyer. Alongside of slumlords, duplicitous "panic peddlers" emerged to engage in blockbusting. Beginning their work by spreading rumors of blacks buying up homes in the surrounding area, they would promptly buy low from worried whites and then flip the house for a significantly higher amount to a black or Puerto Rican family. In doing so, panic peddling became another in a long-line of "self-fulfilling prophecies" and reinforced the sociological concept of the Thomas Theorem, "what people believe to be true will be true in its consequences." No matter if black in-movement actually did lower home prices, whites acted on the belief that it did, and in doing so, sold their homes on the cheap, lowering home prices. Thus fear of black home ownership pushed whites into creating the conditions they sought to avoid. Block busting was common throughout the United States but was well reported in East New York as endemic (Connolly 1977; Orser 1997; Satter 2010). On top of these practices, flipping also occurred through the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) mortgage program. Banks would provide home loans to low-income residents they knew had low odds of being able to pay off the loan. But the practice was very profitable for the bank because they earned generous income up-front through finders and closing fees and were shielded from loss because the federal government would pay the bank the amount left on the mortgage. The bank would then promptly resell the home to another low-income family and repeat the procedure (Connolly 1997). On top of this, banks held onto foreclosures in the hopes that the city would take them off their hands through repossession (Connolly 1997).

[13] Root shock is not unique to black communities suffering from urban renewal either, but is a common response within communities and peoples suffering forced displacement at the hands of the state, foremost within the United States and Canada is the indigenous (Bachman 1992; Shkilnyk 1985). In Indigenous studies, urban renewal would be called a practice of culturecide or ecocide where the community's ability to reproduce themselves is deliberately prevented by destroying the people's ability to pass on one's culture and severing connections to the landbase through destroying the built environment (Churchill 2002; Grinde and Johansen 1995; Jaimes 1992; Smith 2005).

[14] Founded in 1980 Eastern Brooklyn Congregations is an interfaith, multi-racial and strictly non-partisan community based organization with over 15,000 families as members. Composed of religious congregations, schools, and homeowner and voluntary associations EBC is an affiliate of Metro-IAF (Industrial Areas Foundation). They have been involved in building over 4,000 units of affordable housing in the community as well as small school construction and tenant organizing.

Chapter 4 / Access and Affordability Tensions at Farmers Markets: Local Food, Low Income Communities, and a Politics of Redistribution

This chapter explicates how East New York Farms! brings access and affordability to the traditionally privileged spaces of urban farmers markets through the state redistribution of wealth and how this practice is central to creating a local food movement that benefits both lower income urban communities and rural middle class farmers.

Farmers Markets: Juggling the Tensions of Farmers and Consumers

Farmers markets are a, if not the, central space of civic agriculture and the local food movement (Allen 2004; Alkon 2008a, 2008b, 2012; DeLind 2002; DeLind et al. 2008). Framed as an alternative to the supermarket and the industrial food system, farmers markets are claimed to be a win-win for both producers and consumers (Hinrichs 2003; Hinrichs and Lyson 2009; Lyson 2004). Farmers can circumvent the "middle men" of processers, distributors, and retailers and capture the entire food dollar while consumers can obtain fresh, healthy, local food that is grown without fossil-fuel based pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. Consequently, farmers markets build direct face-to-face relations between producers and consumers, neither of whom are multi-national corporations but "regular people." In bringing producers and consumers together farmers markets are declared to be vital to rebuilding cultural, social, and civic capital and with them the social relationships necessary for local democratic empowerment (Hinrichs 2000; Lyson 2004). Politically, farmers markets are seen as rebuilding a vibrant middle class, the economic and political autonomy rooted in land ownership, and as a result place-based democracy at the local town hall level (Allen 2004; Lyson 2004). Ecologically, farmers markets often cater to smaller farmers (generally growing on a couple hundred acres) that utilize

sustainable practices that eschew fossil fuel inputs and actually strengthen and rebuild the soil through multi-cropping, cover crops, crop rotations, integrated pest management, and green manure.

In this sense farmers markets are more than just economic spaces even though the economics of farmers markets underpin all its other benefits. However, the economic, ecological, and political benefits of farmers markets and local food come at a price, more expensive fruits and vegetables than can be found in grocery stores or supermarkets. Local agriculture that is to create middle class jobs and sustain the environment requires internalizing the social and ecological costs of agricultural reproduction. If there is no money to be made at the markets because people cannot afford to pay more to support local food than the other benefits, ecological, cultural, political, will not be realized (Allen 1999; Allen and Sachs 2005; Guthman et al. 2006). Therefore, not all farmers markets are created equal, as they are first and foremost economic spaces of income generation, which necessitates going to communities who can afford to pay more (Alkon 2012).

The dilemma of access and affordability has produced a debate within the alt-food and food justice movements as to how farmers markets can balance the needs of farmers and lower income consumers. Farmers need income and consumers need affordable produce, two needs that generally lead in opposite directions, the former for higher prices, the latter for lower prices. This tension usually leads to a push-and-pull dynamic over who is going to take the hit, the farmer through lower prices or the consumer through higher prices.

This chapter will focus on the problem of how to create a “win-win” scenario for small farmers and lower income communities, where farmers are paid enough for their crops to be economically sustainable and where lower income communities can afford fresh local produce

without having to empty their piggy banks. Through discussions with ENYF! staff, farmers, and vendors who sell at the market, participant observation, and surveys of market customers this chapter will underscore that state-led redistributive programs are vital to the economic sustainability of farmers markets in lower income communities, do a good job of balancing the conflicting needs between farmers seeking higher prices and consumers seeking lower prices, and emphasize a social needs and redistributive logic that is often missing within the local food movement that prioritizes the market over the state and civil society over the rights of citizens.

Based on this analysis, that an activist state for social justice is vital to making fresh local produce accessible and affordable for communities such as East New York, I contend that the local food movement must move beyond its hyperlocalism and incorporate a politics of the state within its activism. For a lack of a politics of scale within the local food movement that connects local, state, and federal levels, essentially gives up the state to conservatives and Republicans. Such a maneuver is a tactical failure for the long-term success of the local food movement if it wants to realize equity and produce an anti-racist food movement, as this requires an interventionist state that engages in the redistribution of wealth to realize racial equity.

Farmers Markets: Why, Where, How, and For Whom

Farmers markets have blossomed over the past few decades to counteract many aspects of what the Slow Food movement calls "fast food, fast life." They began to remerge in the 1970s in major U.S. cities, such as, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Boston. This increase was itself a response to a growing desire by more affluent consumers for fresh, healthy, diverse, and quality local produce rather than the supermarket produce that is grown with synthetic pesticides and herbicides to favor quantity and uniformity. Additionally, consumers at farmers

markets prioritize "community" and supporting small family farms. In doing so, the goal is to keep value circulating locally in the economy rather than being channeled far away to corporate headquarters in other cities, regions, and nations. Farmers market shoppers also express the yearning of getting to know the actual grower of their food and the ability to speak one-on-one with them rather than clerks who lack the knowledge of the produce. These consumers wanted fresh, local, and healthy food and turned to farmers markets to meet their need. As a result, farmers markets have increased every year, from 1,755 in 1994, the first year numbers were calculated, to 2,863 in 2000, 4,385 in 2006 and 7,864 in 2012 (USDA 2012a). Within New York State the number of farmers markets has more than doubled since 2000. Increasing from 235 in 2000 to 521 in 2012. Of this number, 138 are in New York City (over one-quarter), with 48 in Brooklyn, 39 in Manhattan, 32 in the Bronx, 17 in Queens and 2 in Staten Island (Dinapoli and Bleiwas 2012).

But consumers cannot purchase food at farmers markets merely because they want to; farmers have to be willing to sell directly to consumers rather than to grocery stores, supermarkets, or restaurants. Luckily for consumers, small farmers have turned towards farmers markets to improve their economic circumstances. Within the conventional food system as power has shifted from farmers to food processors, manufacturers, and food retailers small farmers have been squeezed economically. 50 years ago, farmers in Europe and North America received as income between 45 to 60 percent of the money consumers spent on food, today that proportion has dropped anywhere from 5 to 20 percent (Pretty 2002). Farmers have subsequently turned to farmers markets as a way to counter this trend and capture a larger percentage of the food dollar.

For the twentieth century farmer if you didn't play by the rules of industrial agriculture, "get big or get out," there was one other option left: diversify the farm. Thousands of not millions scaled up to the size of the factory farm. Millions got out of farming altogether, selling their farms to real-estate developers who turned prime agricultural farmland into shopping malls, housing developments, resorts, and hotels. A much smaller number of farmers sought to rethink the family-farm. Eschewing the monoculture of the factory farm they tried to rebuild the relationship between farmer and consumer through an alternative agriculture movement. The key to this strategy was diversification of the produce line and creating alternative economic relations so farmers could avoid selling to corporate distributors and capture the majority of the food dollar directly. Alongside of restaurant sales, value-added processing, farm-to-table sales, and community-supported agriculture, farmers markets became a conduit for rethinking the economic practices and economic sustainability of the family farm.

Central to this new type of agriculture was a movement away from the high-volume low-price model to a low-volume high-price strategy. With farmers markets as an "economic engine" for small farmers this created a dynamic of "no money, no farmers. No farmers, no market (Winne 2008:41)." Since the 1970s small farmers have been able to avoid this tension by going to where the income is—more affluent communities that are predominantly white. Farmers markets were not only dependent on selling directly to customers but to a specific group of customers, the more affluent, middle and upper middle class who could afford to pay more. What emerged out of this linkage of farmers charging higher prices and consumers who had the disposable income to pay higher prices was a local food politics that prioritized not just market exchanges as the way to a more sustainable and healthy food system but higher prices for local food as an uncontested and non-problematic idea; one that has subsequently become the

foundation of local food movement politics and shaped where farmers market are created, which farmers markets are deemed attractive or profitable by farmers, and which consumers are seen as supportive of small-farmers and local food (Alkon and McCullen 2011; Allen 1999, 2004; Guthman 2008a, 2008b; Slocum 2007).

This is seen in the San Francisco bay area where the "gourmet grotto" in Berkeley, affluent and white, is booming while farmers markets in West Oakland, lower income and Black, have a hard time keeping farmers; the foot traffic is less and the purchasing power is less so farmers leave for more lucrative markets (Alkon 2012). The community simply doesn't have the purchasing power to "vote with their fork," a problem that is not confined to West Oakland. The inability to reconcile the contradiction between price and access has lead to the failure of numerous farmers markets in low-income communities in California (Fisher 1999), struggles to remain open for others (USDA 2001) and barriers to access for lower income communities (Briggs et al. 2010; Grace et al 2005; Tessman and Fisher 2009). I have also witnessed this at ENYF! when new up-state farmers come for the first couple of weeks in July only to leave because overall sales are too small and they merely cannibalize each other's sales. Rather than engaging in price and market share warfare the new farmers choose to leave and find another market whose economic prospects are more robust. Other farmers markets in Brooklyn, such as those in Park Slope, Prospect Heights, or Fort Greene reflect this dynamic as well. They have more customers than East New York but are also able to charge higher prices because they are more affluent areas.

Many of these failures or problems with farmers markets in low income communities are rooted in the missionary politics and white privilege of the local food movement, whose discourse and practices of local food naturalize or make invisible race and class privilege through

a cultural politics that privileges education and choice as central to getting people to consume local food and shop at farmers markets (Guthman 2008, 2008b; Slocum 2006, 2008). No matter one's class or race position everyone is presumed to be able to pay more, all that is needed is education in "good food". Once people learn about the "betterness" of local food they will shop accordingly. In framing local food in this way a politics of access and affordability rooted in countering social inequality and institutional racism is deemphasized in favor of a market-centric voting with your dollars campaign. Additionally, the presumptions behind these educative efforts are also connected to rather conservative and reactionary framings of race and class that reinforce white privilege, the presumed superiority and normality of whiteness, and a taken-for-granted inferiority and undeservingness of Black America and poor people. These discourses presume that farmers markets do well within white communities compared to nonwhite communities and are frequented more by whites than nonwhites because nonwhites and lower income people do not prioritize healthy eating, do not care about their bodies, or do not value fresh food (Guthman 2011). Consequently, white middle class foodies have to bring "good food" to others (Guthman 2008a, 2011).

Is this in fact the case? Is education the key barrier? Is it price? Or is is a combination of the two? In talking to Sharon, a local gardener and vendor at the farmers market, price rather than education is a major barrier to sales for her. Sharon makes a hot sauce and, with her daughter, operates a lemonade stand at the market. For the hot sauces she sells a small 3-oz jar for $3 and a larger 8-ounce jar for $8. However, sales are few and far between, which she attributes to the lack of income in the community: "people just won't pay $8 for a jar of hot sauce." For Sharon the lack of income in the community is what matters most because people come to the market and inquire about her sauces and the lemonade but don't want to pay the

prices, they think they are too high. When you factor in prices for jars, licensing, labels, ingredients, and labor, she is barely breaking 10 or 15 percent profit on each bottle, which means less than 50 cents on the small jars and two dollars on the big jars. Her low-volume high-quality model just doesn't work in East New York. This experience contrasts with her visits to other farmers markets or to communities with income. When East New York Farms! sold peppers at the Hot Pepper Festival at Brooklyn Botanic Garden Sharon went to sell her hot peppers and sauces. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden is located in a gentrified and gentrifying area of Central Brooklyn, known as Prospect Heights. At the festival she sold half-pint boxes of hot peppers for $2.00, they regularly go for $1.50 in East New York, and they went flying off the table like hot cakes; the same for her hot sauces, which she did not mark up. When Deborah and I arrived later and saw her selling for those prices we told her she was crazy for underselling, "these people have money and won't quibble over the price, you should be selling for at least double." She didn't know, as she didn't have any experience selling outside of East New York. She was used to selling maybe one jar of hot sauce at the farmers market, not several dozen in a three-hour period, which was the case at the Hot Pepper Festival. Sharon had entered the world of the affluent (white) foodie where price was no object (Johnston and Bauman 2010). For Sharon, the economic reality of foodie and affluent markets became much clearer after visiting the Union Square farmers market in Manhattan. At the market a farmer was selling hot peppers in a half-pint box for $4 and people weren't even asking for the price or stating it was too much, they bought them by the handful, price consciousness was entirely absent, this was a total shock for Sharon. She now knows that she can possibly charge double her East New York prices at the Hot Pepper Festival at Brooklyn Botanic Garden in 2013.

Price consciousness is not only a barrier to sales for Sharon's hot sauce; it is something that is common to many vendors and farmers at the market. Gudelio, who comes from Staten Island on Wednesday's to sell at the ENYF! farm-stand, takes the rejection in stride. Talking to the people who approach his stand, he asks, "What would you like?" Grabbing a big ripe tomato he states, "heirloom tomatoes only $4 a pound. Delicious." Then he moves to the left and points towards his corn, "I have sweet corn, five for two dollars. Can eat it raw." Both of these prices are too high for some locals who generally respond, with "no, no, too much, too much." Gudelio also grows big and beautiful acorn, butternut squash, and pumpkins, and gigantic broccoli and cauliflower, the likes of which I have never seen before. But akin to the corn and tomatoes, the cost of a full size pumpkin or a several pound broccoli often overwhelms the pocket books of East New Yorkers who wave their hands at Gudelio to put the pumpkin or broccoli back after seeing the price on the scale. Many customers try and negotiate prices, and he often does, to a point, after that he calls Janelle, the market manager, over to intercede and reaffirm price points. Gudelio cannot go as low as the residents want because he is not a high-volume low-price factory farmer, he has a diversified farm that does not use fossil fuel inputs and for him to earn a living he has to sell for higher prices. It just so happens that East New York is not the market for heirloom tomatoes, husk cherries, tomatillos, or squash blossoms, not merely because the community is Caribbean and not Mexican or South American but because the price points are too high.

Many people inquire about the produce at the ENYF! market but choose otherwise when they hear prices. A customer asks Mike, one of the upstate farmers, "how much [for the onions]?" He says, "two dollars [for the bunch]." She puts the bunch down and walks away. Another customer inquires about the price for lemongrass, Pauline responds "two dollars" and

the customer shakes her head, mutters "too much" and walks away. At the same time, this price consciousness is not merely a conception of customers but is also reproduced by other gardeners. For instance, Sybil thinks Mike's sweet corn at three for two dollars is too pricy. Sybil is reflective of many of the customers at the market who earn low wages at the bottom of the labor hierarchy, a reality that turns penny pinching into a way of life and ingrains a tight no-frills food budget into daily activity; price consciousness rather than taste, freshness, or healthiness becomes the regulating logic of consumption. On the flip side, Sybil's market sales have been hampered by the same logic she uses against Mike's prices. Although not common, customers have complained about her callaloo being too expensive at two dollars a pound, even though this is the general market price not Sybil's individual price and a price that has been the same for several years.

Price consciousness is not the only problem though; educational knowledge also plays a role. Many in the Caribbean community are not yet knowledgeable of the leafy greens of kale and swiss chard that Sybil and other gardeners grow, which leads to low sales for this produce. Potential customers are so price averse that on many occasions they won't spend one dollar on a bunch of kale and swiss chard because they don't know what it tastes like or how to prepare it, even after gardeners say to treat it like callaloo, a crop they are very familiar with.

This dynamic exemplifies that buying green, local, or healthy is not merely about education but also the ability to pay more. Sarita Daftary, the project director of East New York Farms!, clearly articulates the actual logic shaping the eating habits of East New Yorkers,

> people make logical reasonable choices everyday to eat what is convenient and affordable for them and so if that's healthy you will get that and if it's unhealthy you will get that. People on the Upper West Side [of Manhattan] do that but what they can afford and

what's close to them is different then what is affordable and close here…If I can only hammer home one point…it's always that access is really important, any amount of talking you do about what people should eat does not matter as much as making sure that food is available and affordable…so unless we can really commit ourselves to changing that dynamic any progress will be minimal.

Sarita's comments have, until recently, been ignored within a local food movement that privileges individualism, education, and market choice, practices that have been harmful to the creation and long-term institutionalization of farmers markets in lower income communities because they reject state-led redistribution dynamics that are central to supporting farmers markets in lower income communities. In doing so, the alternative food movement is reflective of a broader turn within politics and activism where consumption-based politics stands in for social movement organizing involving direct action (Buttel 2003; Johnston 2008; Szasz 2009). The consumer-citizen model emphasizing a privatized politics of voting with your dollars has replaced the citizen model emphasizing a social rights framework.

The color line, and the inequitable distribution of income and wealth along racial lines, shapes not just access to education, employment, healthcare, and housing but the quality and quantity of food in lower income communities. This reality has been known for a long time to civil rights, anti-poverty, anti-hunger, and community food security activists but has only recently become "mainstreamed" within the local food movement through the efforts of food justice activists. Access and affordability issues is where the rubber hits the road in the local food movement and social justice concerns are generally deemphasized or marginalized because there is an expectation within the local food movement that people should pay more for local, healthy, green food, a belief that is not self-reflective of the class and race privilege that such an

expectation requires (Alkon 2012; Alkon and McCullen 2011; Allen 1999; Guthman 2008a, 2008b, 2011).

A hegemonically white and middle class movement has generalized its desire and ability to act on them, based on its class and race privilege, but then extrapolates this contextualized choice into an abstract choice that everyone should and could adopt, if they really wanted to, even though everyone cannot equally afford the burden of paying more for local food. It is within this movement from particularism and situated choice to universalism and abstract choice that the local food movement becomes conservative and authoritarian, reactionary and oppressive. First, any presumption of abstract choice generally reproduces a logic of individualism and the ethos of a one-sided personal responsibility, which rejects the power of enduring social structures (race, class, gender) and institutions (state, corporations, family, school). Second, it tends to frame the decision not to buy local food as an internal failing within the individual or a result of a culture of poverty where people don't know any better or lack the knowledge to purchase correctly. For instance, the presumption that lack of education is the problem rather than lack of access and affordability reproduces a framework where whites believe that racism is an individual-level or personal problem of the irrational prejudice of bigots, rednecks, and conservatives rather than a structural relation of institutional racism produced through economic, political, and cultural policies that involve the state, corporations, and white communities and benefits all white people, particularly college-educated middle and upper class people who identity as liberals and vote Democratic.

In this sense, white privilege manifests within the economic models, public spaces, and cultural discourses that permeate the local food movement and reproduces a reactionary blame the victim mentality that presumes that lower income people should learn to spend their money

wisely, moving from fast food and processed foods to farmers markets (Alkon and McCullen 2011; Guthman 2008a, 2008b, 2011). Such beliefs tend to produce a lot of programs focused on nutrition education rather than a politics of redistribution that aims to make local food accessible and affordable to lower income communities. Additionally, to expect lower income people to double down on local food, that is, to pay more for food when their food budget as a percentage of disposable income is already higher than middle and upper class households is asking the poor to engage in a level of self-sacrifice that is not required of many local food advocates. In a community suffering from high levels of un- and under-employment and real wage stagnation paying more for local food would require them to divert income from other expenditures, which overwhelmingly are tied to the necessities of housing, utilities, and healthcare. This is not socially equitable.

Within communities where youth and families already skip meals to save money asking them to pay more for food will only magnify these behaviors. Having a delicious healthy meal one day a week does not make logical sense if it means going hungry for several meals throughout that same week. This choice is not part of the daily life of most white and affluent farmers market shoppers and therefore they believe incorrectly that lower income people actually have an option between a farmers market and fast food, in reality most don't, since farmers markets generally don't exist in lower income communities, and even if they do people are going to make choices based on how much money they have to spend on food and how far they can stretch their food budget, which is generally easier at the grocery store or discount food retailer than a farmers market.

Based on time spent at the ENYF! farmers market a considerable problem is not education, per se, but the sticker shock or price consciousness of local produce. East New York

is a community where discount shopping, coupon clipping, and store-brand sales predominate, where households spend a higher percentage of their monthly income on food purchases than middle and upper income households, where food budgets are tight and disposable income does not abound. Moreover, given the long history of food apartheid within the community many residents are used to leaving East New York to do grocery-shopping, driving to Queens, western Brooklyn or Long Island to find groceries (AECOM 2010). For all of these reasons residents in the community, even parents of children who go to United Community Centers, were supportive of a proposed siting of a Wal-Mart within the community, as this would allow them to stretch their food dollar farther. In this regard, East New York is not altogether different from rural or suburban America where the predominance of low-wage capitalism has meant booming sales at Wal-Mart and discount food retailers in general, a reality that has not been ignored by Wal-Mart (more on this in chapter 5).

From Market-Centric Food Politics to State-Redistributive Food Politics

In building its farmers market East New York Farms! has and continues to face many barriers, some rooted in the general problems of farmers markets (non-convenient hours, single location, weather dependency, transportation accessibility, consumer belief that food prices are high), others connected to the demographic makeup of the community (lack of disposable income, price consciousness, history of shopping outside of the neighborhood). Despite this, the central struggle for ENYF!, as is the case for all farmers markets in low income communities, is how to balance the needs of food producers for income and the community's for access to affordable produce? Juggling this contradiction is at the heart of the urban food justice movement. Prioritizing one over the other alienates a crucial actor within the attempt to localize

food justice. Outside of having lower income communities self-produce their own food and create autonomy from the industrial food chain, as ENYF! seeks to do, there is one dominant market-centric method in use right now to make produce affordable at farmers markets in lower income communities. In this method vendors, gardeners, and farmers sell their produce and wares for higher prices at more affluent markets and use this income to subsidize lower prices in less affluent markets. A dependency problem is subsequently created where the wealthy must get their food first in order to create opportunities for lower income consumers to even have the possibility of buying local food. If sales at the wealthier markets do not occur in the proper volume than produce at the lower income market cannot be offered; it is market-led redistribution of wealth and access, what I call a "trickle down food politics."

Additionally, this market-centric model eschews any notion of the social right to food or that the state has a responsibility to provide its citizens with fresh healthy local produce. Instead, the desires of the wealthy are prioritized in order to meet the needs of the poor. There is nothing new to this model, except that it is all the rage in urban agriculture (more on this in the conclusion). There is no common-right or citizen-right within this economic model, as it not only works outside the state but fails to utilize non-market logics and practices to guarantee a social right to food. Prioritizing the consumption habits of wealthier and whiter communities and making access and affordability in predominantly nonwhite lower income communities dependent on the spending habits of these wealthier and whiter communities is a form of charitable consumerism. It privileges those with income and gives them voice and power over who gets local food. In doing so, it reinforces a consumer-centric politics of voting with rich people's dollars and enables affluent households to decide the structure of the local food system and on what terms people with limited or no dollars have access to fresh, local, healthy produce.

This dynamic further marginalizes the ability of lower income communities to have decision-making power over how to structure the food system. Lower income communities only get to have voice, to vote with their dollars, after the wealthy have already voted and set up the rules of the game.

ENYF! is not immune from the structural contradictions that can hamper the income and affordability tensions of farmers markets but ENYF! has taken another approach, one that contrasts with the market-centric strategies that traditionally operate within the local food movement, strategies that expect the customer to internalize the cost of a socially and economically sustainable small-scale agricultural model. The other way of realizing income, access, and affordability at farmers markets in lower income communities is state-supported safety net and purchasing power programs that redistribute tax money to provide either a social right to food or increase the purchasing power of lower income families. In this scenario the state redistributes wealth from higher income households and communities to lower income households and communities based on social rights attached to notions of citizenship rather than their market-value or economic worth as wage-labor.

The Check-Based Economy at ENYF! and The W. Rogowski Farm

On first glance the ENYF! farmers market looks like any other farmers market. People are buying greens, fruits, and root vegetables. Farmers and residents are discussing prices, freshness, growing patterns, inquiring about unknown foods, asking how to prepare particular foods, tasting samples, conversing about their own growing practices, and bemoaning the lack of rain this season. But if you spend an entire season at the Saturday farmers market you will pick up on several patterns, one of them is the dance between two different money economies and

how they expand and contract in relation to each other throughout each month and the entire season. Understanding this relationship is central to grasping the economic realities of farmers markets in lower income communities and how vital public redistribution programs are to realizing access and affordability for consumers and to the short- and long-term viability of farmers markets as economic engines for smaller farmers.

These two different money economies consist of a cash-based economy and a check-based economy consisting of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/EBT), the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), Health Bucks (HB) and Fresh Connect (FC), all of which facilitate lower income shopping at farmers markets. WIC/FMNP started in 1992 under the auspice of providing "fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants, and to expand the awareness, use of, and sales at farmers' markets." WIC itself is a program that provides "supplemental foods, health care referrals and nutrition education at no cost to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, and to infants and children up to 5 years of age, who are found to be at nutritional risk." In FY2011 1.9 million WIC participants received FMNP benefits, which are in addition to their regular WIC benefits. These benefits come in the form of coupons that are to be used at farmers markets. The coupon denominations may not be less than $10 and more than $30 per year, at the federal level, but states can supplement these amounts with their own funds. Fiscal year 2010 had the highest ever participation for WIC, with 9,177,000 participations. In 1974 it was a mere 88,000. Overall, in FY2011 4,079 farmers markets and 3,184 farm stands accepted FMNP and over $16.4 million in benefits were redeemed. The SFMP was created in 2000 and mirrored on the WIC/FMNP model. The 2002 Farm Bill provided annual funding for SFMP at $15 million and the 2008

Farm Bill expanded it to $20.6 million. SFMNP participants obtain $20 to $50 in coupons per year. Like WIC and SNAP SFMNP recipients are low-income seniors, 60 years or older with household incomes not more than 185 percent of the federal poverty line. In FY 2010 844,999 people received SFMNP coupons with the average recipient obtaining $31 in coupons. Thus, while both are successful in increasing fresh fruit and produce consumption the effects of both programs are constrained by their low purchasing power. The EBT program started in 2005 and enabled recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), what is commonly known as food stamps, to spend their food dollars at farmers markets. For close to a decade most SNAP recipients had been denied access to farmers markets as the later lacked the technological and fiscal capabilities to handle the new EBT cards that SNAP utilized. And to increase EBT usage at farmers markets Health Bucks was created by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to increase fruit and vegetable purchasing power of lower income consumers. "Anyone who spends $5 with an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) debit card at a participating farmers' market gets a $2 Health Bucks coupon that can be redeemed for fruits and vegetables (DOHMH 2010:2)." The program runs from July 1 through November 15th and in 2009 the City provided over 110,000 Health Bucks that generated $220,000 in sales. Fresh Connect operates on the same model as Health Bucks, $2 coupons for every $5 spent through EBT, but is funded by the State of New York.

If there was only a cash-based economy the gardeners and the farmers would have a difficult time staying afloat, as around fifty percent of the farmers market revenue is tied to the check-based economy. This is one of the factors that make the farmers market practical for community members, community gardeners, and upstate farmers. During the 2011 season, cash constituted 51.2 percent of total sales at the farmers market, WIC/FMNP 23.7 percent,

WIC/vegetable and fruit 5.5 percent, SFMNP 15.3 percent, Health Bucks 0.6 percent and EBT 3.8 percent. Additionally, these figures are reflective of the dramatic changes that the ENYF! farmers market has undergone since its creation in 1998. Over a decade ago the check economy was 80 percent and the cash economy was a mere 20 percent of the total revenue at the market. At this time WIC/FMNP constituted around 74 percent of the total revenue of the market as other check-based programs came to ENYF! at later dates SNAP/EBT (2005), SFMNP (2007), HB (2007), WIC/VEG&FRUIT (2009), and FC (2012). Today, WIC/FMNP and SFMNP constitute a lower percentage of total revenue at the market but their volume in terms of income has not gone down, it is the volume of cash that has significantly increased, from around $19,500 in 2005 to $66,000 in 2011.

Given the high amount of check-based money circulating at the farmers market and that the majority of it goes to the up-state farmers it appeared that the check-based economy was central to juggling the contradictions of access and affordability for consumers and economic sustainability for farmers. But I wanted confirmation from the up-state farmers so I asked Mike Rogowski, the first and longest running upstate farmer at the market, a farmer who came in 1999, continues to sell at the market, and supplies the ENYF! community supported agriculture (CSA) program while most other farmers have come and gone. I directly asked him "how to make a farmers market a win-win for both farmers and lower income communities? What needed to be done to make farmers markets economically sustainable for farmers and to make it affordable enough for lower income residents?" He said, "its tough" and that "there are generally two strategies. High volume and low-ball price or higher quality and price and lower volume." He was initially doing the first model when he started selling at ENYF! because they were transitioning away from fossil fuel monocroping of onions towards their current diverse

farming model. "We were doing the conventional high volume low price. But in the transition away from chemicals the price point went up and so did the prices and at this time the market was ramping up in terms of production as well, Alex, another upstate farmer came, as did more community gardeners." Thus, an issue besides the model of the farmer, whether they are high volume/low price or lower volume/high price, is the level of competition at the market, more farmers can drive down price points if they cannibalize each other for sales. But if you have different farmers doing different models it can still work, but it takes a lot of effort for the farmer doing the lower volume/higher price model, especially in a lower income community where price consciousness is a key factor shaping purchasing habits. Mike emphasized that the higher price point sales are "difficult" and require educating the consumer that with increased price comes increased quality in terms of taste and freshness and avoiding fossil fuel pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. Overall, he says that overcoming this barrier often just "takes time." For instance, he sells three pieces of sweet corn for two dollars, which is higher than Alex's, the other upstate farmer, who sells two for one dollar**.** But he says that once people try it they are repeat customers, "they come back again and again." This is also true for Johanna, a community gardener, who buys Mike's corn, roasts it at the market, sells it for one-fifty a pop, and has many takers at this price, so much so that she usually sells out.

I then specifically inquired into how important the checks were to his economic survival. He stated checks were the "lifeblood" of his sales. But it wasn't all of them, the Fresh Connect or Health Bucks were "less than 5 percent, possibly as low as 2 percent. Everything helps, it all adds up. The two-dollar checks. The four-dollar checks." But the biggest percentage was the "WIC checks," the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program checks, they were "most of our revenue, 70 to 80 percent." It is important to realize that not all checks are equal and that the low figures

for Health Bucks and Fresh Connect are rooted in the low SNAP sales at the market, as both are connected to SNAP purchases at the market. There is a big push right now to increase low-income access to farmers markets through bringing SNAP/EBT access, but this is more of a long-term strategy that has the potential to dramatically increase produce consumption at farmers markets amongst lower income communities. Currently EBT sales pale in comparison to FMNP and SFMNP checks and always have since EBT was instituted in 2005, never ever going over 6 percent of ENYF! farmers market income. A key reason for this is that FMNP/SFMNP can only be used at farmers markets while SNAP can be used at most grocery stores, supermarkets, and bodegas in East New York, and since these locations are more convenient and affordable residents go there.

I also asked Mike how he got started at ENYF! and why he kept coming back. He met Haley, who was running ENYF! by herself at the time, at an organic farmers conference in the city and she said "we really need you" and I said,

> why not? I went with my gut over financials and demographics. The first day was pretty rough, hardly sold anything. I mean, the market gardeners didn't have much at that time, not like today. They had collards, herbs, tomatoes, and callaloo. I brought the staples, potatoes, carrots, beets, fruits, corn. I didn't expect it to work out the first week. But I brought two trucks a week. 50 bags of corn. It was real rough the first couple weeks until the coupons hit and people started to know about it. I mean the market was dead. I had about $86 gross take home. Splitting even is around $200 to $300. But I am a long haul type of person.

And belying the belief that one can't make money at low-income farmers markets, Mike responded to my questions much like he did when Majora Carter, founder of Sustainable South

Bronx, brought her radio show to ENYF! in the summer of 2011. During her visit she asked him when profit margins are so tight and he has to work off-farm full-time to make ends meat why does he come to one of the lowest income communities in East New York to sell food? Mike responded,

> for me it's more a labor of love than anything else. It's just because of the simple fact when I first came down here there was no fresh food available. The market, since I was the only one here, I was able to have a much larger profit margin on it and the first few years I was down here before I had the competition from the other farmers and some of the vendors I actually made quite a bit of money down here (Carter 2011).

This dynamic is seen at many low-income farmers markets. They can be economically viable but this may depend on low rates of competition, that is, one or two farmers monopolizing the farmers market. Put three Mikes in East New York and keep sales constant and the total income for each farmer would decline but put in one Mike and he can make a steady income because he is the only game in town. This is exactly what happened once Alex came in, Mike's sales declined, both because people could choose not to shop from him but also because Alex's prices are less than Mike's; as the same economic pie is shared by more farmers each slice of the pie can become smaller, harming the economic sustainability of farmers markets for farmers. Despite this competition, it is clear that public income support programs can be utilized to increase fruit and vegetable consumption as well as generate income streams for rural farmers.

