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Authors	Forbes, Lauren
Citation	Forbes, Lauren. Rooted Resistance: The Struggle for Black Liberation Through Food Cultivation. 2 May 2022, Georgia State University. https://doi.org/10.57709/28853365 .
DOI	https://doi.org/10.57709/28853365
Download date	2026-05-16 23:35:56
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14694/1817

ABSTRACT

ROOTED RESISTANCE: THE STRUGGLE FOR BLACK LIBERATION THROUGH FOOD CULTIVATION

BY LAUREN W. FORBES

MAY 2022

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The U.S. has a long and sordid history of racialized oppression, and the implications of this history are reflected in the persistence of racially and spatially segregated urban poverty. Low-income, predominately Black and brown neighborhoods are consistently lacking in the resources needed for families and communities to thrive due to policymaking decisions that undergird uneven development and resource extraction. Urban farms and gardens, present a unique opportunity to address many of the challenges facing these communities; however, depending on the characteristics of these agriculture projects, specifically the racial identity of the leadership and the project's objectives, urban agriculture can also pose a major threat to marginalized communities by catalyzing exclusive gentrification. This study examines these dynamics through Black-led urban farms in high poverty neighborhoods.

Using a comparative case study analysis of three distinct cities— Portland, Oregon, Atlanta, Georgia, and Detroit, Michigan— I examine why segregation over the 20th century has persisted and how it continues to reinforce concentrated poverty among Black and brown populations. In the second study (Chapter 3), I use qualitative methods to identify the shared characteristics of Black-led farms that make them particularly well-suited to address the unique challenges of these communities. The third study (Chapter 4) uses a national survey of urban farm leadership and factor analysis to measure transformative local impact through urban agriculture. Through this three-paper study, I contribute theoretical frameworks and findings about the racial logics guiding policymaking decisions that reinforce

segregation; the nature and key societal functions of this pervasive institution; the shared characteristics of Black-led farms that distinguish them and their impact in racially and economically marginalized communities; and I introduce *structural (re)engineering* as a preliminary measurement model to understand how Black-led urban agriculture produces multi-faceted social impact. I provide a list of policy recommendations for institutional actors that wish to support the work of Black-led and racial equity-oriented urban farms to create transformative local impact in high poverty neighborhoods.

ROOTED RESISTANCE:
THE STRUGGLE FOR BLACK LIBERATION
THROUGH FOOD CULTIVATION

BY

LAUREN W. FORBES

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
of
Georgia State University

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
2022

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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Committee. It has been approved and accepted by all members of that committee, and it has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies of Georgia State University.

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DEDICATION

To Auntie Carly- You are irreplaceable. And to Ms. Earlean Wilson Huey, who first sparked the flame of Black radical consciousness within me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God, for the calling, the open door, and the faith to walk through it. Mom and Dad, thank you for your unending love and support. Your constant covering of prayer and encouragement kept me afloat through the darkest times, and your countless sacrifices are the reason why I made it to this day. This degree is for you. Auntie Joyce- thank you for everything you do! I'm so grateful for your love and prayers. To my amazing grandmothers— you both are the inspiration and joy of my life. Thank you for every prayer, hug, laugh, and meal that you gave me. I will cherish those moments for the rest of my life. Poppy, I love you too! To Theresa, Ayanna, Salim, Guelila, Andre, and Gabe— thank you guys for being so loving and supportive. It's because of you that I could call Atlanta home for all these years. To Rashida- I can't thank you enough for your watchful eye, words of encouragement, and practical assistance as you helped me navigate the many nuances of this PhD experience! You have been an invaluable part of my doctoral success and a priceless friend. To all of my awesome friends and roommates— I love you all! And I truly appreciate your patience with me over the years, especially in the past year of this program. Charlene- I am beyond grateful for your friendship over the years! Consider this the 'passing of the torch'. Susan Pavlin- thank you so much for being a wonderful colleague and friend! I look forward to visiting you and Ife again soon. Last but not least, I want to thank each of my committee members— Dr. Cathy Liu, Dr. Dan Immergluck, Dr. Jurée Capers, and Dr. Janelle Kerlin. I have learned a lot from you all through this PhD journey. I really appreciate your feedback and encouragement. Thank you for helping me become a better scholar.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This three-paper dissertation is based on the central assertion that Black-led urban farms are a solution to segregated urban poverty and that they address the “triple bottom line” of sustainability. The policy problem embedded within this assertion is the persistence of racially and spatially concentrated urban poverty. I situate this assertion as the end point of a series of questions that collectively seek to understand why segregated poverty persists today and how Black-led urban farms function as a form of grassroots resistance to it. I ask the following research questions, each of which corresponds to one of the three studies:

- 1) How and why does racial segregation continue to influence the nature of urban development in cities, and what are its implications on the quality-of-life of local Black populations?
- 2) What makes Black-led farms uniquely positioned to advance equitable development in high poverty neighborhoods?
- 3) What does transformative local impact through Black-led urban agriculture look like?
How can it be measured?

These studies engage theoretical frameworks of white supremacy, racial capitalism, and structural violence to answer these questions and unpack how racial inequity is sustained through segregated urban poverty. I identify the unique role that the leaders of Black-led urban farms hold as respected community leaders, culture-keepers, and activists in the racially and economically marginalized communities that they are embedded within. I answer the first question about the pervasiveness of racial segregation through the framework of Policy

Feedback Theory (Mettler and SoRelle, 2016), which examines how policies and politics shape one another over time. I apply the concept of a “policyscape” (Mettler, 2014, 2016; Carney, 2009)— which is, as Mettler (2016) describes it, “a landscape densely laden with policies...that have themselves become established institutions” (Mettler, 2016, p.369)— to a comparative case study of racial segregation in three cities (Atlanta, Detroit, and Portland) over the 20th century. Through this study, I illustrate the complex yet clear reasons why and how this segregation continues to exist across these ostensibly different cities today, despite general improvements in race relations over time. Ultimately, I find that segregation has a fundamental, concerning, and largely unaddressed societal function that undergirds racial inequity.

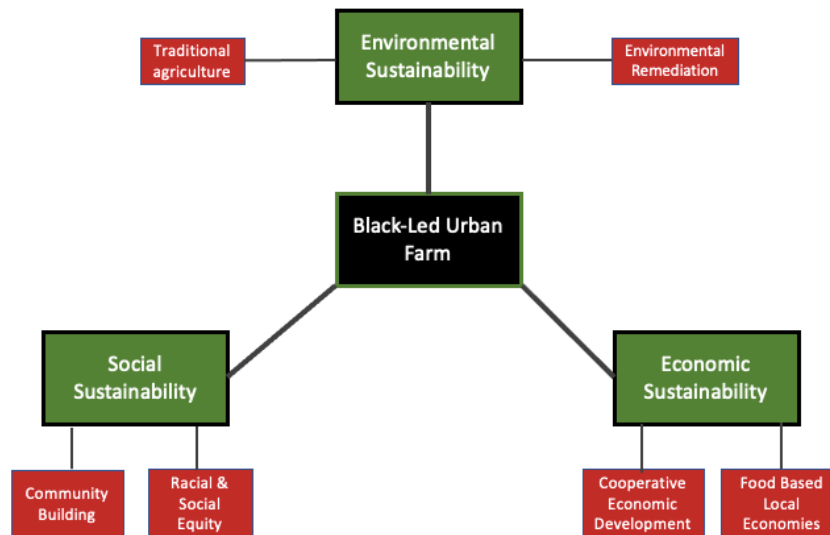


Figure 1.1 Triple Bottom Line of Sustainability through Black-led Urban Farms

In Chapter 3 (study 2), I return to the same three cities to examine what makes Black-led urban farms uniquely positioned to advance equitable development in high poverty

communities. “Equitable development” can be understood as development that genuinely centers equity and justice as opposed to mainstream neoliberal development that centers revenue generation. In the case of this study, equitable development centers healing, restoration, and power shifting in high poverty, racialized communities. I theorize five functions of Black-led urban agriculture that make them uniquely positioned to generate equitable development in these communities. I conduct semi-structured interviews with leaders of Black-led urban farms in these cities to assess these theorizations. This study contributes insight into Black-led urban agriculture and its multi-faceted impact in high poverty, racialized communities. I draw attention to the unique development challenges and opportunities that these communities possess and how even well-intentioned, white-led farms often reinforce their marginalization and exclusion (Ramírez, 2015; Guthman, 2008).

The third and final study introduces the development framework of *structural (re)engineering* and its five composite impact frames— *local ties, capacity building, community ownership, identity reclamation, and political advocacy*— to model what transformative local impact through Black-led urban agriculture looks like. This study uses factor analysis to test preliminary measurement models of each impact frame to determine how these social impact concepts can be operationalized and measured. I theorize structural (re)engineering as a toolkit of actions and a paradigm of values practiced and embodied by Black-led farms to create transformative local impact. As an action-oriented and community-centered praxis, structural (re)engineering is rooted in principles of Black Agrarianism (McDonald, 2021), and it intentionally functions to subvert racialized structural violence and segregation through the healing work of personal restoration, community wealth building, and cultural resilience.

Through this study, I find empirical and applied value of the structural (re)engineering measurement models. I also find preliminary support for my hypotheses that Black-led and equity-oriented urban farms are more likely to engage in structural (re)engineering practices than their white-led and market-oriented counterparts.

1.2 THE URGENCY OF ADDRESSING SEGREGATED POVERTY

The present political hyperpolarization and record-breaking inflation illustrate the urgency of addressing both the equity implications racial segregation and the inadequacies of the industrialized food system. Concerns over who benefits and who suffers the most from neoliberal urban development policy decisions have reignited fierce debate about the responsibility of institutional actors (e.g., anchor institutions and local governance) to improve conditions in low-income communities. These same actors leading the “revitalization” of high poverty communities are often largely complicit in creating and sustaining the conditions of segregated urban poverty and chronic underdevelopment that they now ostensibly seek to remediate.

Grassroots community institutions and low-income residents in these neighborhoods cannot afford to wait in anticipation of these institutional actors to take accountability for the multi-faceted harm that they have caused to Black and brown communities. Indeed, generations of exploitation and broken promises to the communities have not only reinforced racialized inequities among them but also indelibly shaped their political perspectives and relationship to local governance. Black urban growers, as community activists, take action to restore these communities by following in the footsteps of their agrarian ancestors and working to catalyze transformative impact in these neighborhoods through the power of food

cultivation. They use the food they cultivate as not only a renewable resource for local food-based economies, but also as a means of Black cultural reconnection, community building and land stewardship. This study provides a comparative analysis of Black urban growers across three divergent city contexts, exploring the nature of their shared motivations, strategies, and impact within low-income Black and brown communities, which are both distinct and uncommodifiable.

1.3 STUDY CONTRIBUTIONS

Cumulatively, this study contributes a rich, comparative understanding of how segregated poverty is sustained and how Black urban growers and the farms they lead are an equitable and effective solution to it. To be clear, I am *not* asserting that Black-led urban farms are a panacea to segregated poverty; indeed, ending segregated poverty would likely requires a fundamental, comprehensive overhaul of the structural forces and racialized systems that have sustained racial inequity for generations. However, through this study I illustrate that Black-led urban farms offer a unique opportunity to not only address root causes of racialized urban poverty, but also to support equitable urban development in high poverty neighborhoods. For this reason, institutional actors that are genuinely interested in advancing racial and social equity may wish to consider partnering Black-led farms and other deeply rooted community institutions doing this people-centered justice work. In Chapter 5, I provide a list of policy recommendations for municipal governments and other institutional actors about how they might support the work of these farms to advance an alternative vision of urban development.

Moreover, while I centralize Black-led urban farms in this study, I do not negate the existence and significance of the urban agriculture initiatives of other racially marginalized

groups. Both formal and informal networks among “alterNative” (Gottlieb & Joshi, 2010; Alkon & Agyeman, 2011) food system actors exist to advance shared political interests such as the decolonization of land and food sovereignty (Reynolds & Cohen, 2016). However, I focus exclusively on Black-led urban farms in this study relative to their mainstream, largely white-led counterparts because of the ubiquitous and intergenerational overrepresentation of the Black population in segregated urban poverty. Also, the low-income neighborhoods in which urban agriculture is typically located are often overwhelmingly Black; these are the deeply divested neighborhoods of the “inner-city” that have been largely Black and poor since the end of mid-century urban renewal. Many of these neighborhoods have since gentrified; however, the spatial and racial concentration of urban poverty persists to this day.

The subsequent chapters explore the phenomenon of Black-led urban farms, first by understanding the context of segregated poverty and racial inequity in which these farms emerge (Chapter 2); then by identifying the shared characteristics of Black-led urban farms and how their impact in high poverty communities is distinguished (Chapter 3); and lastly by proposing and testing a model of structural (re)engineering to measure the transformative impact that Black-led and other equity-oriented farms are hypothesized to be making within these communities (Chapter 4).

CHAPTER 2: A TALE OF THREE CITIES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Detroit, Michigan- Motor City. A place once admired as the nation's industrial powerhouse now rests in an uneasy, dialectic tension between a neoliberal economic renaissance and a grassroots, racial justice countermovement. With the shadow of 1967 still looming large, Detroit's story has been repeatedly sensationalized, satirized, and scrutinized as the exemplar "failed city", much to the indignation of the residents who sustained the city through its toughest days (Doucet, 2017; Walker, 2016; Pride, 2016; Montgomery, 2016).

Nestled within a dense tree canopy just over 720 miles due South is Atlanta, Georgia—the illustrious "Big Peach". A beacon of the economic and social progress of the New South and a fountain of Black intellectualism, Atlanta has worked hard to wash away its sordid, racialized past and rebrand itself as a city of bipartisanship, multiculturalism, and "bootstrapper" spirit (Keating, 2001). However, as the adage goes, "the proof is in the pudding", and Atlanta's appears to be made of the "strange fruit" of deeply entrenched, racial and social inequity, leaving many to wonder whether the "city too busy to hate" is also too busy to care.

Across the rolling grandeur of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains, 2100 miles to the Northwest of Atlanta is Portland, Oregon- the "City of Roses", bridges, and eclectic oddities. Proud of its "weirdness" and sustainability ethos, Portland is admired around the world as a model city of urban planning, though little is said about the city's long-held and peculiar distinction as the whitest major city in America (Semuels, 2016; Bates et al, 2018) nor of the longstanding political hyperpolarization of its metropolitan constituency (Abbott, 2011; Goodling et al, 2015; Webber, 1977).

What could these three distinctive cities possibly have in common? Not much, it would appear at first glance. A closer inspection reveals that the trajectory of uneven urban development and the racial inequity are remarkably similar across these cities, despite their many differences. Decisions about what urban development initiatives should and should not be invested in, where to located them, and when and how to implement them have contributed to the maintenance of spatially and racially segregated poverty. These patterns are certainly not unique to these three cities; indeed, we are hard-pressed to find a major U.S. city in which segregated poverty is *not* being actively reinforced through contemporary neoliberal urban development patterns. However, each of these cities has a distinctive history of segregation that continues to affect both the nature of urban development and its implications on racial inequities today.

This study investigates the root causes of persistent, segregated poverty and its relationship to both urban development and Black quality-of life through the question *“How and why does segregation continue to influence the nature of urban development in cities, and what are its quality-of-life implications on local Black populations”*? I assert that segregation persists because 1) the fundamental nature and function of segregation has been largely misunderstood by decisionmakers and the lay public, and 2) the implications and rationalities of segregation are generally consistent with the racialized ideologies and “utility-maximizing” self-interest of both of these groups. I explore these assertions through a historical comparative case study analysis of urban development in Atlanta, Portland, and Detroit, examining how policies and politics surrounding urban development in each city reinforce, contest, and negotiate the terms of segregation. I engage theoretical frameworks of white supremacy and

racial capitalism— referred to collectively throughout this study as “racial logics”—to explore why and how racial segregation is sustained despite substantial changes in the socio-cultural and policy context over the 20th century that would predict otherwise. I use Policy Feedback Theory (Mettler & SoRelle, 2016) to analyze the cyclical relationship between “past” policy actions and inactions that shape the nature of racial segregation and “future” politics related to the unequal distribution of burdens and benefits that those policies allocate. I adapt Suzanne Mettler’s definition of “policyscape”, which she describes as “a landscape densely laden with policies created in the past that have themselves become established institutions, bearing consequences for governing operations, the policy agenda, and political behavior” (Mettler, 2016, p.369) by introducing the *urban development policyscape* as an analytic tool through which racial segregation can be comparatively understood and navigated over both time and geo-political space. I use the urban development policyscape to “map” key events that have shaped the landscape of segregation in each city over the past 100 years. I also use it to connect the related ideologies and strategies used to maintain (and subvert) racial segregation in times past with the economic implications of segregated poverty on the Black population of each city in the present. Only through such critical reflection and navigation can policy actions of the future unlock the self-reinforcing cycle between uneven urban development, segregation, and racial inequity.

Moreover, I focus this study exclusively on the implications of racial segregation within Black communities because of the uniquely pervasive way in which Black populations have been both targeted and affected by the institution of segregation (Hamilton & Darity, 2017; Jargowsky, 2018; Logan, 2013; Taylor, 2020). This is well demonstrated in the U.S. urban

planning lexicon of socio-spatial logics (e.g., inner-city, urban, food deserts), which has strong social connotations of Black spaces and embedded insinuations that equate those spaces with danger, vice, and squalor (McKittrick & Woods, 2007; Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018). Black individuals are also consistently overrepresented in poverty (Greene, Turner & Gourevitch, 2017), and it is their lives that Black-led urban farms, which are centered in this overall three-part study, are primarily seeking to liberate and restore.

These research questions could not have come at a timelier moment. The killing of several unarmed Black and brown individuals in just the past two years— in particular, George Floyd and Brianna Taylor—have reignited decades-old debates about institutional racism, economic segregation, and anti-Blackness (Joy & Vogel, 2021). The weeks of protests and riots as well as the political responses to those actions bear an unmistakable resemblance to events of the 1960s and the 1990s following years of urban austerity, police surveillance, and the economic marginalization of the racialized urban poor. Understanding the nature of and reasons for these political parallels, especially as they exist across both time and locality, can help to inform more equitable and effective policy action that addresses root causes of these problems.

Additionally, ongoing far-right backlash against progressive policies and the critically acclaimed 1619 Project have also exposed the ways in which challenges to dominant historical retellings of U.S. history are often marginalized and deliberately discredited. Examples include the recent sensational responses of some politicians to any mention of Critical Race Theory, the banning of award-winning literature that reveals first-hand experiences of racial and ethnic marginalization (Hixenbaugh, 2022), and the ongoing legislative attempts to ban content that

makes anyone feel “discomfort” for the actions of people of their race, nationality, or gender (Simonson, 2022). These political actions suggest a growing political movement to protect a particular image of white self-identity and American exceptionalism. Thus, a critical, perspicacious approach is necessary to understand how and why history continues to shape present day politics and policy design in ways that largely reinforce the racialized status quo.

Moreover, this study makes several contributions to the critical urbanism and public policy scholarship. I introduce a new definition of segregation and present the urban development policyscape as an analytic tool that can enrich studies of racial and social justice. These contributions help to elucidate the mechanisms that links local level policy events related to racial segregation and their cumulative equity-related implications over time to the present-day landscape of uneven development and segregated poverty. Ultimately, this study helps to explain why decades of political discourse and top-down urban development initiatives allegedly designed to reduce segregated urban poverty have not only largely failed to do so, but also, in many cases, have actually exacerbated it (Silverman et al, 2019; Hackworth, 2019; Hamilton & Darity, 2017).

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.2.1 City Approaches to Urban Development and Poverty Remediation

The types of approaches that U.S. cities have taken to implement urban development and its equity-related implications can be understood, in part, by the negative public perceptions of the urban poor relative to those of the non-poor. In the early 20th century, Black and immigrant families, who constituted most of the urban poor, were assumed to be impoverished because of fundamental, culture-related character “defects” that were said to predispose them to

laziness, ignorance, and criminality, among other vices (Lemons, 1977; Munger, 2003; Yancy, 2018). The work of both white Progressive organizations with the immigrant poor and, arguably, that of relatively conservative Black civil rights groups reinforced the notion that abject poverty among the minoritized “other” could be escaped by proximity to whiteness. Therein both sets of organizations, along with many other institutional actors, affirmed the ideology that the visions, values, and interests of white people were the standard to which all “real” Americans should aspire to (Roediger, 2005).

By the mid-century, “slum clearance” and suburban expansion were the leading urban development strategies shaping cities and addressing urban poverty, which were shaped, in part, by perceptions of the so-called “Negro Problem” of concentrated Black poverty (DuBois, 1898; Myrdal, 1944; Goetz et al, 2020). The professionalization of urban planning departments, the shifting location of the white middle class, and Cold War era politics resulted in millions of dollars being invested in commerce-related development projects and highways connecting city centers to the growing suburban periphery (Greene, Turner & Gourevitch, 2017). These projects were facilitated by the intentional divestment of low-income, predominately Black and brown neighborhoods, which saw massive job loss and economic decline over the urban renewal period that exacerbated racialized poverty (Wilson, 1987; Hamilton & Darity, 2017; Hyra, 2012; Squires & Kubrin, 2005). Urban renewal construction projects regularly built on top of these neighborhoods, displacing tens of thousands of families from their homes in cities across the country and destroying entire communities in the name of “progress” (Hughes, 2019; Boyd, 2017; Keating, 2001; Gibson, 2007). These effects primarily affected Black communities, who were most overrepresented in poor neighborhoods, as most European

immigrant communities had acculturated into mainstream society and moved into white middle-class neighborhoods by the mid-century (Abbott, 2007, 2011; Roediger, 2005; Bates, 2012).

