Agriculture and Human Values (2019) 36:825–835
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-019-09945-y

SYMPOSIUM/SPECIAL ISSUE

Food justice, intersectional agriculture, and the triple food movement

Bobby J. Smith II[1]

Accepted: 9 May 2019 / Published online: 16 May 2019

Abstract
Emerging as an intersectional response to social inequalities perpetuated by the mainstream food movement in the United States, the food justice movement is being used by marginalized communities to address their food needs. This movement relies on an emancipatory discourse, illustrated by what I term intersectional agriculture. In many respects, the mainstream food movement reflects contention between marketization (corporate agriculture) and social protectionist (local food) discourses, while the role of food justice remains somewhat unclear as it relates to the mainstream movement. Each movement attempts to restructure the ways in which food is distributed, consumed, and produced, impacting the social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental dimensions of food. Using the lens of Nancy Fraser's triple movement framework, I construct an interpretation of food justice as the emancipatory pole of what I term the triple food movement to explore the role of food justice as it relates to the mainstream movement. Specifically, I draw upon the cases of black farmers and queer people in the U.S. creating and (re)creating spaces to address their community food needs and counter systems of domination constructed around race, class, gender, sexuality, agriculture, and food.

Keywords Food justice · Corporate agriculture · Local food · Triple food movement · Intersectional agriculture

Abbreviations

BPP	Black panther party
DBCFSN	Detroit black community food security network
LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Introduction

Emerging as an intersectional response to social inequalities perpetuated by the mainstream food movement in the United States, the food justice movement is being used by marginalized communities to address their food needs. Even before scholars began to write about food justice, activists in low-income communities of color used the term to address the lack of healthy food options in urban neighborhoods (Alkon 2012). In many respects, the mainstream food movement reflects contention between marketization (corporate agriculture) and social protectionist (local food) discourses in a Polanyian "double movement" sense (Polanyi 1944), while the role of food justice remains somewhat unclear as it relates to the mainstream movement. Yet, each movement attempts to restructure the ways in which food is distributed, consumed, and produced, impacting the social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental dimensions of food.

According to Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi (2010), food justice seeks "to achieve equity and fairness in relation to food system impacts and a different, more just, and sustainable way for food to be grown, produced, made accessible, and eaten" (p. 223). In their collection of essays, *Cultivating Food Justice,* Alkon and Julian Agyeman (2011) argue that essential to food justice is "an analysis that recognizes the food system as a racial project and problematizes the influence of race and class on the production, distribution, and consumption of food" (p. 5). New York City-based food justice organization Just Food defines food justice as the practice of "communities exercising their right to grow, sell, and eat [food that is] fresh, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, and grown locally with care for the well-being of land, workers, and animals" (Alkon and

Symposium Presentation: Rethinking Food System Transformation: Food Sovereignty, Agroecology, Food Justice, Community Action, and Scholarship.

✉ Bobby J. Smith II
bobbyjs2@illinois.edu

[1] Department of African American Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1201 West Nevada Street, Urbana, IL 61801, USA

Julian Agyeman 2011, p. 6). In a recent study of food justice organizations, Hislop (2015) defines food justice as "the struggle against racism, exploitation, and oppression taking place within the food system that addresses inequality's root causes both within and beyond the food chain" (p. 24).

The Oakland, California-based People's Grocery argues that "food justice asserts that no one should live without enough food because of economic constraints or social inequalities" and offers a "different approach to a community's needs that seeks to truly advance self-reliance and social justice by placing communities in leadership of their own solutions and providing them with the tools to address the disparities within our food systems and within society at large" (Mares and Alkon 2011, p. 75). Social scientists Agyeman and McEntee (2014) posit that food justice focuses on both "outcomes and processes as well as symptoms (e.g. immediate needs such as inadequate access to food) and causes (e.g. structural inequalities) of food injustice" as well as the institutions responsible for such injustices (p. 211). However, what is common among all definitions is the contention that food justice uses agriculture and food as vehicles to address social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental relations between inadequate access to food and larger societal structures of inequality.

As a social movement, food justice emerged within the context of the 2007–2008 global "food crisis" (McMichael 2014) as a response to inequalities embedded in both the dominant corporate agriculture movement and myriad local food movements. To do this, the food justice movement relies on an emancipatory discourse that interrogates the "historical-materialist relations responsible for the creation and re-creation of unjust circumstances" (Agyeman and McEntee, 2014, p. 216) to "mobilize [activists] at the grassroots level to dismantle the classist and racist structural inequalities that are manifest in the consumption, production, and distribution of food" (Mares and Alkon 2011, p. 75). "The work of food justice activists," Christine Caruso argues, "seeks to not only address issues of access at the neighborhood level, but also has a more comprehensive political vision that incorporates systemic change at multiple levels, including the local, state, and global scales" (Caruso 2014, p. 1). Moreover, the discourse of food justice relies on what I call *intersectional agriculture* and a structural interpretation of US food movements that highlights the nexus between the historical, social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental contexts of food politics.

Relying on Kimberlè Crenshaw's (1989, 1991) concept of "intersectionality," intersectional agriculture examines how structural inequalities related to race, class, gender, and sexuality produce instances of hunger and food injustice. For example, the food justice movement draws upon intersectional stories of the state-sanctioned evictions of both Native Americans (Norgaard et al. 2011) and black farmers (Green et al. 2011) in the south that have altered both populations' relationship with land; the development of gentrification practices in urban areas that have erased access to fresh, healthy foods in black neighborhoods across the U.S. (Alkon 2012); the plight of farmworkers and their working conditions (Brown and Getz, 2011); and the struggle of queer farmers to create autonomous agri-food spaces (Sbicca 2012). More specifically, for black farmers, land historically represented a sense of both economic and food security. In the case of Native Americans, land was historically and culturally embedded in the sacred relationship between nature and humans, linked to food provision and land stewardship.