Reinventing Farming: The Trials and Tribulations of the W. Rogowski Farm

The W. Rogowski Farm, which Mike co-operates with his sister Cheryl, was the first upstate farm at the ENYF! farmers market, starting in 1999, and is the archetype of the new

breed of family-farm, one that reimagines both what the farm grows, how it grows it, and who it sells it too. In discussing the trials and tribulations of the Rogowski Farm, as well as its successes and motivating logic, we can gain insight into how the struggles of small-farmers and lower income consumers are coupled and that a healthy and just future is dependent on the well-being of each other and that both the Rogowski Farm and ENYF! have had to rethink local food networks in order to create a mutually beneficial relationship prioritizing not just local food, small farmers, or ecologically sustainable production, but food justice concerns of access and affordability for lower income communities. Today, the Rogowski Farm works towards building up local markets and local demand for their products through an economically diverse farming model, both in what they grow (the farm is a mere 150 acres but they grow anywhere from 200 to 300 different crops), how they grow (utilizing crop rotation, intercropping, integrated pest management, and high tunnel production) and how they sell their food (combining farmers markets, CSAs, farm-to-table breakfasts and dinners, a catering company, and a line of prepared products and baked goods). In doing so they aim to tap higher, middle and lower income groups while bringing as much of the food dollar back to the farmer through "value-added" practices that locate production, distribution, and consumption channels on the farm. But for the Rogowski's to end up selling at the ENYF! farmers market a revolution in their way of life had to happen, or more accurately, a total collapse in their conventional farming life.

The farm is located in Pine Island, New York, about a two-hour drive from East New York in upstate Orange County, and along with the towns of Warwick, Groshen, and Florida encompasses 14,000 acres known as the "black dirt" region. Originally called "the drowned lands" this fine powdery soil is the remnants of a shallow glacial lake formed from the melting of glaciers over 12,000 years ago. The bog lands produced by this melting process enriched the soil

with thousands of years of decaying plant matter, bog lands that remained until the early 1900s when immigrant farmers, German, Polish, and Dutch, drained the bogs and found a sulfur and nitrogen-rich soil (Lee and Lee 2007). Referred to as "a giant bowl of compost," the soil is anywhere from 30 to 50 percent and in places up to 90 percent organic matter reaching up to 30 feet deep, all of which makes it a lush environment for food production (Lee and Lee 2007). The soil is high in pyruvic acid, which makes it great for onions, a crop that the immigrant farmers knew how to grow. And the black dirt region remains a prodigious producer of onions today, its output of over 150 million pounds a year constitutes the majority of New York State's onion crop (Al-Rikabi 2007). As a result, onions permeate the culture of the area, with the Orange County Onion Harvest Festival and local farmers and restaurants specializing in onion-flavored dishes, such as a cream-based onion soup or onion pie, which combines yellow onions and extra-sharp cheddar to produce the "richest, cheesiest omelet you ever made atop a layer of deeply caramelized onions (Lee and Lee 2007)."

Like other farms in the region the W. Rogowski Farm emerged during the 1950s when Walter and Lillian Rogowski, first generation polish Americans, bought up land to create an onion farm, the region's staple (Scharfenberg 2004). They sold them wholesale, over 500 tons a year, and never interacted with customers (Moskin 2005). But this path took a profound turn in 1983 when a mysterious and still unexplained soil infestation decimated their onion crop. Entire rows of onions failed to grow at all. Cheryl Rogowski, Mike's sister, explains what forced their hand into "rethinking" the family farm,

> In the 1930s we [the black dirt region] became known as the onion producing capital of the world…but along with that when you're producing a crop like that it means that's what your only producing. Your only putting into your land and your soil the inputs that

> that crop requires. Your taking out of it whatever that crop requires. The people that go with that and live that lifecycle also experience those same inputs and outputs...in our heyday at our peak we were 75 acres of onions and that's pretty much all we grew. Eventually, it got to a point where because of this draining of resources and constantly inputting the same materials over and over again, the farm became unhappy and the land told us. We ended up with an infestation in our soil and no one could help us with answers. There were lots of possibilities, lots of maybes, definitely no promises, and they gave us choices. And one of the choices they gave us was to quit farming, which as you can tell it's not part of our psyche, our personality. On our dad's side we have traced farming back to the thirteen hundreds in Poland...so to quit farming is just not an option. To fumigate the soil was one of the other options they gave us to the tune of six-plus figures, beyond our financial resources, and no guarantees of results because they didn't know what they were fumigating for (TED 2011).

On top of the cost and the risk involved the process would prevent them from growing crops for at least several years, not an encouraging economic option. As Cheryl explains, "the only other option left for us was to change and we've been changing and evolving ever since. It has been one of the most incredible journey's...and we've only just begun (TED 2011)." And by change Cheryl means ecological and economic diversification of the farm.

The collapse of the only economic and ecological farming model that the Rogowski's had known forced the family's hand. No longer could they survive with an economic model of "good year for onions equals good year for Rogowskis. Bad year for onions equals bad year for Rogowskis (O'Brien 2004)." Onions, their staple crop, now took a back seat to "tomatoes, potatoes and squashes." Echoing a smaller scale parallel to Cuba's agricultural crisis of the

1990s, the Rogowski farm mirrors the creativity of collapse, the ingenuity born of crisis, when old models are just no longer possible and a new path has to be made (Funes et al. 2002; Rosset and Benjamin 1993). Before the collapse of the Soviet Union Cuba was heavily dependent on selling its sugar at above market prices to the Soviet Union for below market prices of fossil fuel inputs, fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, as well as the fuel itself for agricultural machines. But when the Soviet Union collapsed so did this economic and ecological model of agriculture. Cuba could no longer sell its sugar at non-market prices, lost its biggest economic trading partner, and was denied the cheap fossil fuel it depended on for food production. Cuba responded by introducing a crash course program in sustainable small-scale urban agriculture emphasizing biofertilizers, green manures, biopesticides, integrated pest management, crop rotations, cover cropping, animal traction, small-scale subsistence and market production, and product diversification attuned to meeting local needs not foreign markets. Scaling away from fossil fuels, mechanization, and monocultures required scaling down the farm and utilizing ecological diversity and human or animal power. The agriculture that developed out of this crisis emphasized low-input technology and small farms, cooperatives, urban farms, community gardens, and backyard gardens rather than state farms and fossil fuels.

Much like Cuba is looked to for a post-collapse and post-fossil fuel crash course model the Rogowski farm is seen as part of the vanguard restructuring small-scale agriculture and the family farm. Moving beyond conventional agriculture's monocultures and reliance on pesticides and herbicides the farm plowed into a diversified and seasonal agricultural model where they now grow over 300 different varieties of vegetables and fruits. Turning towards smaller batches of numerous types of produce, both to repair the health of the soil and their farm's economic sustainability required rethinking their traditional production-consumption circuits. Economic

diversification entailed rethinking not only what they grew and how they grew it but also to whom and where they sold their produce. Like the new local or civic agriculture movement they turned towards cutting out the middleman and ending wholesaling altogether in favor of capturing the majority if not all of the value of their produce by selling directly to customers. Additionally, they sought to employ value-added processing to increase their income stream by turning their raw vegetables into premade products or turning their farm into a restaurant. In this case they sought to maximize income generation by capturing as much added value as they could, building new markets (CSAs, farmers markets, farm-to-table) or tapping into existing markets (premade foods and restaurants). For these efforts in re-inventing the family farm Cheryl received the prestigious "genius award" by being named a MacArthur Foundation Fellow in 2004. This award, which comes with a no-strings attached amount of $500,000, paid in equal amounts over five years, is given "to talented individuals who have shown extraordinary originality and dedication in their creative pursuits and a marked capacity for self-direction (MacArthur Foundation n.d.)." In its twenty-three year existence there had been 624 recipients but Cheryl was the first farmer to win the prestigious award.

Her rethinking of the family farm lead to her creation of the first low-income CSA in New York State in 1999, the same year her father passed away, an experience that clearly signaled the passing and transformation of the farm from her father, Walter Rogowski, to his children, Cheryl and Mike, and with it the birth of a new form of agriculture. Cheryl looks on her CSA involvement with fondness and energy, "we've always been associated with low-income neighborhoods. You know, it's just an amazing difference because they appreciated and recognized what you were bringing to them. You were bringing the farm to them. And a lot of these folks, many had just come from farms and it was their first time here in this country (Carter

2011).” Cheryl is speaking about her experience starting up a CSA in the lower income Latino community of Williamsburg, Brooklyn. “We began the groundwork with Just Food...with a group called El Puente...my father was like you’re never going to do this. This is never going to work. You’re not going to get people to pay for something you haven’t even delivered when I can’t get a check from a commission house for product that I already gave them and they already sold it. When I came in with the first installment in money. They paid in installments. They couldn’t even afford to pay the full amount at that time. I just showered him with money [laughs] in his chair in his living room (Carter 2011).”

Cheryl’s awareness exemplifies several aspects of food justice that break with the norm of small-farmer relations to lower income communities. First, she reverses or upends the conventional presumption that lower income people don’t know what fresh food or healthy food is, shattering the image of the lower income urban consumer as someone who only eats fast food and chips because that’s what they like and that’s all they know. By underscoring that many low income communities are immigrant communities, communities relocated from farming locales or areas outside of industrial agriculture, she articulates that they, oftentimes more than most Americans, understand and value fresh local food. The Rogowski’s CSAs and farmers markets in lower income communities are therefore not about “bringing good food to others” or “educating people about healthy foods,” Cheryl’s efforts are not part of a missionary complex of white people saving poor blacks and Latinos from themselves. In fact, it is continuing their access to fresh local food, an activity they were used to in their home country and lost upon arrival to the United States. This realization, that immigrants actually have better eating habits and more knowledge of food production, was echoed many times by gardeners in East New York who state that upon arriving to the United States they didn’t know what this term “organic” was,

it was a word that they did not use back home because people grew their own food or bought it from local people they knew. Second, rather than a traditional CSA payment that is a one-time lump sum, Cheryl brought access and affordability to the CSA model, spearheaded by Just Foods, to operate on payment plans that divide the lump sum into several payments spread across the season. Even though spreading this payment across the season does reduce the benefit of the CSA for the farmer, which is to have cash upfront at the beginning of the season to pay their bills and avoid taking on loans, it is often vital for bringing in lower income consumers to CSAs and was prioritized over up-front bottom lines. Third, it underscores that lower income people are better at keeping their end of the social contract than corporate distributors and that despite beliefs that lower income people are bad credit risks, in fact paying back loans in full and on time is actually common within lower income communities, as micro credit organizations have proven.

Despite the Rogowski's efforts to re-think the family farm and attempts to build a local food network that incorporates civic agriculture and food justice, it is not a pathway lined with gold. Even with all the recognition and awards they have received and the diverse economic models they have pioneered they are barely getting by. Cheryl isn't really taking a paycheck from the farm, according to Mike, and he has another job full-time job working for a local propane company, one that he would gladly quit to pursue his love for farming but right now it's not financially viable. If the Rogowski's aren't able to juggle economic sustainability and food justice, who really can, and what does it take to realize "just sustainability"?

Income-Support Programs and Coupons: Removing the Blinders of Localism

I spoke with Alex Kravts and Gudelio, the two other out-of-town farmers, both agree with Mike's comments that without the check-based economy they could not sell produce in East New York and be economically viable. And as Mike puts it, "this is not their fault, it's a lack of income," a statement that reinforces that the problem is about the capacity to pay. Despite this reality state-supported income- and purchasing power programs have historically not been a major focus of the local food movement. However, in shifting the focus towards these programs the food justice movement can shift the strategic logic of local food movement towards the importance of the state in building strong local-level initiatives that realize "just sustainability" (Agyeman 2005). For the most part the local food movement has operated with the "blinders of localism," presuming that farmers markets can operate independently of the state when in fact bringing access and affordability to farmers markets requires more than just a politics of the local and a politics of the market. In this regard local food politics generally hits a dead end when it comes to realizing food justice because it fails to have a politics of state-facilitated redistribution and a social right to food (Allen 1999; Guthman 2011). This is particularly troubling for East New York as residents' capability of buying food is reliant on state transfers of wealth, upstate farmers need state transfers to make selling produce to the community economically viable, and ENYF! needs them to make the market a functional space for farmers, gardeners, and residents. Since ENYF! is not a self-sufficient actor, and in actuality no one is, there must be a politics that avoids the local trap, or in other words, a "politics of scale," a politics that can scale up and scale down between the local, the state, and the national, one that can connect these different scales and see how the local is dependent on the state and the national and vice-versa. A successful local food politics inherently necessitates a regional, state, and national food politics (Born and

Purcell 2006). The long-term strength of the local food movement and the food justice movement and its capacity for social change is to be found in its ability to win at the state and national level not just at the local community level.

For those familiar with social justice movements, particularly the long and ongoing struggle for civil rights and racial equity within America, it is no surprise that a purely local or non-State politics can be detrimental to the goal of black freedom. The State was complicit in black oppression and trying to build local safe spaces from white supremacy was merely a short-term effort, one that would not mean much in the long run if blacks did not fundamentally transform the relationship between the state and the black community. The state cannot be rejected tout-court but there must be a different politics of the state today then there traditionally has been during the twentieth century. Local civil rights, environmental justice, and now food justice struggles have scaled up past the local to state, national and international networks to win change at the local level. Whether it was Freedom Rides in the South during the 1950s, Toxic Tours in Louisiana during the 1990s, or Food Justice tours in 2012, building alliances with actors who are non-local, non-black, and non-lower class is important in flexing power on the state. Given the necessity of State-supported income and purchasing power programs for farmers markets in lower income communities these farmers market are not presumed to lie outside of the State or be autonomous from the State. In fact, given that fifty percent of the market revenue comes from State checks it is clear that the ENYF! market is constituted in and through the State and that the State has a valuable role to play in restructuring the food chain and the food system. For this reason, succession and secession within the food justice movement, if this is desired, will require the active hand of the State, it will require an activist State for food justice, which will only occur if there is a well-organized and militant food justice movement that can force the

State to redistribute wealth towards lower income communities. This struggle would place the Farm Bill at the center of food justice politics because restructuring how the State distributes the social surplus is vital to supporting a local food network.

What is the Farm Bill? The Farm Bill is a piece of federal legislation that structures the entire agricultural and food system domestically, with ripple effects on the international stage (Imhoff 2007). A lot of attention is placed on the Farm Bill because it shapes our nation's relationship to the landbase by setting prices on agricultural commodities, incentivizing anti-ecological agricultural growing practices of planting "hedgerow to hedgerow," and an unhealthy American diet glutted with corn, dairy, and meat. Additionally, its policies reinforce factory farming and monocultures through a subsidy payment system that primarily benefits agro-capitals rather than small-scale farmers and supports only a few crops. This is because the majority of farmers do not grow the crops that the program privileges: corn, cotton, wheat, soybeans, and rice. Overall, the Farm Bill is blamed for producing food surpluses and cheap food, facilitating the consolidation and concentration of the food system under corporations, destroying the productivity of the agrarian landscape, making the U.S. food system extremely dependent on a few staple crops, and turning Americans into the most obese population in the world. Yet, as Julie Guthman (2011) has pointed out, a majority of these problems preexisted the Farm Bill and the Farm Bill has only reinforced these tendencies rather than being the root cause of them, which is tied into the dynamics of capitalist agriculture.

While the discourse of the Farm Bill within the alt-food movement is generally centered on the "corporate welfare" of the Farm Bill the largest part of the Farm Bill is not crop assistance but food assistance programs. This fact is a central reason why I contend that the local food movement needs to prioritize the necessity of a politics of the State wedded to realizing social

justice. As of the most recent Farm Bill (2008), 68 percent of its budget goes to food assistance (SNAP, WIC, FMNP, SFMNP, school breakfast and school lunch) with SNAP being the largest section of both the food assistance section and the entire Farm Bill. All other sections of the Farm Bill each constitute less than 15 percent of the budget: commodity support (12 percept), crop insurance (10 percent), conservation (9 percent) and additional programs (1 percent).

Bringing the State Back In: SNAP and the Politics of Food Justice

The importance of the State for building and supporting the local food movement in lower income communities and realizing food justice becomes starkly apparent in the battle over SNAP currently being waged between the food justice, anti-poverty, and anti-hunger communities and conservative actors, including the Republican Party, Heritage Foundation, and Fox News. A struggle that becomes all the more important as there is a big push within the food justice movement to reconnect farmers markets and lower income communities through SNAP/EBT and the purchasing power programs such as Health Bucks and Fresh Connect. Over the last 18 years the number of farmers markets across the country has increased from 1,755 in 1994 to 7,864 in 2012. But this growth is geographically, racially, and economically uneven, as it is overwhelmingly concentrated in more affluent and white areas. The increase in farmers markets has not been coterminous with an increased participation rate amongst SNAP recipients even as SNAP recipients have increased numerically since the early 2000s, "from 1993 to 2009 SNAP redemptions at farmers markets fell by half, while overall SNAP redemptions more than doubled (CFLF 2012)."

Why? Because SNAP, previously known as food stamps, was a victim of the "digital divide" of the 1990s. The rush to digitize all aspects of life under the premise of efficiency and progress actually increased the distance between lower income communities and access to and

affordability of local fresh produce. 1994 was the year that SNAP began the transition away from being a paper coupon to the now standard debit card format. As a result, the value of SNAP benefits redeemed at farmers markets from 1994 to 2008 dropped by 71 percent in 1994 constant dollars. From over $9 million in 1993, SNAP redemptions fell to $6.5 million in 1994, $3.8 million in 1998 and $2.7 million in 2008 (Briggs et al. 2010). The high point of SNAP sales at farmers markets was 1993, totaling $9.3 million at 643 markets and constituting 0.044 percent of all food stamp transactions (Briggs et al. 2010). In comparison, for the year 2009 $4 million was spent at 963 markets accounting for 0.008 percent of all food stamp transactions (Briggs et al. 2010). These numbers parallel other declines. In 1994 27.5 percent of farmers markets redeemed food stamps while only 17.7 percent did in 2009, as a result, the total value of food stamps redeemed at farmers markets in 1994 dollars was $6.51 million in 1994 and $2.88 million in 2009 (Briggs et al. 2010). This is despite only 482 markets accepting food stamps in 1994 and 936 accepting them in 2009.

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) seeks to counter this rapid decline in SNAP redemptions at farmers markets by enabling SNAP recipients to use their EBT cards at farmers markets. The logic behind the conversion from paper to EBT was to reduce fraud and abuse of coupons, a central issue for Republicans and conservatives, and reduce stigma attached to the coupons, a central issue for Democrats and liberals. While EBT was first implemented in 1993 it was not fully extended to all 50 states until 2004 and was generally nonexistent at most farmers markets. The major problem for farmers markets was that EBT was set up for supermarkets, grocery stores, and brick-and-mortar stores that were wired but not for outdoor spaces without access to electricity and a phone line. Farmers markets, since they constituted such a small part of the SNAP dollar, were left out of the conversion process and the effects of going digital on the

relationship between lower income consumers and farmers markets was not a priority or even thought about in particular circles. But with the implementation of EBT at farmers markets during the mid-to-late 2000s through today redemptions have been slowly increasing, hitting $4 million in 2009, $7.5 million in 2010 and exceeding $11 million in 2011. This increase is due to the ever-escalating number of farmers markets that accept SNAP rather than increased spending by SNAP recipients at the markets. In 2004 there were only 289 farmers markets that accepted SNAP, by 2009 it was 963 and in 2011 it was 2,445. Thus, SNAP recipients spend less of their SNAP dollars at farmers' markets in 2011 than they did in 1993 at the same time that the overall SNAP budget is larger and more farmers markets accept SNAP. In 1993 0.044% of all SNAP redemptions occurred at farmers markets, in 2011 it was 0.016%.

SNAP's roots go back to the Great Depression but its current structure as a guaranteed income support program rather than a coupon program tied to mandatory cash spending emerged during the 1960s and the war on poverty. If there is a part of the Farm Bill that needs to be saved in the name of food justice, it is food assistance programs. However, they cannot be accepted as is. They need to be tweaked and expanded because food assistance programs today often mean state assistance to eat the cheap commodity foods of agro-capitals rather than the more expensive and healthy local food of gardeners and small-farmers. And due to the Great Recession SNAP enrollment has expanded dramatically. In 2007, before the Great Recession, there were 26 million individuals and 12 million households participating in SNAP to the amount of $30 billion. As of fiscal year 2011 the federal government allotted $72 billion for SNAP and had 45 million participants in the program, both record highs. Based upon such high participation rates more than 1 in 7 Americans obtain food stamps. Government projections maintain this increased participation rate through the next couple years as the economy continues to stagnate. However,

even when the U.S. economy was "going strong," according to such measures as GDP and the Dow Jones Index, SNAP numbers grew throughout the 2000s due to minimum wage and real wage stagnation. As a result, "the number of people receiving SNAP benefits increased by almost 50 percent between fiscal years 2001 and 2005 and even more rapidly (by 70 percent) between fiscal years 2007 and 2011 (CBO 2012).

Despite government reports that correlate the increased use of SNAP and the Great Recession the increased federal spending on SNAP has become a lighting rod for conservative and Republican attacks on increased government dependency, the loss of a work ethic, and the rise of an entitlement society. Jim Jordan, an Ohio Republican who is chairman of the Republican Study Committee stated that "this [SNAP] is harmful for a culture and a country, when you have one in seven people thinking it's OK for someone else to feed them…we do need to reform that, and frankly we need to scale it back (Bjerga 2012)." Reflecting the "cultural wars" framing of the 1990s, Senator Jeff Sessions, an Alabama Republican, contended that SNAP spending "is more than just a financial issue. It is a moral issue (Associated Press 2012). And in his op-ed in the Wall Street Journal the libertarian author James Bovard (2012) repeats many of the right's well-worn claims of "nanny statism" that aims to legitimate the defunding of social safety nets through polemics rather than facts. In the op-ed Bovard refers to the increase in SNAP participation under the presidencies of George Bush Jr. and Barack Obama as an exemplar of a broader movement "urging people to accept government handouts," one that threatens the very foundation of liberty, as "the more people who become government dependents, the more likely that democracy will become a conspiracy against self-reliance (2012)."

Overall, conservatives have attempted to frame the increase in SNAP participation as part of a unilateral effort by Democrats and President Obama to "dramatic[ally] increase" the "welfare state" and make "individuals more dependent on government" when SNAP's growth is attributable to a neoliberal regime that over the last thirty years has produced wealth primarily through creating speculative debt bubbles, transferring income from the lower to upper classes, destroying millions of living wage jobs through automation and offshoring, and creating millions of low-wage part-time contingent forms of employment (Brenner 2002; Leicht and Fitzgerald 2006; Massey 2008; Meyer 2012). If wall street and corporate America were not investing in debt bubbles and low-wage work then SNAP would not be as large as it is, but given the push for free markets and cheap labor SNAP will become more and more a vital income stream to support those who are cast aside by the post-industrial economy. The current dynamic of free markets creating an impoverished working poor that the state then has to provide assistance to is not new either; it has been around as long as capitalism has existed, as the state is forced to care for a population that employers refuse to reproduce through paying living wages (Polyani 2001).

Much like the fabricated welfare queen image that President Ronald Regan produced in the 1980s to sell the defunding of welfare and pro-austerity politics to White America, conservatives now produce the image of millions of lazy people using food stamps to buy caviar, cigarettes, and alcohol. Citing anecdotal evidence that fraud is rife in SNAP conservatives claim that their austerity politics should be targeted to this "poorly managed program" when in fact fraud levels are at historic lows (Sessions 2011). Payment accuracy reached record highs in FY 2010 when 96.19 percent of all benefits were issued correctly, an error rate of only 3.81 percent, which includes overpayments and underpayments (Lavallee 2011). Additionally, trafficking in SNAP – where people trade SNAP in for cash – has reached historic lows, from 4

percent of benefits to its current level of 1 percent. As a result, trafficking is a mere 1-cent on the dollar (Lavallee 2011).

The Republican attack on SNAP as a program that supposedly supports freeloaders, slackers, and fraud perpetrators, is important for several reasons. First, it is part of a racialized attack on Black America that has been part-and-parcel of the Republican Party since at least the 1960s, one that frames whites as independent hard workers and Blacks as lazy government dependents. This race baiting was no clearer than on Fox News after President Obama won re-election in 2012. Bill O'Reilly, a longtime political commentator for Fox News, framed whites as the people who worked for "things" and Blacks and Latinos as the people who just demanded "things" from the government,

> It's a changing country. The demographics are changing. It's not a traditional America any more. And there are 50% of the voting public who want stuff. They want things…the white establishment is now the minority. And the voters, many of them…want stuff. You are going to see a tremendous Hispanic vote for President Obama, overwhelming black vote for President Obama. And women will probably break President Obama's way. People feel that they are entitled to things and which candidate, between the two, is going to give them things?

Second, the attack on SNAP seeks to end any and all obligations on behalf of the State in meeting the social needs of its citizens, primarily by preventing the State from implementing wealth redistribution programs that reduce inequality. Conservative politics pushes for a "night watchman" State that protects property rights, markets, and law and order. Outside of these actions the State has no legitimate authority. Consequently, the State cannot act to redistribute wealth downward to decrease inequality even though by default free markets redistribute wealth

upwards from workers to management and shareholders. Third, its emphasis on personal responsibility and self-reliance prioritizes competitive individualism over collective responsibility, the presumed generosity of civil society over the rights of citizenship, and dependency on the market (corporations) for access to income over state provision of social needs regardless of employment status. The unity of these three components embodies central aspects of the framework of the Republican Party plank and conservative ideology in general and is the foundation of their attack on SNAP and other social safety net programs, such as social security, Medicaid, Medicare and TANF.

Consevative critiques of SNAP have gone so far as to claim that they are the "latest middle-class entitlement (Wall Street Journal 2012)" and "permit Trust Fund Babies driving Rolls Royces to get free food courtesy of Uncle Sam (Bovard 2012 Such claims, of course, are not accurate. Food stamps are for the poorest of the poor. SNAP is available to almost all households that have a monthly gross income less than 130 percent of the Federal poverty guidelines ($1,984 per month in fiscal year 2010 for a three-person household, $2,422 for a family of four in fiscal year 2012), monthly net income less than 100 percent of the poverty guidelines, and assets of less than $2,000 (Strayer et al. 2012). Households with elderly (age 60 and older) and disabled members are exempt from the gross income limit and must have assets less than $3,250. On top of this, the $2,000 asset figure has not been adjusted for inflation in 25 years and has fallen 48 percent in real inflation adjusted terms since 1986. For this reason states use the categorical eligibility option to enable households with savings modestly above $2000 to receive SNAP. A similar punitive regulation, not being able to have a car worth more than $5,000, is another reason why states employ the categorical exemption. Such categorical eligibility options would be eliminated under both the Senate and House Farm Bills. This makes

little logical sense when Republicans claim to want to incentivize “self-help,” “hard-work,” and “savings.” In reality, ending categorical eligibility options hurts those with minimal savings and harms their chances of upward mobility by preventing them from building assets that are often needed to cope with job loss, medical bills, and unexpected expenses, and denying them access to a reliable automobile that is often necessary for getting to and from work only increases their likelihood of experiencing un- and under-employment. Therefore, current federal regulations for SNAP actually inhibit upward mobility while categorical exemptions at the state level enable upward mobility.

In contradiction to these polemical claims of conservatives, SNAP is very effective at combating poverty and creating a safety net for those struggling against the vicissitudes of a capitalist economy. SNAP has been shown to decrease poverty, in depth and severity, amongst both households and children (Tiehen et al. 2012). The Census Bureau indicates that SNAP would lift 3.9 million Americans—including 1.7 million children—out of poverty in 2010 if its benefits were included in the official measures of income and poverty (USDA 2012b). Government reports also find that SNAP participants spend more money on food then they would without the program and more than if SNAP was merely cash and not limited to food items (USDA 2012b). And like many safety net programs for the poor its expansion and constriction mirror the larger ebbs and flows of the national economy, when the economy is roaring people leave SNAP, when the economy contracts and enters a recession and depression the rolls expand (USDA 2012b). Thus, SNAP is a countercyclical program (Mabli et al., 2009; Ziliak et al., 2003). Not to mention that it is the country’s largest child nutrition program, feeding one in three children (29). (Eslami et al. 2010).

Additionally, the people who use SNAP are not "lazy moochers" as conservatives claim but those most in need of food assistance, as they are the working poor and those marginalized from and within the wage economy (USDA 2012b). Households receiving SNAP generally reproduce themselves through multiple income-streams: 29.9 percent have income from a job they current occupy, 21.4 percent receive social security, 20.9 percent received SSI, 9.6 percent child support payments, 8 percent TANF, 6.7 percent unemployment, and 4.1 percent general assistance. On average, one-fourth of a SNAP household's monthly income came from SNAP (USDA 2012b). Additionally, most SNAP participants in fiscal year 2010 (60 percent) were not expected to work because of their age or disability. Nearly 47 percent of SNAP participants are children, another 8 percent are elderly, and about 6 percent are nonelderly adults receiving SSI disability payments. About 53 percent of the nonelderly, non-disabled adult SNAP participants were either working full- or part-time, living with another employed adult, or subject to a meaningful work requirement (e.g., through receipt of TANF or unemployment benefits). Together these groups account for 81 percent of all SNAP participants in fiscal year 2010. Looking at SNAP households with children provides particular insight into their precarious relationship to the wage economy, "a typical family with children that is enrolled in SNAP has income (not including SNAP) at 57 percent of the poverty line" and "nearly half (48 percent) of children who receive SNAP live in low-wage working families (Eslami et al. 2010)".

What is more troubling is that the polarization of the post-industrial economy is dramatically reshaping the income streams of the SNAP recipient (Eslami et al. 2010). Within the SNAP population, cash welfare (AFDC/TANF) has been replaced by cash wages as the single largest source of income, from 42 to 8 percent between fiscal years 1990 and 2010, whereas the percentage with earnings rose from 19 to 30 percent. Yet the poorest of the poor are

more marginalized than they have been over the past twenty years. The percentage of households with zero gross income has grown from 7 percent in fiscal year 1990 to 20 percent in fiscal year 2010. Similarly, the percentage of households with zero net income, after all applicable deductions, has doubled from 19 percent to 38 percent during the same time period. At the same time, SNAP replicates the on-and-off again cycle of TANF families, during the 2000s "seventy-four percent of new participants left the program within two years" but "more than half of those who leave return within two years (Eslami et al. 2010:11)." SNAP is also a program that manages the long-term poor; "half of SNAP participants in May 2004 were on the program for seven years (Eslami et al. 2010:11)." The working poor are generally more short-term users while the long-term users are the elderly, disabled adults, and single parents and their children.

Given the importance of SNAP to millions of households in the United States the push by Republicans and conservatives to cut SNAP in 2012 would increase food insecurity, hunger, and dependency on food banks and soup kitchens. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), if the cuts go into action an estimated 500,000 households a year will lose $90 per month in SNAP benefits, 32 percent of their benefit. When the average SNAP amount is $284 each month a cut of $90 is quite severe (Strayer et al 2012). Additionally, 2 to 3 million people would lose SNAP eligibility, and 280,000 children in low-income families whose eligibility for free school meals is tied to their receipt of SNAP would lose free meals when their families lost SNAP benefits (Rosembaum 2011). In New York City 190,000 families would be affected. Most of this "savings" will occur by tightening requirements for SNAP participation—eliminating category eligibility (explained below)—and reducing the (maximum) amounts participants receive. These cuts are minuscule compared to the desires of Rand Paul (R-KY),

who proposed to save $322 billion over 10 years by cutting SNAP by $45 billion a year, such a drastic maneuver that 13 Republicans joined every Democrat in voting against it by a margin of 65 to 32. In the case of East New York, where 34 percent of the community lives below the poverty line, and close to 40 percent receive SNAP, Janelle stated that the proposed cuts to the SNAP budget are "going to be a huge problem for people…this is a low income community and the majority of people who live here depend on that to feed their kids, their families, to feed themselves." And in speaking about how important the public subsidy programs are for the farmers market in East New York, Sarita stated they are "hugely important…in the ultimate long-term a hundred years down the line in a dream world maybe our policies wouldn't be so skewed where healthy food is so much more expensive than junk food [we wouldn't need income redistribution programs] but in the mean time those are some of the few programs that fix that issue and make it so that healthy food for people who have trouble affording it is not so expensive."

The worries of Janelle and Sarita, people who work in the community, are reflected by a wider spectrum of individuals fighting to protect SNAP from budget cuts, several of which were represented at a press conference in June of 2012 that urged congress not to cut funding from the state. The group consisted of a range of people from the anti-hunger, anti-poverty, and alternative food movements as well as elected representatives (Gillibrand 2012). One of these was Democratic Senator (NY) Kirsten Gillibrand, who stated that the "Farm Bill is much more than a set of esoteric numbers. It's very much about…the moral obligation we have to our families that are at risk…[u]nder the current bill, families in New York will lose about $90 a month in their food stamps, which means in the third week of the month, many families' children will go to school hungry. It also means less food on a kitchen table for children." Tom Colicchio,

a New York City restaurateur and "Top Chef" star, echoed her thoughts by starkly pointing out that Republicans were choosing to balance the federal budget on the stomachs of the poor, "reducing the federal deficit by creating a food deficit for struggling families is irresponsible policy…[m]illions of New Yorkers depend on SNAP to put the most basic of meals on the table for their children." At the press conference it became clear that those in the emergency food networks understand that cuts to SNAP will merely push those families towards an already overburdened network of food banks and soup kitchens that cannot handle the State's neglect of its poor. Margarette Purvis, President and CEO of the Food Bank For New York City emphasized that "cuts to SNAP would not only weaken our nation's first line of defense against hunger, they would add tremendous pressure to an emergency food system already struggling to meet overwhelming need in our communities." The proposed cuts to SNAP would therefore not eliminate hunger; it would merely move the cost of combating hunger from the State to civil society and in the process it would, according to Joel Berg, Executive Director of the New York City Coalition Against Hunger, "literally take food out of the mouths of hungry children, working parents, seniors, and veterans."

Conclusion: Food Justice, The State, and SNAP

If the food justice movement cannot form an alliance with the broader local food movement and convince them that the State is necessary for realizing social justice then the State as a mechanism for the redistribution of wealth downward will be severely compromised. The food justice movement needs to build relations with those organizing around the Farm Bill in order to shift their focus from commodity subsidies to food assistance programs. Without their numbers and political pull the food justice movement will not be able to transform the

mechanisms of surplus distribution embedded within the Farm Bill to benefit backyard and community gardeners, small farmers, and lower income consumers. This transformation can occur through fighting to save the existing funding levels for food assistance programs, a reactive effort, and in expanding these programs and shifting SNAP spending from the major retailers of the industrial food system towards farm stands, farmers markets, and CSAs, a proactive project.

From the 1960s through today conservatives and the Republican Party have systematically attacked the State as a conduit for realizing social justice and as a redistributive mechanism towards nonwhite America. Against this it has put forth an austerity program that is explicitly and implicitly racialized by withdrawing State support from nonwhite communities in order to concentrate resources within white communities. This austerity program is consistent with the structural adjustment policies forced on the Global South by the United States and European Union during the 1980s and 1990s, both of which increased inequality, poverty, and hunger. At the same time, the left and liberals retreated from the State as a mechanism for realizing social justice and a strong activist state for racial justice was replaced with an activist State that sought to provide all power towards the market and corporate America. The outcome of this neoconservative and neoliberal capture of the State has been the redistribution of wealth upwards towards corporate America and the upper classes, the defunding of public services (education, healthcare, parks, and transportation) that the lower and middle classes depend upon, and the rise of a precarious low-wage workforce that is increasingly more reliant on state transfers as wage-incomes decline. To undo this concentration of wealth within the top, to counter the defunding of public services, and to build alternative food networks within low income communities cannot occur through a privatized movement for secession within

communities but must occur through the transfer of wealth between communities, which can only be done via the State.

