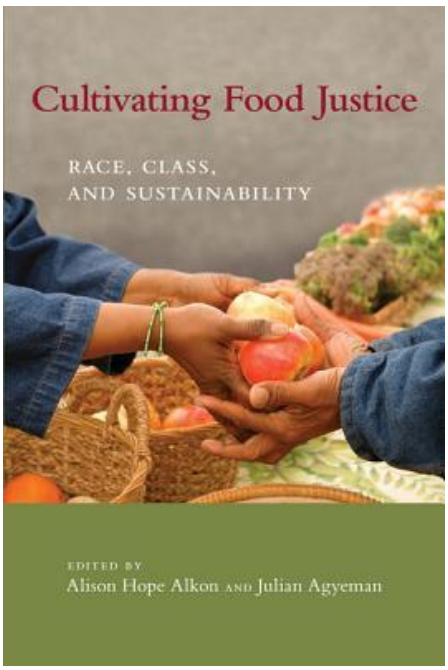

Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability

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Documents how racial and social inequalities are built into our food system, and how communities are creating environmentally sustainable and socially just alternatives.

Popularized by such best-selling authors as Michael Pollan, Barbara Kingsolver, and Eric Schlosser, a growing food movement urges us to support sustainable agriculture by eating fresh food produced on local family farms. But many low-income neighborhoods and communities of color have been systematically deprived of access to healthy and sustainable food. These communities have been actively prevented from producing their own food and often live in "food deserts" where fast food is more common than fresh food. *Cultivating Food Justice* describes their efforts to envision and create environmentally sustainable and socially just alternatives to the food system.

Bringing together insights from studies of environmental justice, sustainable agriculture, critical race theory, and food studies, *Cultivating Food Justice* highlights the ways race and class inequalities permeate the food system, from production to distribution to consumption. The studies offered in the book explore a range of important issues, including agricultural and land use policies that systematically disadvantage Native American, African American, Latino/a, and Asian American farmers and farmworkers; access problems in both urban and rural areas; efforts to create sustainable local food systems in low-income communities of color; and future directions for the food justice movement. These diverse accounts of the relationships among food, environmentalism, justice, race, and identity will help guide efforts to achieve a just and sustainable agriculture.

Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability Details

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From Reader Review Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability for online ebook

Adelaide says

Collective Roots November Book Club.

The chapter that stuck with me the most was about racism in zoning/development in Oakland. It was amazing how explicit it all was. No one even needed to hide the reasons that neighborhoods' ratings were downgraded. They just out and said it was because of Asian and African American residents.

Thomas says

A fantastic book that discusses the intersectionalities of the growing food movement and matters of social justice. The popular food movement tends to ignore people of color and those of lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Not everyone can afford to buy local, and oftentimes people in power whitewash spaces where folks can purchase organic, more healthful foods. Bringing together academics who specialize in food consumption and cultural studies as well as food activists, *Cultivating Food Justice* contains essays that run the gamut of the new food justice movement, by discussing topics such as: the disadvantaged Native American/African American/Latinx/Asian American farmers and farmworkers, how environmental conservation can aid dispossessed people of color, how internet forums for vegans can turn into spaces where white people try to police others' behavior, and more.

Recommended to anyone interested in food and/or social justice. While the essays can get dense and a bit repetitive in their academic nature, they dive into diverse and important topics. This book serves as a solid first step toward food justice, and I hope that in the future more people of color can rise to positions of power in policy, academia, and pretty much everywhere. The next question: how do we distribute this material to a wider audience, and how do we help others cultivate the empathy and compassion to transform these lessons into tangible change?

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sdw says

Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability is the perfect anthology to pair with Anupama Joshi and Robert Gottlieb's *Food Justice* . This collection of case studies (mostly from anthropologists and sociologists) deepens our understanding of the ways that racial and class privileges are articulated in the local food movement.

The anthology's opening essay, "A Continuing Legacy," addresses settler colonialism directly. Kari Mari Norgaard, Ron Reed, and Carolina Van Hornin examine the process through which the Karuk people of the Klamath Mountains have become hungry. The essay's importance lies both in its emphasis on settler colonialism's role in determining food access, and its stress on "the importance of land as a source of wealth" (26). Indeed, land distribution as a key part of racialized food injustice is a central insight repeated in several essays. Rounding out the opening section on the restrictions facing food producers are the essays "From the Past to the Present" which provides a history of black farmers and "Race and Regulation" which

explores challenges facing new Asian immigrant farmers, particularly refugees, in California.

Part Two in the anthology, the shortest section, focuses on consumption. Nathan McClintock looks at the valuation and devaluation of certain forms of capital to understand the ways that the Flatlands of Oakland became a food desert. Sandy Brown and Christy Getz document the food insecurity facing California farm workers. Their work echoes my own insistence on the centrality of labor rights and the absence of living wages in analyzing U.S. food access disparities.