Using the lens of Nancy Fraser's (2011, 2013) triple movement analytic framework, I construct an interpretation of food justice as the emancipatory pole of what I term the triple *food* movement to explore the role of food justice as it relates to the mainstream movement. As a revised version of Polanyi's (1944) "double movement" project, Fraser's triple movement framework introduces a third project to his framework to understand contemporary social struggles. She terms this third project "emancipation," which seeks to dismantle inequalities and oppressive structures that arise in the tensions between marketization and social protection. Thus, Fraser's framework "delineates a three-sided conflict among proponents of marketization, adherents of social protection and partisans of emancipation" (Fraser 2013, p. 129).

This paper uses this conflict embedded in what Fraser describes as the triple movement—which represents in effect the triple food movement—to understand food justice in relation to corporate agriculture and local food. First, I briefly show how corporate agriculture is aligned with the marketization project and the local food movement is aligned with the social protection project to situate the context of the current U.S. food movement. Then, I argue that the food justice movement is aligned with the emancipation project by defining and showing how intersectional agriculture is used by marginalized communities to address and resist inequalities produced and reproduced by corporate agriculture and local food movements. More specifically, I draw upon case studies (Alkon 2012; Reynolds and Cohen 2016; Sbicca 2012; White 2011) at the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality to discuss how food justice aims to address food needs and counter systems of domination constructed around race, class, gender, sexuality, agriculture, and food.

The mainstream U.S. "food movement" context: corporate agriculture and local food

The corporate agriculture movement or global corporate food regime (McMichael 2014) is heavily implicated in the American agri-food system, and relies on large farms practicing conventional or commodity agriculture, supported

by the corporate-controlled, transnational U.S. food system. Historically, the movement is synonymous with the industrial agriculture movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "propelled by mechanization, the increased use of chemicals (i.e., synthetic fertilizers and pesticides), and, most recently, the introduction of advanced biotechnologies" (Lyson and Guptill 2004, p. 373). Sociologist Thomas Lyson (2004) maps out the history of the American agri-food system in his book, *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community*, and argues that commodity agriculture attempts to embed society in the market economy. This process of embedding is guided by the neoclassical economic paradigm, that when applied to agricultural production transforms the factors of production—land, labor, and capital—into commodities that can be traded within a global agricultural-food market, driven by large subsidized farms tied to large agribusinesses such as Monsanto, Syngenta, or Dow AgroSciences (Lyson 2004; Lyson and Guptill 2004).

As a result, this movement is situated in economic and political terms between market mechanisms, large agribusinesses, and large farms. Economically, agricultural marketization supports the production of cheap, highly processed foods that represent a market of "undifferentiated commodities" built upon single-cropping production systems and technology (Beus and Dunlap 1990; Lyson 2004). Politically, agricultural marketization creates a corporate middle class that shapes and regulates where, when, and how food is produced, distributed, and consumed (Lyson 2004). Thus, economic and political power is concentrated among large farms and corporations that convert staple crops into cheap, highly processed foods. Subsequently, the political-economic power of corporate agriculture produces a number of detrimental consequences for both humans and the environment, such as the marginalization of small-to-medium scale farmers, corporate control of the food system, the production of highly-processed cheap foods, high rates of diet-related diseases, soil degradation, and a host of other social and environmental problems (Mares and Alkon 2011).

In contrast, the local food movement has arisen as a social-ecological response to the corporate agriculture movement, "rooted in a critique of industrial agriculture as ecologically, socially, and economically destructive and advocates for the creation of sustainable and just alternatives" (Alkon 2012, p. 11). Its discourse is more aligned with what some are calling the mainstream "food movement," (Alkon 2012) which "argues that the purchase of local organic food is a "vote with your fork" for environmental protection because it shifts market demand to farms eschewing chemical pesticides and lowering transport costs" (Alkon 2012, p. 31). Hence, consumers who are able to "vote" with their fork benefit most directly from the movement. This ability to vote allows consumers to exercise their "food citizenship" (Lyson 2004) rights that enable them to support the economic viability of small farms that produce local or organic meats, vegetables, or fruits, and to have access to local, fresh foods. Food citizenship is defined as the status of a person that "not only has a stake but also a voice in how and where his or her food is produced, processed, and sold" (Lyson 2004, p. 77). Food citizens support what sociologist Thomas Lyson terms 'civic agriculture,' "which represents a sustainable alternative to the socially, economically, and environmentally destructive practices that have come to be associated with conventional agriculture" (Lyson 2004, p. 2).

Historically, the local food movement has origins in the sustainable agriculture movement of the 1980s. The sustainable agriculture movement is situated within "three distinct streams of social thought and activism—agrarian, environmental, and social justice" (Hassanein 1999, p. 4)—and relies on the support of small-to-medium scale farmers, environmentally concerned consumers, and the creation of what Allen et al. (2003) describe as new agri-food initiatives. Such initiatives can be largely understood as market strategies that "seek to construct and portray alternatives to the construction and reproduction of hegemonies of food (and agriculture) in the conventional food system" (Allen et al. 2003, p. 62). These strategies usually take the form of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) organizations, farmers' markets, community gardens, direct marketing programs, farm stands, food policy councils, and other alternative food networks that bring together farmers and consumers across a diverse range of social sectors, including agronomic experts, retailers, chefs, consumers, and food journalists (Allen et al. 2003; Starr 2010).