Placing the Farm Bill in the hands of communities is central to realizing food justice. Today, farmers markets constitute the margins of the food system, representing less than one percent of total food sales in the United States. If farmers markets are going to move towards being a real viable alternative to the current industrial food system rooted in supermarkets and discount grocery retailing than this requires the local food movement to critically reflect on its race and class privilege, foremost is its internalization of a politics that prioritizes the market and education as the primary pathways towards building alternative food networks. Education is necessary but insufficient in realizing food justice. Food justice necessitates bringing the State back in to counter the racialized distribution of wealth, as this is a central barrier to facilitating farmers markets and alternative food networks in lower income communities.

The tensions within the local food movement today, particularly the emphasis on farmers markets as a way to build an alternative food network, are emblematic of the tensions with the community control movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Localization without control over the social surplus often leads to failure. United Community Centers contended that you had to scale up beyond the community or neighborhood level to realize social justice in education and win integrated schooling during the 1960s. For United Community Centers this meant at the scale of New York City, as this is who shaped the distribution of wealth within the education system. If you couldn't organize to increase the whole pie going to public education then each community would merely fight for their portion from within the existing pie, which wasn't enough to provide quality education for all. As a result, the existing racial inequality of education would be maintained. The local food movement is grappling with a similar problem. Community control

in and of itself does not mean much if it fails to control the distribution, let alone the production and appropriation, of the social surplus. Without control over wealth community control is merely nominal. Today, the local food movement needs to scale up beyond a purely market-based secession if it wants to address racial and class inequality in the food system. Food justice requires control over state and federal funding. To withdraw to the local without control over the purse strings would exacerbate institutional inequality within the food system. Community controlled education in East New York and Brownsville did not end educational apartheid because it did not scale up to where the problems were produced. The same can be said for food justice organizations such as ENYF! If Republicans are able to hollow out the State this would subject ENYF! to continued fiscal austerity and the loss of close to half its customer base. There would be no farmers market, at least in its current form, without the State, because there would be no upstate farmers anymore and community gardeners would lose a significant portion of their income as well. State retrenchment of food assistance programs in the Farm Bill would not devastate farmers markets in wealthier areas of Brooklyn, such as Prospect Heights, Park Slope or Fort Greene, communities that rest atop the post-industrial economy but it would devastate those in Bushwick, Brownsville and East New York, communities that are the bottom of the post-industrial economy.

Chapter 5 / Community Gardens in East New York: Spaces of Subjugated Knowledge, Cultural Resistance and Economic Alterity

There is a vibrant community gardening network in East New York, one that embodies ecological, cultural, and economic logics and practices that have been marginalized over the last century by modernization and its articulation of a world structured around corporations, industrialization, wage-labor, and commodity foodstuffs. This chapter underscores the roots of the alternative logics of community gardeners, their demand for access to land as a means of cultural reproduction, their use of polyculture agricultural practices, and cultivation of food for self-provisioning and gift purposes, to contend that the community gardens serve as spaces of resistance to the modernization project and articulate a different way of living, culturally, ecologically, and economically.

My Introduction to a World of Surplus

It is the beginning of June at Hands and Heart Community Garden, several weeks since seedlings were planted and several more until the first farmers market.[15] While the spring weather has been absolutely wonderful for gardening, clear blue skies of middling 70s and a few scattered days of 80s, it has not been conducive to prodigious plant growth. The combination of a long hot stretch and afternoon thunder storms with their bucket loads of rain would be ideal to kick the peppers, tomatoes, and okra into high gear. Right now they sit in the ground looking just like they did when they were transplanted there in mid-May. They have plenty of sun and lush soil full of worms, compost, coffee grinds, and egg shells, but obviously some vital element eludes them and they remain frozen in place, refusing to grow. What has taken kindly to this weather though is the squash and bok choy, which is beginning to reach towards the sky, and I

take heart in knowing that at least these plants, alongside of garlic and mint, will be ready to sell at the farmers market on the thirtieth of June, the first Saturday market of the season.

However, not everyone got an early start on the season. A new gardener, Julie, has utilized today, the Turkey Fry fundraiser, to de-weed her plot and begin planting for the season. She wants to grow tomatoes, basil, and cucumbers but must first remove the accumulated plants or "weeds" that emerged early this year. The absence of an actual New York winter this year created a perfect growing environment for weeds: late frosts and no snow preventing their growth.[16] As the weeds took over the community garden began to look like the "long-abandoned, weed-choked lot" it replaced when it opened in 2007 (Osterhout and Sidman 2012). What this meant for Julie was a bed four feet wide and ten feet long chock full of three feet high weeds. Yet, as we were soon to find out, not all weeds are treated equal or are in fact really weeds at all. Shay, my wife, was assisting Julie and me as we moved through the four foot by ten foot plot the pile of weeds became bigger and bigger, filling not one but two wheelbarrows. "If only these weeds were edible," I thought, "that would be many a meal right there and with no actual effort in growing them too!" Noticing the pile and our hard work, Pauline, a seasoned gardening veteran and a regular "power seller" at the farmers market came over to inspect our work and inform the three of us that what we were so carelessly picking and haphazardly tossing into a compost pile was edible and called lambsquarters.[17] "You just need to sauté it, cook it up with some garlic, onions, and seasonings, just like you would with callaloo or any other leafy green." As the other gardeners at the Turkey-Fry fundraiser overheard our conversation the big haul of weeds immediately turned from future compost into a dinner for all. Annie, Barbara, Charmeion, Pauline, and Marlin all said they would gladly take some home. The bounty of the land was shared throughout the garden, reflecting what lambsquarters is, a free gift of the land.

This was not the first time nor would it be the last time Pauline bestowed her horticultural knowledge on newbies like Julie and myself, correcting our ingrained blind spots as to what was or was not a beneficial or edible plant. It was merely another learning moment into a people's horticulture, a socialization process that forced me to realize that what most people called weeds are anything but the useless and nonproductive plants that I was told they were during my youth in middle class suburbia. The latter was a world where people waged daily war on edible weeds with all sorts of toxins and death-inducing sprays, pellets, and powders in the name of protecting the sanctity of the front lawn, which represented an aesthetic order, reflected a claim to social status, and reinforced the hegemony of real estate values on how people were to construct "nature." Before entering Hands and Heart I was a sympathetic advocate of "food not lawns" but I didn't really know much about horticulture. I presumed that every plant that was not cultivated by humans was a weed to be removed from the soil. Within such a mindset weeds were framed as toxic to the cultivated plants, from which they stole vital nutrients; weeds were a contagion destructive to the social order of the garden—productive plants over nonproductive plants. Such a belief system was eventually upended, first, through conversations with community gardeners at Hands and Heart, and later through my own experiences growing food in the very same garden, which reinforced the knowledge passed onto me by the gardeners.

Over a period of two growing seasons, both as a gardener at Hands and Hearts and volunteer at ENYF!, I was welcomed into and made aware of agricultural practices, knowledge bases, cultural lifeways, and economic performances that are subjugated, marginalized, and oppressed by the hegemonic logic of the modernization project, urban growth machines, and the treadmill of production. The discourse of modernization and the treadmill of production prioritize progress, technology, and growth and through them a development paradigm that

disconnects people from landbased cultures, prevents community control over land use, and marginalizes people's ability to engage in relations beyond the wage form and the formal economy (Bryceson et al 2000; Gould et al. 2008; Logan and Molotch 1987; McMichael 2007).

This chapter contends that community gardens operate as spaces of resistance to the modernization project through enabling residents to express identity, economic alterity and subjugated knowledge while avoiding being divorced from the land and turned into a mere consumer of industrial foodstuffs.

First, community gardens are spaces of *subjugated knowledge* where counter-hegemonic and marginalized forms of knowing, being, and seeing the world are protected and reproduced in spite of a continued war of attrition by urban growth machines, industrial agriculture, and agrocapitals. Drawing upon Michel Foucault's use of the term, community gardens are spaces containing "a whole set of knowledges that are…hidden behind more dominant knowledges but can be revealed by critique…historical contents that have been buried or masked in …formal systemizations" of legitimate knowledge (Foucault 1980: 82, 2003: 7). This protection and reproduction principally occurs through the gardeners horticultural knowledge and practices, which include the utilization of "weed" plants, partner or companion planting, and cover crops, as well as a worldview that emphasizes that human beings are born of the earth and must respect the ecological limits that mother earth places on humanity. Within such practices and discourses is a subjugated knowledge that contests the claims of industrial agriculture and the enlightenment, specifically the formers belief in monocultures and the latters belief that humans stand apart from and above nature.

Second, community gardens are vibrant spaces of *economic alterity* where the economic diversity of independent income generation, self-provisioning, and gifting are experienced as

daily practices and concretely materialized in spaces that underscore not only the historical relationship between food production and non-capitalist and non-market practices but also the social reproduction networks that operate within communities marginalized from and within the wage economy (Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies 1999; Berlin and Morgan 1993; Dickinson 1995; Gibson-Graham 2006, 2008; Hahn 1982; Littlefield and Knack 1996; Meeks 2003; Price 1996; Yans-McLaughlin 1982). Through underscoring these practices community gardens make visible the fundamental aspects of daily life that are made invisible through the capitalocentricity of economic discourse that emphasizes the wage-form, corporations, and social artifacts such as gross domestic product and stock price (Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies 1999; Gibson-Graham 2008).

Third, community gardens are vital to the *cultural identity* of people. The struggle to create, maintain, and expand community gardens and urban farms in East New York is directly related to desires to maintain racialized identities and cultural lifeways that equate food production with "life" and rejects an assimilationist politics that prioritizes the industrialized foodstuff of supermarkets, bodegas, and fast food joints instead of fresh, local, and culturally appropriate foods grown by the community for the community. For residents, being denied access to land to grow food would signal the loss of their culture and the death of self, a form of culturecide (Grinde and Johansen 1995; Jaimes 1992; Smith 2005; Ward 2003).

Community Gardens, Subjugated Knowledge, and Biological Diversity

Upon entering Hands and Heart Garden in 2011 I had not really spent much time growing food since my childhood in southern California in the early 1980s. During that time my family raised three chickens and grew numerous vegetables and leafy greens in a five-foot long by fifteen-foot space in our backyard. However, as I grew up my time in the garden diminished in

direct relation to my movement towards the industrial and corporate foodstuffs of modernity, relying on Jack in the Box, Taco Bell, and Top Ramen in my undergraduate days and pizza and chipotle during my masters. This began to change little by little upon my arrival to New York City, as I began to read book after book on industrial agriculture and food sovereignty, and the numerous farmers markets and community supported agriculture programs made it easy to act on my recently accumulated knowledge. Despite these changes, I, like most people in the United States, still knew little to nothing about actually growing food, having never managed a farm or a community garden plot. I did not think of early frosts as stone fruit killers, hot summer days as mandatory watering days, or mild winters as more time to grow broccoli or kale. My experience in this community garden was therefore an introduction into the subjugated knowledge of food production that continues to exist at the margins of power but has for the most part been erased from the collective memory and skill-set of the U.S. population and devalued in favor of a "monoculture of the mind," as articulated by Vandana Shiva (1993).

The foundation of the monoculture of the mind is the wedding of capitalist economic logics with Newtonian science and Enlightenment conceptions of human domination over nature, which produces a paradigm of thought premised on "human exemptionalism" and the framing of nature as an inanimate and separate object from humanity that exists solely for the benefit of humans (Hawthorne 2002; Mies and Shiva 1993; Merchant 1990; Shiva 1993). Additionally, beyond seeing nature purely as an object for human use nature is made visible solely through the lens of capitalist logics. Trees, soils, vegetables, amphibious life, and minerals only register "based upon what value they will provide for the cash-export market" because nature is solely seen "from the point of view of raw material and maximizing the value of that raw material (Shiva 1993: 14)." Through this lens a tree is not seen as an ecological being within an

ecosystem but an abstract economic form. Rather than seeing a tree as an actor that takes in carbon and pumps out oxygen, binds soil together, prevents erosion, provides habitat and fodder for animals, and fruit, shelter, heat and fuel for cooking for humans all that the monoculture of the mind sees is two hundred and fifty square foot of board lumber at three dollars per foot. The tree is abstracted from its many actions and from its wider environment and turned into a dollar sign. In focusing purely on commercial value the landbase is turned into a producer of one single crop, which entails the creation of a one-way extraction economy continually mining the land for commercial value, treating it as a non-renewable resource and eradicating all forms of life that interfere with the monoculture crop or cannot themselves become a monoculture crop. These nonprofitable crops were called weeds (Evans 2002; Falck 2010).

Monocultures do not only destroy the ecological integrity of the landbase, they also extinguish the cultural and economic lifeways premised on this ecological and economic diversity (Hawthorne 2002; LaDuke 1999; Ploeg 2008; Shiva 2005). For the monoculture of the mind is born of the modernization project that views those who prioritize subsistence or local markets, such as the indigenous, peasants and smallholders, and with them, moral economies and localized food economies, as bygone relics of prehistory. Within such a mindset the subsistence, semi-subsistence and small-market players are preventing the globalization of a more "profitable" industrial agriculture and a more "efficient" global agri-food system controlled by transnational corporations. Local indigenous knowledge, non-capitalist knowledge, and traditional knowledge are consequently stigmatized as folkways, parochialisms, and superstitions, and denied the social, economic, political, and intellectual space necessary for their reproduction (Pretty 1995, 2002; Scott 1998; Wright 1992).

Consequently, with the decline of polycultures as ecological flows there is the elimination of cultures and ways of life predicated on such holistic relations. In this sense, the relationship between how those in power frame weeds or wastelands has always linked devalued plants, spaces, and people (Falck 2010; Taylor 2009). Non-commercially viable plants, spaces, and people are claimed to be weeds or nuisances that need to be uprooted in order to seed development (Brown 2010; Hahn 1982; Falck 2010; Jindrichs 2010; McNeur 2011). As a result, individuals, groups, and communities that have either resisted the monoculture of the mind or engaged in practices that defy the logic of the monoculture have been ostracized, criminalized, and purged, in the rural and the urban, in the United States and abroad, in the past and the present (Brown 1970; Churchill 2003; Federici 2004; Gedicks 2001; Taylor 2009; Shkilnyk 1985). One of these spaces under attack by urban growth machines within the United States has been and continues to be urban food production, including community garden spaces, which have had a tenuous and volatile relationship with New York City since the 1970s (Elder 2005Englander 2001; Fox et al. n.d.; Lawson 2005; Linder and Zacharias 1999; Schmelzkopf 1995; Staeheli et al. 2002; Smith and Kurtz 2003; von Hassell 2002).

The Mother and the Child: Framing Eco-Social Relations

The Hands and Heart community garden is a half-acre space of land founded in 2006 and is one of a few gardens directly attached to and co-managed by community gardeners and ENYF! This relationship structures the garden in a non-traditional way, with food production being geared towards market sales as well as self-provisioning and gifting. All who grow at Hands and Heart are expected to sell a percentage of their produce at the Saturday farmers market and Wednesday farm stand, a percentage based on how many plots they have within the

garden. As we already know, selling at the market is primarily a method to provide fresh affordable and culturally appropriate food to residents as well as create some income for gardeners, but never is the point of selling at the market to make money hand over fist. Gardeners are not go-it-alone entrepreneurs nor are they trying to maximize profits, they grow food for the community and sell within the community even though they know they could make more selling to affluent neighborhoods in Brooklyn. Accordingly, the gardening at Hands and Heart is not non-economic or non-market but is shaped by different economic and market logics than classical or monopoly capitalism. Much of this difference is rooted in epistemological and ontological foundations that strongly reject the imposition of a logic of monoculture and growing practices that reflect the social construction of nature, productivity, surplus, and profit rather than any inherent biological determinism.

A common theme at Hands and Heart meetings and ENYF! meetings is how humanity is destroying the environment, how people are going too far in their separation from nature and how toxic everyday life is becoming. A common refrain at meetings is "you need healthy soil if you are going to have healthy people." Echoing Cheryl Rogowski's comments about how the soil on her farm became sick the gardeners also speak of how the soil is unhealthy and diseased and how we need to repair and heal the soil in order to have healthy food and healthy people. At one particular ENYF! meeting a long and passionate conversation broke out amongst the gardeners on the state of the planet. Nayda, a community food organizer for ENYF!, spoke at length about the problems of ecological destruction, resource depletion, and the reciprocal and co-dependent relationship between humans and the earth, "if you don't take care of the earth the earth can't take care of you. The dirt no longer smells good, tastes good, it is no longer sweet. Everything is taken from the mother but the mother is depleted, nothing is left for the child. You

need to feed the soil if you want the soil to feed you. You need to feed the mother if you want to feed the child." The tone and feelings of Nayda's words were resonated amongst the other gardeners who nodded in agreement and took up where she left off. Ben, who gardens at Hands and Heart, emphasizes Nayda's more abstract points by grounding them in how industrial agriculture transforms the quality and taste of fruit. "The chemicals sprayed on oranges and apples makes the inside bad but the outside look good. The food looks nice but doesn't taste good." Ben is emphasizing how industrial agriculture has reversed the traditional relationship between the appearance of the fruit and the quality of the fruit, before pesticides and herbicides were used on plants the outside might have been imperfect but the inside still tasted yummy. Dennis picked up on this thread and restated one of his major talking points: we "don't want second hand vegetables," with second hand vegetables standing in for the industrial vegetables found at local grocery stores. He expanded on his previous claim by stating that the "goal of the food system by design is to get you sick and have you buy pills." While this claim might sound farfetched, they reflect Nayda's prior statements, and also received nods and murmurs of agreement by fellow gardeners. In a community with higher than average rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, and filled with fast food and bodegas it can be understood why gardeners would feel this way. They look around their community and have not traditionally seen fresh healthy produce in abundance, but rather heavily processed foods high in sugars, salts, fats, and oils and filled with additives, preservatives, and stabilizers. Sarita chimed in at this point, redirecting the conversation away from Dennis's concerns towards the manifest goal of the food industry, which "is to make food like clothes where no one makes it themselves, you only buy premade food from companies." For these gardeners, where growing food "is life," this

thought strikes at the very core of their being, posing a threat larger than just the toxification of their body but the destruction of their way of life.

In this brief snippet of the meeting we see a range of environmental concepts and frameworks at play. Sarita critiques the factory-farming model dominant in the United States since the 1950s and exported to the world through the Green Revolution as a universal model (Friedmann 1992; Lyson 2004; McMichael 2007; Wright 1990). Dennis spoke to the concern that industrial foods are killing us, on purpose, and that this creates a huge avenue for profit making healthcare companies who will treat people suffering from diets loaded with industrial foodstuffs. Ben commented on the transformation in taste that occurs through industrial agriculture's emphasis on distance and durability and how flavor and quality are sacrificed in the effort to create a global food commodity (Freidberg 2009; Pollan 2006). For Ben and many others, industrial agriculture is about the style of the produce rather than the substance.

Nayda's remarks though, are the most prescient, and speak directly to the gardeners' critique of industrial agriculture as well as the logic shaping their own horticultural practices. Nayda's story of the mother and the child reflected eco-feminist visions where human domination of the planet is connected to male domination of women (Merchant 1990; Mies and Shiva 1993; Shiva 1993). She visualized a relationship where if you kill the mother you kill the child, where the mother stands in for the earth and the child for humans. In doing so she decenters the anthropomorphism wrapped up in the human exemptionalism paradigm (HEP) so dominant today (Catton and Dunlap 1980). This paradigm, heavily influenced by the enlightenment project, frames humanity as superior to and independent of the earth, a hierarchical relationship that subsequently legitimates a world where humans can transform the planet at will without any negative consequences on their quality of life or bodily health.

Through her analogy of the mother and the child Nayda exemplifies that if you kill the life-giving entity of the mother than you subsequently kill the child and that in order to maintain humanity you need to be a good steward of the planet, thoughts that exemplify the new environmental paradigm (NEP) where humanity is brought down from its altar and placed amongst all of the planets' creatures (Catton and Dunlap 1980). Her employment of an explicitly female gendered discourse is important as well because it reflects a logic or ethic of care and reciprocity that is lost within the modernist discourse that expresses the need to dominate nature and shape it to our will. The clearest example of this is Sir Francis Bacon, where science and technology "help us to think about the secrets still locked in nature's bosom…they do not, like the old, merely exert a gentle guidance over nature's course; they have the power to conquer and subdue her, to shake her to her foundations…to endeavor to establish and extend the power and dominion of the human race itself over the universe" so that "the human race [could] recover the right over nature which belongs to it by divine bequest (Merchant 1990:172)." For Bacon and others invested in the enlightenment project, the autonomy of nature (mother earth) and women (witches) was frightening and had to be corrected through the male dominated sciences that would end a relationship where humans were dependent on nature for their survival (Merchant 1990).

Nayda and many other gardeners reject Bacon's premise, contending that mother earth is to be respected and worked with rather than against, and they prove it through their horticultural techniques. Eschewing monoculture based fossil fuel inputs of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, gardeners foster the role of biological processes for deterring pests and building up the organic matter of the soil, which included compost, crop covers, crop rotations, and non-synthetic pesticides, all topics that are increasingly common amongst advocates of sustainable

agriculture. Alongside regular treatments of compost gardeners also participate in the East New York & Brownsville Farmer Field School. Hosted by the Garden Ecology Project and ENYF! the field school aims to improve the soil and crop health of community gardeners through utilizing cover crops. Cover crops are crops you plant in your bed to improve the soil tilth, add nutrients (nitrogen) to the soil, and shade out weeds. In doing so, gardeners utilize plants to perform the same ecological functions that industrial agriculture requires fossil fuel inputs to achieve. Consequently, there is no need for toxic fertilizers and herbicides. Gardeners can choose between inter-seeded, winter-kill and over-wintering cover crops. Inter-seeded cover crops include berseem clover, crimson clover, and white clover, and are planted in July during the growing season between and beneath cover crops. Winter-kill cover crops comprise oats and field peas and are planted in mid-August, grow throughout the fall, and die in the winter, when they will provide a mulch for the soil. Their winter death enables the gardener to plant early spring crops, an option that is not open to the over-wintering cover crops of crimson clover, hairy vetch, and winter rye. These over-wintering covers are planted in September or October, continue to live through the winter, and begin growing again in the spring. They are then mulched into the soil in mid-April after they begin to flower, allowing for summer planting. As a result, East New York gardeners utilize the power and productivity of plants and ecological cycles to improve soil health and plant output rather than dependency on unsustainable and toxic fossil fuel inputs. They feed the soil so the soil can feed them. They do so because embracing the social order of monocultures would kill the mother (earth) and with it the child (humanity).

Through these actions East New Yorkers are seeking, in their own small efforts, to repair the metabolic rift of industrial agriculture (Foster 1999; McClintock 2010). This metabolic rift is attributed to the alienation that arises between humanity and nature, a result of the rise of cities

and the separation of humanity from direct relations to the soil. Central to this alienation is the industrialization of agriculture, which seeks to profit from the creation of a global agricultural market and an expanding global proletariat, but does so only through degrading biological cycles. This degradation is based on over-exploiting the fertility of the soil by rupturing the nutrient cycle through treating human, animal, and food waste not as the source of life that needs to be returned to the countryside to replenish the soil but as trash that must be dumped in a landfill. In severing the nutrient cycle industrial agriculture treats the land as a non-renewable resource that must be pumped full of fossil fuels in order to maintain its productivity and in so doing only further degrades and pollutes the ecological cycles upon which life depends. The gardeners, through their ecologically based practices seek to maintain and nurture biological cycles in order to maintain the fertility of mother nature.

Wild, Weed, and Cultivated: PolyCulture at Hands and Heart

Beyond cover cropping, a more ontologically and epistemologically antagonistic practice of the gardeners that strikes at the very heart of the monoculture of industrial agriculture, is the practice of partner or companion planting of cultivated crops and uncultivated weed plants. Whereas conventional farmers only plant one crop and do everything in their power to eradicate all other life forms from that growing space, community gardeners embrace and support the biodiversity of mixed cultivated/uncultivated systems while also engaging in practices that blur the dichotomies of cultivated/uncultivated, underscoring that the boundaries between cultivated, weed, and wild plants are permeable and not absolute, as they are social constructions that reflect particular constellations and valuations of power, knowledge, and value (Mazhar et al. 2007; Shiva 1993; 2005).

Going back to lambsquarters not being a worthless weed, such as I thought, but an edible uncultivated plant provides insights into the social construction of weeds by a monoculture of the mind. Historically and scientifically, the funny thing about weeds is that they do not exist without human disturbance (Evans 2002; Falck 2010; Fiege 2005; Smith 2007). While the lot where Hands and Heart now rests may have been abandoned for decades what grew and still grows on the lot is born of human interaction. Whether Hands and Heart has wild, weed, or cultivated plants is based on a dynamic relationship where the human actor in conversation with the landbase chooses the balance. A ferocious weeder will shift the balance towards cultivated plants while a lackadaisical weeder will enable the weeds to overtake the cultivated plants, who are the most dependent on continual human care. Additionally, whether it is plants or people being called weeds, the meaning is always pejorative and symbolic of being non-productive, worthless, and harmful (Falck 2010). Weeds exist where they are not wanted, they crowd out what you do want, and they root themselves into the area and become an "invasive species." Calling an actor—be they human or plant—"a weed" or stating that "they need to be weeded out" is an act full of symbolic violence because you are stating that they need to be removed because they can only be destructive to their surroundings.

As with any politics of naming, who gets to name what as a problem, why it is problem, and to whom it is a problem needs to be ascertained. What really are the factors that produce the actor as weed? The modern scientific classification of wild and weed rests upon the conception that wild plants grow and thrive in places untouched by humans whereas weeds depend upon and are most successful in areas that are constantly disturbed by humans (de Wet and Harlan 1975:319). Weeds thus evolve and reproduce in combination with humans but with a proper dash of disinterest. Without continued disturbance over time weeds will succumb to wild plants

that survive best outside of human relations (Harlan et al. 1973:319). Weeds can therefore be actively promoted by humans given some effort and guidance and act as beneficial partner or companion plants for gardeners and farmers who desire to utilize polyculture to their advantage; this is done through disturbing the upper layer of the soil, areas where seed germination occurs. Overall, "the boundary between "tended" or encouraged weeds and cultivated plants can be marked by the intentional sowing of harvested seeds," with intentional propagation considered as an act of cultivation (Smith 2007:106). But cultivation is different from domestication where humans force morphological change within the plants genetic structure and as a result the plant cannot survive without continued human attention over and above simple soil disturbance (de Wet and Harlan 1975).

Yet in the garden these plants exist side-by-side rather than in analytical separation, an outcome of conscious human-nature interactions because of the economic and health benefits of doing so. A monoculture of the mind presumes that weeds are growing where they are not wanted, harming the development of crops. If you remove the weed than the cultivated or civilized plant will prosper and thrive, it is a life and death struggle, a zero-sum game where only one can survive. In reality, the lay conception of weed is a reflection of the hegemonic common sense of the monoculture of the mind, which gets to decide what is worthy of value and care and what is contagious and needs to be removed. In such a mindset perfectly edible plants that are rich in nutrients and vitamins are devalued and removed in favor of plants that are easier to grow and more profitable in global markets but less nutritionally robust (Simopoulous 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005; Simopoulous et al. 1995; National Research Council 2005, 2006). This practice, which is the foundation of industrial agriculture, is itself historically aberrant. Weeds and cultivated plants have traditionally existed and still exist as partner or companion plants that are

vital to achieving food security, maintaining biodiversity, realizing independent income generation, and minimizing workloads (de Wet et al. 1975; Mazhar 2007; National Research Council 1984, 1996, 2005, 2006, 2008).

Lambsquarters can definitely take over a bed after a mild winter and before springtime plot preparation but they also grow throughout the season as crop succession creates an environment where weeds are not a one time production but something that continually happens as early and late spring and early mid and late summer planting disturb the soil and create environments conducive to weed growth. Yet, this is not a problem for gardeners as they can eat them. This knowhow is what Michel Foucault refers to as "subjugated knowledge" (1980, 2003).

My introduction to lambsquarters by Pauline is an aspect of this embodied yet subjugated knowledge. Lambsquarters is a chenopod known for its "spinach like" leaves and while it has generally fallen out of favor with industrial agriculture, which considers it a weed, chenopods are still grown globally today and two-types are actually making a resurgence as "super-foods" within the niche field of health food (Ayerza and Coates 2005; Coates 2012; Scheer 2000; Green and Hemming 2010). These cousins of lambsquarters are quinoa and chia. You can find them in cooking and diet books and your local health food store where they are touted for being high in omega-3, protein, lipids, and antioxidants. Lambsquarters itself has a long history as a wild starchy-seeded annual that was initially foraged and then domesticated and grown as a pseudocereal, a leaf vegetable, and for its broccoli-like flowering shoots (National Research Council 2006). You may know it by its other names in the United States: goosefoot or fat hen. Globally, you would eat it as Bathua in India where it is used in dishes such as Sarson Da Saag, soups, curries, paratha stuffed breads, beverages such as Soora and Ghanti or as fodder for

poultry, cattle, and pigs. Historically, it was part of the Eastern Agricultural Complex (EAC) of the pre-historic Eastern Woodland Native Americans, with Bruce Smith claiming that lambsquarters was "at the heart of a premaize economy that lasted for over 4,000 years (Smith 2007: 251)." The plant is one of the first to take off in the spring, alongside of amaranth and chickweed, when the ground thaws after winter and before cultivated plants are seeded/planted. They grow in dense stands very close to each other, making harvesting easy, and their potential to grow five to six feet tall in rich soil produces a lot of leafy green material to consume. Alongside of providing leafy greens in the spring and summer the plant also yields seeds in the fall and winter that can be harvested – both to save seed for the following year and to eat. For the consumer of this "wild" bounty the health rewards are ample. The plant contains high amounts of vitamin A, calcium, phosphorus and potassium and the seeds are rich in protein and antioxidants (National Research Council 2006).

Alongside of lambsquarters two other plants are central to the cultivated/weed companion planting of gardeners, one is amaranth and the other is purslane. Now, amaranth is better known within Jamaica as callaloo, which is a staple Caribbean dish so much so that in Jamaica the name of the dish and the name of the plant are synonymous (Higman 2008; Houston 2005). Both Jamaicans and Guyanese use the name callaloo to refer to the amaranth plant, which is used in many dishes as a side and also as a drink. But while the name of the dish holds throughout the Caribbean the ingredients do not, its input can be amaranth like in Jamaica or in Trinidad and Tobago taro or dasheen bush can be used. But in Jamaica the callaloo dish consists of callaloo leaf, salt, onions, scallion, and steam vegetable while Trinidadians use okra and coconut milk. Overall, the plant is generally steamed or simmered down to a stew like consistency. As a result, in the Caribbean the food is still widely grown for its leafy vegetables, which is also the case

globally where it is a staple of food production for indigenous people, peasants and small-scale farmers, known as Chinese Spinach in China, Bayam in Indonesia and Malaysia, Phak Khom in Thailand, Alcon in the Phillipines and Chaulai, Harive and Cheera in India (Bayam) (National Research Council 2006). It is not by chance that amaranth is called a "poor peoples resource" (National Research Council 2006: 35). Akin to other weeds it grows very easily and prodigiously with little effort, it has an eight-week life cycle with edible yields beginning at week three. "These classic poor-people's plants provide a perfect botanical tool for helping the most nutritionally challenged strata of society. Taken all round, they represent a sort of do-it-yourself kit to good nutrition…few if any tropical vegetables are easier to grow. In favorable locations amaranths produce food almost without attention" (National Research Council 2006: 35-8). In the tropical climate of the Caribbean ten different harvests are possible throughout the year, ensuring a continuous and steady food supply. On top of this output amaranth, like other weeds, is much healthier than many domesticated leafy greens. Its super-food qualities are rooted in its leaves being a good source of vitamin A and C, folate, thiamine, niacin, riboflavin, calcium, iron, zinc, copper, manganese, potassium and its seeds are a good source of protein and higher in amino acids than most grains, especially in terms of lysine, which corn and wheat lack (National Research Council 2006). Its seeds contain more protein than that found in rice and sorghum and is higher in dietary fiber and dietary minerals such as iron, magnesium, phosphorus, copper and manganese than these grains as well (National Research Council 2006). Additionally, it is gluten-free and its seeds can be turned into gluten-free flour and bread or popped and mixed with honey or chocolate for a delicious treat. Because of the ease of production and its high nutritional content it is the basis of most subsistence and market garden vegetable production globally (National Research Council 2006).

It is no wonder that amaranths were a staple of the Incan and Aztec food systems alongside of chenopods such as quinoa and chia (Ayerza and Coates 2005; Marx 1977; National Research Council 1984, 2005; Tucker 1986). Its prodigious quality has long been recognized, as the word amaranth comes from the Greeks, meaning "unwithering." Its unwithering qualities were not favored by all though, it was seen as a threat to western power structures and subsequently devalued and repressed as a result (Ayerza and Coates 2005; Marx 1977). Amaranth was a central component of Aztec religious rites and the Spanish and their colonial impulses consequently banned its cultivation. Thus, to break the back of the cultural reproduction of the indigenous, the cultivation of a particular type of food was made illegal because it posed a threat to the Spanish power structure. While the amaranth was a problem for the Spanish and their colonial conquests the amaranth continues to be a pernicious thorn in the side of industrial farmers today and their desire for monocultures. Not only does the amaranth have rapid growth, high rates of seed production, and an extended period of germination but it has grown resistant to synthetic pesticides in the United States and is seen as one of the "top five most troublesome weeds" in the southeast (Bensch et al. 2003; Culpepper et al. 2006). This shows the illogical behavior of monocultures, it spends vast amounts of time and labor trying to kill off a prodigious edible plant that is highly nutritious in order to grow more favorable cash crops for national and global markets that are nutritionally deficient.