The third section of the book foregrounds the work of organizations struggling to redress food injustice. The opening essay of this section is Alfonso Morales's case study of the Growing Food and Justice For All Initiative in Wisconsin. Additionally, Teresa M. Mares and Devon G. Pena explore "the knowledge systems of immigrant, Native, and diasporic communities" (205) as a way of decentering white alternative food claims. They use case studies of the South Central Farmers and the Puget Sound Urban Farmers. Priscilla McCutcheon looks at the way both The Nation of Islam and the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church draw on different notions of African American foodways and different constructions of blackness useful in analyzing the role of race in the construction of African American alternative food systems.

As is probably already apparent, one of the recurring themes in the book is the problem of colorblindness. Throughout the anthology, authors express concern with the political and social consequences of allowing whiteness to remain unmarked in alternative food circles and the way that colorblindness thus constructs whiteness as the universal norm. Indeed, in "The Unbearable Whiteness of Alternative Food," Julie Guthman exposes the whiteness implicit in the tendency for both students and scholars to insist that "if people only knew" where their food came from a more sustainable and just way of relating to eating would emerge. Guthman argues that such a discourse constructs the spaces of alternative food as white and that the refusal to acknowledge that farmers markets and CSA are predominantly constructed as white (universalism) contributes to the very whiteness of the demographics they serve.

Guthman's article echoes the work of A. Breeze Harper in "Vegans of Color, Racialized Embodiment, and the Problematics of the 'Exotic.' Harper exposes the way racial privilege manifests itself in animal rights circles, particularly in the labeling of certain dishes as "exotic" or "foreign." Harper's work emphasizes the experiences of vegans of colors and the very real implications of the construction of this white space for the 'out of placeness' that vegans of color can experience in white food spaces.

To what extent is the failure of alternative food to reach people of color and economically marginalized communities a function not only of colorblindness but also due to the capitalist logic structuring alternative food access? Jesse C. McEntree's "Rural Food Justice: Divergent Locals in the Northeastern United States" addresses this issue by distinguishing between 'contemporary localism' in which well-intentioned privileged consumers pay a premium to support local farms and 'traditional localism' in which more marginalized members of a community raise food animals or grow their own food to increase affordable access to food for themselves and their families. "Contemporary localism" makes sense from a particular capitalist epistemology which traditional localism subverts.

The penultimate essay of the volume by E. Melanie DuPuis, Jill Lindsey Harrison, and David Goodman examines what "food justice" scholars and activists mean when they employ the word justice. If we want to really work on the connections between sustainable foods and social justice, we would benefit, they argue, from an interrogation of the relationship between theories of social justice and the articulation of food justice in both academic and social movement contexts. The essay would have been stronger if it more explicitly engaged with the relationship between the food justice movement and the environmental justice movement. This article works not to celebrate or denounce local food but to ask us to engage reflexively in local food

movements' claims to enact justice. It ends with a call to embrace imperfect politics.

The concluding essay demanded a global frame, discussing food riots and engaging the question of a global food crisis. In many ways I felt the essay captured some of the major themes of *Stuffed and Starved* in a shorter format. It would pair well with work by Vandana Shiva and statements by Occupy Big Food. The challenge it lays out is indeed the challenge before us: "to address the immediate problems of hunger, malnutrition, food insecurity, and environmental degradation while working steadily toward the structural changes needed for a sustainable and equitable food system" (325).

Greyson says

Worthwhile as a collection that critiques and extends popular notions of the food movement including the work of the ever-present Michael Pollan. Not much to offer in the way of real solutions (which is unsurprising, but depressing) and unconscionably dry...but that's why Pollan is widely read and academic work tends not to be.

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mis fit says

Read a bunch of chapters for a food systems class, some better than others. Guthman is always fun--surprise! alternative food movements are coded white. Also, the chapters on the livelihoods of black farmers and Karuk Indians are both really helpful for understanding the importance of land, food, and environment in racial projects.

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deda mika says

Looooooooooooooooooooove this. Highly recommend this book if you're looking for a background in changing the current climate of race and agriculture.

Annie V says

One of the best intersectional perspectives on the food justice movement, acknowledging that race and class are often left out of the conversation and food spaces have been colonized spaces for as long as the US has been around. Very solid collection of essays. Would highly recommend to anyone interested in the different dimensions of the food justice movement.

Mills College Library says

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Rachel says

A collection of essays written by food scholars, food activists and cultural studies authors complied into a book that truly critiques the 'slow food movement', 'food justice' and the discourses surrounding these movements. Discourses such as race, class and the language used in the food movement.

Powerfully written, thought provoking and brings a well-rounded critique to the table of not accepting the food movement at face value, but looking at the food movement and how in many ways it perpetuates the issues it claims to be fighting for/against.

I appreciated the varied viewpoints, critiques, questions and alternatives posed in this book. For those looking to dig into the meat of the food movement and look at the issue of food justice this book is a definite must read. Great conversation topics around the dinner table!