However, new agri-food initiatives are typically realized in areas located in what sociologist Elijah Anderson (2015) calls "the white space" (see Slocum 2007). The "most visible" and "distinct feature" of white spaces is the "overwhelming presence of white people and their absence of black people" (Anderson 2015, p. 13). For example, in her study of farmers' markets, Julie Guthman (2011) draws attention to how the "overwhelming whiteness" of the local food movement creates a marginalizing food experience for people of color through specific practices and discourses. Moreover, these strategies tend to leave issues of social justice on the periphery, focusing on increasing the economic profit of small-to-medium scale farmers (Mares and Alkon 2011) and preserving the environment. As a result, the local food movement tends to be silent on issues of race and class, and "resonates most deeply with, white and middle-class individuals" (Alkon and Julian Agyeman 2011, p. 3).

In response to this silence, perpetuated by the predominantly affluent and white character of the local food movement and the ills of corporate agriculture, the U.S. food justice movement is being used by farmers of color, low

income communities and communities of color—in both rural and urban spaces—as a vehicle to address racial and economic inequalities in the U.S. food system. From the Bay area of California to upstate New York, marginalized communities are mobilizing and organizing to develop food justice strategies such as community food projects, farmer of color networks, grassroots organizations, and other coalitions to address their food production needs. However, this movement goes beyond issues of food access to address and dismantle systems of domination constructed by race, class, gender, and sexuality within the food movement and more broadly. The agri-food system, as argued by Alkon and Julian Agyeman (2011), is "implicated in many of what Omi and Winant (1994) call *racial projects*, political and economic undertakings through which racial hierarchies are established and racialized subjectivities are created" (pp. 4–5). Consequently, the local food movement is also a racial project that fails to protect *everyone* from the ills of corporate agriculture. Hence, the food justice movement, and activists that support it, seek to emancipate marginalized communities from conditions maintained by both the corporate agriculture and local food projects.

The food justice movement

The origins of the food justice movement in the United States can be traced back to the American Black freedom struggle, situated in the context of conversations on food politics in the 1960s and early 1970s. "In fact, the long black freedom struggle," historian Mary Potorti (2014) argues, "has repeatedly underscored the cultural and political significance of food, explicitly calling attention to the interlocking structures of racism and social inequality embedded in the politics and culture of food" (p. 45). For example, in her article on the Black panther party's (BPP) community food programming, "Feeding Revolution: The Black panther party and the Politics of Food," Potorti (2014) uses the BPP free food programs as a case study to illuminate the ways in which black communities historically addressed inadequate access to food. She argues that the BPP understood that inadequate food access, food insecurity, racial inequality, and socioeconomic equality could not be treated separately in the struggle for social change and racial justice. This focus on simultaneously addressing food issues and structures of inequality such as racism, classism, and sexism, is at the forefront of food justice activism, characterized by what I term *intersectional agriculture*.

Intersectional agriculture represents the trend toward agricultural practices, food distribution, and consumption activities that explicitly seek to address, resist, or counter agri-food issues at the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality. The term derives from Kimberlè Crenshaw's concept of "intersectionality" (Crenshaw 1989, 1991), which speaks to the ways in which facets of identity such as race, class, gender, and sexuality "intersect in shaping the structural, political, and representational aspects" (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1244) of individual experiences, or societal structures—in this case, the food system.

Hence, the role of food justice in the context of the triple food movement is to bring intersectionality into the mainstream "food movement" discourse, which tends to be silent on issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. By relying on intersectional agriculture, food justice simultaneously (1) celebrates the resilience and agency of marginalized communities, (2) critiques the corporate and local food movements, and (3) acknowledges the sociohistorical context in which race, sexuality, class, and gender inequalities in the triple food movement exist. Moreover, the food justice movement also works to alleviate symptoms (inequalities in food access and security), while actively working to dismantle the root causes (political, social, and economic structures) of these inequalities. This is accomplished in three emancipatory components of the movement that work in tandem each other: community sovereignty, food provisioning strategies, and alternative agri-food safe spaces. Each component is embedded in the nexus between community culture, identity, and food as a form of resistance, to create or (re)create spaces, through a social process, that connects symptoms of food inequalities to the structures that perpetuate those symptoms. Moreover, alongside this creation process, communities bridge culture, self-reliance, and community responsibility to develop strategies to address and resist oppressive characteristics of corporate agriculture and local food, as well as celebrate cultural legacies and foodways.

While these strategies are similar to marketing strategies employed by the local food movement, they are re-imagined to provide for and support marginalized communities. They tend to be located in (re)created spaces that are historically black, and are often now designated as food deserts. These include urban places like West Oakland, California or Detroit, Michigan, that are saturated with liquor stores or convenience stores filled with heavily processed foods, as well as urban or rural locations where there are no grocery stores for at least twenty miles. Moreover, these strategies are also located in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ)-identified community spaces that place the needs of queer people at the forefront of food justice efforts. This differs from the other poles of the triple food movement, in that these efforts actively resist structures of, for example, heteronormativity, and respond to issues of local governance and food availability.

As a result, these three emancipatory components connect food justice in the U.S. context to the global food sovereignty movement which struggles to maintain "the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through

sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" (La Via Campesina 2011). However, this link to food sovereignty is realized more in relation to access, paying special attention to *terms* of food access and *who* is determining the terms (McMichael and Morarji 2010). For the food justice movement, marginalized communities *should* be determining *their* food needs as well as any other needs that impact *their* community. By bringing race, sexuality, and class, for example, to the forefront of food discourse, low-income communities, communities of color, and LGBTQ communities use food justice to bring food into larger conversations around inequitable systems constructed around food, class, race, and sexuality. In the following sections, I draw upon the case of black farmers and queer food justice activism in the US to explore and illuminate the ways in which food justice operates at the center of all three emancipatory forces and as an intersectional response to both corporate agriculture and local food.