Within the gardens of East New York there are two different types of amaranth, the good Jamaican kind and the "pigweed" kind. People in the garden and the community will eat both but once a price-point is attached a clear difference emerges. The community will only pay for the good Jamaican kind and will not pay for the pigweed kind, although they will of course take it for free if its offered. George, a fellow gardener at Hands and Heart, and his friend Andrew

taught me how to tell the difference between the two on one spring day in my second season at Hands and Heart. Upon entering the garden I found them picking select green plants from the common area, an area that serves as a dumping ground for woodchips, compost, and dead plants, which makes it prime matter for the germination of seeds from last years plants. Both were inspecting the leaves of each plant, which were only four to six inches tall, and obviously employing some sort of criterion to determine which plants to pick, but to what end I did not know. I walked over to them and asked how it was going. George explained that they were picking the best volunteers to re-plant in their beds and backyards. There was no need to have to start their own seed from scratch indoors or in a greenhouse and transplant it into the ground later on, they could merely let nature do the work and reap the rewards. Given the short life cycle of the plant, with it going to seed in as little as ten weeks, there are always volunteers waiting to be plucked from common areas or walkways and replanted in beds and backyards. What I learned was that there are three main differences between the good Jamaican variety and the pigweed: leaf sheen, leaf texture, and root color (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Types of Callaloo

Callaloo	Sheen	Texture	Root
Jamaican	Shiny	Smooth	Clear/white
Pigweed	Dull	Rough	Pink

While some gardeners collect seed from the good Jamaican crop and save them for the next season other gardeners, such as George and Andrew employ the strategy of waiting for young callaloo to germinate throughout the garden in spring and selectively pick the good Jamaican crop from these “volunteers,” a practice that blends cultivated and weed, nature and culture. In doing this the gardeners are not merely maintaining long historical practices of companion planting or blurring the boundaries between weed and cultivated, such as with

lambsquarters, but actively engaged in the reproduction of biological diversity and a particular plant in order to maintain and reproduce cultural identity, for their Jamaicanness or their Caribbeanness is inseparable from their cultivation and consumption of callaloo.

Finally, the last weed that is regularly consumed within the garden is purslane, a weed that both Dennis, a gardener at Hands and Heart, and David, the ENYF! farm manager, brought to my attention. Purslane is an edible annual succulent that can be eaten as a leaf vegetable and has a sweet lemon flavor. It is generally used raw in salad but can be stewed or boiled like spinach or included in soups and stews. Unlike other leafy greens it is crunchy, providing a strong compliment to them in salad, a quality that has made it indispensable to Greek and Turkish cuisine (Manios et al. 2006; Simopoulous 2001, 2005). Akin to amaranth and lambsquarters the plant is a particularly aggressive grower and seeder that forms in dense mats on the ground, which is in fact beneficial for gardeners as it functions as a ground cover that reduces non edible weeds, stabilizes ground moistures, and prevents erosion. Its persistence might be a problem for farmers but it is a boon to community gardeners because its health attributes are quite extraordinary. Beyond having high amounts of vitamin A and C, carotenoids, antioxidants, amino acids (bioprotective nutrients), and the dietary minerals of magnesium, calcium, potassium and iron, what sets purslane apart from many other land-based plants is that it is high in omega-3 fatty acids something usually found in fish, algae, and flax seeds (Simopoulous 1986, 2004; Simopoulous et al. 1995). Overall, it has been called a "nutritional powerhouse" with more than double the omega-3s of kale, more than four times the vitamin E of turnip greens, and as much iron as spinach (Simopoulous 2002, 2004; Simopoulous et al. 1995)

The nutritional powerhouse of purslane, is, as we have seen, not unique to it alone but is actually characteristic of wild and weed plants in general which are often higher in vitamins,

antioxidants, and dietary minerals than cultivated greens (Manios 2006; Simopoulous 2001, 2002; 2004). The importance of weeds within community gardens cannot therefore be underestimated, especially as it relates to health inequality and combating the high rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and hypertension in East New York. Increasing the health of East New York residents cannot occur merely through bringing in supermarkets and grocery stores or supporting "local" foods but is born through community gardeners managing spaces where weeds grow alongside of cultivated plants. Omega 3 fatty acids, such as those found in purslane, are vital for the physical growth and development of the human body and have been found to not only prevent but also treat "coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, other inflammatory and autoimmune disorders and cancer (Simopoulous 2004: 263)." The correlation between wild plants and human health is explained through understanding that the human diet is rooted in the Pleistocene (geological) or Paleolithic (archeological), a world full of wild animals and plants, a diet that was more balanced between omega 6 and omega 3 fatty acids (1-2:1) (Simopoulous 2002). Alongside of this, wild plants generally contribute higher amounts of vitamin E and C as well as other antioxidants than cultivated plants, qualities that protect against cancer and atherosclerosis (Manios et al. 2006; Simopoulous 2004). Consequently, a diet that incorporates more wild or weed plants is better able to fight disease. However, today the omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acid ratio is 10-20:1 as a result of reduced fish consumption and increased consumption of industrially produced vegetables lower in omega-3's and industrially produced meats higher in omega-6s because they are fattened by grains (Simopoulous 2002). Thus, the knowledge and production of partner/companion planting of weed and cultivated plants is a form of subjugated knowledge as well as an important part of reducing health inequality in East New York. In fact, the popularity of the Mediterranean Diet and the commoditized luxury foods of

olive oil and wine along with the more affordable legumes, fruits, vegetables, and cereals occurred by making invisible the centrality of *wild greens*, herbs, walnuts, figs and snails within the diet, items that are all sources of omega-3 fatty acids (Manios et al. 2006; Simopoulos 2001, 2005). At a time when the Mediterranean diet was codified into a series of dietary guidelines for healthy life-long living what was written out of a diet low in saturated fat and high in monounsaturated fat (oleic acid) and bioprotective nutrients was that this was an outcome of considerable amounts of wild food (greens, nuts, and seafood) not merely low consumption of land meat, eggs, and dairy.

The Struggle Over Weeds: From Source of Life to Nuisance and Back Again

Ike and I find ourselves starring across the street at the fire hydrant, which is pouring thousands of gallons a minute across the street, the result of the hot summer heat and youth who want to cool off. Ike, who works for the city's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), turns to me and says, "the most precious commodity is water. We need better education. Need to put it into the curriculum." "Yes," I respond, "I teach environmental sociology at Brooklyn College, we discuss where the water comes from and where it goes, but it's college, we need to start them young." He nods his head in agreement and turns to look at the garden and replies, "I juice everything. Callaloo. Kale. Zucchini. Tomato. I believe in holistic herbal medicine. Today they feed you pills. They give you something for your eye and it affects your kidneys. Today is full of pills. I juice everything, I feel much better, healthy. I've seen changes (flexes and points to his stomach). The food they grow with fertilizers there is no nutrients in the plant, plants like this (pointing to the garden) they are full of nutrients. Oh, wait, let me find the plant." I respond, "What plant?" Not knowing what he is talking about. He goes into the first bed and

points at the lambsquarters growing up through the sweet potatoes and says “here it is.” “Do you know what this is?” “Yes. It’s lambsquarters,” I retort. His eyes light up, a smile beams across his face, and his teeth sparkle as his body is overtaken by the exhilaration that I know what the plant is. Ike springs into his next question, asking if I know “that its edible!” I acknowledge that I do know and Ike moves on to underscore the bounty that is lambsquarters. “It grows all over!,” he says, the smile continues to radiate across his face and he waves his hand all around his body, emphasizing the ubiquity of this “weed.” He goes on to tell me that he has a friend who collected it from a lot, a whole bunch, and gave him some, which he juiced and loved. And that “last week the youth were here weeding the beds and they were tearing up all the lambsquarters. The rows were full of lambsquarters and they were just tossing it in piles.” Disheartened by the wasting of completely edible plants he “went into the garden and told them it was edible and grabbed a whole bunch.” Like David, Pauline, Marlene, and Dennis, Ike knows of the nutrients bound up in weeds and are continually educating community members of its existence, affirming the reality that combating health inequality in East New York isn’t just about increasing access to greens or fruits per se but the propagation of a subjugated knowledge rooted in polyculture, biodiversity, partner planting, weeds, and the bounty of the earth, where there is room for cohabitation of weed and cultivated, nature and culture.

The fact that many community gardeners in East New York do not reject weeds outright but embrace their existence is important, as East New York has often been framed as full of weeds, both plant and human. In the urban environment weeds have historically been framed as tainting the “spatial beauty” of the rational and ordered city life (Falck 2010: 28). A weed free community was presumed to be a community free of vice and crime, a healthy and productive community. In fact, weeds were thought to be productive of vacant lots and social decay. As a

result, cities passed numerous laws in the early 1900s that sought to eliminate weeds, actions that referred to both plants and immigrants. For during this time immigrant communities were referred to as "human weeds" that spread nothing but disorder and crime. Vagrants, beggars, and paupers were called weeds or dandelions and people who lived in weed filled neighborhoods were presumed to be idlers, spendthrifts and criminals. When someone said "weeds breed fast" they could have been referring to either plants and immigrants at the turn of the century (Falck 2010: 68). Proponents of eugenics even claimed, "socially…we live amid the pigweed and purslane (Falck 2010: 64)." Consequently, there were calls for both immigrants and plants to be weeded, as the purity of the Aryan race and strengthening of the white nation required protecting native-born Americans from the uncouth immigrant masses. In the eyes of many the human weeds and their dependence on plant weeds, "the poor man's botanic garden," had to go in order to achieve progress (Falck 2010: 49). Such a practice was an outcome born of the same mindset that would later legitimate urban renewal, as both claimed spatial disorder produced social disorder. And much like urban renewal failed to address the social roots of marginalization and underdevelopment cutting down or spraying away weeds failed to stop the mass production of vacant lots as they were the process and product of real estate speculation, the quintessential practices of a modern city.

What is more profound is that these practices did not die in the early twentieth century but continued throughout the century. This was the case in East New York, which was home to the "Weed and Seed" program that applied the language of horticulture to a built environment that was raced, classed and gendered. In 1991 the Department of Justice created Operation Weed and Seed (OWS), a program that focused on communities under siege by criminals producing "urban disorder." The strategy of Operation Weed and Seed was to "weed" out

criminals through law enforcement and prosecution, as well as to "seed" good citizens through prevention and rehabilitation services (Falck 2010:171)." The Operation Weed and Seed director at the time, Deborah Daniels, stated that the program sought to "pull out the weeds that choke off opportunity, and begin to sow the seeds of community revitalization (Falck 2010:171)." This framework reflected the conservative tenor of the time and reinforced the logic of individualism by stating the "root cause of criminal behavior" was an absence of "core values such as self-restraint and respect for the rights of others (Falck 2010:171)." An ideology reinforced by a program that found it easier to fund weeding practices rather than seeding practices.

In East New York weeding consisted of heavy police patrols, mass arrests and gun buyback programs, which received the majority of attention and resources. Seeding was requested in the form of community spaces and social services but this never happened because it required inter-agency relations, different funding streams, increased funding and a different conceptual frame for understanding crime. However, there were some basketball tournaments and summer camps but this was limited and short-term.[18] Operation Weed and Seed therefore continued an institutionally racist prison industrial complex that locked up an entire generation of black youth with no prospects for social rehabilitation and explained crime through a culture of poverty rather than structural and racial inequalities. How was Operation Weed and Seed able to do this? One factor is that they rooted criminality within nature and legitimated it by drawing upon horticultural language rather than the social organization of power, race, and class.

From the operations of Operation Weed and Seed it is clear to see that the concept of weed is embedded in power relations between social groups, with particular groups deciding what is worthy of value and care and what is contagious and needs to be removed. Community

gardens in East New York challenge the hegemonic and racist perceptions that plant and human weeds are in fact useless and disorderly. Weed plants are beneficial plants at the level of ecosystems and the health of people while human weeds are in fact material embodiments of food security, community spaces, and subjugated knowledge. These edible and nutritionally rich plants are generally destroyed by conventional agriculture in the name of economic productivity but here in community gardens they are a food source that requires very little effort. There is no need to toxify the landbase to kill off these plants and subsequently toxify the people who eat the cultivated plants because both the cultivated and weed plants are framed as edible. This framing is reflective of and reproduces different ways of seeing plants, growing plants, and eating plants. For lambsquarters, pursulane, and amaranth are only weeds within a farming model that prioritizes wheat or corn or soybeans over all overs, and consequently deems these edibles as non-productive of value or not-productive enough of value.

At the same time that communities such as East New York were framed as moochers and deadbeats, weeds who were dragging down the productive members of society, community members took up the initiative to turn lots devalued and deserted by the state and the market into community spaces for the production of food. These spaces show that neither East New Yorkers nor purslane, lambsquarters, or amaranth are weeds in the pejorative sense, but actors that display resilience and resistance to monocultures and the value, power, and knowledge embedded in modernization. From such community gardening efforts in East New York food justice can be understood as a practice of maintaining and reproducing marginal or subjugated knowledge(s) that are beneficial for both humans and the landbase and rooted not in the birds-eye view of "seeing like the state" (Scott 1998) or the profit maximizing logic of capitalism but the perspective "from below" where people "produce and reproduce…life" (Bennholdt-Thomsen

and Mies 1999: 2-3), which entails the coupling of social reproduction and ecological reproduction. This small-scale and bottom-up perspective on food production and social reproduction is most salient within the garden through the growing and eating of wild and cultivated plants, a reproduction of horticultural knowledge that is important given the higher antioxidant, mineral, and vitamin content within these plants than those found in industrial foodstuffs or even the local and organic foods at your neighborhood farmers market.

The Desire to Grow Food: Maintaining Cultural Identity in the Big Apple

Many East New Yorkers grew up on farms or come from farming families that are only a generation removed from the farm. Subsequently, many residents express the desire to carry on familial and cultural identities through urban food production. Additionally, gardeners often see in food production not just culture but economics. Food production is framed as an avenue to generate extra income beyond their primary job, reflecting the marginal income of numerous community residents. One of these gardeners is Colin, who sells pumpkins at the share-table and is one of the tables' major revenue generators. Deborah, the agricultural coordinator of ENYF!, provided an insight into this, "pumpkins are an easy way to generate a couple hundred bucks. Just plant them in the summer and let them grow and then harvest in the fall. Sell for a dollar a pound, if each pumpkin is around thirty pounds and you have ten to fifteen pumpkins that is at least three hundred dollars." Quite a decent chunk of change for letting Mother Nature do the work. But of course, for Colin this is not enough, he wants to scale up his production and like many other gardeners desires more land. "I grew up on a farm the baby of twelve. My dad was a farmer but the town was built around bauxite mining so there wasn't much farming out there, big money at the mine, high wages, engineers, people with education. But my dad had many

acres, acres and acres, pumpkins, corn. Got a contract with the government and that's when he got some big cheese. We all worked the farm." And in East New York Colin continues this farming tradition but he is not altogether satisfied with it. "I sell at the table, squash, cucumber, you know, but it's not great. They [ENYF!] take so much. I want more land so I can sell and make some money. So much land around I want to talk to them [ENYF!] about growing more, commercially." When Colin says ENYF! takes so much he is referring to the economic dynamics of the share table where there is a distribution of the profit between the gardener who grows the produce and the youth who sell the produce, ranging from 60 to 40 or 80 to 20 depending on how many volunteer hours the gardener contributes to ENYF! He wants more land but even with over 60 gardens in the community land is still scarce. Turning one of the many vacant lots in the area into another community garden would be great for Colin, but there are competing interests for the land, primarily housing. Colin's relationship to the wage-economy is much more precarious than the existing power gardeners, Marlene, Dennis and Pauline, who all have steady and well-paying jobs with the city, and amplifies his need for more land to increase his take-home pay.

Ezekiel, who emigrated from Nigeria, is in a similar position as Colin; he wants to scale up food production through acquiring more land. I ran into him at one of the Saturday farmers markets when he and his wife and two of his five daughters were dropping off their harvest at the share table. I asked how everything was going. Leaning against a truck he peered over the length of the market, taking in the view of the beautiful crops, the people interacting, the music booming, the kids laughing, and he took a deep breath before he stated in his usual relaxed demeanor, "I love farming. But I don't have enough" (he draws his hands apart to signal space). "Land," I respond. "Yes, land. Here, I work for the city. I went to school for two years to get

the city job. Education is important. I do medical eligibility for the city. You got to feed the family. But when I retire I would love to get some land upstate and farm. If I had a farm I could get a big table here at the market, like Mike (referring to the upstate farmer Mike Rogowski). Back home my grandfather was a typical farmer, tree fruits, coconuts, mangos, guavas, oranges. My father was a trader and I made shoes. When I retire I would like to make shoes and farm. I like to do hands-on work." Colin and Ezekiel reflect the major demand that circulates within gardeners in East New York, the demand for land in order to continue both the cultural practice of farming as well as generate income to pay the bills.

The summer of 2012 was a particularly significant one for many of the gardeners, as it marked the summer Olympics and the fiftieth anniversary of Jamaican independence from colonial rule. Several gardeners went back to Jamaica to enjoy the Olympic festivities as well as the celebration of independence. Marlin was one of them, upon coming back she went immediately to the garden to see what the state of her plots were and found that the weeds had taken over the cultivated plants. "I got back and look at all this reaping I have to do. Callaloo grew everywhere. So much reaping. And the callaloo already has seeds so there is no point in putting it into the compost because it will just reseed. But the swiss chard will keep till next week for the market and look at all these tomatoes and cucumbers. I love gardening. I was planting in Jamaica, beans because they will grow and the neighbors can pick them. I grow callaloo too, got some seed. Only a short time until I get to do that all the time." Presuming retirement but unclear on exactly what she meant I asked if she was "going to retire in a couple years?" "Three," she responded. "And then you'll go back?," I followed up. "Yeah." Enquiring, "Do you have a lot of land?," Marlin said, "no not right now, got some, but I want to get a piece of land so I can grow a lot, a row of each, I want to get a piece hopefully with water and

electricity so after a long day I can stay overnight." Marlin is talking about a piece of land not connected to her primary residence, a piece of land elsewhere that she grows at. Historically this was a common practice in the Caribbean. Slaves worked on the primary plantation but also worked their own provisioning plots much farther inland and upland (Berlin and Morgan 1993; Price 1996). This practice continues today. People have homes in towns or cities but a piece of land in the country where they farm.

Another Jamaican gardener is Sybil, a second-year member of Hands and Heart. She is very happy about her chance to grow in the garden, which is one block from her residence, because she was on the waiting list for a plot for close to seven years, a little under half her time in East New York. Sybil's history is reflective of many other gardeners in East New York and provides insight into why anyone would wait seven years to become a member of a community garden. Originally from Jamaica she never bought food back home because her dad had a farm and grew everything on it for a family, giving it away to neighbors as well. Despite this surplus her dad never sold at the market, "it wasn't a job, it wasn't for income." His job was being a butcher; that was his income source. Consequently, they didn't have to buy any food except for meat, which even though he was a butcher could not be obtained for free. Therefore, in East New York, not having access to land meant not having access to food, which pushed her towards store-bought food items, a practice that not only increased her consumption of heavily processed foods but also increased her food bill. Being divorced from her traditional food habits was not the only shock of moving to New York City, Sybil and many other gardeners from the Caribbean juxtapose the contrasting pace of life and work between the islands and the mainland, reflective of a movement from an agrarian and seasonal work rhythm to an industrial or post-industrial factory-style working life. "Rain, sleet, snow, sun, you have to work. You got to kill yourself to

work," Cybil lamented, "I am going back to Jamaica when I retire. Going to relax and live off of social security. I can get it mailed to me there." Back in Jamaica she worked in the food industry as a caterer but in New York City she has followed the contours of race and gender that pushed her and tens of thousands of other Caribbean women into the healthcare fields of child care and home care. Right now she is a homecare aid working long hours for little money, which puts more pressure on growing as much as she can in the garden to keep food costs down.

Sybil's experience echoes that of other gardeners in East New York and transnational immigrant communities overall: altered job status upon arrival to a new country, the culture shock of incessant and unrewarding work rhythms, the absence of a tie to land and food cultivation, and the desire to return home if possible. For people who grew up without or with a very small food bill coming to the city increases their food costs and thus their compulsion to work. The cost of living is generally higher, food costs are more, everything costs more, and their income isn't necessarily higher. For Sybil, gardening is therefore both cultural, continuing traditions from her life in Jamaica, the joy of growing your own food, but also the desire to reduce her food budget through self-provisioning and bring in some income on the side through the share table or occasionally renting out a table when she has weekly bumper crop.

While gardeners often speak of holding out for a few more years and waiting till retirement and social security to move back to the Caribbean, for some, such as Leti, this is too long a wait. I first met Leti in the spring of 2012 when she started volunteering at the ENYF! youth farm. In working in the garden with her I began to learn that she was new to the area and was trying to find a job, a bike, and permanent housing. She noticed I biked to the farm and a conversation quickly developed over biking in the city, its cost effectiveness, healthiness, and where to obtain a bike on the cheap. However, during the summer our schedules changed and

we were no longer able to see each other at the farm. It wasn't till October that I ran into Leti again, this time at the Saturday farmers market. Having not seen her for a while I asked how things were going and she said "I am leaving, going back to Grenada in two weeks." She mentioned that she was done with New York, she was "tired of this" and wanted "to go back to enjoy the simple life and grow food year round." "Year round food?" I curiously inquired. Leti replied, "Oh Yes! In the Caribbean you can grow pumpkins, onions, potatoes, squash, melon, something's always growing. My parents have land and my grandparents have undivided land that I will grow on." Leti then went on to elaborate on the beliefs pushing her from New York and pulling her back to her homeland of Grenada. "The human race has gone too far, we weren't made for this and we'll have to go back. It's all about big and bigger and bigger. I want the simple life, grow food, have family and friends, share what you have. I grew up on the land, growing food, never strayed too far from it so it's easy to go back and once you go back you don't miss anything because you value different things so if you give up things they aren't missed. You grow food, play games, enjoy family, keep busy. There is plenty to do on the farm."

Unlike other gardeners Leti's path was back to home, Grenada. Those staying in New York City had a stronger pull because they had secure jobs, many with the city, or had long-term jobs in the private sector, reflecting their many years spent in East New York. Leti was different in that she was new to East New York, lacked familial or social networks, and was disenchanted with the pace and direction of modern living, a sentiment echoed by other gardeners who believed that the human race has become more and more destructive over time, is killing the planet, and has become too distanced from the landbase and natural rhythms. However, these sentiments are more easily curbed by a steady paycheck, the promise of a pension, or a lack of

family landownership back home, which reduce the push back to the Caribbean. Many planned to leave the hectic work and life schedule of New York but only after acquiring the economic gains from within a system that enabled them to have security in their twilight years.

While many gardeners disagree with the "treadmill of production" that is industrial capitalism most followed a path of least resistance of deriving income and a degree of economic security within the system in exchange for creating marginal spaces of resistance that enabled them to maintain their cultural identity and desired way of life. Their actions are not outliers either, creating safe-spaces or spaces for micro practices of resistance are not only necessary for realizing conditions of autonomy in daily life but are historically much more common than organized social movements that seek either structural reforms or revolutionary transformations. Leti's comments most clearly cut to the heart of the issue of food as a politics of cultural resistance and echoes Sybil's previous comments on work rhythms in the United States. Food production and ties to the land are not only seen as part of one's cultural identity but reflective of the power of the earth and the limitations that the planet placed on human ingenuity. Community gardeners who grew up on the land are struggling with their increasing alienation from the landbase and the structures of industrial capitalism that push them towards the consumption of second hand vegetables. The further gardeners are distanced from food production the further they are distanced not only from their familial, cultural, and national ties but from the landbase itself, which for them needs to be respected and worked with rather than dominated and punished into submission. Estrangement from the landbase is not seen as progress or empowerment but the severing of the umbilical cord between humanity and the landbase, from which we are born and which continues to nourish us despite humanity's best attempts to toxify the earth and the preconditions for life. These fears of being displaced from

the landbase, as cultural, philosophical, and economic, are revealed in the gardeners food justice politics that demands control over land and seed, the means of food production, and rejects their forced assimilation into the commodity foods of industrial capitalism, a practice of culturecide.

Economic Alterity and Community Gardening: Beyond Capitalocentrism

In the heat of early July, I find myself weeding my plots at the Hands and Heart garden to the beat of the reggae music emanating from Flo's restaurant, a mix of a bodega and a Caribbean restaurant that sells oxtail, curry chicken, fried chicken and curry goat, amongst other items. Out in front of the take-out restaurant is a regular group of Rasta's who generally sit and stand, listen to music, and just "shoot the shit" all day. One of the members of the group, Kowskn, has been known to ask gardeners for callaloo and little does he know that today is going to be his lucky day. Barbara, one of the gardeners, is no fan of callaloo. Like many of the gardeners she grew up on callaloo, but in her words "she had too much of it as a kid" and "like peanut butter and jelly, when it's the only thing in the house and your mother makes it all the time, you grow not to like it." As a result, she never wants callaloo in her bed, which generally means perpetual weeding and for someone struggling with arthritis and diabetes this often becomes a burden. For instance, she had spent a considerable bit of time clearing a bed to plant some new seedlings the previous week but a rainstorm struck between then and her next visit to the garden, today, which meant that in the midterm up grew a whole bed of callaloo where nothing but soil existed before.

As a result of these mutual needs, Kowskn's for callaloo and Barbara's desire to be free of it, they engaged in a form of barter. She invited them over to pick her callaloo. Four came over in all. Barbara got her bed partially weeded. They all got dinner. Fair trade. As Kowskn said, nothing "freer than mama earth." As he left he was effusive in his thanks to Barbara, who

is now his “favorite.” “Thanks for the food. Thanks for the daily bread. Thanks for the daily bread. Thank you for feeding me mama. Puttin' clothes on me is one thing. But feeding me is even betta'.” Barbara matches his effusive thanks with a customary saying, “you know, they say, give a man a fish, feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish and feed him for a lifetime.” “Oh, well you will have to teach me how to grow,” says Kowskn, “I need to get myself a plot and grow. I’ll have a plot here next year and grow with ya, you’ll see.” After Kowskn left I asked Barbara about how she got him to pick the callaloo for her. She said, “Kowskn is always asking about callaloo but I don’t grow it. But with all the rain the entire bed was full of nothing but callaloo so I called them over and told them to pick it. I know they will eat it too; it’s going to be consumed. If I call up Deborah and they bring the youth over to pick it the youth are just going to throw it on the ground. It’s not going to be eaten.”

This example is just one of many that demonstrates how community gardens can be viewed as spaces that reject the dominant discursive framings of the twentieth century, which centered on state-led or market-led economic relations. In doing so, community gardens can be seen as *spaces of economic alterity* or economic difference where a multiplicity of food distribution practices co-exist (self-provisioning, gifting, and independent income generation) and operate at different levels (community gardens, backyard gardens, farmers markets, and farm stands) (Fuller et al 2010; Gibson-Graham 2008). At the same time, the community garden is a space of economic alterity because it is a place where wage-labor, free labor, and volunteer labor intermingle to reproduce the community garden as a food production space. There are no strict dichotomies in the garden; it is a multiplicity of practices. Consequently, the community garden decenters the hegemonic discourse of modernization that emphasized the centrality of the wage to social reproduction and the necessity of market-imposed scarcity and the profit-motive as the

only way to organize social relations. The community garden is not only rooted in a much longer history of economic alterity that pre-dates capitalism, where people combined different economic relations to survive, but a social relationship that is still the dominant form of social reproduction globally to this day, as the majority of people on the planet reproduce themselves through subsistence practices or only partially through the wage form (Bryceson et al. 2000; Littlefield and Knack 1996; White 1991; Redclift and Mingione 1985; Williams and Windebank 2004).

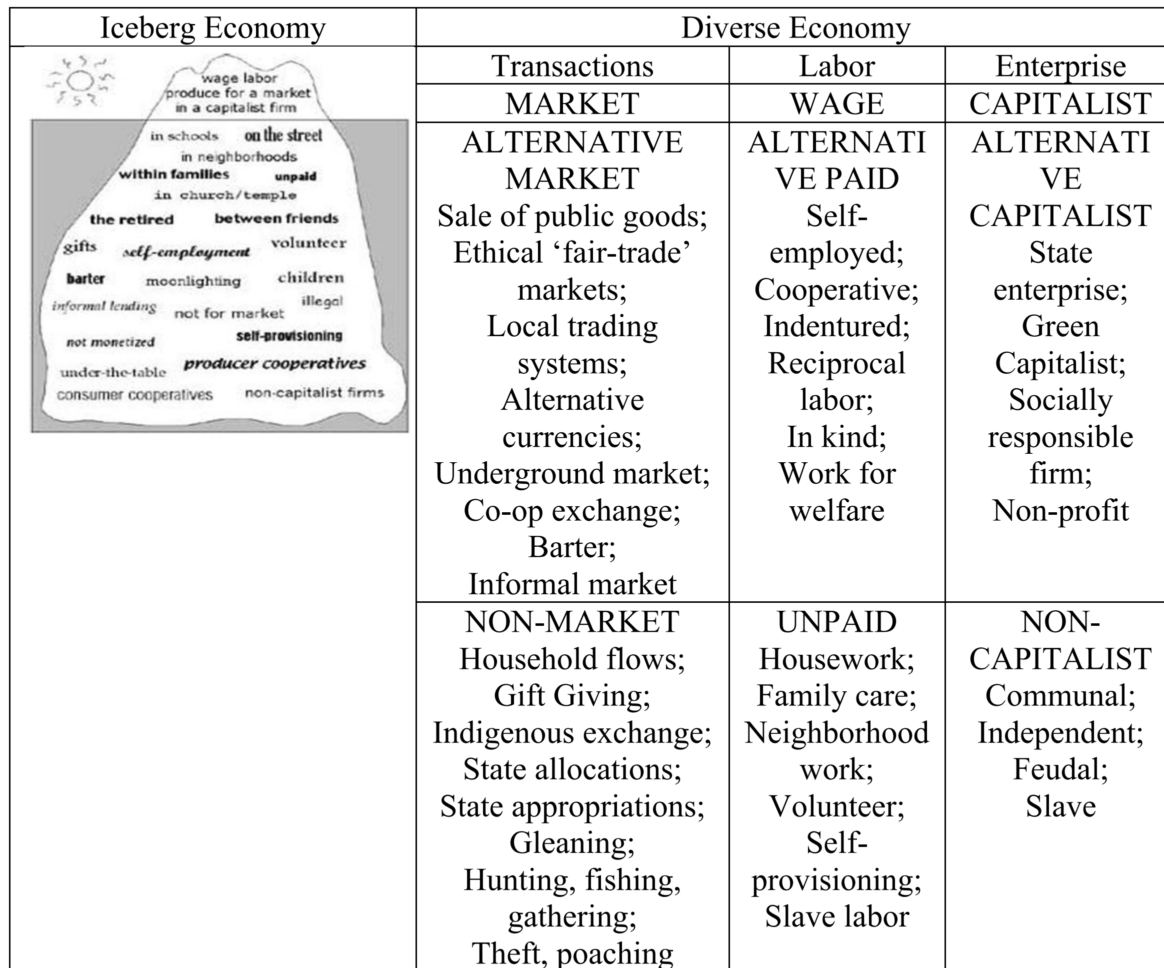
There has been a proliferation of writings focused on rethinking the economy over the past few decades, none more so than within geography and feminism where a literature emphasizing "diverse economies," the "iceberg economy" and "economic alterity" has been mainstreamed (Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies 1999; Fuller et al 2010; Gibson-Graham 1995, 2006, 2008; McCarthy 2006; Schor 2010), so much so that in 2009 Elinor Ostrom won the Nobel prize in economics for her work that decentered the market and the state in favor of the commons. The dominant economic framework shaping state and corporate development paradigms today still rests upon the trifecta of wage labor, the market exchange of commodities, and capitalist enterprises (McMichael 2007). Feminist's use of the iceberg economy decenters this hegemony through underscoring that these actors and practices only constitute a small number of the ongoing economic practices that comprise the social world. Once we peer below the water level we see that the majority of the economy actually exists outside of the wage labor/capitalist relationship. Accordingly, the iceberg economy is utilized to decenter the capitalocentrism of current economic discourse and move towards a diverse economy that reveals the actually existing economic practices ongoing in society, theorizes these alternative economic relationships and their intersections with the state and capitalism, as well as strengthen

and expand these alternative economic practices. Only though doing so can the economics of everyday life be understood. What is underneath the water line of wage-labor and capital? A multiplicity of economic practices (See figure 1). The iceberg economy may be conceptually weak in that it doesn't distinguish between formal/informal, paid/unpaid, individual/communal, merely capitalism and non-capitalism (Gibson-Graham 2006:70). Yet, it is effective in making visible all the economic relations that exist outside of capitalism and therefore should primarily be seen as a strategic method to decenter capitalocentricity—only seeing, thinking, and participating in capitalism in everyday life. Another diagram proposed by Gibson-Graham (2008:616) provides more conceptual clarity on the diverse economy that constitutes everyday life through categorizing the forms that economic transaction, labor, and enterprise can take within market/nonmarket, wage/unpaid and capitalist/non-capitalist configurations (J.K. Gibson-Graham 2008) (Table 5.1).

The blending of formal and informal and gifting and independent-income generation, is no clearer than in the narrative of Johanna Willens, the first community gardener who sold at the ENYF! farmers market and an individual who continues to sell at the market fifteen years later. Before she even started selling at the market, and in 1998 she alone constituted the market, Johanna was informally gifting and selling her produce to interested community residents: "I was growing everything, tomatoes, eggplant, honeydew, crenshaw melon, herbs. People would come past and ask "oh miss what are those?" and I would say "tomatoes…take some, try it, try this tomato, it's a good tomato." And people would come by and ask "can I have a cucumber and I give you a couple dollars" and I said "sure." And one lady would come by and she would say "oh I don't mind giving you three dollars I can't get this here in the store." And I was giving bags of stuff away for like three bucks. But what am I going to do with 100 cucumbers or 10

Crenshaw melons. What the heck am I going to do? They all ripen at the same time." Johanna's experience is indicative of the multiplicity of economic practices that can represent one's food distribution avenues; she grew for herself, gifted some, and sold others for income. One person cannot enjoy the rich delicious surplus of the garden nor can it be distributed purely through one method of distribution.

Table 5.1: The Iceberg and Diverse Economy



Iceberg Economy	Diverse Economy		
	Transactions	Labor	Enterprise
	MARKET	WAGE	CAPITALIST
	ALTERNATIVE MARKET Sale of public goods; Ethical 'fair-trade' markets; Local trading systems; Alternative currencies; Underground market; Co-op exchange; Barter; Informal market	ALTERNATIVE PAID Self-employed; Cooperative; Indentured; Reciprocal labor; In kind; Work for welfare	ALTERNATIVE CAPITALIST State enterprise; Green Capitalist; Socially responsible firm; Non-profit
	NON-MARKET Household flows; Gift Giving; Indigenous exchange; State allocations; State appropriations; Gleaning; Hunting, fishing, gathering; Theft, poaching	UNPAID Housework; Family care; Neighborhood work; Volunteer; Self-provisioning; Slave labor	NON-CAPITALIST Communal; Independent; Feudal; Slave

(Gibson and Graham 2006, 2008).