These policy actions actively contributed to the social and economic marginalization of Black populations, who, in many cities, had been systemically confined to living in particular areas that mainstream mortgage lenders refused to serve in a process known as “redlining” (Lindemann, 2019; Morel, 2018; Hackworth, 2019). Even when federal funds through the federal Model Cities program became available to address the needs of these marginalized communities, most cities largely failed to use the funds to address the needs and interests of high poverty, racialized communities, instead advancing their own visions of growth and development for the city (Weber & Wallace, 2012).

In a study about how community driven urban agriculture initiatives address development failures in Cleveland, Justine Lindemann (2019) posits that city initiatives consistently fail to produce equitable outcomes because they are typically focused on a single, pre-specified problem and course of action that has been determined by people who are socio-culturally, economically, and geospatially distant from the lived experiences of the residents in these neighborhoods. Lindemann (2019) asserts “This single-issue model of intervention often uses market-oriented rather than community-based tools, disregarding cultural aspects of a neighborhood and the holistic or cross-sectional nature of community needs” (Lindemann, 2019, p.868). Top-down intervention models consistently ignore the cultural dimensions of neighborhoods and are consistently used to advance urban development agendas in marginalized communities where political power to resist them is generally low (Lindemann,

2019; Figueroa, 2015; Morel, 2018). Externally driven urban development models used in high poverty neighborhoods are also largely based in racialized social constructions that dehumanize Black and brown individuals and communities (Yancy, 2018; Ammons, 1994; Schafer, 1993; Oliver, 2008). Deeply held racialized assumptions and ideologies that allege the puerility and criminality of Black people provide rationalization to the paternalistic and often rapacious policy actions of development actors in these communities. Such cognitive frameworks undergird iterative cycles of racialized wealth extraction from racialized communities which reinforces segregated urban poverty (Bates, 2017; Bonds, Kenny & Wolfe, 2015; McClintock, Miewald & McCann, 2021; Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018; Goetz, Williams and Diamano, 2020).

2.2.2 The Functionality of Segregation

In this study, I assert that a central reason why segregation continues to shape urban development patterns, and therein the wellbeing of minoritized populations, is because the essence of racial segregation has been largely misunderstood. To clarify, I am not saying that scholars are entirely wrong about the harm of racial segregation, but rather that mainstream articulations of segregation as simply a matter of lingering racial animosity, housing choice preferences, and asset protection is limited because it overlooks the underlying complexities that perpetuate segregation along racial and social lines. These limitations are potentially dangerous and may help to explain why both the institution of segregation and its multi-faceted implications on racial inequity persist today despite decades of policy action that has been ostensibly designed to address it.

Scholars studying segregation have typically examined both racial and income segregation through the housing and employment sectors (Logan, 2013; Massey, 2016; Owens,

2015). However, these are far from the only sectors and dimensions in which segregation operates. An exclusive focus of segregation scholarship on these physical domains may obscure some of the psychosocial processes that sustain it. Certainly, the fundamental role that residential segregation plays in maintaining the racial wealth gap is well supported and critical to address (Massey, 2016; Hamilton & Darity, 2017); however, to identify segregation as the starting point, and therein the causal agent, of racial inequities negates the deeply embedded racialized ideologies that continue to shape public administration and urban development. Exclusively focalizing the elimination of physical segregation by race as the central means to ending racial inequality minimizes the significance of the antecedent structural ideologies, policies, and practices that generate and sustain it.

A more comprehensive definition of segregation may be useful here to understand the mechanisms through which, I theorize, segregation is structured and fueled. To this end, I use the term “multidimensional segregation” to differentiate this conceptualization from mainstream understandings of racial segregation. I define multidimensional segregation as the manifestation of the white supremacist racial hierarchy in both physical and non-physical dimensions and spaces. It is monitored in these locations by members of the dominant group and transcended by those deemed worthy and/or useful. This racial hierarchy, reflected through multidimensional segregation, both structures and enforces the boundaries of these spatial domains, and it allows for their periodic transcendence by certain members of lower-positioned racial groups. Multidimensional segregation is still a social institution, shaped by social norms, practices, and policies over time; but it is also a product and a necessary catalyst of the reaction between white supremacy and racial capitalism. In other words,

multidimensional segregation is mutually dependent upon both white supremacy and racial capitalism for its existence; reciprocally, the power of these “racial logics” is dependent upon the racialized social order and the concomitant racial inequities that multidimensional segregation maintains.

These two racial logics, I posit, guide the decision-making and rationalization of local governance and the broader urban political economy much in the same way that one’s belief system and culture both consciously and subconsciously shape their actions. By “multidimensional” I refer to the physical (e.g., neighborhood, street, “side of town”) and non-physical (e.g., ideological, temporal, economic, and socio-political) spatial dimensions that individuals occupy and navigate over the course of their lives. To be sure, the physical spatial dimensions are central to our understanding of segregation and are most readily analyzable; however, I contribute the totality of segregable spaces to the definition of multidimensional segregation in attempts to capture the full domain of dimensions that white supremacy inhabits. Given the current societal shift towards more digital and metaphysical realms of daily social interaction, these other spatial dimensions may be increasingly important to consider. In Figure 2.1 below, I illustrate the theorized relationship between multidimensional segregation, the racial logics of the urban development policyscape, and racial inequity. The upper left box in this figure indicates three primary mechanisms through which I assert that this “policyscape” sustains multidimensional segregation. The italicized mechanisms have been identified within Policy Feedback Theory (Pierson, 1993; Mettler & SoRelle, 2016) as central to the way that policies can function as institutions that shape future policy and political behaviors. In Appendix A, I provide a table of key terminology used in this study.

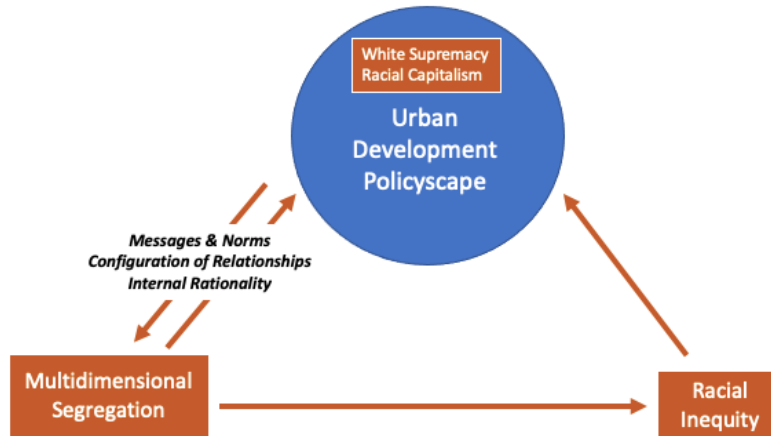


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Model of Multidimensional Segregation

2.2.3 Linking the Past and Present through the Urban Development Polycscape

In this study, I make a second assertion that multidimensional segregation is sustained through urban development because it serves a functional purpose that is consistent with the interests, ideologies, and worldview of the primary decisionmakers in mainstream planning and policymaking institutions. Goetz, Williams and Damiano (2020) note that the field of planning is still largely shaped through a lens of whiteness which largely fails to acknowledge the association between neighborhoods of concentrated white affluence and segregated, racialized poverty. Even beyond the race of an individual institutional actor and the social justice statements of the organizations they represent, the political context of these sectors are imbued with the legacy of racism and classism that continues to affect them today. For these and other reasons, urban development in high poverty neighborhoods typically does little to challenge existing structures, systems and ideologies that reinforce “status quo” racial inequity.

Moreover, in this study, “white supremacy” is the social logic of the urban development polycscape. I define white supremacy as the rationale of white racial superiority in every

dimension of human existence, which is subconsciously engrained into the psyche of all inhabitants of the colonized world. While this definition focalizes white actors, it also includes non-white individuals who have internalized this social logic and therein, arguably, contribute to its sustainability. Only within recent years have the constructs of white supremacy and racial capitalism and their myriad implications been given more attention in the mainstream academic literature (see Goetz et al, 2020; Keisch & Scott, 2015; Montgomery, 2016 for examples), but their academic origins date back at least to the turn of the 20th century in the writing of many early Black academics. More recently, Bonilla-Silva (2001) posits that white supremacy is an intentionally developed “structure to reproduce systemic advantage”, noting that it is a “social edifice erected over racial inequality” (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, p.24). Keisch and Scott (2015) discuss how white supremacy and capitalism operate within the U.S. education system, linking the rise of neoliberalism in education reform and its implications on racialized structural violence, specifically the criminalization of Black and brown youth (Keisch & Scott, 2015). And Goetz et al (2020) also note the persistence and centrality of white supremacy within urban planning praxis, positing that, for most planners, the concept remains largely in the realm of abstraction rather than in concrete socio-political and economic realities with material equity implications. As the findings of these authors suggest, white supremacy functions largely through individual and collective cognitions drawing strength from both its psychosocial embeddedness and political elusiveness.

Further, the corollary *economic logic* of racial capitalism is the primary mechanism through which white supremacy is translated from the collective subconscious into the reality of racialized poverty. Together, this economic logic of racial capitalism and the social logic of

white supremacy comprise the “racial logics” of the urban development polycscape. Racial capitalism can be understood as the leveraging of the dominant racial group’s relative positioning in the socially constructed racial hierarchy for material gain, generally through practices of extraction from lower positioned racial groups. These interdependent racial logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism structure the way in which multidimensional segregation is organized, maintained, and negotiated across the polycscape. This theorization of racial capitalism draws from Cedric Robinson’s (1983, 2000) seminal work *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* as well as the scholarship of historian Robin D.G. Kelley (2015) and Jodi Melamed (2015) who highlight the necessity of Black and brown dehumanization to the functioning of capitalism.

To further illustrate how these racial logics underpin multidimensional segregation, I engage Suzanne Mettler and Mallory Sorelle’s (2016) framework of Policy Feedback Theory. It is based on the notion that policies of the past have lasting legacies that shape future politics and policymaking (Mettler & SoRelle, 2016; Pierson, 1993). Paul Pierson’s (1993) research on feedback effects is central to this theory. He distinguishes the instrumental (resource) effects of policy from interpretive (symbolic) effects (Pierson, 1993), the former being the material effects of policy (e.g., provision v. deprivation of resources) and latter being the messages communicated, both explicitly and implicitly, through the way policy is formulated and implemented. Policy feedback effects undergird the negative social construction of racialized populations by ensuring that their low social standing is largely reflected in their dire economic and socio-political circumstances (Schneider & Ingram, 1993; Soss, 1999).

I also adapt Suzanne Mettler's (2016) definition of a policyscape through the introduction of the *urban development policyscape*, which I define as a "landscape" of policies shaping the political economy, socio-cultural context, and development trajectory of a locality or group of localities. I apply this concept specifically to multidimensional segregation and the policy actions and inactions undergirding it. Most studies involving policyscapes have been about educational, environmental, and gender policy, often using comparative methods across two or three international or sub-national sites (Martino et al, 2019; Carney, 2009). For example, Stephen Carney (2009) focuses his comparative study on educational policyscapes, using the localization-globalization binary as a lens through which to compare the instructional systems of three disparate countries. Carney (2009) and Martino et al (2019) also describe policyscape as a mappable conceptual terrain. Similarly, I characterize the urban development policyscape as an analytic tool used to scope the policy landscape of multidimensional segregation over both time and geo-spatial boundaries.

2.3 METHODOLOGY

This study uses a historical comparative case study analysis of Portland, Oregon, Atlanta, Georgia and Detroit, Michigan. Comparative case studies enable researchers to make multi-scalar comparisons between and within individual cases, allowing for what Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) call "a tracing across sites or scales" (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p.5). Here, I "trace across" not only sites (the three cities) but also temporal domains, as I examine four different time eras of the 20th century. The selected cities were intentionally chosen for their unique socio-cultural and economic histories, their regional distinctiveness, their national significance as urban agriculture leaders, and for researcher practicality. By selecting three cities that are apparently

very different, I enrich the robustness of the analysis, as observations of a particular phenomenon (e.g., persistent segregation) occurring under similar conditions in a wide variety of contexts may be indicative of a scientific principle at work (Chalmers, 2013; Hempel, 1993). Thus, the three distinct case cities used in this study are well-suited to accomplish this objective (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017).

I used Google Scholar and the Georgia State University library (physical and online databases) between 2019 and 2021 to gather literature using search terms that included the name of each city paired with auxiliary terms such as “urban development”, “urban policy history”, “history”, “planning history”, “urban planning”, “political history”, “Black history”, “contemporary history”, “20th century history”, and “early history”. From these searches, I gathered journal articles, published reports, scholarly books, and documentary films on each city. I determined what material to include based on four general criteria: 1) the publication’s relevance to the time period being studied (1918-2018), 2) the publication’s availability, 3) the year of publication, and 4) the degree of topical relevance of the publication to the study. While I primarily used scholarly publications (books and peer-reviewed journal articles), I also included reports by government entities, reputable non-profit groups, and university databases. Exclusion criteria included anything published before 1918 (most publications used were published well after 1950) and publications coming from non-social science disciplines or social science disciplines with only marginal relevance to this study’s central topics of racial segregation and urban development (e.g., biology, architecture, criminology). Where possible, I sought to balance the amount of literature that I reviewed on each city, and I ended data collection when I had a robust picture of the key social, political, and economic events in each

city within the time-period covered as confirmed by triangulation across the data sources.

From this set of data, I identified themes regarding the messages, relationships, and rationality of policyscape as they related to racial segregation.

I focus my analysis around four time periods spanning a total of 100 years: 1918-1940, 1941-1967, 1968-1992, and 1993-2018. I select this wide timespan because, as Burke and Jeffries (2016) and others suggest, the struggle for Black freedom (and therein the existence of multidimensional segregation) extends well beyond the mid-century Civil Rights Movement, encapsulating both the modern growth of cities and the early arrival of Blacks in them. These time eras are each roughly the span of a generation (25-30 years) and are divided based on key events in both U.S. national policy history and Black history.

Importantly, this study does not seek to generate an exhaustive list of urban development policy in each of the focal cities across the time span of this study, nor is this historical study “archival” in any way. Obviously, it would take more than a single study to capture every potentially relevant policy in three cities over a one-hundred-year time span. As Rutheiser (1996) puts it “...no single account can be comprehensive enough to definitively convey the vast extent and contradictory complexity of any contemporary metropolis”. Instead, this study takes a “bird’s eye” view, mapping key urban development activities in each city as they relate to multidimensional segregation, and therein, to the quality-of-life of local Black populations who are most negatively impacted by it.

In this comparative case study of Atlanta, Detroit, and Portland, I examine multidimensional segregation through the urban development policyscape that sustains it, using Mettler and SoRelle’s (2016) observation that policy feedback effects—or in this case the

implications of urban development policy— shape segregation policy and politics (e.g., social constructions, identity politics, voting behaviors) through the communication of *messages and norms* and the *configuration of relationships* between institutional actors and “mass publics”. I also engage Mettler’s (2014) observation about the *internal rationality* of the policyscape as a third mechanism through which it sustains segregation. I employ Stephen Carney’s (2009) notion of “rupture”, or moments of disruption and irrationality within policyscapes, to examine examples of how these critical junctures momentarily “pry open” the windows of policy opportunity (Kingdon, 1984) to eliminate multidimensional segregation and how the force with which they are “shut” confirms the stability of that internal rationality.

2.4 RESULTS

2.4.1 Black Population Wellbeing Summary Statistics

To illustrate how the wellbeing of Black populations of Atlanta, Portland, and Detroit have been shaped by multidimensional segregation, I present demographic data on each city in Figure 2.2 and 2.3 below. These data include 2019 “prosperity scores”, which are scores created by the National Equity Atlas to assess the relative prosperity of racial groups in each major city.

Prosperity scores range from 1 (needs most work) to 100 (top performer) and include an overall score and a “by indicator” score (National Equity Atlas, n.d.). For reference, the highest overall Black prosperity score nationwide was 66 in Plano, TX and the lowest was 5 in Cleveland, Ohio. The cities in this study fall towards the lower end of this range with Detroit at 6.3, Atlanta at 20.7 and Portland at 29.1. For Portland and Atlanta those numbers are approximately twice as high for the total population, but for Detroit the number has been the same for both the Black and total population since 2010. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 below summarize these prosperity scores

by indicator and city. For each city on these graphs the first column represents the Black population and the second is the total population.

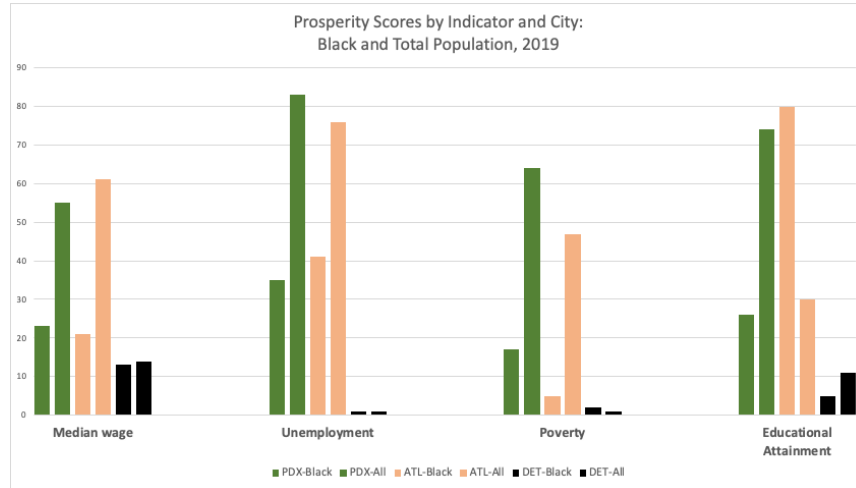


Figure 2.2 Prosperity Scores by City (Source: National Equity Atlas)

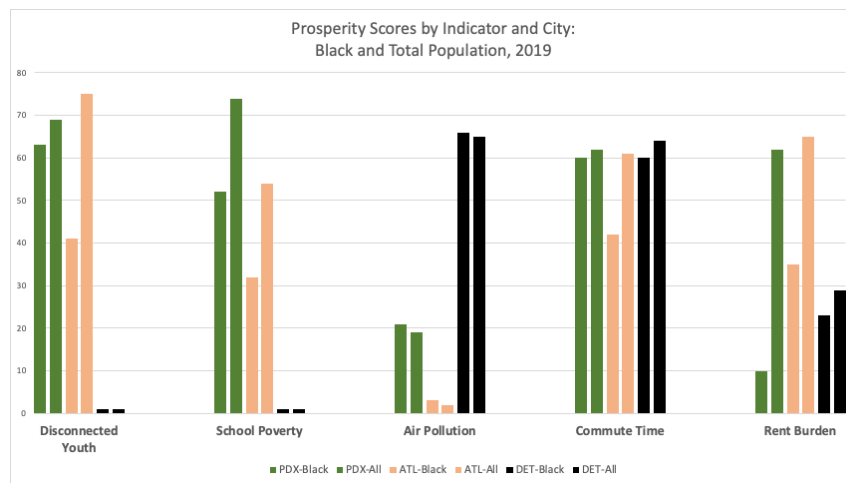


Figure 2.3 Prosperity Scores by City (Continued) (Source: National Equity Atlas)

2.4.2 Mechanism 1: Messaging and Norms

The urban development polycscape, hereafter referred to as the UDP, maintains multidimensional segregation through the racialized messages and norms it communicates

about identity, belonging, and the meaning of citizenship. Portland's housing and labor market policies across much of the 20th century reflect a consistent message that Black people do not belong. The City's 1919 Realty Board Code of Ethics, in which city realtors pledged not to sell homes to Negro or Chinese families in white neighborhoods (Hughes, 2019; Gibson, 2007), illustrates the formalization of this exclusionary message. This policy was an echo of Oregon's Black Exclusion Law of 1844, which officially banned Black people from moving to the state and remained official state policy until 1926, only to be removed from the state constitution over 70 years later (Oregon Encyclopedia, 2022). Both policies reflected and reinforced racialized ideologies that understood Black people to be a threat to white livelihood and prosperity. These policies and the corresponding racial animosity that the city became well-known for effectively suppressed Portland's Black population growth, holding the total population to no more than 2100 prior to World War II (Abbott, 2011; KGW News, 2019).