From West Oakland to Detroit: the case of black farmers

The plight of black farmers in the U.S. is situated in a legacy of resilience, struggle, resistance, and disenfranchisement linked to the American civil rights movement in the rural south. "In fact, black landowners," Gilbert et al. (2002) argue, "were among the first to join and support the Civil Rights Movement in the rural South" (p. 2). Black landowners also mobilized and organized to develop community-based cooperatives, such as the New Poor People's Cooperatives and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives (Green et al. 2011). The struggle of black farmers, sharecroppers, and farmworkers has a long history predating and following the civil rights movement embedded in the dual organization of the south, which facilitated White reliance on black labor and black dependence on white support. This configuration reinforced the racial project honoring white authority and black inferiority. However, coming out of Reconstruction, with slavery in the near periphery, this duality was threatened. By 1900, nearly 90% of blacks lived in the South, and 83 percent lived in rural areas, mostly working as sharecroppers or tenants on cotton farms for low wages (Hurt 2011). Although blacks were an integral part of the American agri-food system and employed conventional agricultural methods, they rarely benefitted from it. Many could not afford to buy or produce their own food and suffered from poverty, hunger, and social isolation (Chapman 1940). However, "despite these challenges," Green et al. (2011) posit, "black landownership grew in the reconstruction period" but "dwindled as more lands were consolidated into white-owned plantations" (p. 53).

From 1920 to 1997, the number of black farmers decreased from 926,000 owning 16 million acres of land to less than 20,000 owning less than 2 million acres (Gilbert et al. 2002). This dramatic decrease of black farmers and black landowners impacted the cultural, economic, and social livelihoods of black farming communities in the rural south and created conditions for a long struggle with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) (Green et al. 2011). Moreover, alongside the struggle of black farmers occurred the twentieth century industrial shift within the American agri-food system, characterized by the increase in large-scale agriculture, and the corporatization of food supply chains at the local, regional, national, and global levels, which impacted many small farmers (ibid.). As a result, oppressive race relations, loss of black land, and shifts in the U.S. agri-food landscape created the context for black farmer struggles in the late twentieth century.

In September 1997, the legacy of black farmer struggles was brought to the national forefront of agri-food conversations when almost 15,000 black farmers joined a class-action lawsuit against the USDA, known as the *Pigford v Glickman* case (Wood and Gilbert 2000). Tim Pigford, a black farmer in North Carolina, originally filed the lawsuit in August of that year, alleging county USDA officials had "systematically discriminated against black farmers for years" and "illegally denied operating and disaster loans, other credit, and benefit payments" to black farmers (Wood and Gilbert 2000, p. 60). Furthermore, the suit charged that most of the county offices were directed by local white people who improperly handled and ignored complaints of black farmers (Wood and Gilbert 2000). Upon settlement of this case, each farmer was offered $50,000 and forgiveness of debt owed by to the USDA by non-private lenders (Gilbert et al. 2002).

The West Oakland farmers market

While the number black farmers and farms is declining at significantly high rates, in terms of conventional farming, which is mostly accurately captured by the USDA's Census of Agriculture, there has in fact been a resurgence of black farmers in recent years. However, these Black farmers are mostly urban farmers who do not rely on conventional methods of production and the mono-cropping systems of some of their predecessors. "These farmers are not just growing food, either," Leah Penniman of Soul Fire Farm in upstate New York recently wrote; they "rely on survival strategies inherited from their ancestors, such as collectivism and commitment to social change. They infuse popular education, activism, and collective ownership into their work" (Penniman 2015). For example, the West Oakland Farmers' Market uses the farmers' market model as a form of food provisioning linked to the struggles of black farmers, social activism, racism, and

cultural recognition. "The goal of the West Oakland farmers market" Alkon (2012) observes, "is to address two sets of circumstances resulting from institutional racism: declining numbers of African American farmers and the absence of fresh foods in low-income black communities" (p. 77). Alkon (2012) further argues that the West Oakland farmers market

> constructs and celebrates black culture as both resistance against oppression and a tool to promote healthy communities and environments. Unhealthy patterns that plague many urban black communities—including high rates of diet-related diseases and lack of infrastructure and economic development—are described as the result of institutional racism. In response, this farmers market draws on and rearticulates black foodways and farming traditions to imagine other ways of being…[I]t is concerned with providing access to environmental benefits—healthy food and public space—through the creation of a local food system (p. 77).

Here, the West Oakland farmers market case connects both the structural interpretation of the U.S. food system and community sovereignty situated within the food justice discourse. Also evident is that the social, economic, political, and health issues of this community are a direct result of institutional racism, and this farmers market is being used as a tool to *emancipate* black folks of West Oakland from the ills of racism. This attention to racism and community infrastructure allows activists to connect unjust symptoms of the food system to the structures and institutions that perpetuate inequality. Moreover, this market goes beyond food to provide a space for black Oaklanders to gather and create or reclaim their rights via a participatory food system, a system in which they can be "citizens" and "vote" with their forks as a form of community sovereignty. This is different from the food citizenship of the local food movement in that community sovereignty in the food justice context is not driven by price but rather by the need and desires of a community.