At the same time, the community garden is a space of economic alterity because it is a place where self-provisioning labor, volunteer labor, and wage-labor, intermingle to reproduce the community garden as a food production space. Beyond the gardeners who give their time

freely to produce their own food and paid ENYF! staff and youth who assist in maintenance, harvest, and upkeep of the garden, gardeners will occasionally hire neighborhood youth and pay them to harvest their crops. But what is often vital to the reproduction of the garden are volunteer groups who provide labor at key points in the season. Every spring numerous volunteer groups come from church, school, corporate, and civic groups to prepare the garden for the summer and fall harvests. The volunteer groups, ranging anywhere from 10 to 40, help weed, level the soil, build beds, turn the compost, pick up trash, and paint benches. Alongside of their volunteer labor many of these groups donate lumber, tools, and supplies for the garden that are vital to keeping the reproduction costs of the garden low for gardeners. The garden also reproduces itself through member dues and grant applications to foundations, which cover the costs of lumber for the beds, tools, compost bins, irrigation systems, and benches and tables. Compost, vital to the health of the soil, is both created internally within the garden but also donated by city agencies, who drop off huge dump truck loads in the spring, summer, and fall for the garden. Woodchips, another garden necessity to prevent weed growth in the walkways and helpful for keeping garlic warm during the winter, is also an item donated to the garden, this time by local tree pruning companies. Finally, the most important things of all, water, is provided free of charge to the garden by New York City, and the land itself is part of a land trust operated by GreenThumb garden, which removes the land from the market and keeps it as a garden in perpetuity. Therefore, Hands and Heart Garden, like many other gardens in East New York and New York City, is reproduced through a multiplicity of processes, all of which fall outside of the capitalist-wage labor relationship and many of which fall outside of the monetized sphere of exchange as well. Free labor and goods are vital to the reproduction of the garden and are entangled with food distribution processes that support self-provisioning, gifting, and

independent-income generation. There are no clear boundaries between market and state, individual and community, as the diverse economy of the garden muddies the water.

Given the long history of food production prior to capitalism and the continued existence globally of food production outside of capitalism the iceberg economy and diverse economy literature is significant in understanding exactly what practices and logics are shaping food distribution in community gardens in East New York and who benefits from food production in East New York. Moreover, it underscore that focusing primarily on the formal monetization of community garden produce—food that is sold "on the books" at the farmers market or farm stand—does a great disservice to the actual volume of food production occurring in community gardens as well as the community relations that are built, maintained, and strengthened through the gifting, sharing, and bartering of food.

Reproducing the Community Garden: Economic Difference in East New York

Dennis and Marlene are two of the "power gardeners" at the market, having plots in Hands and Heart, Triple R, and New Visions gardens, as well as their own backyard. So when I saw them picking callaloo at the garden it was nothing new. Then I realized that it was Sunday, not Friday, and therefore they were not picking for the market. I also noticed that they were picking a lot, and I mean a lot of callaloo, more than normal. Bushels and bushels and bushels, the picnic table was overflowing with callaloo. Callaloo sells for two dollars a pound at the market and I figured they had at least fifty dollars worth on the table. "Why on earth would they pick so much when it wasn't going to the market?" I wondered. I asked inquisitively but also half jokingly, "are you eating all that for dinner tonight?" Marlene said, "Oh no, it's for my coworkers." Dennis chimed in, "We pick a lot for coworkers. We grow too much to sell at the

market." And off he went to his vehicle, lugging a plastic bag full of callaloo over his shoulder. This practice is not abnormal and in fact is encouraged within the garden where the sharing of produce is quite common. There are many factors influencing the redistribution of food throughout the garden and the community. Dennis exemplified one of them, too much food to sell, but another one is that the circulation of food within the community and outside of the monetary-form creates strong social networks within the garden and between gardeners and community residents. One day Althea called me over to her plot to show me her plants. "Look, I have two zucchini's," she said. Last weekend they were like this, holding her hands two inches apart), now look at them, they are huge. I agreed and responded "yes they do," continuing, "I picked six on Wednesday, seven on Friday, three on Saturday, one on Sunday and three today. I could pick four more if I wanted to, they are big enough, and by Saturday they will be too big. But what can I do with twenty zucchini's in a week?" Nonchalantly she responds, "Give them to a neighbor. When I go home I give food to the first neighbor I see, if not the one on the corner then across the street, if not there then the next one and so on. And the next week I give to the other person. I make sure everybody gets some." Enthralled by her generosity I praise her sharing, "wonderful, I want to be your neighbor." And she continues, "It's the same for the backyard. My neighbor comes over and asks 'do you have any tomatoes?' and I give him a few." Althea expressed this same logic of gifting later on in the year when she came back from vacation and found her beds full of ripe tomatoes, fifteen pounds worth. I asked what she did with them all and she had packaged them up and went door to door. "Here you go. Here you go. Here you go. I gave them away."

Althea's statements reflect the relationship between practice and structure within the garden. Community gardens are spaces of surplus. Even a half-acre community garden can

generate a rich bounty of the land where too much food for self-provisioning or independent income generation exists. As a result, this surplus produces both the structural relations but also the cultural values supportive of gifting. For gardeners, humble as they are, acknowledge that mother nature does a lot of the work of food production, a production that is in excess of immediate need, and a production that should be enjoyed by all and not wasted. Gardeners dislike seeing food rotting on branches or vines. It is a common reframe to point out and criticize gardeners who have produce on plants that is not being picked. Therefore the social norms regulating food production include verbal mechanisms for enforcing anti-wasting principles. While I couldn't figure out what to do with all the zucchini I was growing for Althea the default was to give it away, a contrast that reflected my newness to food production; not having grown food in decades I was worried about how I was going to make use of all the zucchini's for my own consumption needs. This logic was quickly problematized within the garden where surplus was not something to be managed or eliminated but to be enjoyed and distributed throughout the community. The surplus was a bounty for all not something to be monopolized by each individual gardener. As a result, on harvest days the picnic table often has produce sitting on it for other gardeners to take as they please.

In a certain sense community gardens are no different than the farms of smallholders or the monocultures of industrial agriculture, when the harvest comes there is abundance, a surplus of produce that requires multiple avenues of distribution. But the logics regulating how the surplus is conceived and distributed are entirely different. For the community gardener, where independent income generation is a secondary rather than a primary income stream, the compulsion to find paying consumers is not necessarily crucial and often takes a back seat to self-provisioning and gifting. This logic of gifting has been so influential that I have distributed

my garden surplus of tomatoes, callaloo, kale, and hot peppers to my coworkers and neighbors, which produced quite new and positive social relations. Coworkers came flying out of the woodworks to meet me once my hot pepper gifting began making the rounds and in return I received delicious green mole's and hot sauces made from the peppers I grew. At my building food gifting broke down existing social barriers. Neighbors and I actually learned each other's name and now stop to talk to each in the hallway, events that had not happened in the previous three years. The community garden therefore transformed my relationships at both work and home, building relationships and bonds with people who I did not know or barely knew at all.

Gifting is endemic with the garden and is most apparent in how gardeners shape their relationship to seed. For gardeners, as has been mentioned, life is provided by mother earth and humans are only its stewards, a framing that leads not only to seed saving and the sharing of seed but a critique of and resistance to the privatization of and corporate control over seed. Through hands-on guidance by community gardeners, George, Dennis, Paulene, Marlene and Annie I have been taught how to save the seed of callaloo, garlic, onion, cabbage, lettuce, bok choy, and bell and hot peppers, amongst others. When gardener's plant, no matter what the plant is, a few plants from each crop are allowed to go to seed to save them for next season, with seed being distributed amongst needy gardeners not just kept for one gardener. Additionally, no gardener ever charges another for seed because seed is the creation of mother earth not the gardener, and the thought of charging for it is beyond comprehension, it is a common right. Yet the logic of the seed as "always already free" is not necessarily expected nor understood, even by others involved in the local food movement. For example, Gudelio, who farms on Staten island and New Jersey sells at the Wednesday farm stand and specializes in Mexican foods, such as papalo, zucchini flowers, tomatillos, epazote, corn, and beans. However, in East New York, and at other

markets across the city, there is a considerable Caribbean population that would buy callaloo if he had it so he asked me for some seed to grow and sell callaloo. I did not have enough seed of my own so I went to George and asked if I could collect some of his seed to give to Gudelio. George said, "Of course! Take as much as you need." "Thanks," I responded and went to harvest some seed, cutting the top stalk off at least twenty different callaloo plants yielded a full plastic grocery bag full of seed for Gudelio. When I handed Gudelio the full bag his eyes lit up and his usual jovial smile spread across his face. "Thank you amigo. How much?" Confused, I inquired, "For the seed?" "Si, for the seed," Gudelio clarified. Taken aback, I stated, "Oh I don't know, I didn't ask." I had been hanging around the garden so much that the thought of asking for a price tag on seed never crossed my mind. So I went back to George and told him Gudelio wanted to know how much for the seed. "How much?" George reiterated. "Yeah. Gudelio wants to know." George reaffirmed his stance "No price. It's free. I never charge for seed. Charge for seed? Never." By now George's response was no shock to me, it reflected the logic of the community gardener, an actor who is not the owner of nature but a steward of its biological diversity, soil fertility, and surplus, which necessitates the sharing of seed.

Another experience of seed sharing embodied all the aspects shaping food production in East New York: subjugated knowledge, cultural identity, and economic alterity. While I am watering the plants at Hands and Heart a man enters the garden and asks me if I have any callaloo seeds. He needs some seeds and some plants. I start to cut the seed tops off of the callaloo plants and he tells me that his name is George, not to be confused with the gardener at Hands and Heart also named George, and back home in Jamaica he was a farmer. He sold to neighbors, sold to restaurants, sold to markets. He grew everything. He wants to know if it's too late to plant the seeds. I tell him no. We still have plenty of warm weather and if you plant the

seeds and they don't grow now they might next spring. Either way, what do you have to lose? You can always come back and get more seeds from me later. We turn to the ground and start to pick small callaloo plants from my bed, he tells me that he has a plot of land and that he is going to grow on. That he needs to make some money, "it's so hard in America to make money." I agree, "yeah, you got to work work work." "Yes! work work work," agreeing with my sentiments, he continues "there is a man near where I live, he grows callaloo and sells it for $5 a bunch. Everyone buys it and I want to grow some and make some money." By now he has plenty of callaloo seeds and plants and we start discussing the other plants in the garden. He asks me what this wild plant is (pointing at purslane) because it grew back in Jamaica too and he didn't know what it was but he said, "well, I am going to try it and if it don't make me sick I will know that I can eat it again and again." So he did and it didn't make him sick and so he ate it. I told him it is called purslane and it has omega-3, people usually get omega-3 from fish. "I don't eat fish, don't eat meat at all. I am a vegetarian," he proclaimed. I then emphasized its importance for his diet, "Well, then you could eat some of this for the omega-3 in it, it has one of the highest levels of all land plants, it's really good for you." George changes the subject and comments on how he loves being with nature, grabbing the soil and stating "when I stick my hand in the ground it gives me power. We come from this. It gives us strength. We are born of the earth. People forget this. We are nature. We are the earth and the earth is us. I have a Chinese friend who says that in China they dig holes in the ground and people go into them and come out refreshed. It's like that." As he turns to leave he sees malabar spinach, also called big-leaf callaloo, and asks if I have any seed or plants for that. I say "not right now but I should have some seed in October or November. If you come back then I should have some for you." In this encounter George and I treat seed as a free gift available to anyone. I did not ask for a price and

he never offered money for the seeds, it was an unspoken presumption that seed was always already free, one merely had to ask. Free seed that George, through access to land, his labor, and the grace of mother earth, can turn into a secondary income stream to support himself and his family, a practice that is desired by East New York gardeners and engaged in by billions of people globally. And through being able to grow seed George can reconnect with his roots; immigration does not have to sever him from his occupation, homeland, or cultural identity.

Conclusion: Community Gardens as Spaces of Resistance

Whether a gardener is growing food for themselves, their family, or their community, whether they grow food for self-provisioning, gifting, or market sales, whether it's for economic or cultural purposes, the aspect that links all these practices and meanings together is that food production in East New York is born of a resistance to the modernist project, urban growth machines, the industrial food system, and cultural assimilation. Following in the footsteps of previous immigrant groups, East New Yorkers who are African American, African, and Caribbean have sought to retain their cultural identities and foodways, reproduce subjugated knowledge, and engage in economic alterity by acquiring control over land and seed. For instance, before Central Park was the luxurious greenery it is today "uptown" was a "no-man's" land of bogs, wetlands, and swamp inhabited by blacks and immigrants, predominantly Irish and German, who combined independent income generation, wage labor, and self-provisioning as a survival strategy (Jindrich 2010; McNeur 2011; Rosenzweig and Blackmar 1998). They raised chickens and pigs, grew vegetables, chopped down trees for firewood and lumber, fished in the Hudson, and gathered slate to sell as cobblestones. All of this occurred because they were used to these practices, were on the margins of the wage labor economy, and sought to maintain

themselves through practices that guaranteed subsistence security. Existing on the margins of power these groups were generally framed as an impediment to the progress and development of New York City and their squats, shantytowns, and pigs were subjected to criminalization and pushed further and further out of Manhattan to Brooklyn, Westchester, Staten Island or New Jersey (Gilje 1987; Hartog 1983, 1985; Jindrich 2010; McNeur 2011; Rock 1979). Despite the city's war on the informal economy it was still existent in East New York during the twentieth century as Italian and German households continued to grow foods in their backyards in addition to laboring for wages for several reasons: self-provisioning reduced the costs of the household food bill, the food that was grown was culturally appropriate; people had a history of growing food that they wanted to maintain, the backyard food economy built community relations and social capital, and backyard food could be utilized as an independent income stream. In fact, the New Lots area between Pitkin (N) and Sutter (S) and Pennsylvania (E) and Van Sinderen (W) avenue was known as the "bean quarter" due to the predominance of home garden cultivation, (Landesman 1977:106). During the late 1800s families kept chickens, ducks, geese, grew fruit trees and grape vines, and cultivated summer gardens of potatoes, cabbages, and beans (Heidenreich 1948).

These practices have been reborn within East New York since the 1990s as community gardens and backyard gardens full of produce, bees, and chickens flourish throughout the area. East New York is consequently reflective of, rather than an outlier to, the long history of mixed reproduction strategies in the United States that combine wage-labor, independent income generation, and self-provisioning, practices that were and still are aspects of life amongst rural communities, immigrants, and the indigenous (Felt and Sinclair 1992; Meeks 2003; Nelson 1999a, 1999b; Slack 2007; Snyder 2003, 2004). While these practices remain at the margins of

the U.S. economy today globally they are a dominant form of individual, household, and community reproduction. But they do exist and will continue to exist in the United States precisely because there is cultural resistance to the modernist project as well as the failure of the modernist project to realize its own utopian desires. Not everyone wants to be a part of the corporate wage economy and the modernist project, despite any attempts to the contrary, is incapable of providing living wages for all. Akin to Polyani's (2001) insight that the utopian push towards free markets creates its own resistance movement that demands state regulation and the non-market fulfillment of social needs, the modernist impulse towards wage-labor and an industrialized food system has created its own resistance movement that demands autonomy from corporate control of the food system, for both cultural and economic reasons, through community control over land and seed.

Modernization, urban growth machines, and the treadmill of development are all premised on a particular ordering of values and with it economic conceptions of work, income, and growth, political conceptions of independence, self-sufficiency, and autonomy, and cultural notions of how land is to be put to use, by whom, and towards what ends. In the mind of modernists land was to capitalistically owned, which implied not just private ownership of property but its utilization towards maximization of income and economic expansion in the interests of bankers, land developers, and the city elite. What this meant for farm land in the later 1800s and early 1900s in New York City, and still in many cities today, is that a particular and peculiarly American and ahistorical conception of the city emerged that divorced it from food production and agrarian lifeways in general, against the wishes of many of its residents (Linder and Zacharias 1999). The conception that emerged was of a futuristic city, a city divorced from the rhythms of nature and its limitations on commerce and progress. It would be a

city full of buildings and industry, a city dominated by the abstract rhythms of the market, a dream manifested in the erection of ever taller skyscrapers, ever longer bridges, every deeper subways; a city that stretched as far as the eye could see, a well ordered and rationalized grid subject to the dictates of the flow of goods, not nature. First, the machine, then the computer, became the measure of time and work, replacing the sun, the moon, the seasons, and the tides. Under the impulse of such a temporal transformation in the social order of work New York City moved from an agrarian to an industrial and now a post-industrial landscape where land is most productive as speculative real estate.

Within such a worldview distance from the environment was viewed positively as a higher form of culture and a more advanced form of civilization. Likewise, the closer humans were to nature and food production the more primitive they were. Just like food production could be perfected through fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, genetically modified seeds, monocultures, and mechanization, food preparation and consumption could be rationalized and perfected through the judicious application of science and technology both before food ever reached the household and upon its arrival in the home (Belasco 2006; Inness 2005; Shapiro 2004). The industrialization, corporatization, and rationalization of food production was part of a feedback loop that promoted the corporatization and rationalization of food distribution, preparation, and consumption (Belasco 2006; Land 2005; Patel 2008; Schlosser 2002). Food was no longer a raw input people would grow, or even buy, prepare, and consume in their own home. Food would become a pre-made processed meal. This freed up women's time for other pursuits, transferred more and more of the food dollar to agrocapitals, and reduced knowledge of food production, preparation, and consumption amongst the population. People lost knowledge of what food looked like, how it was grown, how it was prepared, and why this mattered, and in doing so lost

knowledge of agriculture, ecological cycles and flows, and the importance of polyculture to biological and cultural diversity.

However, by the 1960s and 1970s the modernist vision of the city was falling apart due to deindustrialization, stagflation, growing un- and under-employment, a global recession, racial tensions, an expanding welfare state, and a tax revolt by the middle class, upper class, and corporate elite. The root of these problems was framed as external to the development paradigm itself rather than a byproduct of its own internal logic and contradictions (Greenberg 2008). Incoming migrations of poor African Americans and Caribbeans were blamed for expanding the welfare state and overtaxing the city's infrastructure (Lichten 1986; Tabb 1982). This racial project, now known as neoconservatism, explicitly and implicitly stated that the only solution to saving the city for the white middle classes was to clear them of nonwhites through state power (Caro 1975; Schwartz 1993). In the city the state employed eminent domain and the discourse of "slums" and "urban renewal" to destroy the built environment of black neighborhoods, a practice that was amplified through planned shrinkage, where the city and state actively removed municipal services from nonwhite communities and disinvested from both the physical environment and the community that lived there with the explicit purpose of forcing that community to leave the city (Anderson 1964; Fullilove 2005; Pritchett 2003; Thabit 2005; Wallace and Wallace 2001).

Yet the vast majority of nonwhite New York City did not leave during the 1960s and 1970s. Instead, it was the white populace that fled to the suburbs. Community residents who remained and weathered the worst of white flight, crack, and aids, fought the municipal and corporate neglect of their communities by reclaiming land for community gardens and urban food production. In doing so they continued to assert their autonomy and cultural difference

from white America and the urban growth machine and at the same time created the conditions for a struggle over how land in New York City and East New York was to be put to use. For the bottom-up response to planned shrinkage were movements encapsulating community gardening as well as homesteading, and given the severity of institutional disinvestment in East New York this created the potential for a vibrant community gardening movement, one that did emerge (Martinez 2010; von Hassel 1999, 2002). At the same time the urban growth machine that connected private and public actors behind real estate speculation continued to prioritize technocratic and "free-market" development rather than bottom-up community-led development (Angotti 2011; Brash 2011; Moody 2007; Soffer 2010). In New York City in the 1990s this took the form of Mayor Giuliani attempting to sell city-owned land obtained through defaults and foreclosures to the market for development. The fact that many of these lots were community gardens in use by community residents did not bother Giuliani much as, like his forefathers, he felt these gardens reflected the past and did not constitute development. When asked to explain his rationale for selling off lands being put to use by community residents he showed his intense devotion to neoliberalism's there is no alternative politics, "this is a free-market economy; welcome to the era after communism (Raver 1999)." Within this development paradigm gardens as concrete cultural and economic spaces for community residents are devalued and made invisible in favor of the city's and the market's abstract claims for job creation, tax revenue, and economic growth through "the market."

This chapter has sought to upend the "there is no alternative politics" of modernism and neoliberalism, personified in Mayor Giuliani, by documenting how the place and culture of community gardens matters and that the turn towards a community controlled food system requires community control over land itself, only from the production and appropriation of space

can alternative ecological, economic, political, and cultural logics be maintained and expanded. Without land (space) the food justice movement will wither away and be coopted into a consumer-centric movement emphasizing affordably priced food at your local Wal-Mart. For, as this chapter has displayed, land is central to a food justice movement that rejects monocultures and industrial agriculture, the hegemony of the market, and assimilation into whiteness. Community gardens are spaces of resistance that embody cultural, economic, and ecological critiques of and alternatives to the industrial and corporate food system. Without control over land the food justice movement and the difference that it represents will not matter much, it will only be an ethical not a material alternative to the treadmill of production. This is why at the food justice campaign planning session the community gardeners listed “more land” as their number one demand. Even though East New York has the most community gardens in any community in the city, with around sixty gardens, thirteen percent of the land in the community is still vacant with many empty lots scattered along the raised 3-subway line. For instance, the Weed and Seed section of East New York has at least three acres of vacant land in contiguous lots surrounding the 3-train, land that the community gardeners want to see turned into urban farms. In the eyes of the gardeners they want all the vacant lots turned into gardens: a place where they can work with and maintain relations with the land, provide themselves income, feed their community, socialize with people, maintain their identity, and be free of a boss. For as Marlene Wilkins says, “this is life.” Growing food is more than just a paycheck, a job, or a hobby. Whether they work in education or construction, homecare or self-employment, in an office or on the street, a school or a factory, growing food is their labor of love, a pleasure, an activity that blends culture and economics, soil and flesh. Growing food is central to their sense

of self, central to life itself, and a vital component of the relationship between humanity and mother earth.

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[15] Hands and Heart is like many other community gardens in East New York. Started in 2006 and opened to the community in 2007 it sits on a half-acre of land that was a vacant lot for decades and owned by the New York City Housing and Preservation Department (HPD). On the land once sat a multi-story apartment building but HPD had no plans to turn the lot back into housing. Instead, HPD had some tentative plans to turn the area into open space. At the same time the community organized and petitioned for a park for the lot but the Parks Department usually only works with areas that are an acre or greater in size. As a result of Parks Department disinterest what came out of the meetings was a community garden operated through GreenThumb, a program of the New York City Parks Department funded by federal Community Development Block grants that manages open or green spaces that are generally less than an acre in size. Today, the garden contains over 30 gardeners and has an active waiting list of community residents who want access to land for food production.

[16] All plots must be cleaned of food and weeds by December 1st. Some exceptions are allowed to enable food to be grown into the first few weeks of December, if the weather allows. But for the most part the garden shuts down in early December and is left to its own devices until late March or early April. This human free zone creates prime conditions for the development of weeds.

[17] Pauline came to New York from Jamaica in the 1980s and works for the department of education as a guidance counselor.

[18] Personal conversation with Ana McGuire, director of UCC.

Chapter 6 / Corporations, the State, and Hegemony: Recuperating the Food Justice Movement through the Discourse of Food Deserts and the Grocery Store Gap

On the twenty-first of March, 2012, United Community Centers was host to a town hall meeting and community forum called "Healthy Schools, Healthy Kids." The forum was organized to address food injustice in the New York City school system and parents, students, community members, and political officials were all present to discuss how to fix the current school food system. Those present emphasized the current problems with school food, discussed ongoing projects to remedy these issues, and proposed further changes to the current food structure at public schools. Many of the critiques shared by parents and students alike echoed existing research on the problems of school food (Poppendieck 2011). Food is seen as icky, cold, and gross by students, with one student going so far as to say she "would rather starve than eat school food." While this claim is a bit polemical it also speaks to a school lunch program that is highly effective at feeding students food that is the detritus of the industrial food system, a food system that is structured around how to cheaply counter a history of malnutrition and hunger amongst American youth while primarily supporting farmer incomes through commodity surplus programs (Levine 2010; Poppendiek 2011). At the town hall many students and parents spoke about only having "bad" food options at public schools, such as pizza, chicken nuggets, burgers, and mozzarella sticks, the same choices that dominate their communities. The predominance of these options reflects not merely the commodity surplus program but a defunded public education system where cost cutting has produced an infrastructure where most schools lack on-site kitchens and are limited to either heating up food in microwaves or serving cold food, most of which is prepared off-site and shipped to the school. Rather than fast food options that are primarily loaded with salts, sugars, fats, and oils, parents wanted "healthy" food:

salads, vegetables, vegetarian options, and alternatives to milk and soda. Implicit and explicit within the parent and student critiques was the belief that the school system should serve as an alternative to the conventional choices within their communities, that the school lunch program could be a model for emulation of "best practices"—providing good healthy food to students rather than unhealthy fast food options.

Most of the speakers for the night were on point, be they community members, parents, students, or political representatives. But during the town hall meeting the entire tone of the evening was thrown a curveball when council member Charles Barron (D – East New York) was given the floor. Upon reaching the mic Mr. Barron thanked all those in attendance for coming, especially East New York Farms! for all the work they were doing to help out the community, and launched into his speech, "far too often when you travel through low income communities like ours you see McDonalds and fast food. This fast food is killing us…creating obesity and diabetes…when you walk around, get off the subway, all you see is fast food…Michelle Obama might be right about food but she is wrong about Wal-Mart. We want jobs and work that allows you to unionize, have a pension, a living wage, there is nothing better than a living wage." Cheers and applause rang out amongst those in attendance but a few people in the audience looked perplexed. What link is there between East New York Farms! and Wal-Mart? How are the two connected? And where does Michelle Obama fit into the picture?

Simply put, ENYF! and Wal-Mart represent different and rather antagonistic ways of combating "food injustice" in lower income Black and Latino communities such as East New York. In the previous three chapters I have focused on the *bottom-up* food justice initiatives of East New York Farms!: its emergence out of a participatory planning process, making farmers markets affordable through state-facilitated income-support and purchasing power programs, the

struggles of community residents to maintain cultural identity through food production and ties to the land, the diverse economies associated with growing food, and the subjugated knowledge of polyculture and companion planting. Within these practices food injustice is not a technical problem to be solved by corporations offering lower market prices for industrially grown produce but a social relationship that requires the re-articulation of power relations within and between communities, as food injustice is linked to a long history of institutional racism and underdevelopment, particularly urban renewal, deindustrialization, white flight, and planned shrinkage. Subsequently, food justice discourse is utilized as a community organizing mechanism to build autonomy from the dominant food system through obtaining control over land and the means of subsistence, building local food networks, generating conditions for self-provisioning and independent income generation, and utilizing a liberal State to facilitate the redistribution of wealth. East New York Farms! is consequently reflective of the larger food justice movement that emphasizes community-rooted *bottom-up food projects* to counter the race and class inequality that shapes the food system (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010).

However, food justice organizations such as East New York Farms! are not the only actors aiming to combat food access and affordability issues in low-income communities (Table 6.1). Food justice organizations must combat *top-down food projects*, such as Wal-Mart, which are external to the community, conducted outside of participatory community planning, privilege corporate or big-box stores, and frame food injustice as merely a technical rather than a social or political problem because food is only viewed as a market-driven commodity rather than a way of life. As a result, these top-down food projects tend to perpetuate institutional racism because the effort to bring "justice" to urban consumers reinforces inequality in others areas of the food

system, primarily in squeezing small farmers and exploiting farmworkers in order to create cheaper food prices. Moreover, these top-down projects reject the social and political aspects of food justice movements, principally community-control over the food system and the cultural and ecological aspects bound up with community food production.

Table 6.1: Bottom-Up and Top Down Food Projects

Category	Bottom-Up	Top-Down
Political Frame	Just Sustainability	Technocracy
Social Actor	Community-based organization	State or Corporation
Primary Discourse	• Food Justice • Food Sovereignty	• Combating Obesity and Food Deserts • Access and affordability for consumers
Political Purpose	• Community Controlled Food System • Combat race and class inequities • Reproduce Cultural Identity	• Lower healthcare costs for state • Economic growth for grocery retailers
Food System	• Self-production by and for the community • Farmers markets • Food co-ops/Buying clubs • Youth empowerment programs	• Locate grocery stores and supermarkets in food deserts and food swamps
Form of Agriculture	• Local and sustainable agriculture • Low volume, higher price	• Industrial agriculture • High volume, low price
How Makes Produce Affordable	• Self-production • Income Support and Purchasing power programs	• Integration into corporate food retailing • Integration into industrial agriculture

When Charles Barron invoked Wal-Mart he was not discussing some abstract boogieman but the largest corporation in the United States and the most dominant grocery retailer, a

company that was trying to build a Supercenter within the community a mere two miles from East New York Farms! and sought to legitimate this effort by claiming that it was the solution to East New York's food access and affordability issues. Moreover, Wal-Mart's entrance into lower income urban communities, such as East New York, was not a one-off incident but part of a new growth strategy of Wal-Mart that was actively championed by and produced in relationship with Michelle Obama as well as numerous other city and state governments. Subsequently, East New York Farms! is at the frontline of a struggle against a State-Corporate alliance that sought to consolidate and expand corporate control and a growth orientation over the food system by combating food deserts and the grocery store gaps.

This chapter focuses on the relationship between Wal-Mart, Michelle Obama, East New York Farms! and food justice, and how this paradoxical relationship is born of the tensions between social movements, corporations, and the state in addressing food injustice. First, I will explain how the USDA's definition of food deserts circumscribes a politics of the possible by narrowing solutions to food deserts to that of grocery stores and supermarkets. In doing so, a public-private partnership has emerged as the dominant solution for state and federal governments to combat food deserts, one where public money is used to lure private for profit chains back into lower income communities. Second, I outline how the State/Corporate alliance of Obama/Wal-Mart emerges to recuperate and politically activate the discourse of food deserts, the grocery store gap, and fresh and healthy food to legitimate a *top-down food project* that is a blatant market penetration strategy of Wal-Mart, whose economic growth demands require movement into the untapped urban grocery retailing market. Third, I discuss how Wal-Mart has moved beyond a mere state-corporate alliance and attempted to co-opt the most visible food justice organization in the United States, Growing Power, and how Will Allen, its charismatic

leader, claims that Wal-Mart can be part of the solution to eliminating food injustice. Will Allen's claim is then critiqued by several food justice activists and advocates who reject corporations, particularly Wal-Mart, as part of the solution to food injustice, a critique that is situated within the history of Wal-Mart's low-wage capitalism, what this alliance means for the food justice movement, and the reactionary tendencies of corporate philanthropy in general. Fourth, I turn towards East New York and New York City in general, focusing on Wal-Mart's unsuccessful efforts to locate a Supercenter in East New York. Centering on ENYF!, city council members, small businesses, and union opposition to the Walmartization of New York City this section emphasizes how Wal-Mart sought to pacify its opposition through familiar divide and conquer strategies, including charitable payments, public relations campaigns, and hiring Democratic political strategists. Finally, and in closing, I focus on how food justice as a social movement must address the recuperative tendencies of hegemony within the treadmill of production if it wants to achieve long-term structural transformation within food, race, and class relations within the United States. The barriers facing the movement are underscored through drawing upon parallels from previous social justice movements, including labor, civil rights, and environmental movements.

Food Deserts and the Obesity Epidemic: The Politics of Naming Social Problems

What is a food desert? The term food desert emerged from London during the 1990s. A working group for the Low Income Project Team of the Department of Health in the United Kingdom popularized it in 1996 (Lang and Caraher 1998). The working group was given the task to "collate and disseminate examples of…to consider how to evaluate…and to make recommendations concerning the best ways to improve access to healthy diets for low-income

households (Nelson 1997:91)." Through their investigations they came into contact with a public housing resident that used the term food desert to "capture the experience of what it was like to live in a deprived neighborhood where food was expensive and relatively unavailable (Cummins & Macintyre 2002: 2115)." The working group went on to institutionalize the definition of food deserts as "areas of relative exclusion where people experience physical and economic barriers to accessing healthy foods" (Reisig and Hobbiss, 2000). The core meaning of this definition has become predominant within discussions of food deserts because it emphasizes both the problems of *access* (physical barriers) and *affordability* (economic barriers) that are seen to constitute such areas.

Food desert terminology within the U.S. is therefore an import from across the pond and as with most imports they are subject to cultural modification. For instance, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), whose definition of food desert is in widespread use in the United States, offers a rather conservative definition of a food desert compared to the British version. The USDA defines a food desert as "a *low-income census tract* where a substantial number or share of residents has *low access* to a supermarket or large grocery store (USDA 2012c, emphasis in original)."[19] Notice how the USDA definition incorporates proxies for *exclusion* (low-income), *access* (more than one mile) and *affordability* (supermarket or larger grocery store), which attempts to mirror the U.K. conceptualization but officially circumscribes these barriers within the framework of supermarkets and large grocery stores. What is equally intriguing is that the USDA definition is also narrower than the 2008 Farm Bill definition of a food desert as an "area in the United States with limited access to affordable and nutritious food, particularly such an area composed of predominantly lower income neighborhoods and communities (Title VI, Sec. 7527)." Unlike the USDA, the Farm Bill does not conceptually

frame food deserts as born out of a lack of access to grocery stores or supermarkets. The USDA has even acknowledged that its framing of food deserts is problematic and that its statistical abstraction may not always hold at the local level since smaller stores, bakeries, butchers, food carts, farmers' markets, farm stands, CSAs, buying clubs and community gardens may provide healthy and affordable options (USDA 2009). But it still chose to utilize "supermarkets and large grocery stores…as proxies for sources of healthy and affordable foods (USDA 2012c)." Based on this definition the USDA food desert locator claimed that 23.5 million people in the United States, 8.4 percent of the total population, lived in low-income communities that are more than one mile from a supermarket or grocery store. However, not all those who lived in these areas were poor or lacked mobility via private transport. As a result, the USDA claimed that only 13.5 million people lived in food deserts, 82 percent of which lived in urban areas.

How concepts are defined is important because their framing implies a "politics of the possible," which circumscribes options, confines choices, limits horizons, and can produce a "there is no alternative" mentality that demarcates action within the existing food system (Gibson-Graham 1996, 2006, 2008). The food desert question, as currently defined has many problems. The conflation of large-scale grocery retailers with cheap food naturalizes rather than problematizes the conditions that produce this food as cheap – ecological unsustainability, exploitation of farm workers, and depeasantization. And its use of the term low-income depoliticizes class as a social relation of power between groups by turning it into a static income bracket, a household income below $35,000. In so doing the term effaces the social factors shaping the production of poverty, inequality, and food apartheid, which are born of corporate-state growth coalitions favoring free market policies since the 1970s and the strong influence of neoconservatism in hollowing out inner cities since the 1940s. Most of all, it is a consumer

oriented and supply-side oriented framing that inherently proffers solutions to the problem that it names as a problem. Food deserts are areas that lack affordable and nutritious food. The solution to this problem is to bring in healthy and affordable food through the economies of scale tied to industrial agriculture, cheap migrant labor, and chain stores. Questions about who the food provider should be are not directly engaged, ignoring issues of corporate versus community control of the food system, market versus non-market food production, or capitalist versus non-capitalist food networks. The framing also rejects a discussion on how food can be made more affordable by increasing incomes in these communities rather than by merely lowering commodity prices, but this Keynesian or worker perspective would require a politics emphasizing downward wealth redistribution, service-sector unionization, living wage policies, income support programs, and a robust social safety net. As a result, how the USDA defines food deserts defaults to the dominant actors within the industrial food system as the solution to combating food deserts, the same actors that fled or never ever existed in low-income communities because of their search for higher profits. These are several of the reasons why food justice advocates reject the concept of food desert and food swamp in favor of food apartheid, since food deserts are not natural but socially produced relations.