Although the Black population of the city surged during the war as in most Northern cities, it plummeted soon after. Housing and labor market exclusion were the primary reasons for the steep decline. The intentional policy strategy of economic exclusion was perhaps best illustrated by former city commissioner J.E. Bennett who suggested that Kaiser shipyards, a major employer of Blacks during the war, stop employing Black workers (Abbott, 2011). At the time, Mayor Earl Riley echoed this sentiment, suggesting that racial migration threatened the city's "regular way of life" (Abbott, 2011, p.124). The inability of many Black residents to penetrate the racial wall of the labor market continued at least until the late 1960s when a documentary on the Albina neighborhood by local news agency KGW exposed the enormity of Black labor market exclusion and its implications on economic precarity and neighborhood

instability. They found that of the city's more than 15,000 Black individuals, Black workers in 1967 accounted for 12 of 5000 carpenters, 50 of 1400 longshoremen and checkers, 10 of 3000 linemen and helpers, less than 50 of 8000 truck drivers, 8 of 720 police officers, and none of the city's 5000 cab drivers or 642 firefighters (KGW News, 2019). These policies of exclusion and the intentional spatial concentration of Black people in Albina— a visibly declining, redlined neighborhood—communicated strong messages to both Black and white city residents alike about the linkage between racial identity, perceived character, and social “deservingness” (Wilson, 1987).

In Detroit, the message consistently conveyed through the polycscape was that the problems of the Black community are not the concern of the city. Therein a segregated domain of “political concern” is revealed. Such messages both reflect and instill a “culture of poverty” perspective, held by many conservatives today that views Black poverty as fundamentally behavioral rather than structural in origin (Wilson, 1987; Blair & Carroll, 2007). Two incidents illustrate how the symbolic and instrumental effects of this messaging contribute to multidimensional segregation.

The first of these took place in the early 1920s. The Black population of Detroit had doubled to nearly 100,000 and was continuing to grow rapidly as Black migrants from the South and intellectuals from the South, East Coast, and the Caribbean were arriving in the city (Bates, 2012). They were increasingly funneled into dilapidated housing in the Black Bottom neighborhood, which was already dangerously overcrowded by the late 1910s (Bates, 2012; Boyd, 2017). Local newspapers made a regular habit of reporting on the “unspeakably vile” housing conditions in the Black Bottom, and a 1926 report entitled *The Negro in Detroit*,

produced by the city's Interracial Committee, detailed the dire situation of housing there (Bates, 2012). Despite these alarming findings and their life-threatening implications, neither the city of Detroit nor Henry Ford—whose Black workers and their families comprised a large portion of Black Bottom's housing insecure residents—took any substantive action to address it (Bates, 2012). The “performance of concern” action of studying such a serious problem with no follow-up action communicated to Black residents not only that their lives were disposable in the eyes of mainstream white local governance, but also that their abject circumstances were amusing to a wide readership outside of the Black Bottom. Therein, Black migrants to the city learned that the racialized ideologies of the city were not much different from those they had left behind in the Jim Crow South (Bates, 2012). And white Detroiters received messages through the UDP that affirmed the white racial supremacy many had already come to internalize.

The second incident occurred about twenty years later when the Sojourner Truth Homes federal wartime housing project was about to open— a long-awaited public housing project designated for Black families. Angry white neighbors pressured the government to backtrack and turn the project into a whites-only residence. This led to multiple days of bloodshed as Black workers and their families still tried to move-in and were met with violent backlash at the hands of white civilians and police (Seigel, 2022). Ultimately 25 Black and 9 white individuals were killed (Seigel, 2022), and this incident became a catalyst of the 1943 Detroit Race Riot the following year. The politics and violence surrounding the Sojourner Truth Homes can be, arguably, understood as communicating to Black and white Detroiters alike, that for Detroit police officers, practicality and racial solidarity supersede justice. Both the Black

Bottom housing crisis and the Sojourner Truth Homes incident illustrate how racialized policies communicated messages about the meaning of group identity (as delineated by space and race), whose civil rights were to be prioritized and whose were negotiable, as well as the extent to which the state could be relied upon to uphold “justice”. Collectively, these messages contributed to the establishment of socio-political and psychosocial norms that reinforced multidimensional segregation.

Of course, communication is bi-directional, and the Black populations of Portland, Detroit, and Atlanta actively exercised their political voices throughout the 20th century as policy actors within the UDP. In Detroit and Atlanta, the white business regime and the white middle- and upper-class interests that they represented took note of the sheer size, economic heterogeneity, and growing political power of the Black population. By the late 1920s and early 1930s, Detroit had a large, eclectic, and considerably unified assortment of politically active organizations promoting Black empowerment (Bates, 2012). The United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) had thousands of Detroit-area members and both the Nation of Islam (established in 1930) and the Pan-African Orthodox Church (established 1967) were key, locally-grown national organizations that led the Black liberation movements (Boyd, 2017; Bates, 2012). Local chapters of the Communist Party also boasted many Black members during this time; they, too, played an important role in cultivating alternative political and economic ideologies among local Black populations (Boyd, 2017; Bates, 2012).

The frankness with which these groups spoke, along with the quickly growing size of the Black population in Detroit communicated to many whites that Black people were a major threat, largely because they openly rejected the racialized social order that essentially relegated

them to a subhuman status. This political stance of resistance to racialized oppression and Black cultural reclamation of early generations of Detroiters shaped the radical activism and ideologies of later generations of Black Detroiters (Boyd, 2017). For example, this legacy is evinced in the mid-century initiative to transition the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) system into an African-centered school model that was considered by many local Black leaders to be a reparative, culturally relevant approach for educating the overwhelming Black student body population (Chike, 2011; Halvorsen, 2012). Thus, 20th century Black Detroiters resisted multidimensional segregation and the racial logics undergirding it through organized political action and the reclamation of Black cultural identity in education and other domains (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019; Boyd, 2017).

Another example of reciprocal communication between Black communities and the mainstream white public is the all-white state primary election which was overturned in 1948 largely by Atlanta area voters. The Negro Voters League was subsequently established in 1949 to educate newly enfranchised Black voters and helped to unify “the Black vote” (Keating, 2001). The Negro Voters League became a critical organization that white politicians had to “court” for the increasingly powerful Black vote (Keating, 2001). Through its growing political power, the Negro Voters League communicated, symbolically and instrumentally, that the local Black population was organized and would actively resist racial marginalization.

In Portland, the message of resistance to multidimensional segregation and the marginalization it inscribed was vocalized largely, although not exclusively, by individual Black leaders. This is perhaps due to the relatively small size of Portland’s Black population, which limits the political power of organized action. Individual Black leaders with local clout leveraged

their status and served as a “voice” for the interests of Portland’s Black community, denouncing the violence, marginalization, and exploitation that maintained segregated poverty. For example, local leaders like Beatrice Morrow Cannady, Dr. DeNorval Unthank, and Kent Ford all used their experiences and positionalities to advance local Black interests and resist the ongoing violation of Black civil rights. These three distinctive leaders illustrate a wide range of approaches to delivering political messages of Black resistance and the varying levels of political effectiveness of these messages.

2.4.3 Mechanism 2: Configuration of Relationships

Another way in which the UDP maintains multidimensional segregation is through the structuring of socio-spatial and political relationships between groups with the most and least power. In Detroit, power has largely been concentrated in the hands of a few wealthy entrepreneurs— perhaps none more notable than Henry Ford, Mike Ilitch, and Dan Gilbert. Henry Ford and the Ford Motor Company dominated the Detroit economy throughout the first half of the century and therein shaped the economic future of much of the city’s working-class population. In the 1920s and 1930s when few other non-service jobs were available to Black individuals, Ford hired thousands of Black migrants from the South and, for a time, was regarded as a “friend” to both the Black and immigrant poor (Bates, 2012). However, Ford exploited the desperation of Black migrants for employment through racially discriminatory wages, assigning Black workers to the most dangerous factory positions in the foundry, and through his controversial “Americanization plan” which he used to monitor and manipulate the lifestyle and voting decisions of his employees (Bates, 2012). Through these means, he

affirmed proximity to “whiteness” as both a social standard of morality and nationalism, and he used these criteria as a performance indicator by which to segregate workers and their wages.

In his relationship to the predominately Black town of Inkster— an enclave not far outside of Detroit— Ford carefully curated his image as a magnanimous benefactor, providing grossly underpaid non-factory employment for Black workers while meticulous accounting for and exacting debt owed from them (Bates, 2012). In this way, Ford’s business policies and practices shaped both the economic landscape of Detroit and structured the racialized relationships between working class Blacks, working class whites, and the white business elite who secured their power, in part, by maintaining the multidimensional segregation and related antipathy between the two (Bates, 2012; Kelley, 2015).

More recently, the large investment of Dan Gilbert in downtown Detroit illustrates how the will of individual wealthy businessmen can structure socio-spatial relationships, and thereby reinforce existing multidimensional segregation, through uneven development. The localized development projects of Gilbert in the downtown area promote an image of Detroit based on the distinction between the revitalized downtown core— which is now seen by many as safe, fun, and growing— from the predominately Black outer neighborhoods which are still widely considered to be dangerous, divested, and dying. This racialized distinction is made even more stark by the new Q-line streetcar which connects the downtown area to the New Center arts and culture district just 3.3 miles away (J. Jammon, personal communication, 2019). Massive urban land grabs in these outlying neighborhoods beyond the Q-line by Gilbert and other investors juxtaposed with the relative poverty of area residents and their ongoing attempts of to purchase land in their own communities (Pothukuchi, 2012) reflects what many view as a

rapacious relationship between the predominately Black urban poor and powerful developers who continuously extract from them (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019; Pothukuchi, 2012).

In Atlanta, the bi-racial business coalition structured and monitored the nature of multidimensional segregation for most of the 20th century through the selective enforcement of Jim Crow segregation policies. The success of Black businessmen in the early 1990s like Alonzo Herndon and others – particularly barbers, shoemakers, and real estate dealers (Meier and Lewis, 1959)— who served an exclusively white clientele, led to a loosely organized coalition of Black and white businessmen that “had an understanding” among them about how development in the city would proceed (Keating, 2001). White businessmen would continue to advance their economic and political interests in the city and obtain Black political support (or silence) through Black businessmen. In return, the legal grip of Jim Crow segregation was loosened and housing for the Black middle class was made available through land acquisition (Keating, 2001). Influential Black businessmen seeking to protect both their communities and business interests knew that negotiation and compromise were critical to their survival and prosperity; however, these arrangements consistently excluded the interests of the low-income Black population.

In Portland, “old money” families—the descendants of early businessmen (Johnson, 1989)— quietly used their wealth and connections to shape local policies and protect the city’s conservative character. Many are members of the city’s elite social clubs like the Arlington and the University where the city’s business leaders have gathered to chart the city’s future for generations (Johnson, 1989). The city’s current commission style government, an enduring

legacy of the “Portland Establishment”, continues to shape and reflect the sharp socio-political and economic divide between city governance and the increasingly diverse lay public. Portland is the last major city in the country to use this form of government whereby four elected city officials and the mayor serve as both legislators and executives of local government (Abbott, 2011). By the 1970s political power in the city had begun to be shifted into the hands of neighborhood associations, which were largely controlled by white middle class homeowners. Their interests and policies largely reinforced existing segregation across race and class lines, giving suburbanites not only the power to shape urban development that affected their neighborhoods but also a formalized affirmation of their “right” to do so (LOWV, 2005).

The overall spatial form of urban development in Detroit, Atlanta, and Portland also illustrates how the UDP maintains multidimensional segregation through the configuration of socio-spatial relationships and the negative social connotation of spaces that Black people and other racialized groups occupy. Each city has unofficial demarcation lines that are boundaries of these spaces. In Portland, 82nd Avenue divides the increasingly diverse East Portland suburbs from the gentrified North and inner-Northeast core; however, 60 years ago that demarcation was the boundary streets of the redlined Albina neighborhood (KGW News, 2019). In Detroit, Woodward Avenue (East-West) and the infamous “Eight Mile Wall” (North-South) segregate area residents by race and space (Einhorn, 2021). In Atlanta, street name changes and the stark North-South division by I-20 serve as clear racialized demarcation lines. These visible markers in each city are products of policy decisions that not only helped to maintain multidimensional segregation over time, but many of them also continue to bear instrumental effects of uneven development and racial inequity today.

In addition, key development policies in each city have also supported multidimensional segregation by structuring socio-spatial relationships among area residents. Portland's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) is a unique attribute shaping the city's densification patterns and intensifying the economic and spatial segregation of the increasingly diverse East Portland from the more affluent, largely white residents of both West and near-East Portland and the proximal rural communities just outside of the UGB. The growth boundary contributes to the escalation of urban land values everywhere within the UGB, which increases displacement pressure on low-income populations and pushes them towards the outskirts of the city limits.

In contrast to the densification of development in Portland, Detroit today has a unique urban-rural interface, where over 20 square miles of vacant land exist within the city limits (Pothukuchi, 2017; Eisinger, 2015). This seemingly "empty" landscape contributes to the racialized structuring of political relationships and uneven development in the city. Detroit's current development strategy of "planned shrinkage", whereby residents of neighborhoods deemed unviable are pressured into relocating through the elimination of key city services to those areas (Walker, 2016), reinforces multidimensional segregation and reflects the racial logics of the UDP by devaluing the lives of the predominately Black urban poor who live in these neighborhoods. This controversial tactic also highlights ongoing patterns of resource extraction and "blank slate" development approaches to low-income neighborhoods, which are consistent with neoliberal development agendas (Hackworth, 2019).

Atlanta's characteristic spatial form—suburban sprawl—also reinforces the economic and social marginalization of the predominately Black urban poor. Sprawl enables jobs and other resources to flow to parts of the city that are largely unreachable by the MARTA transit

system on which many of these residents depend. Much like in Detroit, which also has a severely limited transit system, suburban sprawl in Atlanta also reinforces a long held “us v. them” identity politics that underscores a deep discord between middle class suburban and urban poor communities. Resultantly, a highly fragmented, if not balkanized, system of urban governance and development has become characteristic of the Atlanta metro area within the past two decades, which exacerbates existing racial inequities.

2.4.4 Mechanism 3: Internal Rationality of the Polycscape

The third way in which the UDP maintains multidimensional segregation is through its internal rationality. That rationality is guided by the racial logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism, which inform the racialization of urban development policy and related political behaviors. This rationality was initially established through explicit formal policy language of racial exclusion and “enforcement” by both legal and extralegal processes. However, over time, the racial logics become subconsciously engrained and are used to justify actions that would otherwise be considered immoral. Resultantly, they become self-sustained through social interactions and ideologies of city residents such that they no longer need explicit, formalized reinforcement but rather periodic maintenance. The internal rationality of the UDP is also revealed through what Stephen Carney (2009) refers to as “rupture”, which can be understood in this study as the moments in which the “natural” racialized order of socio-political life, as determined by the racial logics, is temporarily disrupted. The ability of this system to return to its original stasis after disruption is indicative of a consistent and highly stable rationality.

One example of the internal rationality is in the confluence of events surrounding the 1985 killing of Lloyd Stevenson by Portland Police. Stevenson, an unarmed military veteran,

was put into a sleeper chokehold after attempting to break up a fight, which led to his death. All the officers involved were ultimately acquitted of all charges. During the court proceedings, some of the other Portland police officers not on trial decided to sell t-shirts at the hearing that read “don’t choke ‘em, smoke ‘em”, complete with a gun image. The offending officers who did this were initially fired by then-mayor Bud Clark, but not long after they were reinstated (Killen, 2019). Only a few years prior, a similar scenario occurred where police officers who committed a racist “prank” against a popular Black-owned diner that was perceived as a serious threat by the local Black community were fired. They were terminated at the instruction of Black city commissioner Charles Jordan, only to be reinstated by the incoming mayor who ultimately fired the police chief who had fired them. Both police-involved incidents demonstrate racist violence, and the events surrounding them reflect how the logic of white supremacy is the rationality linking seemingly disparate policy decisions over time and context. The incident with Commissioner Jordan is also an example of rupture, through which the racialized social order dictated by that rationality is tested. The deliberate, double subversion of Jordan’s power (reversing his decision and firing his police chief) by Mayor Ivancie illustrates the stability and resilience of that rationality.

In Atlanta, the remarkable consistency between the decision to build the city’s first sports stadium in 1963 and the replacement stadium 30 years later in the same low-income neighborhood is another example of how the internal rationality of the UDP reinforces multidimensional segregation. Both decisions not only ignored the existing public housing shortage and economic precarity among area residents, but they also actively displaced hundreds of families and small businesses in the process (Keating, 2001; Holliman, 2009). The

rationalization of these exploitative development activities and the deliberate actions to sabotage and discredit the resistance efforts of grassroots coalitions like Atlanta Neighborhoods United for Fairness (A'NUFF), illustrates the extent to which mainstream development actors are often willing to go to protect their interests. These examples also further highlight the political stability of the internal rationality over time.

In Detroit, the stability of the UDP's internal rationality is perhaps most clearly revealed through the Detroit Police Department (DPD), particularly between the 1930s and 1970s. In the 1930s, the nearly all-white DPD harassed and killed unarmed Black Detroiters with impunity (Lassiter et al, 2021; Boyd, 2017). Hundreds of reports of police misconduct were filed during this time, but these were largely ignored by the agency (Bates, 2012). However, in 1939 DPD was informed that a massive city-wide protest against police brutality was being organized by a coalition of Black organizations (Bates, 2012). The day before the protest was to take place, DPD attempted to sabotage it and thereby save its own image by announcing an investigation into claims of police brutality against the Department, which had gone unaddressed for years (Bates, 2012). Thirty years later, DPD launched the infamous Stop Theft and Robberies Enjoy Safe Streets (STRESS) program— a proactive policing initiative that resulted in many unwarranted deaths and serious injuries (Lassiter et al, 2021). Despite these troubling statistics, DPD claimed that the program was a major success and only ended it after immense local and national political pressure. The STRESS policy and the response of DPD to its criticism reflects a distinctive chord of racialized internal rationality that ties together these examples, illustrating the ways in which Black and brown lives, contributions, and societal membership are often situated within contexts of devaluation and dispossession.

2.5 DISCUSSION

2.5.1 Mapping the Urban Development Polycscape

In this study, I introduce the concept of an urban development polycscape through which multidimensional segregation and the racial logics that sustain it can be understood over time. I use this concept as an analytic tool to link urban development policies and politics to the maintenance of and resistance to multidimensional segregation. I highlight how the racial logics function to maintain this segregation through the communication of messages and norms, configuration of relationships, and the internal rationality that they articulate.

Additionally, the findings of this study suggest that the past and present, as they relate to racialized policy decisions and the politics they are situated within, are co-occurring in time. The logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism are a resilient and adaptive chord binding policies and politics of the past to those of the present, such that time fails to adequately distinguish the two. This non-linear view of time and its implications on the UDP is consistent with some non-Western worldviews that view time as cyclical. It is also reflected in other social and life science disciplines such as English and genetic biology; the former recognizes the gray areas between the so-called past and present through verb tenses like “past perfect progressive”, and the latter reflects how, through epigenetics¹, policy-related chronic environmental exposures (e.g., stressors, contaminants) of an individual or their ancestors can have serious implications on that person’s health and quality-of-life (Diez Roux, 2013). Insights

¹ *Epigenetics* is, essentially, the study of how gene expression is altered through biochemical changes that are triggered through environmental conditions (e.g., prolonged exposure to stress or hunger). The result are changes in the phenotypic expression of those genes (e.g., having the BRCA1 breast cancer gene mutation versus having breast cancer).

from these disciplines could inform future studies of urban development policyscapes and the implications of the multidimensional segregation it maintains.

Moreover, Stephen Carney (2009) asks “If policyscape has deep meaning, then the new space being opened up needs to be mapped. What can travel within this space? How can actors negotiate it?” (Carney, 2009, p.84). I find that the UDP provides a scoping mechanism through which development policies can be understood in relation to persistent, racialized segregation. Thus, the UDP is perhaps better understood as the map and compass of navigation, whereas multidimensional segregation, encompassing both physical and non-physical dimensions and existing across geo-political boundaries, is the “space” to be navigated. In answering Carney’s question about what can travel within in it and how it can be negotiated, I find that strategies of marginalization and resistance, rationales of controversial policy actions and social constructions of Black and other racialized populations can “travel” within these spaces. Relatedly, I also find that collectively held sentiments like racialized fear and cultural pride can also travel throughout and evolve with this space.

The second question of this study asks how the wellbeing of local Black populations are affected by the persistence of multidimensional segregation. Obviously, the Black population is not a monolith but rather a heterogenous group within and across each city. However, for low-income Black populations, urban development has consistently occurred at their expense. Importantly, the cyclical nature of the racial logics that undergird multidimensional segregation is not about racial animosity and middle-class asset protection, although these elements certainly play a role in the broader systems of racial inequity and the racial wealth gap. More importantly, multidimensional segregation functions fundamentally at a cognitive level, shaping

not only behavioral actions and inactions but behavioral intentions and aspirations, particularly those of Black populations. In Figure 2.4 below I illustrate these processes.