The West Oakland farmers market also provides an example of how the food justice movement uses intersectional agriculture to convert marketing strategies into food provisioning strategies by linking race and sustainable agriculture. However, the market cannot be viewed in isolation from the larger context of black economic development, similar to the work of Malik Yakini and the Detroit black community food security network (DBCFSN) as well as the National Black Food and Justice Alliance. While the Network is over two thousand miles away from West Oakland, it is also linked to the struggle and resilience of southern black farmers, community sovereignty, social activism and organizing.

The Detroit black community food security network

In her article "D-Town Farm: African American Resistance to Food Insecurity and the Transformation of Detroit," sociologist Monica White (2011) investigates how the DBCFSN uses urban farming as a strategy to support black farmers, meet the needs of mostly low-income black communities, and create a community space to positively impact community health. "D-Town activists have not only appropriated public space for the purposes of creating a healthy, well-fed, well-educated, and inspired African American community," White argues, "but they also have created a sustainable community food system that fosters a sense of self-determination and self-sufficiency" (p. 415). The DBCFSN has a larger agenda that seeks

> to end relationships of dependency and educate the community about the importance of providing for themselves. In response to the failure of the local government to provide a safe community and a range of social services, D-Town farmers have worked to build community and place the earth in the center of their struggle for social transformation. Their efforts are not invested in opposing existing power structures through protest, but rather directed at contributing to the development of a safe space through the transformation of their physical environment. In this way, the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network and the D-Town Farm create the foundations for a new world marked by new ways of being (p. 415).

While White suggests that their efforts do not necessarily oppose existing power structures through protest, I argue that the existence of the DBCFSN is simultaneously opposing power structures and transforming the physical environment as a form of protest. For example, by creating a community space for black people by black people, and focusing on self-reliance, their work exposes the lack of concern for the food environments of low-income people of color in Detroit by the American agri-food system and the emerging alternative agriculture movement. "Detroiters long have had insufficient access to grocery stores" White (2011) observes, and "the problem culminated in 2007 when Farmer Jack, the last major grocery store chain serving the city, closed its doors (White 2011, p. 407). Thus, the DBFSCN protests the American agri-food system by refusing to rely on the system to provide food for their community through an analysis that posits food insecurity as a structural problem.

Hence, I argue that their remedy for this problem represents an instance of intersectional agriculture, illustrated by their reliance on community food sovereignty through "the work in food production as a strategy to demonstrate self-determination toward political and economic liberation" (White 2011, p. 411). "Most people involved in the

community food-security are young White people…well connected with other White people who are doing this work and have the resources," DBCFSN founder Malik Yakini argues,

> …they end up having a degree of control over urban agriculture in the city of Detroit—control which is inordinate to their actual numbers in the population, and that is a problem. It is an imbalance, in the city of Detroit, which is at least 80% Black people, for them to position themselves in the forefront of this movement. I'm all for cordial, cooperative relations with anyone doing this work. I'm not for any ethnic group coming in the African-American community to control any aspect of our lives, and that includes issues of food security. (qtd in White 2011, p. 411)

Yakini draws attention to the predominantly white character of alternative agri-food movements, and suggests that black communities have agency and ability to address their own issues, including food issues, through urban agriculture. To do this, the network developed the Ujamaa Food Co-op to "provide an alternative to expensive health-food stores, supermarkets, and other retail outlets, which no longer operate within the city of Detroit" (White 2011, p. 411). They also employ a concept of urban agriculture aligned with veteran food justice organization *Just Food*, relying on urban agriculture to positon their farm"(a) as a community center, (b) as a vehicle to articulate culturally relevant language about healthy food and healthy lifestyles, and (c) as a tangible model of collective work, self-reliance, and political agency" (White 2011, p. 412).

Moreover, the DBCFSN also engages in political conversations surrounding food issues in Detroit. For instance, from 2006 to 2008, the DBCFSN was appointed by the Neighborhood and Community Service Standing Committee of the Detroit City Council, to lead efforts to develop the Detroit Food Policy Council. Members of the DBCFSN "gathered existing food policies in other cities, conducted hearings and listening sessions in the community" and generated "recommendations for alternative food systems such as urban agriculture, creating citizen education guidelines, and producing an emergency response plan in the event of a natural disaster" (White 2011, p. 411). As a result, their efforts led to the establishment of the Food Policy Council in Detroit that gathers metrics and data on hunger and malnutrition on the city and makes recommendations to the Detroit City Council (ibid.).

In sum, from West Oakland to Detroit, food is being used by black communities as a tool to promote emancipation intertwined with issues of access. Black communities in these areas and others are attempting to define food access on *their* terms to support their broader goals associated with community sovereignty. D-Town Farm is also another example of a food provisioning strategy that seeks to decide *who* provides the food, *who* receives the food, and *how* the food is being distributed, with community sovereignty at the forefront. This case also illustrates how food justice discourse employs a type of intersectional agriculture that links a structural interpretation of the U.S. food system to a community's desire for sovereignty, and to their strategies for seeking food provision. Moreover, this link shows how issues of race and class shape community food experiences and illuminates the power of food within communities that have been marginalized by corporate agriculture as well as local food, and seeks to reflect the emancipatory actions of activists on the food justice side of the triple food movement.

Queer food justice activism in the eco-queer movement

Over the last 50 years in the U.S., there has been an increase in social movement activism that seeks to address the marginalization of individuals or communities that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ). These instances of activism include, for example, most recently the fight for marriage equality and other rights that challenge "dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity, homophobia, and the primacy of the gendered heterosexual nuclear family (heteronormativity)" (Bernstein 2002, p. 536). Moreover, this activism extends beyond just the fight for social equality, but also the fight for spaces that cultivate relations between food, the environment, and sexuality. For instance, sociologist Joshua Sbicca draws attention to queer activists who are fighting for such spaces under the guise of the Eco-Queer Movement. "The eco-queer movement" Sbicaa contends, "entails a loose knit, often decentralized set of political and social activists identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer or an ally of these groups, challenging binary notions of sexuality and ecology, while simultaneously transforming material and symbolic space(s) into more just, autonomous, sustainable forms" (Sbicca 2012, p. 34). The movement bridges LGBTQ, social, and environmental visions of activism and "demonstrates an understanding of the ways in which sexual relations organize and influence both the material world of nature and our perceptions, experiences, and constitutions of the world" (ibid.).