Moreover, a key question is why does the USDA even care about food deserts? Why is a lack of access to affordable and nutritious food suddenly framed as a problem that needs to be addressed? For food justice activists undoing food deserts is about countering institutional racism in the food system and creating the conditions for community control over an alternative food system. Yet, these are not the same reasons that motivate the state, particularly public health departments, which are worried about the relationship between food deserts, lack of access to healthy food, and high rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease (Anderson et al.

2011; Franco et al. 2008; Larson et al. 2009; Fleischhacker et al. 2010). The economic cost of these physiological ailments is increasingly framed as a problem for private employers, health care organizations, and the state, all of which are now invested in trying to change peoples eating habits in order to reduce healthcare costs. With the obesity epidemic being conflated in discourse with food deserts and supermarkets with increased fruit and vegetable consumption combating food deserts through closing the grocery store gap has become the solution to countering the obesity, diabetes, and heart disease epidemics and with it the healthcare bill (Franco et al. 2008; Morland et al. 2002; Powell et al. 2007a 2007b; Treuhaft and Karpyn 2010).

From Food Deserts to Food Oases: Michelle Obama and Wal-Mart

How the USDA defines food deserts reflects the politics of naming, where social behaviors are not seen as problems until particular groups define them as problems (Ryan 1972). One must ask not just who is defining the problem and how they are defining it but towards what end are they defining the problem? Are food deserts framed merely as a technical or logistical issue to be overcome, or a social, economic and politically rooted problem whose solution requires a larger restructuring of social relations? The narrow technocratic definition employed by the USDA and the conflation of food deserts with obesity is important because it forms the foundation, the legitimating data, upon which Michelle Obama has constructed an alliance with Wal-Mart to launch a *top-down food project* to turn food deserts into food oases through the placement of Wal-Mart's in lower income urban communities. Given the scale of the problem, millions of people in hundreds and thousands of predominantly urban census tracts, the state has turned toward an actor that is presumed to be able to address the problem at that scale, and who better to reach millions of consumers with affordable food than the largest grocery retailer in the

country and the face of twenty-first century capitalism? Both Michelle Obama and Wal-Mart claim that only Wal-Mart, with its purchasing power, market saturation, and logistical networks, can bring fresh, healthy, and affordable produce to lower income communities. How the USDA defines and Michelle Obama politically activates the concept of food deserts is another example of James Scott's (1998) "seeing like the state," where the birds-eye-view of the state implicitly presumes a particular scale for projects, this time at the statistical abstraction of the census tract, which is not an organic lived concrete experience but an artifact of statecraft that makes communities legible to bureaucrats and corporations. Through the census tract the state is able to act on the concept of food desert and legitimate the expansion of its growth coalition with corporations.

Central to this campaign is "provid[ing] access to healthy, affordable food to millions of people in underserved communities (Obama 2011)," which she was able to realize in 2011 by announcing a series of commitments with regional- and national-level grocery chains to build in communities designated as food deserts. At the national level Michelle Obama secured commitments from Wal-Mart, Walgreens, and SUPERVALU to open or expand over 1,500 stores, create tens of thousands of jobs and serve 9.5 million people living in food deserts—about 40 percent of the existing food desert population—by 2016.[20] In terms of Wal-Mart, the nation's largest company will open or expand between 275 to 300 stores serving over 800,000 people (Obama 2011). This expansion is on top of the company's claim that it has already opened 218 stores in food deserts since 2007, which would take the total from 2007 to 2016 to over 490 stores and 1.3 million people. The commitment is seen as a major win for Michelle Obama's *Let's Move* campaign and she used the announcement to reinforce her stand against

childhood obesity and the need to change the economic structures shaping food access and affordability,

> The commitments we're announcing today have the potential to be a game-changer for kids and communities all across this country…We can give people all the information and advice in the world about healthy eating and exercise, but if parents can't buy the food they need to prepare those meals because their only options for groceries are the gas station or the local minimart, then all that is just talk. Let's Move is about giving parents real choices about the food their kids are eating, and today's announcement means that more parents will have a fresh food retailer right in their community – a place that sells healthy food, at reasonable prices, so they can feed their families the way they want (Obama 2011).

Michelle Obama's turn away from informational access to economic access is important, in that it moves past solely changing consciousness to creating structures that allow people to act on that change in consciousness. In doing so, Michelle Obama makes it clear that the key barriers to changing people's eating habits are spatial and economic and that state intervention is necessary to transform food deserts into food oases. However, while Michelle Obama makes the turn towards emphasizing geographic and economic barriers, and therefore how class and race inequality in the food system is spatialized, her default solution to increasing access and affordability is prioritizing supply-side consumerism of "low prices" by making an alliance with the dominant grocery retailer in the United States, a retailer that most people in the alternative food movement and food justice movement would frame as a barrier to realizing food justice and an actor that represents all that is unjust in the conventional food system.

Leslie Dasch, executive vice president of corporate affairs at Wal-Mart praised the new alliance,

> By opening stores where customers need them most, Wal-Mart will help build healthier families and stronger communities. We believe every single person should have access to an abundant selection of fresh fruits and vegetables at an affordable price… First Lady Michelle Obama is helping millions of Americans lead healthier lives, and Wal-Mart is proud to partner with her in this work. The First Lady's leadership on products, prices and access to healthier food has helped sharpen our focus on bringing affordable groceries to underserved urban and rural areas (Walmart 2011b).

But how exactly is Wal-Mart going to offer lower prices? By extending the "Wal-Mart effect" to healthy food,

> With more than 140 million customer visits each week, Walmart is uniquely positioned to make a difference by making food *healthier* and more *affordable* to everyone…Walmart's everyday low price business model will help make healthier food more *affordable*. The company will take a number of steps to provide customers *even more savings* on fresh produce through a variety of sourcing, pricing, and transportation and logistics initiatives that will drive efficiencies throughout the supply chain and further *reduce unnecessary costs*…If we are successful in our efforts to *lower prices*, we believe we can save Americans who shop at Walmart approximately $1 billion per year on fresh fruit and vegetables…Walmart will also *dramatically reduce or eliminate the price premium* on "better-for-you" options such as reduced sodium, sugar or fat on products from the same manufacturer…We will use our size and scale to *reduce the price premium* on these types of products whenever possible because customers *shouldn't have*

> *to pay more to eat healthier*. Customers should be able to choose knowing the biggest difference in these products is not the price, but rather that one is better for you (Walmart 2011a, emphasis added).

The claims of Wal-Mart fly in the face of the logic of the alternative food movement, that supporting small farmers and growing food in an ecologically sustainable manner requires paying more for food, not less. Now, it is true that this practice creates access and affordability problems for low-income communities, but it is a problem that the food justice movement tries to counteract through community self-production as well as state-facilitated income-support and purchasing power programs. The food justice movement does not reject the alternative food movement's emphasis on higher prices for local, organic, and small-scale food production but utilizes demand-side programs and projects to reduce or eliminate the economic barriers to their consumption. However, the Obama/Wal-Mart alliance does reject the presumption of a win-win scenario between smaller farmers and lower income consumers as it attempts to nullify the price premium of local, organic, and small-scale production. Its claim is that healthier food doesn't have to cost more. Healthy food can be made as cheap as less healthy food. How? Using Wal-Mart's vast purchasing and logistical power to "*reduce unnecessary costs*" and "*dramatically reduce or eliminate the price premium.*" Such a project requires three things. One, the application of factory farming principles to organic, local, and healthy food production to create the high-volume low-price model of food production, a model that facilitates the death of small biodiverse family farms as well as rural towns in favor of industrialized monocultures and chain stores. Two, the largest grocery retailer in the country squeezes value from food producers, continuing a trend that transfers the food dollar away from farmers towards retailers or eliminates value for the farmer, and thus their income, in the name of consumer "affordability."

Yet, the price premium of local and organic is necessary for small-scale producers to be economically sustainable. Calling for an end to the price premium is calling for the death of the alternative food movement. Three, the retailer squeeze on agricultural producers inevitably leads to increased exploitation of farmworkers. This is exactly what the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) is organizing against through campaigns that target the key price-makers of the food system, the institutional purchasers such as grocery stores, supermarkets, and fast food companies. To improve the working conditions in the fields requires that these institutional purchasers pay more, not less, for food.

Despite these glaring problems with the low price model of the Obama/Wal-Mart alliance it does not come out of thin air but is smartly built upon the discourse of food deserts, the food justice critique of institutional racism within the food system, and the alt-food movement's emphasis on healthy food. At the same time, its framing of the problem recuperates these concepts and critiques to sell a top-down food project based on the expansion of the conventional food system (Wal-Mart) into lower-income communities and application of industrial agriculture (the lower price-higher volume model) to local, organic, and healthy produce.

Urbanizing Wal-Mart: Activating Food Desert Discourse to Legitimate Market Expansion

The previous section underscored that the Obama/Wal-Mart alliance reinforces the neoliberal logic of corporate domination of the food system, supply-side economics, lower prices, and an anti-worker perspective. What is more alarming is that the framing of Wal-Mart's movement into underserved areas as in the best interests of lower income communities, an act born of social responsibility, compassion and heartfelt do-gooderism, effaces the reality that this

alliance legitimates what is a blatant and necessary act of market expansion for a company that has seen sales stagnate over the last several years (Holt-Gimenez 2011).

Wal-Mart is the face of twenty first century capitalism, with a history that maps over rustbelt decline and sunbelt ascent. Emerging from the rural Ozark region of Arkansas untouched by civil rights, labor rights, and women's rights movements it rejects the New Deal framework of liberalism, Keynesianism, business unionism, and the family wage in favor of a "a new economic order founded upon right-wing politics, neopopulist southern Christian conservatism, patriarchal values and Reaganism (Lichenstein 2006:3)." The "vanguard of the retail revolution," Wal-Mart is part of a sea change in the economic and political structures of society that subordinates producers and manufacturers to retailers through the latters ability to configure markets, set prices, shape product development, and control wages and working conditions (Petrovic and Hamilton 2006). By 1996 16 of the top 100 firms on the Fortune 500 list were mass retailers, a list that included Wal-Mart, Sears, Target, and K-Mart. Wal-Mart has lead this charge though, as the company moved to the number one position on the Fortune 500 list in 2002 and has remained there every year thereafter except in 2006 and 2012 when Exxon Mobil held the crown. The shear size of the company is astounding (Lichenstein 2010). It is the world's largest private employer with over 2.1 million employees and 4,557 stores in 14 countries. The bulk of its workforce (1.4 million) and stores (3,800) are found in the United States, making it the largest private employer in the country. Domestically in 2010 the company had total sales of $310 billion and grocery sales of $140 billion. It does more business than Target, Home Depot, Sears, Holdings, Safeway, and Kroger combined. It imports more goods from China than the United Kingdom or Russia, meaning it would rank as China's six largest export market if it were an independent country. Its revenues are larger than Switzerland, on a

single day its sales top the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 36 countries, and its economy would rank as thirteenth in the world if it were considered an independent country (Moreton 2006).

Entering grocery retailing in 1988 with its first supercenter, which combined a supermarket-sized grocery store with a general merchandise store as well as a drugstore, by 2000 Wal-Mart sold more groceries than any other chain, including Kroger, Safeway, and Albertson's (Lichenstein 2006, 2010). Today, Wal-Mart is the single largest purchaser of American agricultural products, which enables it to shape the processes in which these foods are produced, the prices paid to farmers, farm workers, and food processors, and the type of food American's consume. In 29 domestic markets it controls 50 percent of grocery sales. Nationally, the company controls about 33 percent of the grocery market, its closet competitors, Kroger, Safeway, and SUPERVALU, each control 4 to 9 percent. Today, a little over half of its sales come from groceries and 1 out of every 3 to 5 dollars in the country spent on groceries goes to Wal-Mart (Food and Water Watch 2012). If Wal-Mart were to match this market saturation in New York City it would have to build 114 small stores, 34 medium, and 11 large stores (Kellermann and Luce 2011).

Central to Wal-Mart's success, and one that it is applying to grocery retailing, is an economic model that rests on low prices, low wages, high product turnover, and high volume sales. Low wages are secured through a rejection of the high-wage unionization of Keynesianism in favor of a low-wage, low-benefit, part-time workforce that depends on social safety net programs such as SNAP, Medicaid, and public housing to survive (Lichenstein 2010). The outcome of these processes is that Wal-Mart is an exemplar of the income polarization reshaping America since the 1970s. In 2003 the C.E.O. of Wal-Mart took home 1,500 times

what the average full-time hourly employee did (Lichenstein 2010:38). Low prices are achieved through controlling manufacturing prices by institutionalizing "retail price maintenance" as a sacrosanct principle of neoliberal capitalism (Strasser 20006). Through technology, logistics, and just-in-time (JIT) supply chain management, as well as its sheer size, Wal-Mart has instituted a "lean retailing" model that enables it to shift power within the commodity chain away from producers and manufacturers towards retailers like itself. In doing so Wal-Mart is the face of a resurgent brand of capitalism that "creates" value not through actually producing goods but fashioning networks that centralize value within themselves through a combination of connecting their consumers to new low-wage production spaces globally and squeezing economic value from other actors in the supply chain, producers, manufacturers, processors, and workers. This dynamic of "downward price pressure" legitimates the centralization of value within retailers under the guise of "everyday low prices" and ensures that actors lower on the supply chain become marginally profitable or non-profitable unless they scale up to the industrialized low-wage format matching Wal-Mart's supply demands, which often necessitates outsourcing production to East Asia or finding a cheaper labor force domestically. The volume and price demands of Wal-Mart combined with its massive market power has become known as the "Wal-Mart effect," where a company forces intensified competition for market share and fuels sectorial consolidation through a wave of mergers, acquisitions, liquidations, and bankruptcies that restructures the agricultural, manufacturing, retailing, and processing industries into monopolies or oligopolies (Petrovic and Hamiltion 2006:107). The titans of the food industry, Dean Foods, General Mills, Kraft foods and Tyson Foods all have Wal-Mart as their biggest customer. Besides fueling sectorial consolidation and intensifying the trend of oligopolistic markets Wal-Mart's downward price pressure has generated a push for social wage

concessions by unionized and nonunionized companies within all these industries, which further ratchets down wages and work conditions domestically and internationally. Wal-Mart is therefore a, if not the, central actor fueling an attack on the living standards of millions of people globally.

At the same time, Wal-Mart's domination of discount retailing and its dramatic growth have produced new problems for the company. From the 1960s through today Wal-Mart's expansion occurred primarily in rural and suburban areas. But within the last few years Wal-Mart has reached saturation in these markets, meaning that growth at new stores will only occur through cannibalizing the sales from existing stores. This dynamic contributed to same-store sales declines for 9 straight quarters, from 2009 to second quarter of 2011. Wal-Mart's growth problem is consequently tied to "its maturity and success" (Lichenstein 2010). For Wal-Mart to grow 10 percent a year requires $35 billion in new sales, equal to the total revenue of Staples, Barnes & Noble, Starbucks and Nordstorm. As this growth strategy hit roadblocks in the 2000s Wal-Mart looked to urban America and the implementation of a smaller store format adopted from Latin America. Rather than its traditional and massive supercenters, which are often 200,000 square feet, it could create stores that are around 20,000 square feet, a size much more situated to the density of urban areas. According to Neil Currie, executive director for UBS Securities, New York, "penetrating urban markets could enable Wal-Mart to boost volume by at least $80 billion a year…[because] Wal-Mart has the potential to open 350 to 400 small-format stores a year for the next 10 years...[Overall,] a multi-year rollout of a smaller-store format could make Wal-Mart U.S. a *growth story* once again (Zwiebach 2010, emphasis added)." Garrick Brown, Vice President of Research at Colliers International, echoes these sentiments, "smaller designs, in the twenty thousand square- foot range, and mostly groceries – that's where the

money is" (ABMN Staff 2010). In order for Wal-Mart to grow it will have to break with its traditional large-scale model, especially its Supercenters.

On top of these factors, the city is a growth market for Wal-Mart because it is home to millions of low-income SNAP recipients, a vast majority of who could spend their food stamps at Wal-Mart. 83 percent of all SNAP dollars are spent at grocery stores, supermarkets, and supercenters even though they make up less than a quarter of all SNAP retailers (USDA 2012b). An investigative article in the Tulsa World entitled "Food Stamps Equal Big Money" explored this relationship by looking at how many SNAP dollars Wal-Mart obtained in Oklahoma (Graham and Off 2011). From July 2009 to March 2011 the state of Oklahoma distributed close to $1.2 billion dollars of food stamps and nearly $506 million of that went to Wal-Mart, close to half. Similar numbers were produced in Massachusetts, where the state's nine Wal-Mart Supercenters "received more than $33 million in SNAP benefits" during fiscal year 2009/2010, that is "more than four times the amount spent at farmers markets nationwide in 2010 (Simon 2012)." There are no public numbers on SNAP and Wal-Mart in New York State but over $950 million dollars were distributed to SNAP recipients in New York City in 2008. Besides New York, Wal-Mart has also attempted to enter the urban markets of Chicago and Los Angeles, where over $480 million and $800 million of SNAP were distributed respectively. If Wal-Mart is able to channel SNAP sales in these markets to itself, like it has in the rural and suburban areas, it will significantly improve its bottom line.

Wal-Mart's growth now requires it to go "small-mart" in order to enter the city, the home of unions, democrats, and liberals who are not necessarily pro-Wal-Mart. Utilizing the language of combating food deserts subsequently allows Wal-Mart to combat two long-term barriers to its penetration of urban markets, "high real estate prices and resistance from organized labor (Holt-

Gimenez 2011)." The first barrier is reduced through a combination of new city, state and federal initiatives that combine zoning and financial incentives to reduce these costs and subsequently risk for supermarkets and grocery stores. The second barrier is reduced through many of these initiatives lacking any "quality job" requirements mandating full-time employment, living wages, healthcare and pension coverage, or collective bargaining rights.

What the Obama/Wal-Mart alliance represents is part of a larger corporate-state alliance that aims to re-legitimate the corporation, capitalism, oligopolistic markets, and economic growth as solutions to the problems of a corporate dominated economy and a growth imperative that primarily benefits the top 1 percent. Through the discourse of turning food deserts into food oases growth is re-framed as good, for it is a mechanism of inclusion into affordable healthy food for lower income communities. In doing so, Wal-Mart can claim it is helping out millions of American's during a recession when unemployment is up, jobs are hard to find, and disposable incomes are tight, even though its economic policies are a key producer of these social problems in the first place.

Co-opting the Food Justice Movement: Wal-Mart and Growing Power

While the Obama/Wal-Mart alliance is by all measures not food justice, what is more problematic is that this alliance legitimates not merely a corporation as the solution to food injustice, or the largest grocery retailer in the United States, but a corporation whose social, political, and economic practices are central to the emergence of a neoliberal form of capitalism premised on low-wages, mass underemployment, and oligopolistic markets and a color-blind/post-racial neoconservatism that has exacerbated racial and class inequality, social problems that the food justice movement is struggling against. For these reasons, actors across

the food justice movement were shocked when the most visible face of the movement, the Milwaukee-based organization Growing Power, announced it had formed an alliance with Wal-Mart to combat food injustice. At the same time, the Growing Power/Wal-Mart alliance is emblematic of the contradictions and tensions bound up with bottom-up food projects, social justice organizing, and the tendency towards the recuperation of potentially oppositional movement actors by top-down food projects and corporations.

Over the last five years Growing Power has been vaulted from a little known organization within the food justice movement towards the national limelight, with its founder, Will Allen, garnering numerous accolades. As an organization Growing Power began in 1994 on a three-acre urban farm dedicated to "urban agriculture training and building community food security systems" through vermicomposting and aquaponics. The organization operates to ensure fresh and affordable food access to low-income communities while utilizing food production as an income and jobs program. Growing Power is also a key organization behind the Growing Food and Justice Initiative, whose goal is "to establish a powerful network of individuals, organizations and community based entities…aimed at dismantling racism and empowering low-income and communities of color through sustainable and local agriculture (GFJI n.d.)."

These efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2008 Will Allen was awarded a John D. and Katherine T. McArthur Foundation "Genius Grant" and named a McArthur Fellow, which brought him a $500,000 award, spread over five annual payments of $100,000. This is the same award that Cheryl Rogowski, the farmer who sells at ENYF!, won in 2004. Much like it did for Cheryl Rogowski, this award signaled Will Allen's ascent into the public eye. In 2010 he was named a member of the Clinton Global Initiative, which seeks to build "a community of global leaders to forge solutions to the world's most pressing challenges…[notably]…efforts to

alleviate poverty, create a cleaner environment, and increase access to health care and education (CGI n.d.)." In the same year Time Magazine named him as one of the 100 World's Most Influential People and he was one of four people chosen to stand with Michelle Obama at the White House when she launched her "Let's Move!" initiative.

However, the rosy hue of Growing Power and its mainstreaming of the food justice movement became very clouded the following year as Wal-Mart doubled the MacArthur Foundation award of $500,000 with a $1,000,000 donation to help Growing Power expand nationally. The money will be channeled into reproducing Growing Power's hydroponic model with "regional outreach training centers" in: Louisville, Kentucky; Brooklyn, New York; Detroit, Michigan; Denver, Colorado; Fort Valley, Georgia; Indianapolis, Indiana; Raleigh, North Carolina; Rutherfordton, North Carolina; Lynchburg, Virginia; Mound Bayou & Shelby, Mississippi; New Orleans, Louisiana; Cleveland, Ohio; Forrest City, Arkansas; Columbus, Ohio; East Point, Georgia, and North Branch, Minnesota (Growing Power n.d.). While the MacArthur Grant designation received praise and signaled urban farming and food justice's ascent to national prominence the Wal-Mart grant was critiqued publicly and privately by many in the food justice community as a selling-out by Will Allen or a co-optation by Wal-Mart, or a mixture of both. This forced Will Allen to go to his blog and explain his "position on the role that corporations can play in the Good Food Revolution,"

> The First Lady has brought national attention to our country's poor health, poor eating habits and poor food quality with her "Let's Move!" program. Now that this issue is in the national spotlight, we are using the momentum she's created to take the next steps forward in improving overall food quality and quality of life for all people. We, as a society, can no longer refuse to invite big corporations to the table of the Good Food

> Revolution. Poverty, foodlessness, joblessness: these are problems we all face. They are not only the problems of the poor or of the urban – they are everyone's problems…Wal-Mart is the world's largest distributor of food – there is no one better positioned to bring high-quality, locally grown food into urban food deserts and fast-food swamps. We can no longer be so idealistic that we hurt the very people we're trying to help. Keeping groups that have the money and the power to be a significant part of the solution away from the Good Food Revolution will not serve us. At the same time, by accepting grants like these we retain the power for how corporate money is spent, and the grassroots movement stays grassroots (2011).

Andy Fisher, the main fundraiser of the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) for the last fourteen years, took to the web to provide "a perspective on money and the movement" as well, one that refuted Allen's glowing interpretation of his relationship with Wal-Mart and corporate America. Andy's critique exemplifies the struggles that all social movements must go through when they go against the grain and try and build alternatives to the current power structure,

> All organizations have to make decisions about from whom they are willing to take money and under what terms. Some groups will take money from any corporation that gives it to them, believing that they can do better things with the money than the company can. Other organizations are more selective, only taking money from those aligned with their mission...Given the tight funding environment, NGO boards and executive directors are often faced with compromises that they wish they didn't have to confront. They are often forced to become pawns in someone else's game in order to meet their organizational needs. That is just the reality of fundraising in a society where corporations control much of the wealth…Nonetheless, we in the movement don't have

> to define our game as including those entities whose practices undermine our long-term goals, despite the convergence in short-term more narrowly defined objectives. In plain language, Wal-Mart is NOT part of the "Good Food Revolution," because at the end of the day it hurts communities more than it helps them…Let's not be so idealistic about the power relations between our movement and multi-national corporations that, as Will Allen, says, "We hurt the very people we're trying to help" (2011).

Fisher unequivocally rejects Allen's assertion that Wal-Mart can be a "significant solution to the problem" because its larger policies destroy community food security by attacking the wage and benefit politics of unionized groceries, opposes the CIW campaigns for workers rights, concentrates more wealth in the hands of a few, and supports a low-wage labor regime that externalizes the costs of reproducing its workforce onto the public. On top of all this, Fisher (2011) points out that Wal-Mart's "altruistic intentions to build in food deserts is little more than a Trojan horse packaged in shiny PR gift wrap," reinforcing the claim that urban food justice organizations, such as Growing Power, are co-opted by Wal-Mart to legitimate a growth-oriented strategy of expansion necessitated by capitalist logic.

Michelle Simon, a public health lawyer who wrote the book, *Appetite for Profit: How the Food Industry Undermines Our Health and How to Fight Back* (2006), echoed Fisher's critique. She claimed Wal-Mart's funding of Growing Power was a tactic straight from the playbook of the Tobacco and alcohol industries: "buying silence" (Simon 2011). Simon wonders what the cost of this deal will be for Growing Power. "What will Wal-Mart want in return? To be the sole seller of Growing Power Produce? To have a Wal-Mart person on Growing Power's board? (Simon 2011)." As of now, this is unclear. Michele Simon is equally upset as Andy Fisher is that Will Allen presumes that the "Good Food Revolution" needs corporate America,

> Allen defends the move by arguing that we "can no longer refuse to invite big corporations to the table of the Good Food Revolution." Invite them to the table? These corporations: McDonald's, PepsiCo, Kraft, and especially Walmart, have already been to the table: they have *set the table,* and left a stinking mess for us to clean up. Has Corporate America really been left out of the conversation about our food supply? My book was inspired by the response of the food industry to the criticism being leveled against them. Responses in the form of a massive public relations campaign designed to convince the American public and policymakers alike that they have it covered. McDonald's pushing cheeseburgers and fries? No problem, now they sell salads. General Mills promoting sugary cereals to kids? Enter whole grain Reese's Puffs. Not enough access to fresh food in poor areas? Wal-Mart to the rescue. Meanwhile, any policy effort to reform the food system in more meaningful ways is resisted by these same companies with powerful lobbying campaigns. Wal-Mart is no exception to this pattern (Simon 2011).

Another well-known writer on food politics, Christopher Cook, author of *Diet for a Dead Planet: Big Business and the Coming Food Crisis* (2006), responded to the Wal-Mart Growing Power deal through the Community Food Security (CFSC) listserve, of which I am a member,

> When Allen says we can no longer afford to be "idealistic" by refusing corporate largesse, with all respect, he has it backwards—it is profoundly realistic and wise to refuse those dollars, which are, invariably and without exception, not only tainted but tied to future political allegiance with the corporate agenda. There are no exceptions to this rule. Let's remember: the PR and influence that Wal-Mart and Pepsi gain from this "charitable giving" expands their corporate power and their market control—the

> very things that are directly undermining our food system, sustainability, and food access and justice. These two corporations are a huge part of precisely why we are in such deep trouble with our food today. It's not just about "tainted" dollars, it's about how these corporations will (and they will) profit both economically and politically by buying market share in the food justice movement. Don't let them in, they cannot be trusted, and they will wreak havoc. It is, in fact, naively idealistic to think Wal-Mart and Pepsi are going to give their money without strings—present or future expectations of political allegiance or silence…Instead of the false "realism" of taking money that's directly part of the problem, we need a strongly united movement pushing aggressively for public investment in the great and vital work of Growing Power and other groups (Cook 2011).

These three authors remind us that community food systems are about food sovereignty, people controlling the conditions of food production, distribution, and consumption, not corporate or industrial food systems. Additionally, food justice advocates underscore that state-led redistribution of wealth is a better alternative than corporately controlled wealth. In reality, it should either be the workers through cooperative principles or citizens through participatory democracy that decide how socially produced wealth is socially distributed rather than a private foundation elite mirroring the same structure of the private corporate elite. Historically, philanthropy is a well-funded backdoor strategy that overwhelmingly restricts emancipatory social change through channeling funds to non-antagonistic social organizations and denying funding to movements engaged in non-reformist reforms (Incite 2009). Alongside of starving oppositional social movements of funding necessary to build the movement philanthropy also operates as a marketing tool and legitimation technique where a power structure organized around the private appropriation of socially produced wealth, one that concentrates wealth and

power within the hands of an elite, is made socially acceptable because in the end the person or corporation donates "their" wealth back to society. In this way philanthropy becomes a necessary part of maintaining the treadmill of production and the non-profit philanthropic foundation becomes the attaché of the for-profit corporation. Corporate philanthropy was central to legitimating the titans of industrializing America, those of Carnegie, Vanderbilt, Ford, and Rockefeller, and continues with the dominant corporations today. The Wal-Mart foundation is the biggest and most active corporate philanthropy in America, part of and leader of right-wing philanthropies that aim to enhance the ideology and political appeal of pro-business free market fundamentalism as the solution to the nation's problems (Lichenstein 2010). Wal-Mart is traditionally a Republican-leaning company, during the past fifteen years, more than seventy-five per cent of its political donations have gone to Republicans. The Wal-Mart foundation donates to free-market think tanks such as the Cato Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Manhattan Institute and provides funds to the school choice movement, school voucher movement, and the charter school movement. Although no longer a member, for a long time it participated in American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a US conservative advocacy group that advocates for "stand your ground" gun laws, the privatization of public lands, and voter ID legislation, amongst other proposals. To a company that makes around $15 billion in profit every year, a one-million dollar contribution to Growing Power is a rather cheap way to present Wal-Mart as part of the solution, especially since it spends over $60 million per year lobbying against minimum wage laws, zoning regulations, collective bargaining rights, health insurance mandates and environmental regulations such as clean air standards (Lichenstein 2010). Only time will tell of the affects of the alliance between Growing Power and Wal-Mart, but what is clear is that Wal-Mart is considerably more powerful than Growing Power. Wal-Mart doesn't need the

legitimacy of Growing Power or the food justice movement; it merely needs the public to believe that Wal-Mart and corporations are the answer to food injustice, an image that is put forth when Growing Power creates connections with Wal-Mart. It is this dynamic that is most threatening for Andy Fisher, Michelle Simon, Christopher Cook and many others in the food justice movement, including the staff at East New York Farms!, which must struggle against the siting of a Wal-Mart within their community.

Wal-Mart and East New York: Turning a Food Desert into a Food Oasis?

East New York is often framed as one of the top-ten food deserts in the country, alongside of areas in New Orleans, Chicago, Atlanta, Memphis, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Detroit, and New Jersey (Goldschein 2011; Gordon et al. 2011; Thomas 2011).[21] A 2008 study conducted by the city and called "Going to Market: New York City's Neighborhood Grocery Store and Supermarket Shortage" focused on supermarket demand within New York City and found that there was a "high need" for supermarkets in East New York,[22] as well as low-income neighborhoods in the South Bronx, central and eastern Brooklyn, far eastern Queens, and Harlem. Overall, the report found that three million people were "underserved" and suggested the creation of over one hundred new grocery stores and supermarkets in order to "capture approximately $1 billion of grocery spending lost to suburbs," spur competition to "reduce grocery costs" and "increase convenience and availability of fresh foods, empowering consumers to make healthier decisions about what to buy and what to eat." The report also touted the "economic multiplier" effects of supermarkets, beyond expanding the sales tax base by increasing grocery sales each new store raises surrounding property values and each new grocery worker represents at least $2,800 in income, sales, and real estate taxes. Supermarkets are

therefore framed as a neighborhood development strategy, an “anchor store” that brings with it “additional private sector investment.” The planning department also found that high-need areas, such as East New York, were areas that had lower levels of fruit and vegetable consumption and higher levels of diabetes than the city average. For instance, in East New York up to 25 percent of the population does not eat a single fruit or vegetable a day—the USDA recommends five to nine servings a day (NYCDHMH 2006). And while New York City had an obesity rate of 23.4 percent and a diabetes rate of 9.3 percent in 2010 in East New York it was 31.2 percent and 13 percent respectively (NYCDHMH 2006).

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDHMH) then commissioned a follow-up study to “Going to Market.” Released in May of 2010 the report, titled “NYC Full Service Grocery Store Analysis,” studied nineteen New York City neighborhoods, of which East New York was neighborhood 12. The report found that “each of the nineteen neighborhoods has demand for a range of grocery store types, from small, independent format stores of 6,000 square feet to larger national or regional chains that typically require 40,000+ square feet…and [that the communities] could support another 1.1 million square feet of full service grocery store space (3, 1).” In particular, “Fordham, Crown Heights North, Washington Heights, East New York, and Prospect-Lefferts Gardens neighborhoods show the highest potential for new, full service grocery store space (13).” Focusing on central East New York within the report, as of 2007 there were only five full service grocery stores for a population of 110,900 in 2000 and 122,100 in 2010—this is an improvement since the 1990s when none existed.[23] As a result, many East New Yorkers leave East New York to buy groceries and the report estimates an annual grocery retail leakage of $44.1 million dollars based on expenditures of $127 million and sales of $83 million. This finding is corroborated by ENYF!

own surveys, which find that East New Yorkers go to Queens, Manhattan, and other parts of Brooklyn for groceries. This leakage leads the report to conclude that a total grocery retail potential of 84,144 square feet exists for East New York, allowing for a possible combination of several small (5,000 sq. ft), medium (15-25,000 sq. ft) and large-size (40,000 sq. ft) grocery stores. Out of the 19 communities, with the exception of the St. George section of Staten Island that lacks a full service grocery store, the central section of East New York has the highest population (122,138), the lowest store area per person (0.2 square feet), the lowest average store size (5,800 square feet) and the fourth lowest aggregate store area (29,000 square feet). As a result, it has the fourth largest store area potential (84,144 square feet).

All of this data has been drawn upon by Wal-Mart in their attempt to enter one of the largest grocery markets in the United States, that of New York City, by way of East New York and the Gateway Estates II complex (Illustration 2). It's older sibling, the Gateway Center, opened in 2002 on a fifty-acre piece of land in East New York adjacent to the Belt Parkway. To the North is the New Lots Section of East New York. To the south is Jamaica Bay. To the east is the community of Howard Beach. To the west is Starrett City—a massive public housing development encompassing 5,881 apartment units in 46 buildings spread over 153 acres. The mall itself is a one-story 638,000 square foot suburban-style shopping center, the largest in New York City, and is anchored by a Target, Home Depot, and BJ's Wholesale Club (150,000, 135,000 and 130,000 square feet respectively). Additional tenants include Bed Bath & Beyond, Staples, Marshall's, Best Buy, Babies R' Us, Old Navy, and Famous Footwear, as well as the restaurants Olive Garden, Red Lobster, and Boulder Creek Steakhouse. The center is the first home for Target and Bed Bath & Beyond in Brooklyn and is expected to draw customers from central and southern Brooklyn, Bay Ridge, Bensonhurst, Ridgewood and Ozone Park—

customers who previously went to Long Island for mall shopping. Developed by Gateway Center Properties LLC, a partnership of the Related Retail Corporation (affiliate of The Related Companies) and Blackacre Capital Management, the $192 million project was first put forth by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) in 1989, has been heavily supported by Mayor Michael Bloomberg and other city officials, and is financed through a mix of private, public, and community funds.