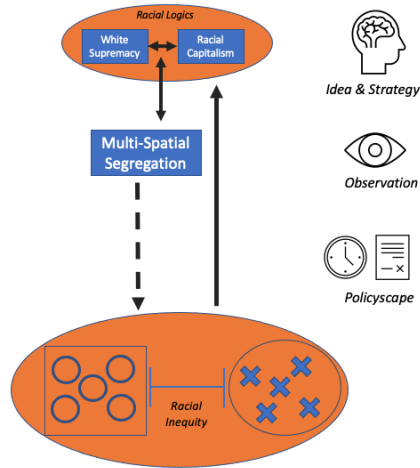


Figure 2.4 The Mechanism of Multidimensional Segregation

2.6 CONCLUSION

In this study I sought to understand how and why segregation continues to influence the nature of urban development in cities and what its quality-of-life implications are for low-income Black populations. I made two central assertions: 1) the nature and function of segregation is largely misunderstood, and 2) the fundamental ideologies and interests of mainstream decisionmakers are linked to white supremacy and racial capitalism, which are contingent upon the ongoing marginalization of Black and brown people. I find that multidimensional segregation— a term I introduce to capture the multiplicity of dimensions in which white supremacy operates— functions as a mechanism of both cognitive and behavioral control, shaping not only where a low-income Black individual is “allowed” to live or work, but also, perhaps more importantly, where that individual even thinks to live, where they aspire to work, and what they dare to

achieve. These findings constitute refinement of my theoretical framework, which is consistent with inductive studies.

2.6.1 Study Limitations

As in all research, this study has several limitations. Given the 100-year time frame, the number of focal cities that I examine and researcher limitations, I am not able to cover all policies that could potentially be said to affect segregation. The broad-based approach that I took to describing and synthesizing key policies was intentional. A more granular analysis of individual policies may have obscured the historical patterns, processes, and implications of segregation and their relation to development decisions today.

Other limitations of this study include the limited probing of the way in which county and state policies as well as regional trends affect urban development policy in each city. The decision was made not to focus on these dimensions due to the scope of this study. Future studies of UDPs may wish to engage these multi-scalar policy jurisdictions and consider the political and economic relationships between them.

Also, because multidimensional segregation, as I have characterized it here, can have both physical and non-physical domains, it is particularly challenging to explore through historical data. Most of this analysis focused on the physical, or at least observable, aspects and locations of segregation with implied implications on non-physical domains (e.g., social status, ideological domains, self-perception). To explore these latter domains in more depth, future studies will likely need to use different methodologies such as ethnographic studies and participatory action research, which can help to elucidate latent constructs, cognitive experiences, and non-physical spaces that correspond to multidimensional segregation.

2.6.2 Implications and Contributions

In this study, I highlight Portland as a noteworthy city for future comparative studies of critical urbanism and Black populations. Scholarship by Nathan McClintock (2018), Lisa Bates (2018), Karen Gibson (2007) and Jenna Hughes (2019) have addressed Portland's complex and racist planning history; however, most comparative studies of racial segregation and urban histories use cities with relatively large Black populations. I include Portland in this study as an intentional deviation from that trend to illustrate the applicability of the UDP, racial logics, and multidimensional segregation frameworks across a variety of contexts. This comparative study is the first of its kind to juxtapose Portland urban planning and Black histories with those of cities that have more widely recognizable and heterogenous Black populations.

Going forward, the role that the racial logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism continue to play in urban development and planning must be explicitly centered for critical consideration. In the absence of such transparency, top-down urban development initiatives will, no doubt, continue to perpetuate multidimensional segregation, simply because it is profitable, normalized, and largely self-sustaining. Without more accountability of urban development projects and scrutiny of their equity implications, the future of urban development policy in high poverty neighborhoods is foreseeably bound to a dizzying cycle of investment checks and luxury development projects, police killings and Black Lives Matter protests, urban land grabs and corporate equity statements, and the "invisible hand" of the neoliberal power grip.

CHAPTER 3: BLACK LED URBAN FARMS: FROM SEED TO HARVEST

You have to have the right spirit here- that's the most important thing. Cause you can always learn more about farming, but you can't learn character. I can't teach you how to have the right spirit, how to care about people... (C. Hunter, personal communication, 2021)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Black cultural identity is characterized by a fundamental connection to the land, the food it bears, and the community in which that harvest is prepared and shared. Perhaps more than any other group, Black farmers play a central role in preserving this land-based cultural heritage through their Afro-ecological knowledge and their multi-faceted roles within Black communities, both rural and urban, as community activists, organizers, educators, and culture keepers. Today's Black urban growers are continuing the tradition of their agrarian ancestors by using food cultivation as a means through which to reclaim, restore, and rebuild healthy Black communities (Garth & Reese, 2020; Penniman & Washington, 2018). They lead community institutions that are involved in the bottom-up struggle for social justice, and they work to create transformative impact within high poverty communities that have been affected by decades of divestment and racialized exploitation (Reynolds & Cohen, 2016; White, 2011). However, urban agriculture in mainstream discourse is seldom framed, discussed, or studied from the vantage point of Black-led farms and the growers who lead them (Reynolds, 2015; Reynolds & Cohen, 2016; Guthman, 2008). Resultantly, most of what is known about urban farms and gardens is based on white-led projects that generally do not reflect the concerns and interests of the predominately Black and minority neighborhoods that they are typically located within (Alkon & Agyeman, 2011; Gottlieb & Joshi, 2010; Reynolds & Cohen, 2016).

Understanding the factors that characterize Black-led urban farms and their distinctive local impact within low-income communities can help to inform policymaking that advances genuinely equitable urban development and sustainable local food systems.

In this study I ask *“Are Black-led urban farms uniquely positioned to advance equitable development in high poverty neighborhoods? If so, how?”* I assert that Black-led urban farms are distinct from mainstream, predominately white-led urban agriculture in four domains: motivation, strategy, problem definition, and signaling. I propose that five shared functions identify the unique significance of Black-led farms within high poverty neighborhoods. To examine these assertions, I return to the three focal cities introduced in the previous chapter (Portland, Atlanta, and Detroit) and conduct semi-structured interviews with Black urban growers in each city. I use these interviews to explore the meaning that these growers ascribe to their motivations, strategies, and local impact in these neighborhood contexts.

This research makes several contributions to the urban planning and urban agriculture literature. By comparing Black-led farms in these three distinct cities, I illustrate both the heterogeneity and commonalities among Black-led urban farms with regards to their organizational identity, ideologies, and objectives. The juxtaposition of these differences and similarities reveals important nuances in the effect of the socio-cultural and historical context of each region as well as the significance of the shared, intergenerational experience of Black struggle in the U.S. I contribute new insight into Black-led urban agriculture and its impact on high poverty, racialized communities in which Black and Latinx populations are consistently overrepresented (Massey, 2016; Reynolds and Cohen, 2016; Jargowsky, 2015). I highlight how these roles and effects are distinct from what is known about mainstream urban agriculture

located in these same types of neighborhoods of segregated poverty. Ultimately, I show how and why institutional actors that are genuinely interested in advancing equitable development in high poverty communities should consider partnering with Black-led urban agriculture to achieve these objectives. In Chapter 5, I provide policy recommendations about how this can effectively be done.

3.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.2.1 Urban Agriculture Then and Now

Urban agriculture has historically been a stigmatized practice of the urban poor, despite its contemporary popularity among the mainstream middle class (Lawson, 2005; Meenar & Hoover, 2012). In Northern cities, immigrants and Black migrant arrivals used the practice as a means of supplementing meager diets and incomes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Meenar, Morales & Bonarek, 2017; Okvat & Zautra, 2011). Although briefly popular among the white middle class during both world wars, urban agriculture remained predominately practiced by low-income, racialized urban communities (Lawson, 2005) until the early 2000s when the fast-food induced obesity crisis and inner-city gentrification patterns were entering the consciousness of the mainstream public.

For Black city residents, the practice of food cultivation in the city has long been both a means of cultural continuity and an important source of food, particularly during the mid-20th century. This period saw the early rise of the industrialized food system and urban renewal, both of which transformed the nature of local community-based food systems that supported local jobs and socio-cultural connections among neighbors (Reese, 2019; Garth & Reese, 2020). As urban renewal processes led to “white flight” to the suburbs (Zuk et al, 2018; Hyra, 2012),

Black communities, who were largely restricted to living in neighborhoods of segregated poverty, often experienced price gouging from the few remaining grocers and “supermarket redlining” (Eisenhauer, 2001), both of which reinforced food insecurity and marginalization.

While the typical image of an urban farmer today is that of a middle class, white urban “hipster” who starts a farm in a low-income, racialized neighborhood (Reynolds, 2015), this narrative often neglects the long history of Black-led, Latinx-led and immigrant-led urban agriculture in inner and outer ring neighborhoods (Ramírez, 2015; Guthman, 2008; Reynolds and Cohen, 2016). Such limited narratives fail to provide a comprehensive picture of the diversity of experiences, perspectives, motivations, and strategies embedded within contemporary urban farms and local food systems (Reynolds and Cohen, 2016; Reynolds, 2015). Resultingly, local urban development and food system planning often end up reflecting and prioritizing the interests, ideologies and experiences of the mainstream, relatively affluent white governance actors and area newcomers rather than those of the long-term, low-income Black and brown residents who have often engaged in urban farming for decades.

A robust body of academic scholarship from disciplines like public health, sociology, and urban geography has been produced about urban agriculture within the past thirty years (Corrigan, 2011; Colosanti et al, 2012). These scholars generally find that participation in community gardens can increase fruit and vegetable consumption among participants (Aliamo et al., 2008; Grebitus et al., 2017), improve participant nutritional knowledge (Draper & Freedman, 2010), and improve physical fitness and mental health (Corrigan, 2011; Draper & Freedman, 2010; Hartwig & Mason, 2016; Agustina & Beilin, 2011). Both Hartwig and Mason (2016) and Agustina and Beilin (2011) show that urban agriculture can be particularly beneficial

for communities that have experienced trauma and cultural displacement. Agustina and Beilin (2011) show that gardens can provide a sense of belonging and social connectedness for immigrant and refugee communities, therein benefiting both individual and community mental health.

Beyond the numerous individual and community health benefits of urban agriculture, the environmental benefits that traditional soil-based urban agriculture can provide to local urban communities are manifold (Draper & Freedman, 2010; Alkon & Agyeman, 2011). Urban farms and gardens help to reduce the urban heat island effect (Ackerman et al., 2014) and help to improve the biodiversity of urban areas by restoring local plant-based ecosystems (Okvat & Zautra, 2011). These multi-faceted benefits to local ecology as well as individual and community wellbeing may be especially important in low-income, racialized neighborhoods, which have experienced decades of environmental racism and ongoing trauma (Hughes, 2019; Pulido, 2016). Many farms and gardens are located on the sites where environmental injustices (e.g., hazardous waste dumping, brownfields) have occurred and harmed the health of local residents; therein, these green projects can reflect both the instrumental and symbolic transformation of the neighborhood through agriculture. High rates of food-related illnesses are also prevalent in low-income, Black and brown communities due to the lack of access to fresh foods and the oversaturation of fast food in these neighborhoods (Maantay & Maroko, 2018; Milbourne, 2012; Walker, 2016; Wolch, Byrne, & Newell, 2014). Thus, urban agriculture in these spaces can help to both restore the environment, support community connections, and provide a source of fresh food for chronically food-insecure and malnourished communities (Meenar & Hoover, 2012; White, 2011).

3.2.2 Contentions within the Urban Agriculture Debate

While urban agriculture has multi-faceted benefits that can support healthy communities, the presence of urban farms and gardens in low-income, racialized neighborhoods is often controversial, particularly when these projects constitute externally driven “urban revitalization” strategies (McClintock, 2018; Maantay & Maroko, 2018; Horst et al, 2017; Ramírez, 2015). These and other “green development” initiatives have been consistently used to advance neoliberal development agendas in divested urban neighborhoods (Pothukuchi et al, 2012; Palardy et al, 2018; Immergluck & Balan, 2018). Several scholars have found that such types of mainstream urban agriculture initiatives are typically led by white actors and that they often reinforce racial hierarchies and the socio-economic marginalization of low-income racialized populations (Ghose & Pettygrove, 2014; Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018; Pudup, 2008). Pettygrove & Ghose (2018) specifically note the “fundamental structuring role of race and racism” in urban agriculture in Milwaukee’s Black communities. They identify how top-down urban agriculture initiatives regularly appropriate agricultural and equity-oriented discourses (Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018) by publicly promoting ideas like “food justice”, “racial justice” and “sustainability”, while generally doing little to challenge the structures, systems, and ideologies that reinforce the racial inequities these terms highlight (Horst et al, 2017; Pudup, 2008; Reynolds, 2015; Alkon, Kato & Sbicca, 2020).

Moreover, Pettygrove & Ghose (2018) and Ramírez (2015) find that even those white-led urban agriculture projects that are intendedly equity-driven often uphold the same racialized exclusionary ideologies and practices that many claim to challenge. For example, in the framing of low-income Black neighborhoods as “unhealthy” (Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018),

“underutilized” (Ramírez, 2015), and the people there as lacking in both education and self-motivation (Garth & Reese, 2020; White 2018), mainstream, white-led urban agriculture within racialized communities largely, although no doubt subconsciously, maintains a white supremacist racial logic, which provides rationality for ongoing practices of settler colonialism in these spaces (McClintock, 2018; Guthman, 2008; Alkon, Kato and Sbicca, 2020).

Findings from Voicu and Been (2008) and others also confirm that the presence of green spaces like farms and gardens increase area property values. Because of this reliable economic effect, urban agriculture is regularly used by cities and developers as a tool to stimulate place-based economic development in previously divested neighborhoods (Horst et al, 2017; Alkon & Agyeman, 2011; Voicu and Been, 2008; Vitiello and Wolf-Powers, 2014). This type of development has consistently triggered displacement and housing instability among low-income Black and brown communities (Bates, 2013; Faber, 2020) who have fewer liquid assets and political capital to rely on for their defense (Hamilton & Darity, 2017).

In addition, many mainstream urban farms, especially those using non-traditional agriculture techniques such as controlled environment agriculture (CEA) (Goodman & Minner, 2019) are often growing microgreens and other high value crops that are sold for high profit at upscale farmers markets (Bradley & Galt, 2014; Sbicca & Meyers, 2016). These boutique farms are being cultivated for the interests, appetites, and budgets of affluent newcomers and not for the low-income populations of neighborhoods that they are typically located in (Reynolds & Cohen 2016). This sharp disconnect between the purpose and function of mainstream urban agriculture initiatives along with the contrasting interests of doubly, if not triply, marginalized area residents present glaring equity concerns. Scholars like Ramírez (2015), Guthman (2008),

and others highlight how whiteness in urban agriculture and local food systems is problematic when situated within racially and economically marginalized neighborhoods because it often minimizes the cultural preferences, values, and experiences of long-term residents, therein contributing to cultural erasure and exclusion (Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018; Slocum, 2007; Alkon & McCullen, 2009; Ramírez, 2015; Horst et al, 2017; Hoover, 2013; Cadieux & Slocum, 2015). Perhaps unsurprisingly, many of these farms and gardens report difficulty connecting with low-income communities in these neighborhoods (Reynolds & Cohen, 2016; Guthman, 2008).

3.2.3 What Sets Black-led Farms Apart

In this study, I posit four central factors that distinguish Black-led urban farms from their mainstream, white-led counterparts. These farms generally differ in 1) their motivation for farming in a low-income community, 2) their definition of the central problem(s) facing the low-income communities in which they are situated, 3) their strategy to achieve the objective(s) of their respective farms, and 4) what the farm's presence signals to local long-term residents in the neighborhood. These factors are listed in Figure 3.1 below. While these racial differences are important to understand with regards to the equity and utility of urban agriculture as a poverty mitigation solution, this study is designed to identify and examine the shared characteristics of Black urban growers across diverse contexts as they relate to the low-income communities that they serve.

Key Differences	Black-led; Racial Equity Oriented	Mainstream White-led; Market-oriented	References
<p><i>Why the farm cultivates food in a low-income, racialized neighborhood</i></p> <p>MOTIVATION</p>	<p>Self and community survival Cultural memory Community responsibility/ legacy Improve quality of life</p>	<p>Profit/ entrepreneurship Rescue mission Food preference</p>	<p>Guthman, 2008; Ramírez, 2015; White, 2011; Reynolds & Cohen 2016; Goodman & Minner, 2019</p>
<p><i>How the farm operates to achieve its goals</i></p> <p>STRATEGY</p>	<p>Community wisdom Cultural values and practices Community elders and leaders</p>	<p>Institutional authority and scientific expertise Trend/market demand</p>	<p>Horst et al, 2017; Lindemann, 2019; McClintock, 2018; Guthman, 2008; Goetz et al., 2020; Feagin & Elias, 2012; Alkon & Agyeman, 2011</p>
<p><i>How the farm defines the problems it is seeking to address</i></p> <p>PROBLEM DEFINITION</p>	<p>Access barriers to opportunity and resources White supremacy Racial capitalism</p>	<p>Lack of food access Lack of education/interest in nutrition and agriculture Lack of local vision/strategy</p>	<p>Reynolds & Cohen, 2016; Figueroa, 2015; Pride, 2016; Alkon & Mares, 2012</p>
<p><i>What the presence of the farm signals to low-income, Black and minority residents</i></p> <p>SIGNALING</p>	<p>Cultural and community memory New opportunities and possibilities Sense of belonging</p>	<p>Racial hierarchy Surveillance Displacement threat Exclusivity</p>	<p>Lindemann, 2019; Guthman, 2008; Ghose & Pettygrove, 2014; Horst et al, 2017; Ramírez, 2015; Hern, 2016; Lubitow & Miller, 2013</p>

Figure 3.1 Key Differences between Black-led and Mainstream

To this end, I theorize that at least five characteristic functions are shared among Black-led urban agriculture which uniquely connect them to low-income Black communities: 1) they (Black-led farms and gardens) serve as a connection to Black cultural heritage; 2) they counter racialized social constructions of Black people by serving as a visible demonstration of Black self-sufficiency; 3) they represent an active form of resistance to the racial capitalism of the

industrialized food system; 4) they provide psychosocial relief from the harm of racialized violence, and 5) they function as a form of local Black placemaking. These five characteristics are listed in Figure 3.2 below.

-
1. Black-led farms serve as a connection to Black cultural heritage
 2. Black-led farms are a visible example of Black self-sufficiency
 3. Black-led farms demonstrate active resistance to racial capitalism
 4. Black-led farms provide psychosocial relief from racialized violence
 5. Black-led farms function as a form of local Black placemaking

Figure 3.2 Shared Functions of Black-led Urban Agriculture

3.2.4 Function 1: Connection to Black Cultural Heritage

Black-led urban farms and gardens reconnect Black communities to their cultural identity. For most Black Americans who had enslaved ancestors, these cultural connections to the past have been largely severed over time in multiple ways, particularly through chattel slavery and Jim Crow era violence (Satterfield, 2021; Twitty, 2017; Penniman & Washington, 2018).

Reconnecting to this cultural heritage through food serves as a source of strength, identity, and purpose for many Black individuals and families (Twitty, 2017; Satterfield, 2021; Harris, 2011).

Black urban growers facilitate the restoration of this connection through *Black foodways*, which encompasses all of the cultural significance surrounding the cultivation, preparation, and

consumption of food within Black families and communities (Harris, 2011; Garth and Reese, 2020).

Black urban growers also reflect and facilitate this link to cultural heritage through the types of foods they choose to cultivate (e.g., okra and yams), through their traditional growing practices, and through the naming of their organizations and programs in ways that reflect Black cultural identities and possibilities (e.g., Black Futures Farm, Mudbone, the Groundbreakers Collective). In this way, Black-led urban farms function as culture keepers, passing on both the legacy of Afro-ecological wisdom, cultural memories, and community values to future generations.

3.2.5 Function 2: Counteracting Anti-Black Social Constructions

Black-led urban farms also function as a visible counternarrative that challenges the myriad negative social constructions of Black individuals and communities. This is a critical function in high poverty neighborhoods, where the low positioning of Black people on the socially constructed racial hierarchy is echoed in both the dilapidated physical condition and the economic and political marginalization of these neighborhoods. These derogatory social constructions are rooted in the dehumanization of Black people, which is, arguably, the critical input of mainstream economic systems and urban development patterns that consistently reinforce uneven development and racialized inequity (Kelley, 2015; Robinson, 2000; Melamed, 2015; McClintock, 2018). Black-led farms counter these social constructions by providing a visual illustration for both those internal and external to high poverty neighborhoods that Black people are intelligent, capable, and self-sufficient. The farms and the growers who lead them reveal to a society that is socio-spatially structured by the idea of Black inferiority, that Black

individuals and communities do indeed eat healthy food, enjoy nature, work together, and are capable of leading successful organizations. Thus, simply by existing within these racialized spaces and being true to their cultural identity, Black-led farms counteract both the power of anti-Black social constructions and the hegemonic, strikingly amiss narrative that urban agriculture and healthy living is primarily a white endeavor (Guthman, 2008; Reynolds, 2015; Garth & Reese, 2020).

3.2.6 Function 3: Resistance to Racial Capitalism

Black-led farms also function as a form of resistance to racial capitalism. Recall that in the previous chapter, I defined racial capitalism as the leveraging of the dominant racial group's relative positioning in the socially constructed racial hierarchy for material gain, generally through practices of extraction from lower positioned racial groups. While the dimensions and dynamics of racial capitalism may vary considerably across time, space, geo-political context, and racial group, within this study, racial capitalism is the extraction of wealth from the local assets, cultural wisdom, and lives of Black and brown communities. Racial capitalism is inherently violent, having both effects of increasing the likelihood of *physical violence* against racially marginalized populations (e.g., workplace violence, police brutality in divested communities) and of enacting racialized *structural violence* (Lee, 2016; Galtung, 1969). Structural violence is the economic and psychosocial counterpart of physical violence that "works slowly through general misery, eroding and ultimately killing human beings, sometimes without even the awareness of doing so" (Lee, 2016, p.111). Black-led urban farms contest this multi-faceted violence, specifically as it is inflicted on racialized communities through the industrialized food system and neoliberal urban development.