In many conversations on food access and food security at the local, national, and global levels, food issues among LGBTQ communities are often neglected, further exacerbating food inequalities among this population. In 2016, a report by the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law found that approximately 27% (2.2 million) of LGBTQ adults or their families were food insecure due to economic constraints and 14% of LGBTQ adults "reported running out of food for their families and not having money for more"

within a 30-days period (Brown et al. 2016, p. 2). "Contrary to popular stereotypes of the LGBT community as affluent," Brown et al. (2016) argue, "research demonstrates not only widespread economic diversity…but also that LGB people are often more likely to be poor than straight people and that transgender individuals face extremely high rates of poverty" (p. 2).

Queer youth programming at bushwick campus farm

In response to the food struggles and obstacles to earning livelihoods of LGBTQ communities, queer youth and adults from California to New York City are thinking of ways to (re)create urban and rural autonomous spaces for LGBTQ people to practice what Sbicca (2012) calls "queer ecological politics of food," which focuses on the ways in which the relationship between ecology and sexuality impacts "the personal, local, organizational, and national power struggles driven by fundamental concerns of who can eat what and under what conditions" (Potorti 2015, p. 5). The ultimate goal of such spaces is to allow LGBTQ people to "collectively experience their sexuality while simultaneously striving to create more democratic, just, and sometimes sustainable alternatives to white hetero-patriarchal norms" (Sbicca 2012, p. 38). In relation to food spaces, the Bushwick Farm campus works with the Make the Road New organization and the high school Gay Straight Alliance chapter, to create a safe space for queer youth to experience their sexuality while working toward the development of a more just, sustainable NYC food system (Reynolds and Cohen 2016). To get the idea of how this farm creates this space, I draw on Kristin Reynolds and Nevin Cohen's (2016) description of farm activities and reactions of the students by Maggie Cheney, a white, queer identified farmer, in their book *Beyond the Kale*:

> She [Cheney] recounted several ways that youth in the program reacted to it: "[They'll say,] 'Oh, let's have a rainbow-colored garden box' and 'Why don't we do our GSA outside, and farm?' and 'What if we go to this conference and do a cooking demo, and be gay and cooking farm food?' […] Cheney has also used farm activities to challenge heteronormativity and to help all of the students she works with, regardless of their sexual orientation, to reconsider traditional gender roles…and that "agriculture is a perfect example of something that demonstrates all different types of gender roles—construction, cooking, sowing seed, digging in the dirt. You all these things that you could pinpoint, and say, 'Oh that's stereotypically male, and that's stereotypically female.' And then you're given this beautiful opportunity to discuss that, and try to have students understand that they don't have to be either of those boxes if they don't want to be." (p. 54)

It can be seen that Cheney uses her teaching as a form of activism (hooks, 1994) to emancipate her students from the constraints of sexual identity while simultaneously creating a more inclusive, autonomous food space for queer youth, supporting tenets of the eco-queer movement.

Queer farmers in Northern California

In 2013, queer filmmaker Jonah Mossberg, released his documentary project, *Out Here*, which explored the lives, histories, and experiences of queer farmers in the U.S. According to the documentary's website, the film asks the questions "what does it mean to be a queer farmer, is agriculture a safe space for queer people, and what are the relationships between food production and queerness?" to "give voice and visibility to queer people in agriculture and inspire a flagrant national discussion about gender and sexuality as they are related to our food system."

As a part of this project, the Fancyland land project is located north of San Francisco on twelve acres in the California county of Humboldt. "Inspired by social justice, feminist, and anti-authoritarian principles," Sbicca (2012) notes, the Fancyland project creates "queer and radical communities and individuals by being a small-scale rural resource in the following ways: acting as a site to plug into homestead projects; providing a feminist environment for learning and sharing useful rural living skills such as alternative building, appropriate technology, gardening, and land stewardship" (p. 47). According to their website, Fancyland strives to build and grow a "vibrant rural landscape by and for queer and transgender people and allies who share a common goal of dismantling oppressions, addressing privilege and keeping up the fight." To do this, Fancyland provides an *emancipatory* space for queer people and allies to mobilize, organize and strategize ways to fight against systems of domination at the intersection of sexuality, gender, food, and agriculture.

Queer food justice activism

The eco-queer movement creates a site for both queer youth and adults to link gender, sexuality, environmental, and environmental justice activism. Moreover, as Sbicca has argued, the movement can also be used to discuss intersections of sexuality, food, and the environment as well. Whether it is queer youth in New York or queer adults in California, queer people are mobilizing and using intersectional agriculture to develop spaces where they can emancipate themselves from dominant ways of being which marginalize both their sexual identities. "It can be seen that food," Sbicca contends, "provides an adhesive by which queers can develop community,

challenge heteronormativity, and create sustainable alternatives to capitalist modes of industrialized agriculture" (2012, p. 45). For example, the Bushwick Campus Farm and Fancyland both resist the corporatization of agriculture by choosing to practice an alternative way of producing. Moreover, they both also challenge the dominant narrative that most farmers who participate in the local food or sustainable agriculture movement are white, heterosexual, middle-class men, by publicly being and farming. These actions foster and maintain spaces that seek to emancipate queer folks from dominant systems.