Illustration 6.1-3: Gateway Estates

One of the largest city-sponsored economic development projects in Brooklyn the center was built on a long vacant publicly owned municipal landfill of forty-eight acres known as the Fresh Creek Urban Renewal Area (FCURA) (NYCDH 2009). The FCURA is part of the southern portion of the New Lots section of Brooklyn, also known as the Spring Creek section of Brooklyn. Prior to its use as the Milford Street Landfill from the 1930s to 1950s it was full of salt meadows and streams or “kills” and as such was valuable agricultural land since salt hay was

collected as feed for livestock. After the landfill closed in the 1950s it largely sat vacant and unused. United Community Centers and other integrationist groups put forth plans during the 1960s for this site to be home to an integrated educational complex for East New York, Brownsville, Canarsie, and East Flatbush but these proposals were blocked by whites invested in segregation, blacks devoted to community control, and the New York City Board of Education that sought to reduce the tensions bound up with integration. Instead, the FUCRA was created in 1967 and remained one of last remnants of the post-war Urban Renewal attempts to remove "blight," strengthen the tax base, and provide new housing and community facilities through a process of eminent domain, rezoning, demolition, and the creation of entirely new construction from ground zero. Despite these plans the land largely remained unutilized through the 1990s, with the only construction being the Brooklyn Developmental Center, the 7.7 acre Thomas Jefferson Athletic Field and a few streets. But in 1996 a new FUCRA plan was released and laid out the design that the Gateway Center began to realize. The success of the Gateway Center has reinvigorated efforts not only to finish but scale up the 1996 FCURA plans through the construction of more mixed–use development. Aptly named Gateway Estates II, the second and final phase of development for the FCURA is proposed as a 227-acre neighborhood that blends retail, housing, and public amenities (NYCDH 2009). There would be a 625,000 square foot "regional" retail center—an expansion to the existing Gateway Mall—as well as 68,000 square feet of "local" retail and "affordable" housing for 7,000 people, consisting of a mix of single-family homes, condos, as well as apartment buildings between six to eight stories tall. There would be 30,000 square feet of community facility space, a public intermediate/high school, a 16,000 square feet day care facility, and 36.5 acres of new or improved open space, including a

17-acre public park, a grasslands preserve on the 73 acre White Island in Marine Park, and the creation of 3.5 acres of wetlands adjacent to the project.

Glenn Goldstein, vice president of Related Retail Corporation, summarizes the retail aspect of the project succinctly, the "Gateway Center will offer people living in eastern Brooklyn and southern Queens an outstanding shopping experience where they can get the products they want at *affordable prices without leaving New York City* (NYCDH 2000, emphasis added)." For the city, the project is viewed as central to capturing the property, sales, and income taxes associated with the project, which are often lost to Long Island. In the words of New York State Office of General Services Commissioner Joseph J. Seymour, increasing "revenues for local tax rolls" is an important component of the project, which will generate over $30 million in annual tax revenues for the city and state (NYCDH 2000). East Brooklyn Congregations (EBC), a community organization that has long pushed for affordable housing in East New York as a strategy to counter disinvestment and institutional neglect also considers the project a significant victory. Reverend David K. Brawley, co-chairman of East Brooklyn Congregations (EBC), stated, "the leaders of EBC and Metro IAF have fought long and hard for this latest phase of Nehemiah construction and commend Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Donovan on their consistent support and commitment to our vision of quality, affordable housing for all New Yorkers (NYCDH 2006)."

It would therefore appear that the project is a win-win for everybody involved. The developers generate wealth through construction and leasing of retail spaces. The city accumulates sales tax revenue to increase its coffers. East New York residents obtain long sought after affordable housing and big-box stores. Despite this triple-bottom line win the Gateway Estates II project has been marred in controversy and negative publicity because of the

potential location of a Wal-Mart within its retail space. On February 3, 2011 the city council held a hearing to discuss the potential effects of Wal-Mart's entrance into New York City. The hearing displayed the forces allied against Wal-Mart. Prior to the meeting hundreds of protestors from unions, small business associations and community groups lined the street and chanted "Wal-Mart-Free, N-Y-C-!"[24] Yet, what was more intriguing was that opposition to Wal-Mart brought together City Council speaker Christine Quinn and City councilmember Charles Barron, two councilmembers that rarely see eye to eye and have engaged in quite visible power struggles over the last several years with Barron seeking to replace Quinn as speaker several times and Quinn stripping Barron of his chair position on the city council's Higher Education Committee since he was not a "unifying force" (Lombardi 2010a). Yet on this day they both acted as roadblocks to Wal-Mart's New York City entrance. Quinn stated, "you [Wal-Mart] cannot come to New York City and behave the way you have behaved in other parts of the country. New York City will simply not stand for it (Strasser 2011)." This comment was in reference to Wal-Mart's notorious history of sexual and racial discrimination, low-wages, reliance on public subsidies to reproduce its workforce, and ability to put small businesses out of business. Charles Barron upped the anti, calling Wal-Mart a "roving plantation" that is not welcome in East New York because "there are no slaves in East New York…we will not be your slave workers (Stewart 2011)." Quinn's comments were reflective of previous statements. At a rally led by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) and supported by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Christine Quinn stated her opinion of Wal-Mart loud and clear,

> Wal-Mart's corporate philosophy, Wal-Mart's business plan is in fact a plan and a philosophy which runs counter to the core values of New York City, the core values of

> our workers, the core values of people who spend money to buy goods for their family. Now we in the Council feel very strongly that we need to get more retail establishments, particularly those that sell supermarket food good for people. That is why we are the first city in the country to pass a rezoning encouraging supermarkets to develop in the city of New York. But in that rezoning we were clear about the types of supermarket jobs we wanted and that we wanted them to be assets to the community and help build the community. That simply is not Wal-Mart. Now if Wal-Mart wants to usher in a new day we are happy to sit down with them and write a New York philosophy and a New York business plan. But until that happens they can call themselves whatever they want, they can have a new urban store that's smaller, but until they change their ways they are Wal-Mart and they are not welcome in our five boroughs (Lombardi 2010b).

Mr. Barron's opposition would be noticed again as well, this time on July 29, 2011, when Wal-Mart organized a private invitation-only meet and greet between five of its staff from human resources, constituent relations, store operations, and public affairs and thirty-five local East New York leaders who were either pro-Wal-Mart or undecided. These included local clergy, community board members and politicians. Those openly opposed to Wal-Mart, such as City Council member Charles Barron, were not invited. The event was a more focused follow-up to a previous meeting that occurred between Wal-Mart officials and key community leaders from Queens, Staten Island and East New York. Nonetheless, the meeting was emblematic of Wal-Mart's political strategy to gain entrance into New York City: combine advertising campaigns and back-door meetings with important political figures while avoiding open and public arenas such as city council hearings or community board meetings. The meeting was to be held at the Lidenwood Diner but was moved to a private building on Atlantic Ave and Eastern Parkway

when Mr. Barron and 100 community members showed up outside to protest. 40 of the protestors followed the meeting to its new location and continued to protest outside of the private building, led by Mr. Barron. While Barron has been supportive of the Gateway Estates development, largely for its creation of affordable housing, he has been very vocal in his opposition to the location of Wal-Mart within the complex. Earlier in the week Mr. Barron critiqued Wal-Mart's "closed-door" practices, evasion of city council requests to come to meetings, and once again stated that "they [Wal-Mart] are not going to sneak into East New York to bring in that *roving plantation* (Durkin 2011, emphasis added)." While Barron and his community members were rallying outside in the meeting local leaders were pushing Wal-Mart "to consider raising the $8 hourly rate for some employees to $13 and hiring at least half of its staff from East New York (Barbarino and Pearson 2011)." Insiders have even disclosed that the Related Companies, the actor in charge of leasing retail space for Gateway Estates, "basically threw the supermarkets under the bus and decided to put all its eggs in the Wal-Mart basket (Rotondaro and Durkin 2011)." Realizing that Related Companies is "all-in" Councilman Charles Barron and his wife assemblywoman Inez Barron (D-East New York) have tried to use the power invested in their respective political offices to block the land sale between the city and Related Companies and prevent Wal-Mart's entrance into East New York (Tracy 2010). Because the City Council has no official power to block who Related Companies leases space to and since the project has already been green lit the only major play—besides community organizing to create a negative public opinion about Wall-Mart—has been to refuse to allow the land transfer to occur.

The anger and fear projected at Wal-Mart during the city council meeting back in February is reflected throughout the city by labor unions, small businesses and community

groups worried about the negative effects of Wal-Mart on their quality of life. In New York City, the Office of the Manhattan Borough President, the Murphy Institute, Align and the Center for Community Planning and Development have all produced reports documenting the loss of jobs and small businesses that would result from Wal-Mart moving into the city (Angotti and Platkin 2011; Gans 2011; Kellerman and Luce 2011). Unions have played an important role in organizing to keep New York City Wal-Mart free, specifically the UFCW, which has created and funded a new non-union organization consisting of Wal-Mart employees that will fight for better working conditions. The group is called Organization United for Respect at Walmart, or OUR Wal-Mart for short, and is being assisted by ASGK Public Strategies, a consulting firm long associated with David Axelrod, President Obama's top political strategist. The new group is the latest union-funded and backed worker group that intends to pressure Wal-Mart to change its labor practices. Previous groups included Wal-Mart Watch and Wake-Up Wal-Mart. The UFCW has also been a major actor in the Making Change at Wal-Mart campaign, which includes "Wal-Mart associates, union members, small business owners, religious leaders, community organizations, women's advocacy groups, multi-ethnic coalitions, elected officials and ordinary citizens who believe that changing Walmart is vital for the future of our country (MCAW n.d.)." Why is the UFCW so invested in challenging Wal-Mart? Jennifer Stapleton, assistant director of Making Change at Wal-Mart, emphasized the relationship between the wages and working conditions at Wal-Mart and the rest of the service industry, "the mission of the U.F.C.W. is to raise standards for workers in the retail and grocery industry…you cannot change the standards in the retail and grocery industry unless you also change Wal-Mart (Greenhouse 2011)." Jennifer Stapleton's insight is not an isolated opinion either but one shared throughout UFCW. The

International President of the UFCW, Joe Hansen, went further than his colleague and echoed Charles Barron's critique of the Obama/Wal-Mart alliance,

> the First Lady's commitment to addressing childhood obesity in the U.S. is laudable and the UFCW commends her for her enthusiasm for such a worthy endeavor. But with income disparity between the rich and the poor at more extreme levels than during the Great Depression, Wal-Mart must be held accountable for its track record of lower standards for millions of retail workers…Wal-Mart is more responsible than any other private employer in our country for creating poverty-level jobs that leave workers unable to purchase healthy food or provide a good life for their families (n.d.).

In New York, UFCW Local 1500 worked with NY Jobs with Justice to launch the *Good Food, Good Jobs* campaign to bring good food, good health, and good jobs to every New Yorker, which they claimed has influenced New York City's focus on food deserts and closing the grocery store gap, but an effort that needs to be supported with quality job protections for workers, otherwise these stores will merely provide part-time low-wage work. Another actor pushing back against Wal-Mart is Wal-Mart Free NYC, which is a "coalition of concerned workers and residents, small business owners, community leaders, clergy, and elected officials who are committed to increasing economic opportunities, preserving local businesses, and bringing more jobs to communities across New York." Bertha Lewis, who works for the coalition and previously worked with ACORN, was vehement in her opposition to Wal-Mart's entrance into the city,

> Their strategy now is urban expansion, which is code word for black and brown neighborhoods, poor neighborhoods, places that they believe are not as powerful politically, that have high unemployment and poverty, so that they can come in and be a

> predatory retailer. For years, a red line was drawn around these neighborhoods, and they didn't have access to credit. It's almost the same language now. It's, 'Aww, you don't have access to fresh food,' and, 'aww, you don't have access to affordable goods. Let Wal-Mart help you. It's a cynical race-based ploy…What they didn't count on is that we're not here for a Wal-Mart plantation. There was full employment on plantations, but we're not going to do that here…We are everywhere. We are up their ass. And we're going to stay up their ass ... They need to be told, 'Wal-Mart, you cannot come into New York City doing things the way that you always did them. We've seen what's happened in Chicago, in L.A., all over. If you're going to come into New York City, you need to come in a different way' (Scola 2012).

The battle over Wal-Mart reflects, at its root, a struggle over different value systems and development visions. Different cultural narratives are negotiating the struggle around Wal-Mart, one focuses on everyday low prices and increasing purchasing power, the other focuses on the death of towns, small businesses, quality jobs, and with it the decline in civic life and democracy. This is the debate that has dominated Wal-Mart over the past two decades. However, Wal-Mart has recently become a topic of discussion for food justice advocates, as was brought to light with the Obama/Wal-Mart and Growing Power/Wal-Mart alliance. And given the attempt of Wal-Mart to move into East New York the company had subsequently flown onto East New York Farms! radar in a more concrete manner. I asked East New York Farms! staff about whether Wal-Mart could play a positive role in the food justice movement and the answer was a resounding NO! Janelle claimed that they are "two completely different things!" and rejected the idea that bringing Wal-Mart to so-called food deserts is any way to address food access, "I don't think that is the solution…they need to come to the communities and see what's really

going on…and be real about what they are doing to the human race." Sarita echoes Janelle's critique,

> right now it's really hard for me to think of a way that Wal-Mart could be reformed to be part of the food justice movement. I think the first thing is going back to what I said earlier, people having ownership and decision making power…in the broader world of food justice and thinking about producers. A giant like Wal-Mart is always going to stick it to producers and that's what they can do and that's why they want to be so big because they can set their price. So that's never going to be compatible with a just food system. And then the way they treat their workers, which is also connected to their size. That they can just dominate the employment market in smaller places and do what they want with wages.

The arrival of Wal-Mart has also galvanized the local supermarket and grocery store community who feels extremely threatened by a big box store like Wal-Mart. Arturo Payambs, owner of a Compare Supermarket a few blocks from Gateway Estates, invokes a common theme when discussing Wal-Mart, "it's like David and Goliath. Wal-Mart's a multibillion-dollar corporation, and we're just a small business. We cannot compare with the prices…They tell Pepsi what to do or Coca-Cola what to do. We don't have that power…This is my business. It's my dream…I see everything getting crushed (Rotondaro and Durkin 2010)." His fear is represented in a long line of small New York City grocers being members of the Wal-Mart Free NYC coalition. But there is no universal consensus in the community. Many East New Yorkers are split when it comes to support or opposition to Wal-Mart. Given the lower income of East New York and lack of grocery space, many East New Yorkers would shop at Wal-Mart because of its cheaper prices. But according to a local hardware store employee, the Home Depot at Gateway Center has already pushed several local hardware stores out of business. A Wal-Mart, he contends, would

further harm local small businesses. Yet, he himself shops at Wal-Mart on Long Island to save money. This helter-skelter logic is reflective of the larger New York population and exemplifies the contradictory tensions that exist between one's ideology and values and one's social practices. When push comes to shove, people will often protect their pocketbook rather than their values. For instance, a 2011 poll of New York City voters by Quinnipiac University exemplified these dynamics, with 72 percent of respondents agreeing that Wal-Mart's lower prices would benefit New York shoppers, and 70 percent agreeing that Wal-Mart's lower prices hurt smaller nearby businesses, and 51% that Wal-Mart doesn't pay enough (Carroll 2011). New Yorker's know that Wal-Mart hurts small mom-and-pop businesses and underpays its workers but they will still choose to shop there. This is a clear example that consciousness raising does not necessarily change social behaviors, especially when larger political and economic structures squeeze middle and lower income households. Bread and butter issues can trump class solidarity. The findings of this poll are supported by other polls conducted by NY1/Marist College and New York Times/CBS News, which finds overwhelming support for Wal-Mart, with approval percentages ranging from the low 60s to high 70s (Chen and Connelly 2011; Clark 2011).

The contradiction that Wal-Mart represents is endemic to a person within a capitalist society who is both a wageworker and dependent on waged commodities for survival. In order for companies to make profits, wages must be kept in line, which can generally lead to a personal wage that is largely eaten up by rent, housing, healthcare, education, and transportation costs. In order to maximize purchase power with the minimal disposal income the wageworker shops at stores whose low-cost goods are dependent on other low-wage workers. Consequently, wageworkers pass the hot potato of exploitation from worker to worker due to their structural

position within a capitalist society. In the case of Wal-Mart, low wage workers in the U.S. are able to maintain their standard of living in the U.S. despite declining real wages since the 1970s because the production of clothing, electronics, and other commodities have been globally outsourced to a cheaper group of wage-laborers, principally those in East Asia.

Wal-Mart has responded to the negative press put forth by community groups, labor unions, local politicians, and small business organizations in several ways. Wal-Mart has joined a number of local business groups, like the Association for a Better New York, the Partnership for New York City, and the Chambers of Commerce in four of the city's boroughs, as well as signing a ten-year lease for an executive office in Times Square that will take up the entire second floor and second floor mezzanine at 1371 Broadway, 46,103 square feet in all (Paybarah 2007a, 2007b; Wellborn 2007). Wal-Mart also brought on prominent local and national Democratic operatives in order to win over opponents. Bradley Tusk managed Mayor Michael Bloomberg's re-election bid in 2009 and Doug Schoen has worked for Michael Bloomberg, Bill Clinton, and Hillary Rodham Clinton, both are working on Wal-Mart's New York City campaign (Harris 2011). But a, if not the, key player rebranding Wal-Mart as urban friendly is Leslie Dach, Wal-Mart's executive vice-president for corporate affairs and government relations, who has a long history in environmental and presidential politics. He has worked for the National Audubon Society and the Environmental Defense Fund, was involved in seven presidential campaigns, including those for Senator Edward Kennedy, Michael Dukakis, and Al Gore, and worked for Edelman, the world's largest public relations firm, where among other duties as vice-chairman he managed the Wal-Mart account (Goldberg 2007).[25]

Besides conducting polls that show that New Yorkers want Wal-Mart and already shop at Wal-Mart's located outside of the city the company has put forth an advertising campaign that

included a sheet entitled "10 Facts You Should Know About Wal-Mart in NYC:" #1: New Yorkers are Already Shopping & Working at Walmart, #2: New Yorkers Want Walmart in New York City, #3: New Yorkers Need Jobs, #4: Competitive Wages, Affordable Benefits & the Chance to Build a Career, #5: Walmart Helps American Households Save Money, #6: New Yorkers Need More Access to Fresh, Affordable Food, #7: Walmart is Committed to Making Food Healthier and Healthy Food More Affordable, #8: Walmart has a Positive Economic Impact on the Local Economy, #9: Walmart Supports Local Communities, and #10: Walmart is Committed to Diversity. Utilizing statistics on obesity and lack of access to food in New York City compiled in the previously addressed documents put out by city agencies, Wal-Mart goes on claim that "as the nation's largest grocer, Wal-Mart sells more locally grown produce than any company in America" and can bring its purchasing power to combatting NYC food deserts through "making healthier choices more affordable…by building stores."

Alongside of these tactics Wal-Mart has sought to quell unrest and political opposition by channeling its profits into philanthropic activities. The company has specifically sought to win over politicians as well as the organizations within the local food and environmental movements in order to gain their voice or at least to buy their silence. The entrance into "blue-state" urban environments where citizens and voters tend to be pro-union and pro-environmental necessitates that Wal-Mart pay lip-service to these interests to curry their favor. As a result Wal-Mart has given "strategic donations to liberal nonprofits like Demos and the Center for American Progress" as well as NPR and Harvard (Featherstone 2012). This is a continuation of corporate whitewashing and greenwashing practices where corporations give money to organizations and causes that are generally antagonistic to their economic and political interests in order to create

positive public relations and the legitimacy necessary to carry on their growth oriented projects (Athanasiou 1996; Beder 2002; Stauber and Rampton 1995).

Within New York City the company has sought to ingratiate itself with the mayor's office and city council speaker Christine Quinn, who has spoken out against Wal-Mart, by contributing to one of her pet projects, the Summer Youth Employment Program that hires youth between the ages of 14 and 24 and provides them with summer employment and educational opportunities, for many it is their first paid work experience. In 2011 Wal-Mart donated $4 million to the program to save 3,400 youth jobs from budget cuts and followed this up with $800,000 in 2012 (Schlosser 2002). Despite this donation the program will only be able to provide 30,000 jobs out of 130,000 applicants in 2012 the lowest number of jobs in over five years. The reduced contribution could be a reflection that Wal-Mart's initial investment did not pay dividends as Speaker Christine Quinn, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, and City Comptroller John Liu were still speaking out against Wal-Mart in the spring of 2012, this time on the heels of a massive bribery scandal in Mexico where Wal-Mart is accused of paying $24 million in bribes to "win market dominance" (Barstow 2012; Hennelly 2012). All of these city officials who are opposed to Wal-Mart are also mayoral candidates with the current Mayor Michael Bloomberg only having two years left in his third and final term. This creates a time-sensitive window for Wal-Mart, as Bloomberg is supportive of the retailer while his opponents are not (Massey 2012).

Mayor Bloomberg has even implied that Wal-Mart is a good corporate citizen. When asked by a reporter if the $4 million donation to the Summer Youth Employment Program will "help the company in its attempt to build a store?," the mayor responded matter-of-factly,

> let me answer that. I hope so. Why would anybody not hope so? I mean, I can just tell you. You're telling me that your company's philanthropy doesn't look to see what is good for your company. Otherwise they have no reason to use stockholders' money to do that…This is about summer jobs. We're trying to create jobs in this city. Wal-Mart can speak for itself…I don't see how you could ever separate the two. How can you? What company would not look to see, want to burnish their reputation, want to make the citizens where they have stores feel that they're good corporate citizens (Katz 2011).

Bloomberg's laissez faire economic ideology supports Wal-Mart's entrance into New York City and emphasizes his difference with the prospective Democratic candidates. A year earlier Bloomberg reinforced his belief in free markets, against other city councilmembers, by stating that

> this city does not have the legal right to prevent any business that can come here that complies with our laws. And if Wal-Mart wants to go into a place they have a right to do that. I've always thought that the more competition the better. People that live in this city are going outside the city to shop at Wal-Marts. So if they're going to shop at Wal-Marts…they might as well have the jobs here and the tax revenues here. But the city does not have the right to say to one business, 'You can't come here.' And we're not going to do that (Katz 2010).

Despite the growing opposition to Wal-Mart the mayor continued to articulate his free market beliefs in 2012,

> I've been a big supporter of government not telling people whether they can do business here…I think you let the market decide whether people want jobs or not, whether people want to buy products at given price ranges...and I think that's exactly what this is all

> about…Wal-Mart has the right to come here and open a store anytime they want…they don't need a land use change, they don't have to consult with anybody and that's the way it should be. And you don't have to work there or patronize them. Or you can apply for a job and give them your business. It's totally up to you, he said (Levin 2012).[26]

Alongside of its contribution to the Summer Youth Employment Program by April of 2011 Wal-Mart had also contributed $812,500 to a summer program in literacy, math and experiential learning for 2,000 at-risk middle schoolers, $382,879 to renovate the Food Bank for New York City's 90,000-square-foot warehouse, $225,000 to purchase two refrigerated trucks to deliver summer meals to kids, $150,000 for a concert series founded by Brooklyn Borough president Marty Markowitz, 75,000 for summer jobs for teens in Harlem, and $100,000 to become the lead sponsor of New York Veterans Day Parade, amongst others (Benson 2011). Wal-Mart Stores even moved outside of its comfort zone and contributed $200,000 to environmental conservation projects in the city, $100,000 for the New York Botanical Garden and $100,000 to the Department of Environmental Protection (Massey 2011). The former gift is to help restore the Bronx River while the latter will assist in the Jamaica Bay Salt Marsh restoration project. Overall, from 2007 to 2011 Wal-Mart donated over $13 million dollars to New York City, a small investment considering that Wal-Mart will reap hundreds of millions of dollars of year from the city if its expansion plans are realized.

Even with all of Wal-Mart's efforts the East New York effort ended in defeat, reminiscent of the company's failed attempts to enter Queens and Staten Island in the mid 2000s (Harris 2011; Kusisto 2012). Rather than Wal-Mart a unionized Shop-Rite Supermarket will anchor the Gateway Estates II complex (Hawkins 2012; Santora 2012). New York City's struggle against Wal-Mart is a national phenomenon as well, with communities internally

fragmented over whether Wal-Mart is good or bad for their community. Los Angeles and Chicago have been recent battlegrounds. The tensions playing out in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago will soon become a phenomenon in lower income urban communities across the United States with Michelle Obama and Wal-Mart proposing a top-down technocratic and corporatist food project that puts forth low-price low-wage neoliberal capitalism as the solution to food deserts. How this top-down food project is going to address a long history of food apartheid rooted in the institutional racism of urban renewal, planned shrinkage, the war on drugs, and the prison industrial complex, as well as the neoconservative assault on keynesianism, unionism, and an activist liberal state is unclear, largely because the Obama/Wal-Mart alliance does not intend to address any of these practices that are deeply rooted in the cultural, political, racial, and economic structures of the United States. The alliance merely puts forth the treadmill of production as a solution to the problems produced by the treadmill of production.

Food Justice as a Social Movement: Political Opportunity Structures, Framing, and the Threat of Cooptation

Social movements are inherently filled with conflict because they "pose a threat to existing institutional arrangements in society (McAdam 1982)." This threat is twofold, born of the substantive goals of the movement as well as, and primarily due to, their demand for power within the decision making structure (McAdam 1982). This is the case with the food justice movement, which articulates a political project of community controlled food systems to combat race and class inequities in the food system and the role and power of industrial agriculture and corporations in shaping the food system. The burgeoning power and perceived threat of the food justice movement to establishment interests is apparent in the response by elites, be they Wal-

Mart or Michelle Obama, to the movement, specifically their attempts to make alliances with food justice organizations or propose top-down food projects to address food inequities.

These overtures by elites underscores a major tenant of the political process theory of social movements, which states that much of the strength of insurgency is based less on the internal efforts of insurgents, the resources they have, than on "systemic crises that render existing regime[s] weak and vulnerable to challenge (McAdam 1996:24)." This insight has shifted social movement research away from resource mobilization towards political opportunity structures, dynamics of contention, and strategic approaches, which focus on the larger social context within which movements occur and the agency of individuals and organizations within movements to flex power during crisis (Jasper 2004; McAdam et al. 1996; McAdam et al. 2001). Alongside of these research orientations, framing has become another important aspect of social movement research (Gamson et al. 1982; Capek 1993; Snow et al. 1986). Framing emphasizes how discourses and language matter in terms of movement power and mobilization, particularly "master frames" that enable the politically marginalized to "map their own grievances and demands" (McAdam 1996:25).

In connecting the food justice movement to resource mobilization, political opportunity structure, and framing theory, I contend that what has increased the food justice movement's power vis-à-vis the power elite is not due to resource mobilization in terms of labor, land, and money, all of which are generally extremely limited, but political opportunity structures and framing. In terms of political opportunity structures, the food justice movement, despite its resource limitations, has been able to tap into the debate over the future of food and the alternative food movement's critique and delegitimization of industrial agriculture and corporate control of the food system on ecological, social, and physiological grounds. Tapping into this

food crisis has been strengthened through the movement's food justice frame, which operates as a "master frame" and a "collective action frame" that builds mobilization (McAdam 1986:25). The food justice frame is able to do this because it enables individuals and communities to connect food inequities to an existing and powerful discourse within marginalized communities, that of social in/justice and institutional racism, as well as connecting an individual's desire to grow food to a larger group that shares similar ideals, in this case the community. The food justice frame therefore organizes people's thoughts on food inequities (institutional racism) while directing them on where to act (build community food systems). In doing so, food justice "collectively define[s]" food inequities "as both unjust and subject to change (McAdam 1982:34)."

As a result, food justice movements must now contend with the question of institutionalization and alliance formation that shaped the civil rights and environmental justice movements, amongst others (Dowie 1996; Gottlieb 2005; McAdam 1982). Institutionalization and alliance formation are fraught and heavily debated issues within social movements (Gamson 1975; Jenkins and Perrow 1977; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Piven and Cloward 1977). The problem of institutionalization, also known as "the organization dilemma," engages with the question of whether bureaucratization builds power or weakens the movement (Jasper 2004). Through constructing long-term organizations is the movement's ability to win increased or does it lead to dilution of the movement's goals and subsequent energy and intensity? Alliance formation, also known as "the extension dilemma," addresses whether having a strong and narrow frame or a broad but less specific identity is the best strategy for movement building (Jasper 2004). Does an open membership increase the numbers involved and thereby increase movement power or would a strong and tightknit group be more effective?

The food justice movement has witnessed intensified debates over the organization and extension dilemmas in the case of the alliance between Growing Power and Wal-Mart as well as Wal-Mart and Obama. The worry for many within the food justice movement is that these alliances and top-down food projects are attempts to defang the movement and depoliticize their food injustice critique through cooptation or dissolution of the movement's power by proposing alternatives to bottom-up community-controlled food projects. The perennial question asked by critics of the Wal-Mart donation to Growing Power is what type of control over Growing Power will Wal-Mart have in return for the resources it supplies? This is the fear of cooptation, that Wal-Mart will dilute the goals of the movement that rest in community control and its critique of corporations. On the other hand, Growing Power saw the alliance as a way to institutionalize resources and its own reproduction in a movement and a larger social environment where money is scarce. Growing Power therefore choose institutional reproduction over ideological purity. The long-term effect of this strategic choice is unclear at this point in time but what it does underscore is that individual actors, Will Allen, as well as organizations, Growing Power, have agency in making strategic choices, and that this choice often entails tradeoffs (Jasper 2004; McAdam 1982). For social movements generally have leaders and the leaders matter, for they can be "leaders, decision makers, spies, potential defectors (Jasper 2004)."

Today, food is a topic of political content for the power elite. But the future of food debate is a two-way street; it has created political opportunity structures for food justice movements to flex power but this is circumscribed by the internal conflict between and within the alternative food and food justice movements of the proper path forward as well as the precarious funding situation of many of these food justice organizations. These barriers have subsequently produced an opening for the power elite to co-opt the critique of food inequities

and offer solutions that maintain the broad strokes of the current power structure while providing minimally substantive tweaks to the current food system. As happened with the labor, civil rights, and environmental movements of the twentieth century, the food justice movement may be defanged, this time less so through long-term institutionalization than through the creation of competing top-down food projects that promote cosmetic initiatives to remedy food injustice, disrupting the food justice movement's concrete proposals for social change. However, this question remains open rather than closed, as the food justice movement continues to go through internal and external change all the while working towards building a food system emphasizing distributional and procedural equity.

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[19] To qualify as "low-income," a census tract must have either "a poverty rate of 20 percent or greater, or a median family income at or below 80 percent of the statewide or metropolitan area median family income." To qualify as a "low-access community," "at least 500 persons and/or at least 33 percent of the population lives more than 1 mile from a supermarket or large grocery store (10 miles, in the case of rural census tracts)." Supermarkets and large grocery stores are defined as "foodstores with at least $2 million in annual sales and containing all the major food departments."

[20] Robert Emanuel, Mayor of Chicago, has obtained similar commitments from Wal-Mart, Walgreens, Aldi and Roundy to build stores in underserved areas of Chicago.

[21] The USDA's food desert locator does not consider East New York a food desert. In fact, the USDA's only food deserts for New York City do not include East New York, Harlem, or the South Bronx, the places people generally think of, but the neighborhoods of Arverne and Edgemere on the Rockaway Peninsula and the neighborhoods of St. George and Forth Wadsworth on Staten Island, totaling 26,326 people. Such figures have drawn strong critique from New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Kim Kesseler, the city's food policy coordinator who claim that three million residents are underserved (Lucadamo 2011).

[22] The city agencies involved were the Housing, Economic and Infrastructure Planning division within the Department of City Planning in coordination with the New York City Food Policy Coordinator, the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), and the Department of Health (DOH).

[23] Based on conversations with ENYF! staff. The East New York Neighborhood Study Area is bordered by Jamaica Avenue, Fulton Street, Arlington Avenue, and Conduit Boulevard to the north; Hegeman Avenue and Linden Boulevard to the south; 78th and 76th Streets to the east; and Van Sinderen Avenue and Junius Street to the west.

[24] There has been community organizing against the proposed Wal-Mart location by the New York Communities for Change, a nonprofit launched by ACORN after it was defunded, as well as Wal-Mart Free NYC, a coalition of workers and residents, small business owners, community leaders, clergy, and elected officials, as well grocery unions, including UFCW.

[25] The National Audubon Society and the Environmental Defense Fund are two of the largest and most powerful environmental organizations in the country and part of the Group of Ten, which also includes Defenders of Wildlife, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Resources Defense Council, Friends of the Earth, Izaak Walton League, Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society and the World Wide Fund for Nature. This group of ten is part of the mainstream environmental movement that is focused on the preservation and conservation of wild nature and has historically avoided urban environments, race- and class-based inequities in environmental benefits, and the issues of toxins and pollutants.

[26] On the other hand the Mayor's support of free markets is not absolute. When he puts on his public health hat he defaults to an interventionist regulatory state that will ban trans-fats in restaurants and the sale of sugary drinks over 16 ounces. But when he is speaking economics he puts on his neoliberal free market hat. When combined these logics are quite contradictory and create a scenario where one could go shop at a Wal-Mart but not buy a 32-ounce soda. Overall, Bloomberg will not regulate corporate America but he will regulate what people can eat, the mark of a person who is an economic liberal as well as a social conservative.

Chapter 7 / Conclusion: Food Justice and The Blinders of the Alternative Food Movement

Today, it is fashionable to be green, organic, and local. The books of Francis Moore Lappe and Michael Pollen, the TV shows of Jamie Oliver, and the films *Fast Food Nation*, *King Corn*, and *Food Inc*. have brought national attention to the alternative food movement whose principle claim is the need to re-localize food economies through community self-reliance and the direct sale of produce from farmers to consumers to support small family farms, ecologically sound farming methods, and good food practices. By reconnecting people and land, production and consumption, and social and environmental sustainability these localized food economies are framed as the necessary counter to industrialization's production of "nonfoods" and "nonplaces" (Allen 2004; Petrini 2007). In fact, being green, organic, and local is so popular today that they have even become solidified into distinct social groups, "foodies" and "locavores," groups that have turned eating local food, once a given fact of life, into an ethical desire, a socially righteous cause, a business model, and an act of distinction and conspicuous consumption all at the same time (Cotler 2009; Johnston and Bauman 2010; Meredith 2010).

As a result, the proliferation and enlargement of local food spaces has been dramatic over the past decade, particularly after the economic crisis of 2008. Farmers markets are booming, reaching their highest numbers ever. Community supported agriculture (CSA)—where consumers buy a share of the produce from a farm—has been growing rapidly. Across the nation, from New York to Chicago, Cleveland to Oakland, Denver to San Diego, community gardens and urban farms are sprouting in major cities. Municipalities have witnessed a noticeable increase in local food activism where residents demand access to vacant land and the right to raise chickens, maintain beehives, and grow produce, either for their own needs or for a secondary income stream. Kitchen or backyard gardens have also undergone resurgence as

people are increasingly aware of the chemicals and additives found in produce purchased in grocery stores and supermarkets.