Examples of racial capitalism in the food system and urban development include the cultural commodification of Afro-indigenous lifestyles and ecological wisdom through the mainstream “sustainable living” movement (Penniman & Washington, 2018; Garth & Reese, 2020; Twitty, 2017; Kimmerer, 2013; MacDonald, 2021; Jordan & Hill, 2007); the oversaturation of fast food and low-nutrition “food like substances” (Pollan, 2009) in so-called “food deserts” (Toussaint, 2021; Cooksey-Stowers, Schwartz & Brownell, 2017); the targeted marketing of sugar-sweetened beverages to Black and brown youth (Gilmore & Jordan, 2011); and the extraction of community resources through urban land grabs for breweries, high-end restaurants, and other externally-drive, exclusive development initiatives (Silverman et al, 2019; Tornaghi, 2017; Montgomery, 2016; Horst et al, 2017; Alkon, Kato and Sbicca, 2020; Zuk et al., 2015). Importantly, this is not to say that all Black-led farms use non-capitalist business models in their organizations; indeed, many are for-profit businesses, and no doubt all recognize the inevitable reality of the capitalist economy that they are situated within. However, I assert that Black-led urban farms generally do not ideologically support mainstream Western capitalism because of its racialized and deeply exploitative nature.

Black-led urban farms also reject racial capitalism both as local activists seeking to shift political power into the hands of marginalized communities and through the utilization of alternative economic arrangements like cooperatives and bartering systems. As food producers, they provide both inputs and leadership for local food-based economies (Freedgood and Fydenkevez, 2017; Lindemann, 2019). In this way, Black-led urban farms help to restore and catalyze community-driven economic development of low-income neighborhoods. The community fortification and holistic resilience that today’s Black urban growers seek to restore

reflects what W.E.B Dubois referred to as the “impregnable economic phalanx”, which he envisioned as key to overcoming Black political and economic marginalization (Dubois, 1933, p.1237; Gordon-Nembhard, 2014).

3.2.7 Function 4: Psychosocial Relief from Racialized Violence

Black-led urban farms also function as a community space where relief, although perhaps temporary, from the ongoing psychosocial harm of racial and class marginalization can be experienced. Decades of research across multiple disciplines have linked chronic exposure to racism to poor mental and physical health (Greene, 2010; American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016; Diez Roux, 2013; Davis, Cook & Cohen, 2005; Heckler, 1985). The additional layers of ongoing structural violence and unaddressed generational trauma continues to manifest in both the lived experiences and health outcomes of Black communities, contributing to both lower quality-of-life and life expectancy (Assari, 2018; Diez Roux, 2013).

Black-led urban farms facilitate the multidimensional restoration of Black communities, both through direct, structured actions (e.g., cultural events structured around healing and repair), quasi-structured actions (e.g., transparent dialogue, teamwork in the soil, sharing of cultural memories), and unstructured actions (e.g., the general therapy of immersion in green spaces and social interaction). Green spaces have long been utilized both formally and informally as a means of healing and restoration (Corrigan, 2011; Reynolds and Cohen, 2016).

3.2.8 Function 5: Black Placemaking in Changing Neighborhoods

The last shared function of Black-led farms that shapes their impact on low-income communities is their role as an institution of *Black placemaking*. Black placemaking can be

understood as “the ways that Black Americans create sites of endurance, belonging, and resistance through social interaction” (Radney, 2019, p.316). In contrast, mainstream conceptions of placemaking are generally about the transformation of divested, predominately minority neighborhoods into aesthetically pleasing, comfortable spaces where the “creative class” would like to work, play, and live (Montgomery, 2016). Alesia Montgomery (2016) notes that traditional placemaking is “a strategy for increasing commerce and rents in an area by crafting vibrant streetscapes” (Montgomery, 2016, p.776-777). However, Black placemaking is about “infusing community significance to that space” and “reframing historical traumas” to strengthen communities and local economies (Lindemann, 2019, p.869-870; Sbicca, 2012). In this way, Black-led urban farms, who inhabit physical (and therein “visual”) space in these neighborhoods, engage in Black placemaking by embedding the significance of Black cultural foodways and freedom struggles into these spaces.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 Overview

To answer my research question about if and how Black-led urban farms might be uniquely positioned to advance equitable development in high poverty communities, I use 10 semi-structured interviews conducted with Black urban farmers in Detroit, Atlanta, and Portland between June 2019 and October 2021. The number of interviews conducted was primarily determined by the city with the fewest Black-led urban farms (Portland) and the goal of balancing the number of interviews across the three cities. Hennick, Hutter & Bailey (2011) note that the number of interviews conducted in qualitative research is often small because the objective is depth and variation of findings with regards to the research question and not

generalizability as is the case in quantitative research. Interviewees were identified through mutual contacts and direct emails. I have been involved in the local food systems community since 2019 as a student scholar. Through this work, I developed contacts with several interviewees, but I did not know any of them well. A summary of all interviewees is listed in Appendix B.

Most interviews took approximately one hour to complete and were conducted both in-person (N=4) and virtually (N=6) between June 2019 and November 2021. The in-person interviews were all conducted in locations designated by the farmers. The first of these was conducted with Malik Yakini of D-Town farm in June 2019, which consisted of an extended dialogue during a day-long driving tour of Detroit. All interviews were recorded with interviewee permission, and six of the ten interviews were transcribed by a volunteer undergraduate research assistant. The decision not to transcribe the remaining interviews was made based on the extent to which the city was already represented in the transcribed data and due to researcher capacity limitation. Interviews that were not transcribed were thoroughly annotated twice, once within 24 hours of recording and once again during the analysis process. It is not uncommon for only a small fraction of the total collected data to be transcribed and coded in qualitative research (Saldana, 2008; Hennick, Hutter & Bailey, 2011).

3.3.2 Study Set-up

Of the transcribed interviews, all were coded using an iteratively developed qualitative codebook. This codebook is based on key constructs from the original theoretical framework linking Black-led farms to local communities, and it includes code groups of racialized structural violence, cultural reclamation and resistance, structural (re)engineering (discussed in the

subsequent chapter), general codes (an all-purpose code group), politics, and urban agriculture and food systems (technical codes). Interview questions were designed to understand the growers' motivations, experiences, strategies, and the perceived impact of their respective farms in low-income communities. A volunteer graduate-level research assistant was available for part of the study; she provided coding support on two interviews. According to Saldana (2008), it is not uncommon for 10% or less of the data in a qualitative project to be cross-analyzed by a second researcher. Often, qualitative research does not include any formal coding, let alone cross analysis. The two interviews that were cross-coded were chosen because they were among the earliest interviews conducted and because each of these farms is similar in size and regional significance.

3.3.3 Analysis Process

The coding process occurred in three phases, corresponding with each of the three focal cities. After an initial orientation to the overall study and the Atlas.ti 9 coding software, my research assistant and I reviewed the codebook, which initially consisted of 168 codes categorized into six code groups. We each independently coded one interview, using the codebook and memoing to determine what changes needed to be made to it. I did not define a specific text unit of "splitting" (coding short segments of text) or "lumping" (coding larger paragraphs) as is sometimes done in qualitative research (Hennick, Hutter and Bailey, 2011) because the structure of some interview responses was less conducive for that function. Instead, I instructed my assistant to code in "complete ideas", meaning to break codes where there was a perceptible transition in thought expression. There were no limitations placed on how many codes could be applied to any passage of text.

Once the coding was completed, I merged the two files, compared coding alignment, met with my assistant to troubleshoot any challenges, and revised the codebook based on these discussions. This same process was subsequently replicated for the next interview. The final reduced codebook contained 40 codes and 6 code groups. This large reduction in the number of codes reflects both theory refinement through the data analysis process and my own development as a novice qualitative researcher over the course of the study, both of which are expected in qualitative research (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Elliot, 2018).

3.3.4 Researcher Reflexivity

The strength and quality of qualitative research is contingent upon, among other things, researcher reflexivity— that is, the ongoing, introspective process of considering the ways in which one’s identity bears an impact on the study. Both myself and my co-analyst are Black women (Afro-Diasporic) of middle-class backgrounds. As not only a qualitative researcher in a quantitative-oriented discipline but also as an early-career scholar and a Black female, I am keenly aware of the importance of reflexivity in my research.

I could have been considered by the urban farmers that I interviewed as part of the academic “establishment” and thus assumed to be approaching this work through a dispassionate, “scientific” lens. However, while both they and I recognize that I approach this work from a place of privilege and ignorance (having limited technical knowledge of farming), none of them treated me as an outsider. I was intentional about making connections with these interviewees when and however I could in advance of the interviews. This included, where possible, visiting and volunteering on the farms, conducting in-person interviews at times and locations that worked best for them, and by continual engagement in local food

system spaces. These experiences helped me to build rapport with the interviewees and enhanced my understanding of the food systems in which they are embedded. I believe that I was able to make connections with several of these interviewees as a Black woman in a way that facilitated a greater level of transparency and frankness in their responses about race, family, and power than perhaps would have otherwise been possible if I were of another racial or cultural background.

3.4 RESULTS

The interviewees, referred to interchangeably hereafter as “growers” and “farmers”, discussed their formative experiences with loved ones and mentor figures who sparked their initial interest in agriculture. They also discussed how the motivations and strategies of their farms were rooted in family history, Black cultural foodways, and a spiritual imperative to both cultivate food and steward the land from which it comes. While these growers expressed their deep investment in and commitment to improving the lives of marginalized Black communities, their work also impacts, directly and indirectly, other populations such as the racially and socioeconomically mixed groups of volunteers who participate with D-town Farm, Truly Living Well, Atlanta Food & Farm, and the justice-involved youth who participate in Hands of Wonder. The growers also embody countercultural value systems and ideas of success which influence the nature of their interactions with the communities they serve, their visions for the future of their farms, and their aspirations for the neighborhoods in which they are embedded. I discuss these findings in the following subsections through the metaphoric framework of seed, soil, land, and fruit (see Figure 3.2 on page 91), which is consistent with the agricultural tropes regularly used by Black growers.

3.4.1 Introduction to the Farmers

Shantae Johnson and Arthur Shaver are the owners and operators of Mudbone Grown— a Black-owned urban farm homestead previously based in Portland, Oregon that is now located just outside of the metro area in Corbett, Oregon. There they live with their young kids and cultivate 19 acres of land under an extended lease. Shantae and Arthur began Mudbone Grown in 2006 after completing the Beginner Farmer Training Program through Oregon State University’s Agriculture Extension Office. Starting out, they experienced some of the same challenges that first-time urban farmers and farmers of color often do, including a lack of access to land (Oberholtzer et al, 2016; Reynolds & Cohen, 2016; Alkon & Agyeman, 2011). Eventually, they were able to lease two acres of land from Habitat for Humanity for a year before it was used for development. Shantae, Arthur, and their kids moved to that site and, as Shantae puts it, they “roughed it” in a mobile home for the year, growing food and “building community”. In doing so, Shantae and Arthur both willingly sacrificed their stable jobs— Shantae’s as a health specialist with Multnomah County and Arthur’s as an appliance delivery person— to pursue farming full-time, against the advice of many. Challenges to accessing land, exacerbated by Portland’s hot housing market, led Shantae and Arthur to relocate to Corbett in 2018. Their farm has become a leading resource for Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) urban farmers and food insecure communities in the region. They work collaboratively with and through the Black Food Sovereignty Coalition (BFSC)— a regional coordinating and advocacy organization for BIPOC growers— to expand access to land for minority growers and to build a more equitable regional food system.

While Shantae and Arthur are Oregon natives, Malcolm Hoover and Mirabai Collins of two-year old Black Futures Farm in Southeast Portland are transplants to the city. Malcolm grew up in Philadelphia and spent much of his adulthood in Oakland before moving to Portland. The two met through volunteering with Mudbone Grown and found that they shared a passion for the work of healing and nurturing Black community through agriculture. They would eventually marry, and the four of them (Malcolm, Mirabai, Shantae, and Arthur) along with others would eventually spend several months on a half-acre industrial site where they lived together and grew food from the land. As Mirabai later tells it, they shared this special connection because “they [Shantae and Arthur] were Black weirdos like us”. Although the part of the city where they lived together is a rather seedy area (Mirabai and Malcolm recall signs of heavy drug use and industrial waste), Mirabai and Shantae both reflected on the time spent there as some of the happiest in their lives. Malcolm and Mirabai both have jobs outside of the farm as many urban farmers do (Dimitri et al, 2016), but cultivating food and Black community is their passion. As he and Mirabai jokingly describe, Malcolm “collects Black people” — a reflection of not only his extroverted personality and love of Black community but also the scattered paucity of Black people in the city.

The third and last Portland-area Black urban farmer of this study is Jerry Hunter who currently runs the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ) Hands of Wonder urban farm— a restorative justice program for justice-involved youth. Jerry is a seasoned farmer in his sixties who hails from Arkansas but has spent most of his life in Portland. He worked in a corporate job for two decades before the racism that he experienced became unbearable and led him to search for other employment. Ultimately, he held several

agriculture-related positions with Multnomah County, including as lead of the County’s Forest Project— a nature immersion program for justice-involved youth; a decade spent leading the CROPS farm (2009-2019)— a county-owned 2-acre farming site on which justice-involved adults with community service mandates could participate; and currently as the Hands of Wonder (HOW) program leader. HOW is a year-round restorative justice program for low and medium-risk youth at the Donald E. Long Juvenile Detention Center in Northeast Portland. Youth receive a stipend for successfully participating in the program, and they have the opportunity to gain resources including life skills, certification, and agricultural knowledge in the process.

The two Detroit farmers in this study are Malik Yakini, founder and executive director of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network (DBCFSN), and Natosha Tallman, program director, youth development coordinator, fund development manager, and social media marketer of Oakland Avenue Urban Farm. As Natosha’s many titles suggest, she plays a vital role within a “small but mighty” grassroots farm that is managed by the Northend Christian Community Development Corporation. She is a native Detroiter who was raised in the suburbs and has a background in horticulture. Similarly, Malik wears many hats in the Detroit food community and in the broader national network of Black farmers and food sovereignty proponents. A former educator in the Detroit public school system and a deeply rooted, Detroit native, Malik is an internationally respected leader in the food sovereignty movement. The seeds of DBCFSN and D-town farm were planted in 2003 when he served as founding principal of an African-centered school and started a school-based community garden program. Eventually, this work led him to enter the food system world full-time as a farmer, community

organizer, and policy advocate through DBCFSN, an organization he established in 2006 to address local food insecurity and the dearth of fresh food in the city.

I also interviewed five Black farmers in Atlanta— Rashid Nuri, founder and former executive director of Truly Living Well (TLW) and Carol Hunter who is the farm’s current executive director since Rashid’s retirement in 2018; farmer-entrepreneur Kwabena Nkromo of Atlanta Food & Farm; East Point Urban Agriculture Director and farmer-entrepreneur Tenisio Seanima of Nature’s Candy Farm; and City of Atlanta Urban Agriculture Director J. Olu Baiyewu. Rashid is a national leader in urban agriculture and is a self-described “Pan-Africanist”. He started TLW in 2006 and ran the organization until his recent retirement. Carol Hunter, referred to hereafter as Ms. Carol, has been with TLW since 2011, was selected to replace him in 2019 and has been serving as executive director ever since. Through the work of both leaders, TLW continues to be an important community resource of the West End and the broader Atlanta food system, and it remains the largest urban farm in the city.

Tenisio Seanima and J. Olu Baiyewu are both graduates of the TLW training program and serve in parallel roles as urban agriculture directors in the area— a position which TLW helped to create with the city of Atlanta in 2014. Both have strong ties to the metro area, entrepreneurial experience and technical training in food production and business management, and a rootedness in Black cultural foodways. Like Tenisio and J. Olu, Kwabena Nkromo has also been involved in local government and food cultivation in a variety of roles in both Houston, Texas and the Atlanta metro. He currently owns and manages Atlanta Food & Farm, a social enterprise consulting group that provides hands-on technical assistance and management support for local organizations that do not have the capacity to manage their own

land for food cultivation. A native of the East Coast, Kwabena's journey into his current agricultural work is perhaps the most eclectic of them all, and he has been involved in local food system policy for years, including as a former secretary and chair of the Georgia Food Policy Council.

3.4.2 Seed: What Motivates Black Urban Growers?

To understand the significance of food cultivation to Black urban farmers, I sought to identify the context in which the interviewees were first introduced to farming and how that introduction connects, if at all, to the motivations of their present-day work as urban farmers. For most of the interviewees, formative experiences in early childhood were their first introductions to food cultivation. This initial "seed" of agricultural interest was linked to observation and participation in family gardens, usually through an older relative with deep connections to Black Agrarian heritage. For example, Shantae recalls seeing the agrarian lifestyle of her great-grandmother, who sustained herself and provided for others through her farm: "...so my great-grandmother had a berry farm out in Oregon City. Well, she did more than berries, she...she had chickens so she sold eggs, she did berries, she had fruit trees..." (S. Johnson, personal communication, 2021).

The industriousness of Shantae's great-grandmother reflects a long history of Black Agrarianism and its intergenerational connections to the present. She leveraged her agricultural knowledge to generate a local food economy of her own that enabled both her family's subsistence and that of her local community in both a place and time well known for its racism and economic hardship. Shantae continues about the influence of her ancestors in their current work at Mudbone:

And our grandparents are our muse for the work, I say this a lot. And so, just seeing like our grandparents- the way that they gave back to community. And through gardening, through cooking food, the connection to food, sharing food. And they grew up in a different era where there was the Great Depression, right? So people did canning, and they had Victory Gardens. Just growing up in church...you know, the church setting. (S. Johnson, personal communication, 2021)

It is this early connection to agriculture, community building and Black foodways through their ancestors that motivates Shantae and Arthur's work at Mudbone Grown. Their grandparents' left them an invaluable legacy of inspiration and a food-based strategy for community preservation. In addition to these memories, Shantae also recalls being put in charge of her family garden at age 10, picking strawberries as a child on Sauipe's Island to make money, and having access to a nature-filled childhood as formative experiences shaping her vision of community building through food cultivation.

Similarly, Ms. Carol, Jerry, and Malik recall that their grandparents, all of whom were born into the Jim Crow era South, were their primary introduction to agriculture and Black foodways. Ms. Carol fondly recalls her grandma's passion for and encyclopedic knowledge of plants:

My grandmother grew up in South Carolina and was very connected to the land. She was an educator. And she knew all the names of all the trees, all the plants, even the shells...and so that created a love for plants in me, and she had like beautiful houseplants. Our front yard had this huge window and people would drive by slowly just to see the plants. And we would bury our goldfish in the plants, and so that was the first

thing I learned about fertilization- 'it's good for the soil!' (C. Hunter, personal communication, 2021)

She later shared that her desire to honor her grandmother's memory took her on an unforeseen journey from a successful career in journalism, entrepreneurship, and media management into what she considers her calling in food cultivation and non-profit management at TLW. The company that she started prior to joining TLW, The Seed Planter Group, reflects and foreshadows those personal agro-ecological connections.

Malik's grandfather, a Georgia native who migrated to Detroit during the early part of the Great Migration, was also deeply connected to his agricultural heritage and introduced Malik to gardening as a young boy. Malik recognizes the significance of this intergenerational influence in his current food systems work. As he describes:

So my first exposure to gardening was actually on this block. My grandparents lived on this block. And this is where my father lived before he got married. And so my grandfather was from Georgia and had a garden in the backyard of this lot. And so as a 7,6...5,6,7 year old, that was my first exposure to gardening. And I think it kind of planted some of the seeds that led to what I'm doing now. (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019)

Like Malik and Ms. Carol, Jerry was introduced to agriculture through his grandparents, both through food production in the family garden and food preparation in the family kitchen. Although he also attributes his mother, stepfather, and best friends to his agricultural skillset, both of his grandmothers played a central role in shaping Jerry's extensive horticultural knowledge and his self-professed cooking skills. Jerry recalls that at age 6 or 7 he would rise

early to help his grandma prepare breakfast on a wooden potbelly stove and serve his bed-ridden grandfather before heading out with her to work in the garden. Later in Portland, these skills of food cultivation and the self-sufficiency they provided would enable Jerry and his family's survival in very challenging economic times.