Conclusion

In exploring the role of food justice as the emancipatory pole of the triple food movement in the U.S., I have argued against treating the food justice movement in isolation from corporate agriculture and local food, a common practice that constrains our understanding of the role of food justice in the U.S. Many studies on food justice and alternative food movements tend to use the term "food movement" to describe alternative trends to the production, consumption, and distribution of food in the U.S. However, I argue, this conceptualization fails to delineate the differences between each food movement and does not necessarily capture the conflicting interests between corporate agriculture, local food, and food justice. That is not to suggest that the three movements do not intersect, but rather that the interests of the movements tend to be silenced when they are all put under the banner of a mainstream "food movement." For instance, a sole focus on corporate agriculture ignores the detrimental consequences of the movement's marketization of food on both low-income people of color and the environment. A sole focus on local food ignores the ways in which social protection efforts, which attempt to counter the detrimental consequences of corporate agriculture, marginalize and exclude low-income communities of color.

In addition, a sole focus on the emancipatory character of food justice ignores how systems of inequality, such as racism and classism, influences the social, cultural, political, economic and environmental dimensions of food. Instead, I have argued that food justice is better understood, historically in relation to the mainstream "food movement" in the US and that it relies on intersectional agriculture to address, resist, or counter the consequences of corporate agriculture's marketization and the exclusionary actions of the social protectionist local food movement. However, further research is needed to enhance our understanding of food justice and intersectional agriculture in the triple food movement. This framework could help inform future food studies, especially those that seek to parse through the food justice discourse. For instance, future research could simultaneously explore the complexity of all three food movements in the U.S. and the relationship between conventional, sustainable, and intersectional agriculture. Another area of inquiry could explore more concrete examples of how the forces of food marketization, social protection, and emancipation work together and against each other outside of the US context.

While this paper has presented two case studies to illuminate the role of food justice in the context of the triple food movement, it has focused more on issues of race and class—and less on issues of gender and sexuality—as seen through the more detailed case of black farmers. For example, I used the cases of black farmers and queer farmers to show how these two groups create and (re)create emancipatory spaces for farming, food, and community to counter the dominant U.S. food movement narrative, which posits that only white, heterosexual men farm. Yet the case of black famers shed more light on how African-Americans have been historically marginalized by food movements. In contrast, the case of queer farmers focuses more on queer bodies in spaces of food production and less on how LGBTQ communities have been excluded from the mainstream food movement. This is due to the fact that very minimal research has been done on the relationship between sexuality, food access and food justice. Moreover, queer communities have received minimal coverage in the food justice literature. As a result, we know very little about what food justice looks like in these communities and there is need for more research in this area. I propose that the concept of intersectional agriculture could be used to amplify our understanding of LGBTQ food experiences and how systems of oppression in the food system marginalize them and how they seek to resist them.

There is also a critical need for scholars and movement activists alike to expand the food justice analysis to include more explicitly issues of gender and sexuality. Although, I have argued that food justice is necessarily intersectional, most food justice projects do not engage in or practice intersectionality. However, if the movement plans to build a more equitable, sustainable food system, activists will have to expand beyond a focus on race and class and engage in intersectional agriculture to ensure that all marginalized communities are included. In the U.S., black people and LGBTQ people are two of the most vulnerable populations, therefore regularly have to develop their own 'safe' spaces. Spaces where they can empower one another and recognize their own agency in building towards a more sustainable, just food system.

Working toward intersectional agriculture could provide an avenue for the food justice movement to better align with the food sovereignty movement to address issues of gender more explicitly and the eco-queer movement in the context of sexuality. In this way, food justice provides a way for the struggles of seemingly disparate groups to be linked together in the fight against capitalistic systems of inequality

perpetuated by racism, patriarchy, and heteronormativity. Interestingly, linking black, gender, and LGBTQ struggles, is exactly what Black panther PARTY co-founder, Huey P. Newton, suggested that the party do to fight against inequality in his August 1970 "Letter from Huey to the Revolutionary Brothers and Sisters about the Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation Movements" (Newton et al. 1976). "We must try to form a coalition with the gay liberation and women's liberation groups," Newton urged the party,"[w]e must always handle social forces in the most appropriate manner" (Teal 1971, p. 171). Thus, the food justice movement could be an important vehicle to which all marginalized communities come together to not only fight for access to adequate food but also issues of inequality beyond the politics of food.

Acknowledgements I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Philip McMichael, the Food, Agroecology, Justice, and Well-Being Collective at Cornell University, and the anonymous reviewers for comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of this manuscript.

References

Agyeman, J., and J. McEntee. 2014. Moving the field of food justice forward through the lens of urban political ecology. *Geography Compass* 8 (3): 211–220.

Alkon, A. 2012. *Black, White, and Green: Farmers Markets, Race, and the Green Economy*. Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

Alkon, A., and J. Julian Agyeman. 2011. *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Allen, P., M. FitzSimmons, M. Goodman, and K. Warner. 2003. Shifting plates in the agrifood landscape: The tectonics of alternative agrifood initiatives in California. *Journal of Rural Studies* 19 (1): 61–75.

Anderson, E. 2015. The white space. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1 (1): 10–21.

Bernstein, M. 2002. Identities and politics. *Social Science History* 26 (03): 531–581.

Beus, C.E., and R.E. Dunlap. 1990. Conventional versus alternative agriculture: The paradigmatic roots of the debate. *Rural Sociology* 55 (4): 590–616.