The crumbling of and disenchantment with the traditional employment structure over the last decade has also sent many young highly educated, well networked, and entrepreneurial youth into farming and sustainable or local restauranteering. Thousands of young people have left the urban “rat-race” and sought a life of small-scale farming in the country, utilizing farmers markets, community supported agriculture, and farm-to-restaurant programs to eek out a more meaningful and wholesome way of life. For those who want the best of both words, the joy of farming and the excitement of the city, roof-top or sky-farming has become a new growth industry of sorts, as people seek to turn urban agriculture into a socially conscious job creator. The resurgence of interest in local and seasonal food has also facilitated a burgeoning niche of restaurants that serve only local and seasonal ingredients through farm-to-restaurant programs and consequently the movement into professions that prepare and sell this produce, chefs and restaurateurs. Alongside these spaces, fledging school gardens and farm-to-school programs aim to “get the kids while they’re young” by transforming classroom education through experiential courses that couple agriculture, education, and nutrition. These programs seek to push school lunch away from pizza, tater tots, and chocolate milk towards fresh local produce while increasing the youth’s connections to nature, ecological cycles, food production, and healthy eating habits.

Materialized though these spaces, the alt-food movement is often depicted as the David against the Goliath of corporate industrial agriculture (Allen 2004; Lyson 2004). These local food spaces are presumed to be mechanisms for creating a more participatory, economically equitable, and environmentally sustainable development model (Allen 2004; Lyson 2004). They

are claimed to revitalize connections to the land and small "multi-product" farmers and with them vibrant local community economies (Allen 2004; Lyson 2004). The movement even has the support of the First Lady. In contrast to the pre-packed and pre-made food found in many supermarkets and fast food restaurants Michelle Obama has praised the virtues of local food as "fresher" and "better tasting" and pushed for the inclusion of more fruits and vegetables in people's diets (Feldmann 2010). In March of 2009 she even oversaw the planting of a 1,100 square foot vegetable garden on the white house lawn, the first vegetable garden on white house grounds since Eleanor Roosevelt's victory garden during World War II. Michelle discussed how the garden served two purposes, to counter the negative effects of processed, fast, and take-out food on the health and weight of her daughters as well as serve as an educational mechanism to inform all Americans, in particular children, about eating healthy, locally grown food in order to reduce obesity and general ill health (Feldmann 2010).

The Sunday section of the New York Times responded to the Obama garden with an article inquiring, "Is a Food Revolution Now in Season?" The article answered this query in the affirmative. "After being largely ignored for years by Washington, advocates of organic and locally grown food have found a receptive ear in the White House, which has vowed to encourage a more nutritious and sustainable food supply (Martin 2009)." As a result, the white house garden has become a *national beacon* in the alt-food movement, praised by such alt-food personalities as Alice Waters and Michael Pollan, both of whom had been calling for a white house garden for decades.[27] Pollan went so far as to claim that the Whitehouse garden is the most powerful manifestation of the Obama's support for local food,

> you know, frankly, the most important thing that's happened has been the garden that Michelle Obama planted, which has had a galvanizing effect around the world. There's now a garden in Buckingham Palace. People are planting gardens all over America. You can't find seeds in garden centers, there's such a run on gardening. I think that's a very

> encouraging thing. I don't think it is merely symbolic. And by the way, I think it's very deliberate on the part of the Obamas. I think they understand that before you can begin to change this food system, you need to raise consciousness about it because for a lot of people, the food system works just fine (Davies 2009).

The discourse surrounding the Whitehouse garden, conflating local, fresh, healthy, and sustainable, is representative of what I call the mainstream alternative food narrative. The mainstream alt-food narrative presumes a universalizing logic behind food localization and subsequently provides a particular or singular explanation for why people should and why people are engaging with local food. This narrative consists of four key aspects, three are longstanding—supporting small-farmers, realizing environmental sustainability, and eating fresh delicious food full of taste—and one is recent—the healthiness of eating local food (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Major Components of Local Food Movement

Key Concept	Small-Farmers	Environmental Sustainability	Taste	Health
Who Local Food Supports	Independent Middle Class	The Planet	Your Palate	Your Body
Discursive Frame	Do You Know Your Farmer?	Being Green/Local	Eat Slow	Eat Whole Food

Case in point, the reductionism of the white house garden, which conflates local food with eating healthy and being green. Through producing local food places as spaces of healthiness and greenness they become cleansed of social conflict where connections between jobless growth and the profit motive, poverty and white privilege, famine and corporate monopolization, increasing inequality and concentrated property ownership are absent. The discourse of "cleaning up diets" deemphasizes debates around who should have land, water, seed, and food rights, the importance of democratizing control over the agrifood system, and the efficacy of bottom-up community strategies to counter market-led and state-supported underdevelopment. Instead, the language of healthiness and greenness sanitizes the local food

space through de-politicizing it, as the space is presented as an inclusive space open to all, a space of racelessness and classlessness. In elevating good food and being green to the forefront of the food localization imaginary these claims are removed from their social and political roots amongst the white upper-middle class, a social group that does not have to address the negative effects of marginalization from and within the wage economy and downward positionality within class and race hierarchies, which leads to an emphasis on sustainability and health over livelihood concerns.

What is a particular classed and raced standpoint supporting food localization generally stands in as *the universal* standpoint for local food. The race and class privilege of the alternative food narrative leads to local food being coded as a *consumption politics* oriented to freshness, taste, quality, and health, rather than a *politics of food justice* about livelihood and cultural identity, access and affordability, workers rights, and people's control over the food system, principally land, water, and seed. Through this mainstream narrative, one does not grow local food because of the failure of the wage to cover the costs of social reproduction, efforts to maintain cultural identity, the lack of alternative economic opportunities, or the lack of neighborhood places to procure fresh food at affordable prices. In particular, through de-politicizing the local food space the redistributional, social democratic, and alternative development politics of bottom-up food justice movements are made invisible in favor of a local food discourse emphasizing individualism, personal responsibility and consumer choice—the quintessential neoliberal subjectivity—that presumes an uncritical acceptance of and belief that the concepts of local, organic, and fresh are inherently good and beneficial for everyone.

This is acutely salient in the aforementioned example of the Whitehouse garden, which does not exist in isolation to but is circumscribed within Michelle Obama's "Let's Move"

campaign and her agreements with corporate retail chains, including Wal-Mart, SUPRAVALU, and Walgreens, to eliminate food deserts. The Let's Move campaign is intended to counter obesity through "more physical activity for kids, healthier meals in schools, and prominent food labeling" while the corporate retail agreements seek to combat food deserts—areas devoid of affordable fresh produce—by locating these corporate chains in low-income urban communities. In both of these initiatives a blend of personal responsibility, consumer sovereignty, and corporate control of the food system are put forth as the solution to systemic dysfunctions within the structure of the food system that are caused by these very same beliefs and actors. Bottom-up community based solutions are replaced with top-down technocratic corporate based solutions.

Food Justice: The Politics of Community Controlled Food Systems

When I go and speak on panels people act like what I'm, the stuff I'm saying is so revolutionary. I'm like, 'this is not rocket science'…but I think a lot of people sugarcoat things and I don't and we don't [referring to East New York Farms!]. We'll be like, no, I don't think roof top farms are really going to work here. No, we're not really going to sell our food to a fancy restaurant. We don't do that. We're very clear about we are not goanna do and what we do do and what's our mission and I think that in the world of doing sustainable food stuff it's very easy to say 'sure well do that or maybe we'll do that' and we don't do that, which has allowed us to be really focused on building up our program and really focusing in our community more than getting distracted by the wider world of what's going on in food.

Being able to sustain and gradually grow a program that still continues to have a really high degree of community input and community leadership, that in itself is an accomplishment. Having a big fat counterpoint to people who think low-income people of color don't know what fresh food is, don't know how to eat, need to be educated in nutrition. You know, everybody born in the U.S. could probably benefit from some nutrition education but it's not something that low-income people need 900 more times of. They just need...people need access. Just being willing to be really clear about that. We really work on access because that really matters. No amount of nutrition education without access is going to matter.

- Sarita Daftary, Project Director of East New York Farms!

On the first Tuesday of August ENYF! held a food justice visioning workshop where East New York residents were expected to come together and work through their ideas about how to realize food justice in East New York. The workshop clearly articulated what ENYF! and East New Yorkers considered food justice to be and in what direction they wanted ENYF! and their community to move. As an icebreaker community members were asked to speak about a specific organization whose campaign or advocacy they were proud of, organizations working on access to land (596 Acres, Brazilian Landless Workers Movement) and labor rights (Coalition of Immokalee Workers) as well as seed saving (Weeksville Heritage Center). Sarita built upon these examples by utilizing a diagram titled "Strategies for Change," which introduced a framework for thinking about social change that incorporated different notions, aspects, and purposes of change as well as their political content (Table 7.2). This diagram became a way for community members to think about the larger politics of social change and where ENYF! fits into a larger social movement, particular the gardeners two key demands: more land and control of seed.

Table 7.2: Strategies for Change

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Working within the Current System</td><td>Creating a New System</td></tr>
<tr><td>Service</td><td>Resistance</td><td>Reform</td><td>Government</td><td>Building Alternatives</td></tr>
<tr><td>Addressing a Crisis</td><td>Stopping the Bad</td><td>Winning Something Good</td><td>Running Things</td><td>Creating Something New</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Reactive</td><td colspan="2">Proactive</td><td>Visionary</td></tr>
</table>

Community members spoke of the community gardens, the farmers market, and the youth program and whether they were forms of service, resistance, reform, government, or building alternatives. Sarita emphasized that East New York Farms! envisions itself primarily as an

organization committed to building alternatives rather than doing service, resistance, or reform. The latter may be part and parcel of what they do but their organizing, activism, and politics of social change is ideologically and materially about building a food network outside of the dominant food system. To put it bluntly, Sarita emphatically stated, "if you're going to sell us crappy food we'll build our own food network," which is exactly what East New York Farms! is doing, and because East New York Farms! emphasizes building an alternative food network the organization does not really engage in fighting the corn lobby or the subsidy structure, nor is it structured to in purpose or design, they don't have the resources nor the desire to do that. Other organizations are differently and better organized to address service, resistance, or reform. Given its purpose and limited funding East New York Farms! cannot afford to get bogged down in a twenty-year legislative battle that might not mean anything for East New York residents, it focuses on making concrete change in the lives of East New Yorkers through its community food programs and activities.

Yet, even though East New York Farms! is focused on building alternatives these are not the traditional alternatives within the alternative food movement, as food justice organizations deviate in several important aspects from traditional sustainable or small farmer focused food organizations. I spoke with Sarita about these differences, particularly what food justice was and was not and where East New York Farms! fit into the food movement. Referring to my question about what food justice looks like Sarita stated,

> someone asked me this on a panel and the first thing I said was what food justice was not and I said *growing food in a low income community if it does not involve any empowerment or ownership for the people that live there is not a food justice project*…It's sort of a disturbing trend, people will be like, 'oh, we're growing high end

> greens in a roof top in a low income neighborhood and that's food justice because we're hiring some youth from the community.' And it's like unless the youth and the community own that business it's not really a food justice project. We do food justice education with our youth program but the youth program in itself…youth programs are always run by staff, youth programs rarely organize themselves. So that's inherently not going to be the same degree of food justice as people managing their own land and deciding what to do with it.

In emphasizing that food production by people of color is not inherently food justice Sarita underscores that food justice is more than just who is producing food but the conditions under which that food is produced. Food justice entails that food production is rooted in community ownership and control. Consequently, the multiple projects of East New York Farms! manifest different shades of food justice, some deeper (community gardens and urban farms) than others (the youth program). For instance, hiring youth of color to sell expensive greens to foodie restaurants or wealthy farmers markets is not food justice for Sarita. Even if a local food project includes leadership components, educational goals, and stipends for youth it will still fail to realize food justice if it is not centered on securing the right to food or combating food access and affordability issues within the community by the community for the community. If the food project creates a business model that hires local youth to sell food to a whiter and more affluent community and in so doing can provide stipends or environmental education to youth of color this is merely a youth jobs or youth education program. Just like slaves, sharecroppers, or migrant farmworkers, youth of color growing food is not in and of itself considered food justice. Key issues are who is in charge of the organization, who decides the purpose of the organization

and how is the organization run? In other words, who is food being grown by and for whom? These are central to determining whether an organization or activity is realizing food justice.

The emphasis on procedural justice within food justice exemplifies its roots from within the civil rights and environmental justice movements, where inclusion into decision making, principally community-based decision making, lies at the heart of addressing other forms of equity (Table 7.3). Through procedural justice community economic development and redistributive values and policies can be made concrete and through them an equitable distribution of environmental benefits, also known as just sustainability (Agyeman 2005).

Table 7.3: Forms of Equity for Environmental Justice

Type of Equity	Intergenerational Equity	Intra-generational Equity	Geographical Equity	Procedural Equity	Inter-species Equity
Equity Principle	Principle of Futurity	Principle of Today	Transfrontier Responsibility	Principle of Participation	Principle of Eco-centricity
Key Purpose of Equity	Need to preserve ecological flows for future generations	Need to address social justice in the now.	Need to address benefits and drawbacks of ecological footprints globally	Inclusion into decision-making processes.	Survival of other species equal to survival of humans.

(Adapted from Agyeman 2005; Haughton 1999)

Sarita followed up her critique of simplistic presumptions of food justice by clearly stating what food justice was,

> In terms of what it looks like it's a lot of what we're doing here. There's gardeners that are running their own gardens. It's always a weird thing when people refer to the gardeners as volunteers. Volunteers sounds like they're volunteering for me. They run their own site and they decide what to put there and yes we give them assistance but it's totally at their decision and through that they are able to provide food for themselves and

> their neighbors and sell it or give it away and do whatever they want with it…the fact that people from the community who are people of color are selling to other people of color and are producing things they know people want and are culturally appropriate. That's a big component [of food justice].

Such a poignant distinction emphasizes that East New York Farms! belongs to the community. Gardeners are autonomous from East New York Farms!, which acts as a community resource to facilitate their desires and aspirations, a practice that is reflective of their bottom-up grassroots mission to support the existing foundation of gardens and gardeners within the community. The East New York Farms! staff are there to assist the gardeners rather than the gardeners to assist East New York Farms! Moreover, Sarita reinforces the belief that control over the actual processes of decision making, not just more equitable outcomes, is central to food justice and a major reason why East New York Farms! is a form of food justice. It is an organization that facilitates people of color living in urban environments having access to control over land where they decide what to grow and what do to with that produce, whether it be for household consumption, neighborly giving, or market sales. In this regard food justice is different from other historical forms of urban agriculture in that it is not a top-down pacification or management of poverty strategy, a short-term program designed to unite idle-hands with idle-lands until the market and economic growth come back. It is a long-term community building movement that seeks to create an alternative food network within East New York.

Food justice takes many forms and means many things to many people, but this dissertation has emphasized that it means at least 4 things:

(1) *Food justice is an explicitly racialized bottom-up food project.* As the history of East New York underscored, localism has long been a space for social conflict and contestation over

segregation, integration, and community control. The practice of localism and specific localization projects, be they tied to education, food, housing, or jobs, are not inherently liberatory, intercultural, or anti-racist. The food justice movement has critiqued the race and class privilege of the alternative food movement that prioritizes environmental sustainability, small farmers and high prices over social justice, worker rights, and access and affordability concerns. Moreover, for organizations such as East New York Farms! food justice is understood as part of a broader racial project invested in celebrating and reaffirming the positive difference of blackness and brownness while creating an intercultural and anti-racist food system that includes whites who are supportive of and engaged in anti-racism. This is seen everyday at East New York Farms! as race is constituted in and through particular food practices, activities, and narratives that define African-American and Caribbean identities. Whereas whiteness never officially speaks in the alt-food movement, blackness, brownness, caribbeanness, and latinoness, amongst others, officially speak in the food justice movement and is a central shaper of discourse and identity at East New York Farms! If nonwhites are not invested in the mainstream alternative food movement it is not because they don't know about it or because they don't care about food but because it doesn't include experiences, stories, problems, or words that speak to them. The food justice movement has shown that counter to the beliefs of people in the alternative food movement lower income nonwhite communities do care about food and are organizing to change the food system and that they seek to change it for those at the bottom of racial and class hierarchies, those most oppressed by the conventional food system.

To emphasize the words of Sarita, food justice is more than just about feeding people and it is not charity or service delivery. Food justice is about race- and class-consciousness. Food justice is a mode of organizing that intends to build an alternative food movement that is not just

anti-corporate but anti-racist. East New York Farms! and the food justice movement in general, unlike the traditional alternative food movement, does not ignore institutional racism in the food system nor do its advocates claim to be "post-racial" or that they don't see color, they recognize racial and cultural difference and support it.

(2) *Food justice is a bottom-up food project that emphasizes the social roots of food deserts and food swamps as a form of institutionalized racism*. There has been a lot of focus recently on food deserts and food swamps, the grocery store gap, access and affordability issues, and race and class inequality in the food system. However, the terminology of food deserts and food swamps effaces the social policies and social actors that created communities devoid of grocery stores, crammed with fast-food places, and left to subsist off of the "second hand vegetables" of industrial foodstuffs. Additionally, the grocery store gap language is about a consumer-centric food security frame rather than a community-centric and power-oriented discourse of control or autonomy that is important to realizing food justice. When you take a tour of the youth farm at East New York Farms! David Vigil, the youth program coordinator, will educate you about what they grow, how they grow it, and why the grow it, but he will also provide a crash course in the history of East New York and it is in this discussion that East New York Farms! situates itself within a long history of institutional racism, one of urban renewal, redlining, white flight, and planned shrinkage. East New York Farms! does not use the language of food deserts or food swamps nor does it subscribe to its naturalization of food inequality. East New York has not always been devoid of food, from the Lenape who lived off of the bounty of the ocean, the Dutch who farmed the land, and the Italians who turned Pitkin avenue into the "bean quarters," the community has a long history of food production, one that has been revitalized by immigrants from the Caribbean and migrants from the American South. The

market and the state disinvested in black communities when it was politically expedient to do so and they have continued this disinvestment though today. Food Justice is about alternatives to the conventional food system but alternatives that embrace an anti-racist politics and privilege those who have historically been marginalized, culturally, economically, and politically. Food Justice's emphasis on community control, once it is located within a history of racial oppression, can be understood as part of larger social movement within Black, Latino, and Caribbean communities that seek to create autonomous spaces of resistance to avoid the institutional racism that traverses the landscape of housing, healthcare, education, employment, and food.

(3) *Food justice is a bottom-up food project that rejects food as bare commodity in favor of food as culture*. East New York Farms! is not simply a food distribution point that exists to realize what grocery stores and supermarkets have failed to do—provide affordable healthy produce to the community. East New York Farms! is about the production of food as a vital aspect of self and community identity, a practice that requires regaining control over the means of food production, removing land and seed from free markets and corporate control, and subsuming them under the priorities of cultural reproduction, foodways, and health imperatives. In other words, food justice is about re-embedding food production within a moral economy rather than a market society, which is why the community gardeners of East New York reject the forced assimilation into being merely a consumer of industrial foodstuffs. In this regard, East New Yorkers demand for land and seed reflect affinities with the global food sovereignty movement that consist of hundreds of millions of small-farmers, peasants, and indigenous that reject corporate control over the food system in favor of a people's food politics. The rejection of food as bare commodity is what shapes community gardeners demands for land and seed, their

growing practices incorporating polycultures, companion planting, and seed savings, and their desire to engage in self-provisioning and gifting as well as market sales.

(4) *Food justice is a bottom-up food project that utilizes state-facilitated redistribution of wealth to realize a just farmers market*. Merely relying on the market or civil society will not reduce inequities in fresh fruit and vegetable access and affordability at farmers markets since they are first and foremost economic spaces. The East New York Farms! farmers market is not the only farmers market in Brooklyn, let alone East New York, and many farmers have come and gone because of low sales. When only four miles away farmers can sell to a more affluent consumer base in Park Slope, Prospect Heights, or Fort Greene, most farmers will do so, or they can go to Manhattan and sell to restaurants at the Union Square farmers markets—where the real money is made. To counter this farmer flight public subsidy in the form of income-support programs and purchasing power programs are necessary in order to produce a win-win scenario for both lower income consumers and rural farmers. In communities at the bottom of the polarized post-industrial economic structure the state will have to step in and assist in the social reproduction of the population and the creation of alternative food networks, without a redistributive welfare state this is simply not possible.

The Limits of Food Justice

East New York Farms! as an alternative that creates something new, that is visionary, that attempts to build a new food system rather than work within the conventional food system is not going it alone though. There are many other food justice organizations like East New York Farms! that combine community food production, farmers markets, and youth programs to address inequities in the food system. But whether these organizations exist in East New York,

Boston, Chicago, Oakland, or Detroit, they all face similar problems in terms of institutional reproduction, political efficacy, and movement building. The food justice movement, its success and long-term viability, is consequently an open rather than a closed question as there are several outstanding issues that raise questions about the capacity of the food justice movement to create substantive social change and the generation of an alternative food system based on the principles of community control, social justice, and cultural identity. The major barriers to the movement are based on three factors: the general limits of social movement organizations, tensions over the future direction of the movement, control over land, and the limits of a local politics.

Limits of Social Movement Organizations

The food justice movement's fledgling expansion has brought it into direct contact with corporations who have sought to co-opt the movement for their own economic and political intentions. The limitations of building anti-corporate alternatives when the corporation is the dominant social institution of the day, often more powerful than nation-states, is not lost on the food justice movement, as it is heavily rooted in non-profit organizations and dependent on the corporate wealth embedded in philanthropic foundations, money that is the "surplus" wealth of an economic and political elite that has benefited from institutional inequity, is invested in the treadmill of production, and utilizes philanthropy to legitimate a social system premised upon inequities in outcome and decision making. A key question subsequently arises? Can corporate wealth be funneled to nonprofits in a manner that reduces the power of corporations over everyday life? Or does corporate giving to food justice organizations respond to militancy by serving as a cooling off function and therefore a mechanism of social control?

Does philanthropy co-opt and defang grassroots movements, enforce their own values on projects or empower and give voice to marginalized groups? Positive answers are not easily forthcoming. The limits of philanthropy are well known to those who work in nonprofits focused on social change, particularly those that do not produce a good that can be commodified or turned into a revenue stream (Bothwell 2002, 2003; Drabble and Abrenilla 2000; Faber and McCarty 2011; INCITE! 2009; Karl and Katz 1987; Shuman 1998). Study after study on the relationship between philanthropic foundations and social change have found that foundations are overwhelmingly conservative in form, shying away from causes deemed "political," and in so doing fail to donate money to social justice oriented issues (BACRP 1979; Carson 1999; Covington 1994a, 1994b; Dowie 2001; Jenkins and Halcli 1999; Rabinowitz 1990). From the 1970s through the 1990s less than 3 percent of all foundation money went to progressive social movements (Jenkins and Halcli 1999). And less than two percent of corporation funding to nonprofits went to "civil rights, race relations, and advocacy" (Paprocki and Bothwell 1993; Paprocki and Bothwell 1995; Paprocki 2000).

In addition to philanthropy not funding social movement organizations many progressive foundations have historically failed to fund general support in favor of short-term projects, often for only one- or two-years (Bothwell 2002, 2003; Drabble and Abrenilla 2000; Lawrence et al. 2001). But this is exactly what social movement organizations need. Core support is vital to "build long term capacity" (Bothwell 2002: 387-8). In funding competitive short-term projects progressive foundations have handicapped the goal of realizing "equity and justice" (Bothwell 2003). The philanthropic world, dominated by money, is no different from other social relations in today's society; those who control the money have power. In creating a grant structure focused on projects rather than general support donors control organizations and therefore social

movements. If progressive donors were to switch to the general support model, as conservatives have done, they would in effect be transferring power to the organizations and relinquishing their ability to control both organizations and the movements (Burkeman 1999). This transfer of power is perceived as threatening to many foundations because their boards are full of the top brass from many U.S. corporations. For instance, the well-known anti-poverty organization WHYHunger lost one of its corporate wall-street funders because it adopted the language of food sovereignty, which is explicitly anti-corporate.[28]

Many of the problems of social movement organizations are faced by East New York Farms! The organization has to invest a lot of time and resources into annual grant writing for short-term project funding rather than securing long-term funding for the organization itself that they could use as they see fit. Moreover, as urban food production in low-income communities has become a popular or hot activity, many other organizations are pursuing these activities in East New York, which creates increased competition for the small amount of philanthropic funds targeted to addressing food inequities.[29] East New York Farms must also deal with the tension of trying to secure funding for their projects from grants that are structured to meet the funders desires, such as addressing specific vulnerable populations (homeless youth or "at-risk" youth) or specific health issues (obesity or diabetes) rather than block grants that allow East New York Farms! to structure programs and projects that make sense to their community and are decided on by their community. Under the current funding structure the foundations have a strong say in the movement rather than the community.

Understanding the limitations of philanthropic dependency there has been a turn within the local food movement towards a hybrid model that is a combination of for-profit and non-profit, where the organization would sell produce to generate an income stream to subsidize

other educational or social mission focused activities. For-profits can do this in order to fund their own nonprofit organizations that run educational programs, operate job-training programs, or subsidize food prices for lower income communities. Non-profits can sell produce in order to self-generate their own funds and reduce the need on external funders who may be fickle. For both, this hybrid model is seen as a way to avoid the yearly grant writing process that is burdensome in time-commitment and mission framing and diverts energy away from mission success and community organizing.

At the same time, such a hybrid model is problematic for food justice organizations like East New York Farms! because they tend to recreate dependency relations on affluent populations, this time directly through market-based redistribution of wealth rather than state-based redistribution of wealth. For selling produce to higher end consumers is necessary to create the surplus income to fund non-profit projects. More so, such projects generally entail converting what little land that is controlled by the organization away from community food production towards production for affluent non-locales, thereby diverting the organization from its social mission of creating a community controlled food system. So the question becomes where do organizations like East New York Farms! go? How can food justice organizations increase autonomy from philanthropic funder dependency, affluent foodie dependency, and restructure its relationship with philanthropy in a way to benefit community controlled food systems?

Tensions Over the Future Direction of the Movement

Is the food justice movement going to be light on justice and focused on consumer issues of access and affordability or heavy on justice and centered on community controlled food

systems? Is the food justice movement going to be focused primarily on making outcomes in relationship to fresh food and produce more equitable or restructuring power relations to achieve equity in the decision-making structures that organize the food system? In other words, is the food justice movement going to go the way of food security or food sovereignty, with the former emphasizing individual consumer capacities and the latter prioritizing peoples' control over the food system? Based on the response within the food justice community towards Will Allen's relationship to Wal-Mart, it would appear that food justice is increasingly embedded in notions of procedural equity as well as intergenerational, intragenerational, and geographical equity. In this, food justice appears to be firmly emphasizing equity in both outcomes and decision making processes and calling for just sustainability, in deed if not in language.

At the same time, the movement must deal with the recuperative tendencies of corporations and the state who seek to utilize food desert and food inequity language to legitimate further corporate consolidation over the food system, quantitative growth dynamics, and the integration of lower income communities as an untapped market into the grocery retailing sector. Through a narrow framing of consumer equity, which is really consumer integration into grocery retailing markets, these top-down technocratic food projects seek to co-opt particular notions of food inequity and food deserts to not only increase corporate and state revenues but defang a community controlled food system movement.

If food justice goes the way of food sovereignty, which it appears to be doing, than it must directly address the power of the corporation. The corporation, as it is primarily structured today, is a social organization devoted to the singular goal of maximizing shareholder value, which is generally achieved through a politics of growth and necessitates a political strategy of limiting its liabilities or obligations to its workers, the community, and the environment (Bakan 2005;

Danaher 2002; Derber 2000; Korten 2001). This corporate-form has been very successful at amassing wealth in the hands of a few while polluting the environment and minimizing democratic control over the economic and political systems. But this history was not and is not inevitable. Against the claims of free-market apologists, the corporation is neither a natural entity nor a person with inalienable rights. The corporation is the offspring of the state and a social product and process. While today the corporation is presented a natural being and a person this is contingent upon a legal structure that creates this reality and the social belief that accepts these claims as legitimate. Historically the corporation was not always free to do what it wanted, as it had many restrictions placed on it by the state in the name of public interest, including the length of time that it could exist, the purpose for which it existed, and where it could engage in this purpose (Derber 2000). While these requirements may not have played out perfectly in practice it did constrain the corporation vis-à-vis the state and the popular sovereignty of the people. However, this is no longer the case. Corporations are now technically immortal with no restrictions on what they can do, where they can do them, or for how long, and there is certainly a very tenuous relationship to the public interest.

If the food justice movement is indeed anti-corporate and invested in winning it will need to take on the corporate-form itself, which means scaling up to the state, the only actor that can constrain the power of the corporation. And the food justice movement cannot do this alone, it will have to form a big-tent coalition including actors from within the alternative food, labor, environmental, anti-hunger and anti-poverty movements, which means winning over vast sections of the working and middle classes and a breakaway faction of the bourgeois who is willing to fund such a movement. For without flexing power against corporations the food justice movement will be unable to protect land for food production from speculative development,

redistribute wealth to those who need it, bring healthy and affordable produce to all, create just working conditions and environmentally sustainable farming practices, and realize a community controlled food system.

Control over Land

Central to realizing a community controlled food system and with it food sovereignty is securing control over land, in both the urban and the rural, for without land no long-term local food system can be created. In many urban communities like East New York a lot of the vacant land that was produced through private and municipal disinvestment is still owned by private actors or the city itself. As a result, during the 1990s through today, the community gardening and food justice movements in New York City have waged a campaign to save gardens from being sold off by the city to developers under the guise of development, free market capitalism, economic growth, and fiscal necessity (Schmelzkopf 1995; Smith and Kurtz 2003; Staeheli et al. 2002). Some of these battles have been successful while others have not, and gardens have been lost.

Wresting control over land from the city is therefore central to the long-term viability of community controlled food systems in communities such as East New York as well as Chicago, Milwaukee, and Detroit. Much of this can be done through altering the zoning status of the land from commercial, residential, or industrial to protected open-space or designated park-space, with ownership resting in either the city parks department, local community based organizations, or national land trusts. East New York Farms! has been able to remove land from the market and protect it as greenspace through GreenThumb, the community garden program of the New York

City parks program. But the underlying tension between using land for food production and using land for development is the conflict of agricultural modernization versus food sovereignty.

Part of the uphill battle the food justice movement has ahead of itself is to make land reform a central part of alternative food movement politics in the United States. Without control over land community food systems do not exist. Given the continued propensity of urban growth machines to push for big development projects that generate property, income, or sales tax, and the close ties between municipal officials, the banking industry, and real estate developers, food justice movements will have to scale up to the city level to reshape the development trajectory beyond quantitative growth towards quality of life, much of which requires slowing down the treadmill of production and consumption in favor of slow life and slow food. This will necessitate a revolution in the cultural, political, and economic values that currently structure the United States and will be impossible without a big tent coalition uniting quality of life advocates in the environmental, labor, food, anti-poverty, anti-globalization, and social justice movements.

Limits of the Local

Another potential barrier to the food justice movement is based on its politics of scale, which has been overwhelmingly based on local level mobilization. The locally oriented politics of the food justice movement is understandable given its focus on creating community controlled food systems but does pose some limitations in its ability to flex power and shift resources towards community controlled food systems rather than the conventional corporately controlled food system. First, there is a difference between localism and hyperlocalism. Localism is a necessary politics of any food movement, as you have to grow and sell your food somewhere. You need places where farmers, gardeners, and consumers can meet, talk, and exchange produce.

Without these face-to-face spaces the local food movement would not be what it is. A hyperlocal politics would eschew any attempt to scale up to larger political scales, such as the municipal, state, or federal governments. However, in order to build and strengthen the food justice movement requires more than just a hyperlocal politics. As discussed in chapter 3, state redistribution of wealth is necessary to make farmers markets in low-income communities a win-win for farmers and consumers. This would necessitate a strong food justice movement that is active in shaping the farm bill, which is primarily a program geared towards food assistance programs. Alongside of federal funding of food assistance programs scaling up to the municipal and state levels are important in creating food policy councils that have the power and funding to support local food production through urban farming, community gardens, farmers markets, and community supported agriculture while prioritizing equity principles within such policy and funding efforts.

In the case of East New York Farms!, with a staff of only five, who put in long days merely to keep the youth program, youth farm, and community gardening network operating, asking them to scale up to municipal, state, or federal politics is asking a bit much and would definitely overexert their capabilities. Organizations like East New York Farms! with precarious funding, a small staff, and a community gardening network to maintain and expand are not the best suited organizations to scale up. However, if food justice organizations are only able to flex power at the local level and in lower income communities than they become not an alternative worthy of the name but a subculture that exists alongside of urban growth machines and the treadmill of production, one that is tolerated by the powers that be until it is pushed out of the way to make room for the latest shopping mall, housing development, or super-highway.

Food Justice: What does the future hold?

Compared to the alternative food movement the food justice movement is just a baby. Less than two decades old the food justice movement has sought to shake up the alternative food movement much in the same way the environmental justice movement sought to shake up the environmental movement. In turning the lens from the rural environment and saving wild nature the environmental justice movement turned the discursive and organizing lens towards the built environment, race and class inequities, and the pollution and toxins residing in places where we live, work, and play. The food justice movement, following in these footsteps, shifted the food discourse towards race and class inequities throughout the food system. In emphasizing injustices both in the built urban environment as well as in the agricultural fields food justice has moved beyond the limited politics of the alternative food movement based in small-farmers and environmental sustainability. In doing so, the food justice movement has begun to push the alternative food movement towards race and class inequities in ways that seek to infuse the alternative food movement with social justice goals as well as sustainably goals, moving towards a politics of just sustainability.

However, it is unclear as of now if the food justice movement and the alternative food movement will become one, with the food justice movement shaping its discursive frames, organizing models, and funding streams, or if the food justice movement is brought into the movement but at the margins, much as the environmental justice movement has been in relation to the mainstream environmental movement. If the alternative food movement merely gives lip service to inequity discussions and focuses on access and affordability issues and nutritional education then the alternative food movement will hurt its own political future as well as that of the food justice movement, since it will set itself up for easy co-optation by the state and

corporate treadmill of production. One thing appears certain though, the food justice movement is shifting towards a food sovereignty framework, one that explicitly seeks to create a peoples' food system. The question will be whether the alternative food movement is willing to join in this struggle over land, water, and seed or if it will maintain a privileged economic choice based on capacity to pay rather than a social right to food.

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[27] Two of the most well known local food activists in the United States, Alice Waters is known as the chef and owner of the Chez Panisse restaurant in Berkeley California, which is seen a central to the birth of the California cuisine and locavore movement. She is also known nationally through her edible schoolyard projects that fuse gardening, nutrition education, and cooking education in schools. Michael Pollan has become known through his journalism on local and alternative food, including the books *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *The Botany of Desire*. He is currently Professor of Journalism at the University of California Graduate School of Journalism.

[28] Personal conversation with Tristan Quinn-Thibedou of WHYhunger.

[29] Such organizations include the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, GrowNYC, Good Shepard, and the Boys Club.

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