In addition to being connected to farming through family members with deep cultural ties to agriculture and community, Rashid, Malik, and Kwabena also point to key mentor figures who motivated them to pursue farming as a means of protecting and restoring marginalized Black communities. These mentor figures were connected to the Black nationalism movement and the education system, and they passed along the community values of the movement as seeds of motivation planted in the hearts and minds of their young mentees. In doing so, these mentors helped these three Black farmers to "connect the dots" between the forces sustaining Black intergenerational oppression and food sovereignty as a tool through which that oppression could be resisted. Malik describes the lasting influence that his middle school teachers had on shaping his identity and politics in the 1960s:

So, in 1969, I was attending Post Junior High School, and I had some teachers who were very concerned about the young people they were teaching, and they were themselves politically conscious. And so, they played for us Malcolm X speeches; they had us reading Black Panther Party newspapers; they exposed us to the music...the music that accompanied the kind of political revolution that was going on at the time, so we were listening to...um...Jimmy Hendrix, John Coltrane, Pharoah Sanders, and other artists who were really stretching the sonic bounds of Western music. And, this kind of

radicalization- if I can use that term- set me on the path that I've been on ever since. (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019)

Malik would later carry forward the education mantle as an educator in the Detroit Public School system in the 1980s and 90s, ultimately serving as the founding principal of the Nsoroma Institute. This Institute was one of approximately twenty African-centered public schools in the city that sought to shift the mainstream Eurocentric education model of public-school education towards one that reflected the student body population. Malik and his students started a school garden there managed by the students, which supplied fresh food to local families and provided Afro-ecological and STEM education. Soon after, interested neighbors began to approach Malik for help in starting gardens on vacant lots in their communities, and so he organized the Shamba Collective of community gardens and the Groundbreakers— a group of volunteers who came out with him on weekends to prepare backyards and vacant lots for food cultivation. These start-up organizations illustrate the early sprouting of the seeds of Black radicalization, critical-consciousness, and service to the Black community that were planted in Malik by his revolutionary Black teachers. He notes that DBCFSN is *“planting seeds of self-determination, where people can begin to see that if we work together collectively, we can begin to create development models in our community that benefit us, where we have some ownership of them”*. This vision that Malik states is clearly countercultural to mainstream neoliberal forms of urban development in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, which largely overlook the interests, concerns, and human potential of low-income, racialized residents, instead prioritizing the desires and resources of “creative class” newcomers (Florida, 2003; Denmead, 2019; Bartik, 2018).

Similarly, Rashid and Kwabena were both shaped through the Black nationalism ideologies of their mentors who pointed them, both directly and indirectly, to pursue farming as a means of Black community uplift. For both men, these mentors entered their lives in young adulthood on opposite coasts and in seemingly opposite social contexts. Rashid credits “Brother Randy” (who himself was mentored by a legendary man named Tim) with sparking his interest in farming on the San Diego basketball courts in the late 1960s. Randy was a few years older than Rashid and was embedded in the Black radical thought movement percolating throughout the region and nation at the time. Rashid, like many of his Black peers, was interested in nation-building and the Black power struggle, and he was looking for a way to connect these ambitions into practical action to serve the needs of the Black community. He came to understand through Brother Randy that food, clothing, and shelter were central to nation-building. Of those, he chose to focus on the provision of food for low-income Black communities, many of whom struggled, then and now, to access enough food to feed their families.

Kwabena’s key mentor figures were two very different professors, both now deceased, that contributed to his development as a farmer and as a food system policy entrepreneur. He credits his father-figure and mentor Dr. Mudavanha-Patterson as the root behind his agricultural work. This outspoken and eclectic professor was, as Kwabena puts it, a “Rafiki-like” figure who led an African book club in which Kwabena participated as a high school student. Kwabena also credits Dr. Bob Randall, a white anthropologist in Houston who helped him learn the mechanics of urban agriculture and local food systems. These two mentors equipped

Kwabena with the community-centered vision and practical strategies that inform his current work with Atlanta Food and Farm.

3.4.3 Land: What is at Stake for Black Urban Growers?

Differential access to land and the failure to properly steward it undergirds both racial and social inequities. For Black farmers in this study, land has immense instrumental and symbolic value. The instrumental value comes from its function as the key source from which economic and political power are derived. The symbolic value of the land stems from its function as contested spaces of belonging and unbelonging, sites of collective memory, and articulations of individual willpower, all of which are intimately tied for Black people to intergenerational experiences of marginalization and resistance.

Several of the farmers I interviewed expressed that they felt a spiritual imperative linked to land and Black cultural heritage that guides the purpose and positioning of their work in agriculture. When asked what drives her work as a farmer, Shantae reflects “...something that really strikes me, that Art says, is ‘we heard this ancestral call to the land.’ And, I think it was around divine timing. Like we were looking for something different, looking for a different way to connect”. Shantae’s reflection suggests that their pursuit of urban farming was not a quickly made decision nor was it based on the calculated profitability or social trendiness of a practice seeing a resurgence in mainstream popularity. That sense of connectedness to family tradition and cultural responsibility is the “land” of which she speaks. Her objective in answering the “ancestral call” is the fulfillment of that sense of responsibility both to the Black community and, therein, to themselves. To be clear, Shantae is also referring to land in the literal sense here; she along with the broader network of Black and allied food sovereignty

actors are vocal advocates of land justice and reparations. But land, as she and others suggest, is much more than a physical, proprietary asset. As Shantae explains:

But what's really driving us is just that desire to serve others, through food. You know, growing food and sharing it. And then sharing opportunities that we have. And that's why we also share the land because people need a space to learn, and so just seeing like, the success of other farmers that are in our network, being able to help to look at what some of the barriers are, and advocate for new and beginning farmers, and remembering what it was like when we first started out. (S. Johnson, personal communication, 2021)

For Shantae and Art, the land is a resource to be shared and a laboratory to learn the practice of food cultivation and community building. Although Mudbone is technically a homestead business, Shantae and Art contest many of the typical competitive dynamics of neoclassical capitalist economics by positioning themselves as farmer trainers that cultivate and amplify the voices of new Black and indigenous growers in the Northwest region.

Malcolm and Mirabai are motivated by a similar sense of responsibility and connection to the land. Malcolm reflects on his goals for Black Futures Farm: "Yeah, I mean, I always say, we're trying to help heal Black people's connection to the land. And that can be, through like, any number of ways, like gardening, or just coming out here and like being on the land" (M. Hoover, personal communication, 2021). Here, he suggests that the relationship between Black people and the land has been harmed, referring to the incalculable amount of violence that Black people have experienced intergenerationally through the land and proximity to it (e.g., chattel slavery, sharecropping, land theft, lynching). Interestingly, Malcom and the other

growers in this study consistently refer to land using a definite article (“the”) rather than an indefinite article or a possessive pronoun (e.g., mine/his/hers/ours/theirs), the latter of which might be expected given both the proprietary nature of land and the significance of geo-spatial land boundaries in this country. This way of referring to land is consistent with Afro-indigenous conceptualizations of land as shared and communal, which is reflective of pre-colonial African and First Nations land-based practices (Penniman & Washington, 2018; Kimmerer, 2013).

Malcolm’s reference to healing through “being on the land” suggests that in addition to the green therapy (“biophilia”- see Wilson, 1984) of agricultural immersion (Kingsley & Townsend, 2006), simply by being physically present on the farm— which is, in itself, the active occupation of an urban space where Black people are not only present and welcome but also centered and seen in positions of meaningful authority (e.g., Malcolm and Mirabai as farm owners)— can also facilitate the “healing” of Black people’s relationship to the land both individually and collectively.

Continuing this objective of healing and Black reconnection to the land through the farm, Malcolm insightfully describes a sort of “diagnostic skillset” that he is actively developing through the practice of food cultivation and proximity to the land, which enables him to be a nurturer of both plants and people:

I think one of the most important tools is just to learn how to look. To learn how to observe and to like, to be able to tune your third eye, and your nose, and your ears, like to tune your senses to how to regard the land. You know, not just how to observe it, which is a more passive thing, but like how to interrogate it, and look at it in a way that gives you the information that you need to like steward it properly. And I really

continue to learn that. And I guess I will always be learning that. Because my senses are attuned to the city. Like I know how to walk on the block and read it, you know? Instantly. Any block. Anywhere. And I pride myself in that. Like I been a lot of places, and have never ever been in any trouble internationally, or in any city in America, you know, because I learned how to read a block. And that is very different than learning how to read the land, and listen to birds, and, you know, or smell soil. Or like pull a plant out and look at its roots and know what happened in the planting. (M. Hoover, personal communication, 2021)

Here, Malcolm draws a powerful analogy between the agro-ecological insight, attentiveness, and character needed to properly “regard the land” and diagnose soil quality with the very different but no less critical characteristics of psychological fortitude and astuteness required to “read” a city block and thereby assess its situational temperament. Thus, for Malcolm, food cultivation is associated with the development of a practical skillset and personal character—the former of which is simultaneously physical and metaphysical, learned, and intuitive. Most importantly, this skillset is purposive; it is not for self-aggrandizement and popularity but for the hard-labor and generally unnoticed work of community healing, land stewardship, and self-sufficiency.

The farmers in this study also revealed how cultivating one’s own food shifts power into the hands of historically marginalized communities. Several of the interviewees referenced white supremacy as the central problem behind the power imbalance that enables the ongoing exploitation of Black and minority populations. Malik, Rashid, and Malcolm are all unequivocal about their opposition to white supremacy, which they clearly differentiate from a hatred of

white people. Malcolm recalls that one of his own cousins in Portland misunderstood his pro-Black political stance:

And one of my cousins told me I was a Black supremacist. He was like ‘you hate white people’! I was like nigggaaa. A- I don’t hate anybody. And me calling out white people for their bullshit consistently is not me hating white people. I hate white supremacy, you know. That’s my sworn enemy in life. And any advocate of white supremacy can get it. Especially Black advocates of white supremacy. They can get it first. (M. Hoover, personal communication, 2021)

Here Malcolm makes his position clear, his animosity is toward the system of white supremacy, and he opposes anyone who advocates for it, regardless of race. Malik also charges white supremacy as a root cause of the racialized violence experienced by the marginalized Black communities of Detroit that DBCFSN is embedded within. For Malik and many others, food cultivation and Black food sovereignty are tools to achieve Black liberation and economic autarky from systems of white supremacy. He describes his position:

So, many of the people who are involved in Black food sovereignty, like myself for example, or Dara Cooper- we were activists in the Black liberation movement before we started participating in what people might call the food movement. And so our participation in the so-called “food movement”, is more, shaped through the lens of Black liberation, as opposed to participating in the food movement and trying to shape that to help Black people. So you know, in general we are in favor of sovereignty for Black people, and you know, the building of power in Black communities, and Black people having the power to determine our own destinies.... But also, I think, most of the

people who favor Black food sovereignty, probably...are also very strongly opposed to white supremacy and see a dismantling of these systems as a necessary prerequisite for achieving Black food sovereignty. (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2021)

Malik provides a vivid example of his perspectives by recounting an affluent white urban farmer in the area who runs what has been self-identified as “The World’s First Urban Agri-Hood”, which, according to Malik, has attracted immense publicity and funding. This comparison that Malik paints in the following quote was drawn within the context of a visit to the neighborhood in which the so-called “Agri-Hood” is located and a follow-up question that I asked about his perceptions of the reasons for its apparent success:

He’s been able to get corporate money from a number of sources. Largely, because of his whiteness, his connections. He’s not nearly as threatening to them as...somebody like myself, who is constantly talking about white supremacy.... They feel much more comfortable with him. (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019)

One might be tempted to interpret Malik’s remarks as those of a bitter competitor farmer; however, a closer inspection Malik’s follow-up remarks suggests otherwise:

And you know, I mean, I’m cordial with the guy, we speak, I stop there sometimes and introduce people to him. But we have significant differences in terms of our vision of how this kind of project should proceed. And so I think he’s almost a poster child for gentrification, frankly... But he’s also been buying up some of these houses around here... So if you hear about “the World’s First Agri-Hood” this is what they’re referring to. This area. In fact, if you google “Detroit urban agriculture” this will be one of the first things that pops up. Michigan Urban Farming Initiative. So Black folks who have

been in the city all our life, like at our farm, doing this work that has an operation 20 times the size of this, you won't hear about us first, you'll hear about this first.... But he's had significant tension with other people in the neighborhood, including Oakland Avenue Farm. For example, he- on Saturday morning he gives food away. Which on the surface sounds ok, but slightly below the surface it's highly problematic. So at the same time he's giving food away, Oakland Avenue Farm has a Farmers' Market where they're trying to contribute to a local economy and it's creating employment for people. And so...right down the road he's giving food away, and so it undermines to some extent what they're doing. (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019)

Malik's comments highlight not only the highly contested nature of divested urban neighborhoods, but also the ways in which white-led urban agriculture in these spaces, regardless of intent, often reinforce racialized hierarchies and undermines existing community-led development efforts to stimulate local economies (Ramírez, 2015; Figueroa, 2015; Guthman, 2008; Reynolds and Cohen, 2016; Reynolds, 2015; Lindemann, 2019; Horst et al, 2017; Ghose and Pettygrove, 2018; Pudup, 2008).

Black-led farms also shift power into the hands of racially marginalized communities through the resilience of these farms and farmers in the face of racial violence, their pride in Black cultural heritage, and through their plant-based lifestyles that reject the corporate food system. For example, Shantae recounts several dangerous, politically-stoked incidents around the time of the 2020 presidential election that occurred both on and near their farm in Corbett, a small, rural predominately white town not far from the outer edge of east Portland. Despite ongoing threats of racialized violence, including an incident with an armed vigilante group in

the area that was monitoring access to the town, Shantae and Art continue attempting to build connections with the local community there. And although only marginally successful at doing so, Shantae and Art's refusal to be intimidated by these open displays of white supremacy shifted at least some of the power from the hands of those who sought to use fear to control their behaviors.

Moreover, the pride that all of the farmers, Malcolm and Malik in particular, expressed in their cultural heritage can also be understood as a means of shifting power and ideological territory away from white supremacy and the dehumanization of Black people on which it rests.

Malik reflects on his pride in his identity as a Black Detroiter:

I'm extremely proud to be from Detroit, and even prouder to be part of this, kind of, legacy of black political struggle. Because that's what shaped me. And I realize- because I have the chance to travel around a lot- that most places are not like this. And so sometimes even, like when I go places and speak, people are shocked!! Because for them it sounds so radical, but for us here it's just like our normal conversation! You know, because we were...we were forged in this like...Black furnace, almost!

You know...like in the basically 70s, 80s, 90s, we had a black mayor, black city council, black police chief, black fire chief, black school board...and so you have a whole generation of black people that grew up just seeing...Black people in charge! At least on a...surface level. White people still controlled the money. And the politicians had to still dance to the money, but at least the visible symbols of power were Black! And so it gives us a kind of boldness that Black people in some other places don't have. (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019)

Malcolm, who was similarly “forged” in the furnace of Black radical thought and political activism, notes how this cultural pride— a source of strength, identity, and direction for his life— is rooted not in hate and resentment but in his love for and relationship to the Black community. He describes how his Afrocentric upbringing in 1970s Philadelphia and later in the Bay Area shaped his identity and priorities:

You know it’s just the way we were raised. My family’s been involved in the movement for a long time. So...it’s just the way we were raised. My Dad was a Panther. Both my Aunt and Uncle were really deeply involved in the Black Studies movement, and my Mom was involved in the Black Power Movement.

Just you know, a lot of different perspectives. Really...you know, know your people. Know who they are. Know who we are. Know how we move through the world. Understand the things that impact us. And you know, operate with a love for the people at the center. You know, hold that at the center. And act like that. (M. Hoover, personal communication, 2021)

At least three of the farmers that I interviewed— Malik, Jerry, and Tenisio— self-identify as vegans and their decision to grow most of the food they consume is also a form of shifting power away from the corporatized food systems shaping racialized health inequities. In choosing to live this self-sufficient, plant-based lifestyle and sharing that lifestyle with their respective families, these growers subvert the mainstream food system and the racial capitalism that undergirds it. While their individual actions may do little to subvert the multi-billion-dollar corporate food regime, the instrumental and symbolic impact of their actions on their own health and that of their loved ones are important examples of contesting corporate

power and reshaping Black futures. Their food decisions also reflect a growth in Black veganism nationally (Terry, 2021), which encompasses not only a shift in food consumption patterns but also a broader adoption of Afro-centric lifestyles.

Moreover, the growers in this study also contest power through engagement with local policy, through their practice of alternative economic strategies, and their redefining of the standards and definitions used to measure their own success. In addition to both J. Olu and Tenisio, who are urban agriculture directors for their respective cities, and Kwabena who is the former president of the now defunct Georgia Food Policy Council and former chair of the Neighborhood Planning Council, Shantae and Malik are heavily involved in both local and regional policymaking related to food systems and equitable development. In his role with DBCFSN, Malik led the drafting of the city's urban agriculture policy and is currently leading the development of the Detroit People's Co-op, which is a mixed-use development that includes a member-owned cooperative grocery store where local growers can sell their food, community kitchen space for local food entrepreneurs, and other multi-use spaces and offices. Tasked with raising the \$14 million necessary for the development, DBCFSN will begin construction on the project in Spring 2022.

Similarly, Shantae is deeply involved in local and regional food policy in the Northwest. She sits on the state of Oregon's Environmental Equity Committee where she represents small food producers on the Portland Metro Natural Areas and Capital Program Performance Oversight Committee. In addition to these roles, she also serves a leadership role within the BFSC and the Black Oregon Land Trust. One of her latest projects through Mudbone Grown is the creation of the Feed 'Em Freedom Foundation— a non-profit organization seeking to

improve access to culture-specific food items and to address food insecurity among Portland's Black and African immigrant populations. Through these roles and activities, Shantae leverages both her professional background in community health and her experience as a Black farmer to advocate for greater access to land access and justice for Black and indigenous communities.

Further, Black farmers use food cultivation as a means of practicing counter-capitalist economic relations. Recognizing that food sold at farmers markets is more expensive than which is sourced from corporate farms by "big box" stores, Mirabai suggests the willingness of middle-class consumers to make a what she calls a "righteous payment":

And you know, there's...I understand that when prices are low it's reflective of some sort of...someone not being treated well along the line. Like someone losing out, and not the rich, you know...not the people at the top. So...prices are a reflection of the work put in, really. And I think we're just kind of not used to that, and then comparatively we have all these examples of that not being the case. And we can kind of ignore, you know, the bag of \$2 cherries. You know, they're \$2 for a reason. So I feel like people are willing to pay, you know, a righteous payment in a way, and that's part of the exchange, or part of the agreement. (M. Collins, personal communication, 2021)

For those who cannot afford the righteous payment, Malcolm and Mirabai allow bartering or often will give away the food they harvest to those in need. Obviously, this latter practice may not be the most sustainable business model in a market-based economy, but to many Black farmers like Malcolm and Mirabai making a profit is not the central goal of their work as farmers. Mirabai captures this sentiment well in her articulation of food sovereignty and the Black Futures Farm economic approach:

Well, I think that's some of how sovereignty, and food sovereignty especially, works is that it gives you the agency- like the ability to set your own terms. And like, the terms of the exchange. And so within that is some autonomy, like within the larger system, you can't be inside and outside of the thing itself at the same time, you know.

But I think that when we're asked about what 'sovereignty' means I think some of it is that. Like being able to set the terms. You make the things of sustenance and can exchange them in whatever way...you know. (M. Collins, personal communication, 2021)

Even for Shantae, Tenisio, and Kwabena— all of whom operate for-profit businesses and therefore are naturally concerned about the bottom line— their primary objective is not about growth and scale of their business but rather the broader community goal of advancing racial and social justice. Malcolm captures this connection between counter-capitalistic thought, sovereignty, and Black community prosperity in his outlook on the “future” impact of Black Futures Farm:

I would like to change the conversation around what it means for Black people to...to be in charge of their own destiny and life. You know. And I want this farm to be a part of that conversation. Um...you know, capitalism as an economic system is a failed enterprise. And it is collapsing. Slowly, you know. But the values that are associated with capitalism are like anti-human. And I don't believe in it fundamentally. And that's why I keep trying to shift the conversation- like what does it mean for us to be...I mean, you know, economics are a reality, people have to pay rent, da da da da- I get all of that. But...in my own life, when I grew as a person, money came more easily. So, as my skillset has grown, and I'm able to do things more easily, and access like a wider body of

knowledge and I'm not locked in to "I know how to do this one thing, and this is the only thing I know how to do that brings me money...". (M. Hoover, personal communication, 2021)

Shantae expresses a similar sense of fulfillment in food cultivation and of liberation from the ideological and economic enslavement of mainstream capitalist materialism. She notes the joy and personal satisfaction that come not only with food cultivation, but the reclamation of long-lost cultural connections to food and community, and the joy of seeing the excitement about their work among children at Kairos, a local Black-led elementary school that Mudbone serves:

But just to be able to work with your hands, most days, and, to get dirty, and to have your office. Art likes to say like "this is the best office I've ever had"... You know, looking on the land, the fact that you can...you can, put your effort into something, and you can see it change and evolve. When we get into...and we are doing systematic work in those policy system environmental changes, but, there's nothing like, when you tend a bed. You prep a...prep a bed, to plant food in it. And then you get to see it grow, and then you get to, then, make sure that it goes to families and seeing how much people really appreciate your efforts. And then it triggers something within them, in remembering their grandparents, or their auntie, or someone in their family that grew their food for them. And then seeing kids get excited, you know...walking down the halls of Kairos, and hearing little people say like, "When are we going to come to the Mudbone?" (S. Johnson, personal communication, 2021)

Clearly, the personal fulfillment and local impact that Shantae and Art experience through the hands-on work of food and community cultivation are reflected in the exhilaration of the school

children they serve. As such, Shantae and Art contest normative Western standards of professional success and social hierarchy, igniting “taste memories” (M. Twitty, personal communication, 2019) of Black foodways and instilling a desire within the children for learning, cultural connection, and adventure through a connection to the farm. Thereby, through Mudbone, Shantae and Art are helping to shape and reclaim Black community narratives, shift racialized ideologies, and cultivate children’s interests and appetites for learning and healthy food through their roles as Black farmers.