Brown, S., and C. Getz. 2011. Farmworker food insecurity and the production of hunger in California. In *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and sustainability*, ed. A. Alkon and J. Agyeman, 121–146. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Brown, Taylor N.T., A.P. Romero, and G.J. Gates. 2016. *Food Insecurity and SNAP Participation in the LGBT Community*. Los Angeles: The Williams Institute.

Caruso, C.C. 2014. Searching for food (Justice): Understanding access in an under-served food environment in New York City. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis* 3 (1): 2–3.

Chapman, Oscar James. 1940. A Historical Study of Negro Land-Grant Colleges in Relationship with Their Social, Economic, Political, And Educational Backgrounds and a Program for Their Improvement. PhD dissertation, Department of Educational Studies. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University.

Crenshaw, K. 1989. Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140: 139–167.

Crenshaw, K. 1991. Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241–1299.

Fraser, N. 2011. *Marketization, Social Protection, Emancipation: Toward a Neo-Polanyian Conception of Capitalist Crisis*, 137–157. In Business as usual: The roots of the global financial meltdown.

Fraser, N. 2013. A triple movement? Parsing the politics of crisis after Polanyi. *New Left Review* 81: 119–132.

Gilbert, J., G. Sharp, and M. Sindy Felin. 2002. The loss and persistence of black-owned farms and farmland: A review of the research literature and its implications. *Southern Rural Sociology* 18 (2): 1–30.

Gottlieb, R., and A. Joshi. 2010. *Food Justice*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Green, J., E. Green, and A. Kleiner. 2011. From the past to the present: Agricultural development and black farmers in the American south. In *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*, ed. A. Alkon and J. Agyeman, 45–64. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Guthman, J. 2011. If they only knew: The unbearable whiteness of alternative food. In *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class and Sustainability*, ed. A. Alkon and J. Agyeman, 263–281. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Hassanein, N. 1999. *Changing the Way America Farms: Knowledge and Community in the Sustainable Agriculture Movement*. Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.

Hislop, Rasheed. 2015. Reaping Equity: A Survey of Food Justice Organizations in the U.S.A. Thesis, Department of Plant Sciences. Davis, CA: University of California, Davis.

Hooks, B. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. London: Routledge.

Hurt, R.Douglas. 2011. *Introduction. African American Life in the Rural South, 1900–1950*. Missouri: University of Missouri Press.

Lyson, T.A. 2004. *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community*. Medford: Tufts University Press.

Lyson, T., and A. Guptill. 2004. Commodity agriculture, civic agriculture and the future of US farming. *Rural Sociology* 69 (3): 370–385.

Mares, T.M., and A. Alkon. 2011. Mapping the food movement: Addressing inequality and neoliberalism. *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 2 (1): 68–86.

McMichael, P. 2014. Historicizing food sovereignty. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 41 (6): 933–957.

McMichael, P., and K. Morarji. 2010. *Development and Its Discontents. Contesting Development: Critical Struggles for Social Change*, 233–242. Oxon: Routledge.

Newton, H.P., B. Seale, E. Cleaver, and G. Louis Heath. 1976. *The Black Panther leaders speak: Huey P Newton, Bobby Seale, Eldridge Cleaver and company speak out through the Black Panther Party's official newspaper*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press.

Norgaard, K.M., R. Reed, and C. Van Horn. 2011. A continuing legacy: Institutional racism, hunger and nutritional justice on the Klamath. In *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*, ed. A. Alkon and J. Agyeman, 23–46. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Omi, M., and H. Winant. 1994. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. New York City: Routledge.

Penniman, Leah. 2015. Radical Farmers Use Fresh Food to Fight Racial Injustice and the New Jim Crow. *YES! Magazine*. http://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/radical-farmers-use-fresh-food-fight-racial-injustice-black-lives-matter. Accessed 18 January 2017.

Polanyi, K. 1944. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Potorti, M. 2014. Feeding revolution: The black panther party and the politics of food. *Radical Teacher* 98: 43–51.

Potorti, Mary. 2015. *Food for Freedom: The Black Freedom Struggle and the Politics of Food* (Doctoral Dissertation, Boston University.

Reynolds, K., and N. Cohen. 2016. *Beyond the Kale: Urban Agriculture and Social Justice Activism in New York City*. Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

Sbicca, J. 2012. Eco-queer movement (s): Challenging heteronormative space through (re) imagining nature and food. *European Journal of Ecopsychology* 3 (1): 33–52.

Slocum, R. 2007. Whiteness, space and alternative food practice. *Geoforum* 38 (3): 520–533.

Starr, A. 2010. Local food: A social movement? *Cultural Studies? Critical Methodologies* 10 (6): 479–490.

Teal, D. 1971. *The Gay Militants*. New York: Stein and Day.

Via Campesina. 2011. Organization: The International Peasant's Voice. Via Campesina archive. http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php/organisation-mainmenu-44. Accessed May 23, 2016.

White, M. 2011. Environmental reviews & case studies: d-town farm: African American resistance to food Insecurity and the transformation of Detroit. *Environmental Practice* 13 (04): 406–417.

Wood, S.D., and J. Gilbert. 2000. Returning African American farmers to the land: Recent trends and a policy rationale. *The Review of Black Political Economy* 27 (4): 43–64.

Dr. Bobby J. Smith II is a sociologist and currently a Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of African American Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research focuses on the relationship between food justice, agriculture, race, and inequality in historical and contemporary contexts. Dr. Smith graduated *summa cum laude* with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture, with a focus on Agricultural economics from Prairie View A&M University in 2011, and he earned a Master of Science degree in Agricultural Economics in 2013 and a Ph.D. in Development Sociology in 2018 from Cornell University.