3.4.4 Soil: Who do Black Urban Growers Focalize and How?

The growers that I interviewed in this study are committed to the survival and restoration of Black community. Their farms reflect that mission through their work of “soil restoration”—that is the enrichment of both land and people, which have collectively been depleted through racialized capitalist extraction. For example, Natosha of Oakland Avenue Farm recalls the personal history of Northend Christian CDC founder, the late Reverend Bertha Carter and her daughter Jerry Hebron who is the current executive director of the farm. She explains how Reverend Carter sacrificed so much of herself to meet both the material and spiritual needs of the local community. Natosha also describes the organization’s distinctive policy of what they refer to as “healing workforce development”, whereby they intentionally employ people from the neighborhood who have the most difficulty obtaining and sustaining employment. Malik describes the multifaceted positive impact that Oakland Avenue Farm has on the local community through healing workforce development, answering a question that I asked as we drove by. I wanted to know if they (Oakland Avenue Farm) were concerned about crime, as I saw no fences or gates around the farm.

...so they employ a lot of people from the neighborhood. Like the people who are going to be coming out weed-wacking at our farm tomorrow are people that they've employed from the neighborhood. And because they are embedded so deeply, and they employ people, a lot of people from the neighborhood are looking out, so they don't have any problems. (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2019)

Similarly, Jerry of HOW expressed that he enjoys working with the youth who are generally considered the most difficult to work with. Youth in his program span the range of risk, but Multnomah County policy prohibits him from serving low and medium risk populations together. To make sure that both populations could be served, he added an extra day to his schedule to serve them separately. When asked why he prefers working with the higher risk groups, he poetically explained “blemished pasts, spotless futures” (J. Hunter, personal communication, 2021). This hopeful optimism in the potential of these youth is echoed in both the success story of his own life, whereby he overcame a learning disability, and in the many success stories of graduates of his farm-based restorative justice programs.

3.4.5 Fruit: What is the Legacy and Impact of Black-led Urban Farms?

The product of the diligent work to restore depleted soil and nurture seeds into plants are the fruits of the harvest. This “fruit” can be understood as the lasting impact that Black-led urban farms have on the individuals and communities that they serve. The Black farmers in this study redefine the parameters of the term “impact”. Whereas mainstream measures of impact are often captured in growth metrics that track the size, scale, and profit of agricultural production, each of the growers I interviewed spoke about the reciprocity and interdependence between

the benefits of personal and community development through food cultivation. Jerry highlights this in his reflection of working with the justice-involved youth of HOW:

I can't tell you how many people touched MY soul! Not me touching their soul. They touched me because...I was able to share my wisdom with them in so many ways. I planted so many seeds too. It was an amazing experience out there. (J. Hunter, personal communication, 2021)

He goes on to mention how people gravitated toward working with his farm because of the sense of value that he helped to create for them through it.

So they come out. They would come out to do physical labor, but once they got out there- guess what? It was one of the most...people would come, via my van, would want to come to that garden, that farm, before they go to any other crew leader, you know what I'm saying? They felt the value in it. It was community service, but it was more valuable because they were helping, learning, growing food for less fortunate. So- it just empowered them... I got police officers right now, law enforcement officers who are growing food, and teaching their kids. (J. Hunter, personal communication, 2021)

This reciprocity in benefit between urban growers and the communities they service is also reflected in Malik's ongoing relationship with his former students, many of whom participated in the Shamba Collective as Groundbreakers. As they were literally breaking up the ground of abandoned lots across the city for the preparation of food cultivation, Malik and others were following the soil of their minds, planting seeds of Black pride, food sovereignty, and community responsibility. The fruit of one such seed can be seen in the life of Malik's former student, Ali, who had recently moved back into the neighborhood:

This is the house my former student bought. I see he has solar streetlight- a solar light installed there. So he's done some solar street lights, including at Avalon Village down the street. He has two degrees in mechanical engineering. So he had a big house in the suburbs, but a few years ago he sold it and came back over here.

Highland Park contracted with, what's called DTE- Detroit Energy Company, which provides the majority of the power grid for Detroit. So they took out all of the street lights, because Highland Park couldn't pay the bill or something like that. So on the blocks, there's no street lights- there's only street lights on the corners.

And so part of what Ali and some others...he's working with a group called Solardarity, and so they've been installing solar-powered streetlights- just citizens doing it, you know, moving- doing what the city should be doing! (M. Yakini, personal communication, 2021)

Like Malik's students, TLW has also produced a cadre of Black leadership and community change agents through their urban agriculture training program. Ms. Carol notes that Truly Living Well was able to train many of the current urban agriculture policymakers of the city:

A part of my legacy as well is creating ways that we were able to bring in so many people with urban agriculture who were able to come, sit at our feet, participate in our program and learn. So when you look at our city right now, the urban ag director came from Truly Living Well's program, Food Well Alliance program directors came through our program, Tenisio who's the Urban Ag director for the City of Atlanta not only came and worked through our program...so many people who are now literally doing the work, we participated in their learning in their coming up in this organization. And so...

...that gives me great encouragement because when I look around at folks who are doing this work now I'm like "Yeaaaah!!! Yeaaaah!!!" You know and they come back and they say "Thanks Ms. Carol" you know and "Whatever you need, we're here". And so the community has been built because we've grown that community of workers. (C. Hunter, personal communication, 2021)

It is clear through Ms. Carol's comments and those of the other growers that their sense of "impact" and "success" is collective and intergenerational. When asked what she would want people to know about TLW, she reflects:

The first thing that comes to mind is the word commitment. If you're serious about community building and making a change, it may take a lifetime of commitment! Don't be afraid of that. Even now I'm thinking "how much can I get done", you know, and what I realize is we all have a different role to play. So I named my company the "seed planter group" because the gift that God has given me, the ability to go into places and be the only one, break up the soil, get some stuff ready, so someone can come and put a seed in there. I may not always be there to see the harvest, but I can be the one to help break up the soil. And be ok with that. I think you know so many times we get these projects and want to make it our own, and that's ok, but know that it may take a lifetime. So what can you do and allow others to come alongside so that it grows. (C. Hunter, personal communication, 2021)

Ms. Carol goes on to speak of another type of community impact of TLW that is not easily quantifiable and thus typically goes overlooked. She describes the process of orienting a young,

white intern to working in the West End neighborhood and the power of transparent dialogue between different types of people to bring about personal growth and transformation:

And so I'm saying, even now, we're still having to break down barriers; we're having to go into these places, and we're having these conversations, but that's the work that I want to do is have these real conversations because if you don't bring about understanding, people are...and the reason I say "bring about understanding" is because we don't want to be anyone's token project. We really want to create change. I want you- the next time you're on the street and a young black man walks past you, that you look at him different.

Young intern- she's from [university name]- sat right here the first day of the internship and [I] had real conversation with her about working in our community. About paying respect to our elders. Always, no matter what you're doing. About if "you feel uncomfortable, these are the people you talk to and will talk you through it". But you've got to- and you've got to own your own. But we had Real. Talk. We recommended her for intern of the year. She has done an outstanding job. But it's Real. Talk. Creating a space to do that. And so...one of the things I fight for, I believe in- in this place, is that we are a place for real talk. So even when COVID came and people were marching in downtown Atlanta, Black Lives Matter- had volunteers under the shed having real conversations about what does that really mean- black-white; no arguing but people sharing their different opinions. I mean like this is what it's all about. This- is- what it's all about! Something is happening in the field. I mean, you don't know who

people are when they come here. But they walk up- they meet an Otis. And they're working alongside the farmer. Real. Talk. (C. Hunter, personal communication, 2021)

Expressing a similar sentiment of the farm as an intergenerational collective project that enables both personal and community edification, Mirabai expresses her ambitions for Black Futures Farm:

I think we don't want to grow, necessarily, in like "growth for growth's sake" expansion in any way. I think the goal kind of leads...like function follows form. Like we want this to be a sustainable cooperative, or some sort of community health space that people can enter into and cultivate and grow in their own ways, like new ways that we haven't even thought about. (M. Collins, personal communication, 2021)

Malcolm's own conceptualizations of impact were inspired by his uncle— a highly educated man and a standout athlete who played professional sports for a while only to withdraw into a quieter life outside of the public gaze. He measures his wealth and impact through the people he has helped. He reflects on the goal of this type of relational impact in the work of Black Futures Farm and the personal development he has gained through it:

In the frame of community development, like what is the responsibility of power- power in this place being like municipalities, government entities, funders- what is the responsibility of power to people who are underrepresented? The responsibility- the social responsibility of those people in a righteous society is to help those people develop and become who they are. This is a place for that. This is a place for human beings to develop...Black human beings to develop a deep connection to land. Such that

they can become more fully themselves as I am becoming and as Mirabai is becoming.

(M. Hoover, personal communication, 2021)

3.5 DISCUSSION

3.5.1 Seed, Soil, Land, and Fruit

The Black urban growers featured in this study are a heterogeneous group, ranging in age, personal background, farming experience, political ideologies, and geographic locations across the country. Despite these differences, they share five fundamental attributes: 1) a deep sense of personal responsibility to the Black community, 2) pride in Black cultural heritage from which they draw inspiration and strategy, 3) an embodied redefinition of success and value, 4) an essentially people-centered, “least of these” approach to community development, and 5) direct involvement in local policy advocacy on behalf of marginalized populations and beginner urban growers. These attributes are consistent with the five characteristic functions of Black-led urban farms that I theorized and are listed in Figure 3.4. I use the agricultural metaphor of seed, soil, land, and fruit to summarize the themes of the interviewees’ responses, which correspond to their motivations, focal populations, goals, and impact, respectively. These are illustrated in Figure 3.3 below.

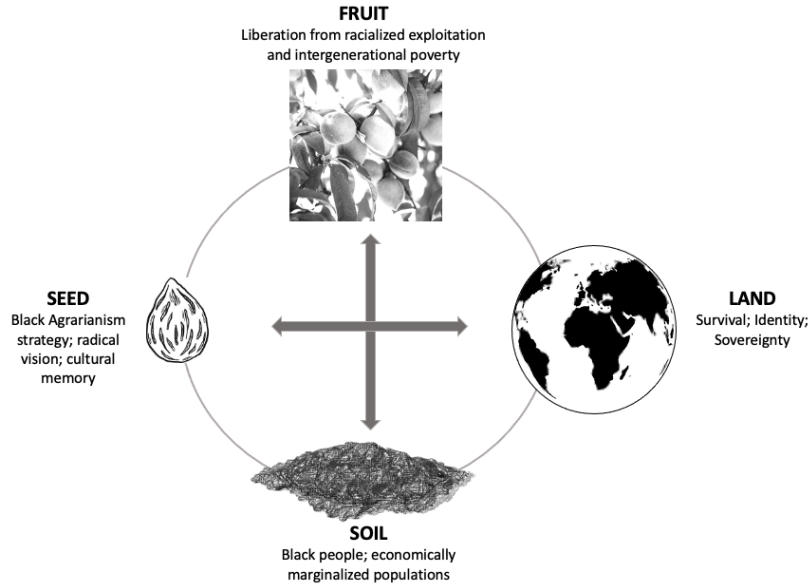


Figure 3.3 The Blueprint of Black-led Urban Agriculture in High Poverty Communities

Attribute	Connection to Theory	Examples(s)
1. A deep sense of personal responsibility to “the Black community” (local and at large)	Connection to Black cultural heritage; Psychosocial relief from the harm of anti-Black structural and physical violence; Form of local Black placemaking	<i>Just you know, a lot of different perspectives. Really...you know, know your people. Know who they are. Know who we are. Know how we move through the world. Understand the things that impact us. And you know, operate with a love for the people at the center. You know, hold that at the center. And act like that. (Malcolm)</i>
2. Pride in Black cultural heritage from which they draw inspiration and strategy	Connection to Black cultural heritage; Counteraction to racialized social constructions of low-income Black communities	<i>You know...like in the basically 70s, 80s, 90s, we had a black mayor, black city council, black police chief, black fire chief, black school board...and so you have a whole generation of black people that grew up just seeing...Black people in charge!And so it gives us a kind of boldness that Black people in some other places don't have. (Malik)</i>
3. An embodied redefinition of success and value	Form of local Black placemaking; Active form of resistance to the racial capitalism of the food system	<i>Well, I think that's some of how sovereignty, and food sovereignty especially, works is that it gives you the agency- like the ability to set your own terms. And like, the terms of the exchange. And so within that is some autonomy, like within the larger system, you can't be inside and outside of the thing itself at the</i>

		<i>same time, you know. But I think that when we're asked about what 'sovereignty' means I think some of it is that. Like being able to set the terms. You make the things of sustenance and can exchange them in whatever way...you know. (Mirabai)</i>
4. Fundamentally people centered, "least of these" approach to development	Connection to Black cultural heritage; Form of local Black placemaking; Counteraction to racialized social constructions of low-income Black communities; Active form of resistance to the racial capitalism of the food system	Healing workforce development (Natosha); Justice-involved youth (Jerry); TLW hiring area residents for farm projects (Ms. Carol); East Point cooperative grocery store (Tenisio); Detroit People's Food Coop (Malik); Feed 'em Freedom Foundation (Shantae)
5. Leadership in local policy advocacy on behalf of marginalized low-income communities	Connection to Black cultural heritage; Form of local Black placemaking; Active form of resistance to the racial capitalism of the food system	Shantae's local and state policy roles; Malik's local and national roles; Tenisio and J. Olu as Urban Agriculture Directors; Kwabena as former leader in neighborhood planning and Georgia Food Policy Council

Figure 3.4 Summary Findings of Shared Characteristics of Black-led Farms

Of the five common attributes of Black-led urban farms identified through this study, attributes 1 and 2 coincide with my hypothesis that Black-led farms function as a link between Black communities and their cultural heritage. This relationship reflects proximity to Black culture and local populations, often by way of living in and/or being from the neighborhoods they serve. This was most clearly demonstrated in Malik's case, as he has lived in the same house for over 60 years. It would probably be an understatement to say that he is both deeply embedded in and committed to the neighborhood. The richness of the relationships that he and others have cultivated among their neighbors over decades— the trust that they have built, the laughter and tears that they have, no doubt, shed together— cannot be replicated, or otherwise replaced. These are deep and invaluable local ties, rooted in relationship, shared

cultural heritage, and the common struggle for Black survival. Without such ties, reaching the hearts and minds of populations that have been consistently and intergenerationally marginalized is likely impossible.

Additionally, the third and fourth shared attributes of Black-led farms— their function as an embodied redefinition of success and value and their “least of these” approach to development— also align well with my original theorizations about Black-led farms functioning as a counteraction to racial stereotypes and racial capitalism. “Least of these” is a Biblical idiom referring to the most marginalized, exploited, and excluded individuals of society. In the case of Oakland Avenue Farm’s unique “healing workforce development” strategy, they prioritize hiring these populations, providing them with opportunities (and related social services) that many would otherwise not be able to access. Mudbone Grown does something similar through their work with local veterans, and Jerry Hunter intentionally prioritizes the highest risk youth in his restorative justice program, seeing bright futures for them where many others, likely even themselves, may see only a hopeless and downward spiral of criminality.

The growers I interviewed also stipulated the terms of their own ventures, changing both the definitions and metrics with which “success” and “value” are determined. In doing so, they shift power by exercising their autonomy, reflecting Black excellence, and demonstrating Black radical thought. These actions are paradoxical to racialized social constructions of Black people. These growers also reject the corporatized diets, unlivable wages, and wholly unjust conditions that low-income racialized communities are structurally locked in to through the industrial food system and other modalities through which racial capitalism is experienced.

Additionally, the growers I interviewed also shift power through direct policy advocacy. They serve on local, regional, and national level organizations working to advance Black food sovereignty and food justice. They collaborate with other farms and food systems organizations that are committed, in word and deed, to the causes of social equity and the restoration of racially and economically marginalized populations. In doing so, they are helping to rebuild deeply divested Black and brown communities and to reconfigure broken food systems and spaces built on racialized exploitation into sites of healing and economic resilience.

3.5.2 Black-led Farms: The Original Anchor Institutions

The findings of this study highlight that Black-led urban farms have always been, and continue to be, the original “anchor institutions” of low-income Black communities. In the contemporary context, the term “anchor institution” is usually ascribed to large organizations with multi-million-dollar budgets, substantial political power, and a massive spatial presence (Ehlenz, 2018). Universities and hospitals (“eds and meds”), whose urban expansions in the 1970s-1990s encroached on proximal low-income neighborhoods, ultimately displacing thousands of families, businesses, and entire communities in cities across the country (Silverman et al, 2014; Worthy, 1977). While these types of anchor institutions do provide some important benefits to local communities, their predominant effect is, arguably, the maintenance of underdevelopment and displacement through their effect on local property values. These effects are a major concern for racial and social equity (McKittrick, 2013).

In contrast, Black-led urban farms, which I distinguish from mainstream anchor institutions through the term “compass institutions”, are fundamentally people-centered. They reflect the local community that they serve, have deep local ties with those communities, and

function as a means of navigation for them to escape food insecurity, internalized racism, and chronic underdevelopment. The purpose of these compass institutions is fundamentally to ensure the cultural and material survival of the local Black community, whereas eds and meds are primarily concerned with their own fiscal growth and expansion. Black-led farms strengthen community identity and connectedness, and they stimulate local food-based economies, whereas mainstream anchor institutions often weaken, if not destroy community ties by physically dividing and displacing neighborhood residents. In sharp contrast, Black-led farms—many, if not most, of which operate on shoe-string budgets—invest literal blood, sweat, and tears into the restoration of these same divested communities through food cultivation and community building, therein strengthening the people and enriching the earth. Obviously, Black-led farms have many challenges; I do not claim them to be a panacea for high poverty neighborhoods. However, they are a viable and promising solution to end racialized poverty and advance equitable development in these areas as these findings strongly suggest. I summarized the key differences between mainstream anchor institutions and compass institutions in Figure 3.5.

	ANCHOR INSTITUTION	COMPASS INSTITUTION
Example	Eds and Meds	Black-led Farms
Symbology	Tethers	Guides/Navigates
Functional Purpose	Maintain the status quo (location/arrangement)	Reach a different destination
Development Orientation	Place-based development; blank-slate	People-centered development
Assumptions about local community	Ignorance; apathy; incompetence; docility	Creative; resourcefulness; wisdom-filled; hopeful
Primary Organizational Purpose	"Self" preservation, prosperity and influence	Community survival, restoration and resilience
Local Economic Effect	Extractive; linear	Regenerative; circular
Belief about how to solve segregated poverty	Solution lies in its ability to achieve its own agenda of organization growth	Solution lies in the liberation of the people and the land
Organizational Structure/Culture	Hierarchical; formal	Non-hierarchical; familial
Resources Available	Large budgets; traditional technical expertise; professional networks; political power	Cultural and technical expertise; food systems and community networks; Limited funds; "Blood, sweat, and tears"
<i>Sources: Silverman et al, 2014; Ehlenz, 2018; Brown and Bachelder, 2016</i>		

Figure 3.5 Anchor and Compass Institutions Comparison Chart

3.6 CONCLUSION

3.6.1 Limitations

This study has important limitations. The wide timespan in which interviews were conducted (June 2019- November 2021) was not ideal given that the COVID-19 pandemic began during this time. However, only one interview was conducted prior to the start of the pandemic, and I have no reason to believe that this global event had any significant impact on the findings.

Ideally, all interviews would have been done within a shorter time span to maximize the similarity in time frame and national context, but this was not feasible due to the time required for participant recruitment.

Additionally, the definitions that I used for the codes in my codebook could have benefited from further specificity. My initial codebook was too large, which made retention and application of the codes to the text challenging for both my co-analyst and me. Both of us were new to using the software, so the training and data analysis processes were co-occurring. The ongoing discussions between both of us throughout the process enabled us to work through any coding challenges. Iterative refinement of the codebook resulted in major improvements to its clarity and conciseness. Unfortunately, my volunteer co-analyst was not available to code the remaining transcripts. For this reason, I do not present reliability scores in this study. The value of such scores is debatable and they are inconsistently reported in qualitative studies (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020). Most qualitative studies do not report any "reliability" metrics (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020).

Future studies may wish to explore how these findings about the motivations, strategies and local impact of Black urban farmers compares with those of other local food systems actors such as food entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations embedded in low-income communities. While this study did not directly compare Black-led and white-led urban agriculture, future studies may wish to explore this juxtaposition more directly, particularly as it relates to local embeddedness in low-income communities, comparative community perceptions of impact, and the relationship of urban agriculture projects to local governance and political power structures. Future studies may also wish to explore the impact of regional

organizations like the Black Food Sovereignty Coalition and Southeastern African American Farmers' Organic Network (SAAFON). These organizations, along with their national counterpart, the National Black Food and Justice Alliance, function to connect, train, and amplify the voices of growers calling for Black food sovereignty and land justice.

Importantly, this study is not seeking to assert that white-led urban agriculture initiatives are inherently malevolent or harmful, but rather that these farms and gardens—even well-intended ones— may actively be hindering equitable development in low-income racialized communities, as both the literature and anecdotal evidence from my ongoing fieldwork suggest (Ramírez, 2015; Guthman, 2008; Lindemann, 2019; Reynolds and Cohen, 2016). However, Black-led urban farms, through their cultural connectedness, shared motivation of Black community survival, economic strategy, and political advocacy are facilitating equitable urban development in high poverty neighborhoods. They do so in a way that provides cultural restoration and fortification from racialized violence as opposed to the reinforcement of that violence through racial hierarchy. Municipalities and funders genuinely seeking to advance equitable development should consider if and how collaboration with Black-led urban farms might be possible. I provide a list of policy recommendations about this in Chapter 5.

3.6.2 Study Contributions

This study makes several contributions to the literature. The five shared characteristics that I identify which make Black-led urban farms uniquely positioned to generate equitable development in low-income communities point to the multi-faceted ways in which these organizations provide instrumental benefits to not only local Black populations, but also to all

low-income residents, and therein, to all city residents who are indirectly affected by segregated poverty. By rejecting mainstream capitalistic definitions of “success” and “value” which center profit, expansion, and individualism, Black-led urban farms chart the course for other equity-oriented organizations (food systems related and otherwise) to do the same. In doing so, Black-led farms help to stop labor exploitation and other abuses against low-income racialized populations, thereby decreasing the power of the industrialized food system and inspiring liberated economic thought not confined to the limitations of racial capitalism.

Relatedly, I contribute the concept of a “compass institution” as a distinction from mainstream anchor institutions. Black-led urban farms, as compass institutions, centralize community survival and help marginalized populations in these neighborhoods to navigate from chronic underdevelopment to economic liberation. This concept of a compass institution could potentially be applied to other types of grassroots, activist organizations in racially marginalized communities. Future studies may wish to explore this further and should consider the feasibility of non-hierarchical collaboration between the two types of institutions.

Additionally, this study contributes rich, comparative insight into the motivations, strategies, and impact of Black urban growers. Relatively little has been published on this population of growers and their role within food systems and urban development. This study adds to that body of knowledge by comparing Black urban growers across three different urban contexts. I present these findings about Black urban growers and the work of their farms to inform equitable planning and policymaking.

Building on a poignant question asked by Ashanté Reese (Garth and Reese, 2020), I pose the following questions in attempts to move the findings of this study from dialogue and

debate into meaningful, equity-oriented policy action: What do we miss when we fail to tell the stories of Black and minority urban growers and the farms they create? What do we sacrifice as a society when we minimize the racialized dynamics of urban development and the food system in favor of more palatable interpretations of both that regard all urban development and urban agricultural as equally beneficial, equitable, and sustainable? How might we design better local policies to support, rather than hinder, the ongoing work of Black and brown urban growers to generate equitable development in high poverty, racialized communities? The answers to these questions have critical implications that affect not only the very survival of Black and brown populations but also the entire trajectory of social progress.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSFORMATIVE LOCAL IMPACT THROUGH BLACK-LED URBAN AGRICULTURE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Neighborhoods play an important role in shaping the outcomes of children, families, and communities. However, high poverty neighborhoods typically lack access to resources such as safe, affordable homes, fresh food, living wage jobs, and well-funded schools— all of which are necessary for individual and collective wellbeing. These access barriers are structural in nature, contributing to the disparate life course outcomes that exist along lines of race, class, and neighborhood. Low-income, racialized neighborhoods have consistently been identified through mainstream media as places of danger, violence, and despair; yet, like other neighborhoods, they also contain both human and economic potential. While the economic potential of many divested neighborhoods has been capitalized on through top-down urban “revitalization” initiatives over the past several decades, the human potential of residents in these communities has been largely overlooked. This is, perhaps, unsurprising given the “tabula rasa” approach of mainstream development which considers low-income neighborhoods as blank slates for so-called creative class driven development. Many developers “equity-wash” the controversial nature of these development initiatives with terms like “sustainability”, “green development”, and “social justice” to appease the public and advance their own place-based development priorities.

The people-centered development approach of Black urban growers represents a distinct contrast from these types of mainstream neoliberal development strategies. These growers and the farms they lead are having a positive and multi-faceted impact on the communities that they serve. However, there are presently no standardized frameworks or

tools by which to measure this transformative impact, let alone any of the social impact of urban agriculture. While the extent to which such tools are actually needed is debatable, the ability to identify and measure this kind of impact through them would greatly increase the ability of planners and policymakers to prioritize transformative impact, and therein racial and social equity, in urban development.

To this end, I ask the question “*What does transformative impact through Black-led urban agriculture look like? How can this type of impact be measured?*”? I revisit the concepts of racialized structural violence and its connection to the racial logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism (introduced in Chapter 2) to understand how current development initiatives largely fail to meet the needs of these communities and therein reinforce underdevelopment. I use this foundation to introduce *structural (re)engineering* as a strategic praxis engaged by Black urban growers to simultaneously dismantle racialized systems of oppression and construct new architectures of relationality, liberation, and social progress. I illustrate how structural (re)engineering functions as both a practical toolkit and a paradigm of development through which racialized structural violence is counteracted. I use a national survey of urban farms to test a measurement model of structural (re)engineering through factor analysis.

This study constitutes a novel attempt to operationalize the social value of urban agriculture projects and their implications on local urban development. I engage Black Agrarianism and racialized structural violence as the central theoretical frameworks informing structural (re)engineering, and I test whether Black-led and “people of color” led urban farms are more likely than white-led farms to engage in the practices of structural (re)engineering. I also introduce a framework to distinguishing “equity-oriented” farms from market-oriented

ones, hypothesizing that equity-oriented farms are also more likely than their counterparts to engage in structural (re)engineering. This study focalizes hypotheses 1 and 2; however, hypothesis 3 is also preliminarily tested using chi-square test of independence.

The hypotheses of this study can be summarized as follows:

1. *Structural (re)engineering* is a construct consisting of five impact frames (latent factors)- local ties, community ownership, capacity building, identity reclamation, and policy advocacy.
2. The five impact frames of structural (re)engineering can be measured by a set of corresponding indicators (see Appendix C for the full list), each of which reflect a dimension of that frame.
3. Black-led urban farms and racial equity-oriented farms are more likely than white-led and market-oriented farms to engage in structural (re)engineering.

The research questions of this study are important to answer because the strategies used to develop low-income, predominately minority communities by external entities have consistently led to their exploitation and further marginalization (Silverman et al, 2015, 2019); yet these are the projects that typically garner the most financial and political support from local governance actors. Development initiatives like these, many of which involve urban agriculture, regularly prioritize place-based over people-based development, resulting in infrastructural improvements to low-income neighborhoods that attract affluent newcomers at the expense of displacing economically vulnerable residents (Bartik, 2018; Zuk et al, 2018). The role that urban agriculture plays in this process is often complex; on one hand, it facilitates these processes of displacement-based gentrification by increasing local property values and

neoliberal development (Maantay & Maroko, 2018; Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018; Voicu & Been, 2008; Vitiello & Wolf-Powers, 2014), but it can also help to subvert existing systems of racialized extraction that reinforce economic precarity and sociopolitical marginalization of Black and minority populations (Garth & Reese, 2020; Horst et al, 2017; Lindemann, 2019). However, this latter effect does not occur by happenstance or simply by good intentions (Ramírez, 2015); it is generally the product of the strategic, collaborative, and dedicated work of networks of Black-led and racial equity-oriented urban farms and food system actors (Penniman & Washington, 2018; Reynolds & Cohen, 2016; Alkon & Agyeman, 2011; T. Seanima, personal communication, 2021). This study constitutes a preliminary empirical test of these hypotheses, centering both the racial differences in farm leadership and the differences between equity-driven and profit-driven urban agriculture as key distinctions shaping the likelihood of urban agriculture leading to equitable development in high poverty communities.

This study is timely for several reasons. Food system and supply chain shocks in the wake of both the COVID pandemic and subsequent record-level inflation has brought renewed attention to the value of urban agriculture and local food systems. The implications of the rising cost of living are especially salient for low-income communities who are more likely to experience food and housing insecurity. The value of urban agriculture is also reflected in the increasing number of cities adopting urban agriculture policies (Meenar, Morales & Bonarek, 2017) and the recent creation of the USDA Office of Urban Agriculture. Thus, this study makes important contributions to ongoing policy efforts to support urban agriculture, equitable local food systems, and racial equity.

Moreover, this study also contributes an operationalized framework and measurement model of structural (re)engineering, which I theorize is both a precursor to and an indicator of transformative local impact. Importantly, I do not argue here that Black-led farms are the only farms capable of making a positive social impact on high poverty neighborhoods nor are they the only ones engaging in various aspects of structural (re)engineering. However, I do assert that they are the ones most likely to be engaging in each of the structural (re)engineering, as this framework is derived from Black Agrarian values and practices of communality, resistance, and autonomy. It is through the aggregate effect of engaging in all five impact frames of structural (re)engineering that, I posit, transformative impact can occur. In Figure 4.1 below, I illustrate the theorized relationship between Black-led urban farms and transformative local impact through the proxy of structural (re)engineering.

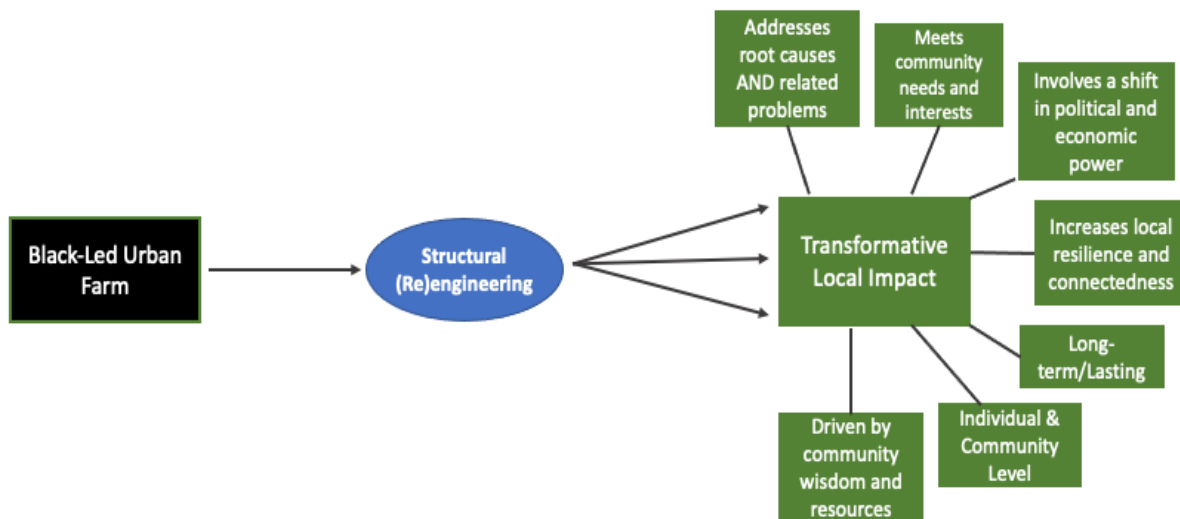


Figure 4.1 Transformative Local Impact Through Black-led Urban Farms

4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

4.2.1 Racialized Structural Violence and Intergenerational Harm

Transformative impact in high poverty communities must be understood within the context of the multi-faceted harm that has been inflicted on and within them for generations. This harm is the result of ongoing racialized violence that is both physical and structural in nature.

Structural violence is even more deadly than physical violence because of its subtle and normalized nature (Lee, 2016). Johannes Galtung (1969) first introduced the concept of structural violence within the context of social inequity in the global South, characterizing it as the difference between one's potential and actual achievement as moderated by the structural context of the society in which they live. Bandy Lee (2016) further explains this concept within the contemporary Western setting, noting that structural violence "occurs through economically, politically, and culturally driven processes working together to limit subjects from achieving full quality of life" and that it "works slowly— through general misery, eroding and ultimately killing human beings without even the awareness of doing so" (Lee, 2016, p.110; Gupta, 2012). Structural violence indicates an organized power system at work within the urban political economy, and it is widely considered to be the deadliest form of violence, largely because it is "subtle, invisible and accepted as a matter of course" (Lee, 2016, p.110).

Examples of structural violence affecting low-income communities include, *inter alia*, school funding inequities, displacement-based gentrification, environmental injustices that harm the health of local residents, and inadequate public transit systems that prevent the transit-dependent urban poor from accessing jobs on the outskirts of the city. These and other forms of structural violence are racialized in nature, and they not only reinforce the socio-

economic harm of residents of these neighborhoods, but they also compromise their health and wellbeing by increasing their exposure to environmental risk factors.

The food system also provides clear examples of racialized structural violence and its implications on the health and quality-of-life of low-income communities. For example, “toxic” food landscapes and so-called “food deserts” characterize many low-income Black and brown neighborhoods, which typically have low political and economic power to resist (Meenar & Hoover, 2012; Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018). Such neighborhoods are consistently saturated with fast food establishments and corner stores selling cheap, highly-processed food with little nutritional value which often contains unhealthy food additives linked to chronic illnesses that disproportionately burden Black, Latinx and indigenous communities (Bonacich & Alimahomed-Wilson, 2011; Corrigan, 2011; Ghose & Pettygrove, 2014; Lane et al., 2008). The hyper-concentration of these establishments within high-poverty neighborhoods and the dearth of nutritious, affordable food in them restricts the food options of low-income residents and compromises their health. This harmful food landscape and the politics of the industrial food system that undergirds it constitute racialized structural violence and contribute to disproportionate rates of food insecurity, poor health, and lower life expectancies among low-income residents living in these areas (Cooksey-Stowers et al, 2017; Meenar & Hoover, 2012).

Racialized structural violence is also demonstrated in the food system by the targeted marketing of fast food and sugar-sweetened beverages to children of color (Gilmore & Jordan, 2012), the labor exploitation of low-income Black and immigrant populations through the corporatized food system (Garth and Reese, 2020; Holt-Giménez, 2011), and the selling of poor-quality food to these communities (Newman & Jung, 2020). In Andrew Newman and Yuson

Jung's (2020) study on local perceptions of Whole Foods in Detroit, Black residents noted the "obvious practice" of independent grocers marking expired meat as "manager's special" and attempting to disguise visibly spoiled meat with paprika (Newman & Jung, 2020, p.140). This inhumane, and no doubt illegal, practice was confirmed first-hand by one of the Detroit interviewees featured in Chapter 3 of this study who explicitly equated it, and the unremorseful attitude of the offending grocers, with racial genocide (N. Tallman, personal communication, 2021). These practices also constitute structural violence on the part of local governance actors who reinforce racialized ideologies of Black dehumanization and expendability through their failure to address these dangerous practices.

4.2.2 Lessons from the Past: Engaging Black Agrarianism to Understand Transformative Impact

In this study, I test a hypothesized measurement model of structural (re)engineering, which I theorize is a proxy indicator of transformative local impact. Structural (re)engineering is derived from Black Agrarianism, which is the ancestral practice of Black communities living from the land (McDonald, 2021). Black-led urban farms and the growers who lead them work towards goals that are reflective of this Black Agrarian cultural identity. Black Agrarianism is described by Noah McDonald (2021) on behalf of the Southeastern African American Farmers' Organic Network (SAAFON) as "the enduring land-based traditions, technologies, wisdoms, ceremonies and practices of African Americans" (McDonald, 2021, p.9). McDonald (2021) identifies five land-based themes of Black Agrarianism— protection, community and kinship, efficacy, nurturance, and service. Other scholars have also highlighted the importance of political organizing and communal support in the Black Agrarian philosophy (Roll, 2012; Reid,

2012; King et al, 2018). Black Agrarianism has also been characterized as the praxis of the Black freedom struggle, originating in slavery and the rural farming communities of the Jim Crow era South (King et al, 2018) and centering “economic independence, political freedom, and cultural ties to the land” (King et al, 2018, p.680). This is perhaps best illustrated in the life of Fannie Lou Hamer—a Black woman sharecropper who organized the Freedom Farms Cooperative in the Mississippi Delta during the mid-century Civil Rights movement. Hamer epitomizes Black Agrarianism through her courageous political leadership, her communal, land-based liberation strategy, and her deep connection to both the soil and souls of Black people. It is this activism of Hamer and many others, along with the Afro-ecological wisdom, community values, and economic independence of Black Agrarianism that guides the work of Black urban growers today who are working to restore and fortify economically marginalized Black communities.

Additionally, the work of Jessica Gordon-Nembhard (2014) and Monica White (2018) illustrate how cooperative economics are central to Black history and Black Agrarian practice. Gordon-Nembhard (2014) compiles an exhaustive list of U.S.-based Black cooperatives over a three-century period, highlighting both their connection to farming, their networked relationships with other Black community institutions and businesses, and the collective survival that they enabled amidst widespread political and economic oppression. Relatedly, White (2017, 2018) contributes insights about Black Agrarianism through Collective Agency and Community Resilience, a resistance framework consisting of commons as praxis, economic autonomy, and prefigurative politics. Both Gordon-Nembhard (2014) and White’s (2017, 2018) work draw largely from rural Black farming communities and illustrate the ways in which collectivism, self-sufficiency, and political leadership are central to Black Agrarian identity. I

complement the collective body of scholarship on Black farms by introducing the framework of structural (re)engineering to model and measure the ways in which Black-led urban farms are theorized to disrupt the systems undergirding divestment and chronic underdevelopment in racialized neighborhoods.

4.2.3 Structural (Re)engineering for Transformative Local Impact

In this study, I introduce structural (re)engineering as a framework to assess the transformative social impact that Black-led and equity-oriented urban farms are having on the communities they serve. It is composed of five impact frames—local ties, policy advocacy, capacity building, community ownership, and identity reclamation— which operate in coordination with one another, such that the combined effect of all five is theorized to be more “transformative” for local communities than the sum of the parts. Structural (re)engineering is phrased and denoted as such to highlight its function as a counteractive force intended to strategically upend racialized violence and related racial inequity. Its composite impact frames can be understood as both a *toolkit* of time-tested, actionable strategies for Black community survival and a *paradigm* reflecting the values, ideologies, and goals that underly those strategies.

Structural (re)engineering is as much a simultaneous demolition and unlearning process as it is a rebuilding initiative. Regarding the latter, institutional systems perpetuating white supremacy and racial capitalism, which are inherently demeaning and extractive for racially marginalized communities, are replaced with traditional systems like cultural rites-of-passage ceremonies and circular, food-based local economies that are uplifting and restorative. Importantly, both the paradigm and action-orientation of structural (re)engineering are necessary to engender transformative local impact; they are mutually dependent on one

another. And while the impact frames of structural (re)engineering are individually valuable, it is only when they are implemented in conjunction with one another over a sustained period of time do they constitute the action of structural (re)engineering and therein function as a proxy of transformative local impact.

Moreover, the language of impact “frames” was inspired by Nathan McClintock and Michael Simpson (2017) who used factor analysis to identify and classify the motivations of urban agriculture projects into six “motivational frames”- Entrepreneurial, Sustainable Development, Educational, Eco-Centric, DIY Secessionist, and Radical. Similarly, this study uses EFA to test the theorized impact frames of structural (re)engineering. Figure 4.2 summarizes these frames and the corresponding element of racialized structural violence that they counteract.

Local ties refers to the mutual trust and rapport that exists between urban farms and local long-term residents. This concept is similar to the notion of rapport building and community attachment, although the former generally refers to trust development in relationships that are generally hierarchical and formal, such as those between a doctor and a patient or a teacher and a student. “Community attachment” is generally used to denote the sense of connectedness that an individual has to a particular spatial context (e.g., neighborhood) and the people within it.

STRUCTURAL (RE)ENGINEERING IMPACT FRAMES		
Impact Frame	Counteracts	Reference
<p>Local Ties</p> <p>The strength of the trust and rapport between the urban farm and local residents</p>	Fractionalization by class and space; social hierarchy; paternalism	Wilson, 2016 Dauner et al, 2010 Addo, 2017
<p>Identity Reclamation</p> <p>The restoration and celebration of marginalized racial/ethnic identities</p>	Racialized social constructions and narratives; internalized racism; anti-Blackness	Hunter et al., 2016 Montgomery, 2016 Radney, 2019 Bates et al., 2018 McClintock, 2018
<p>Community Ownership</p> <p>The creation of opportunities for local wealth-building and collective economics, often based on existing community resources</p>	Material resource extraction; Labor and creativity exploitation/extraction; racial-wealth gap	Ostrom, 2000 Gordon-Nembhard, 2014 Haynes & Gordon-Nembhard, 1999 White, 2017
<p>Capacity Building</p> <p>The equipping of local residents with the information, support, and resources needed to live healthy lives</p>	Urban austerity; resource extraction; Underfunded neighborhood amenities and public services	Bandura, 1989, 2002 Releford et al, 2010
<p>Policy Advocacy</p> <p>The extent to which an urban farm works to amplify the political voices of local low-income residents and to advocate on their behalf among decisionmakers.</p>	Political marginalization and exploitation; racialized power imbalance	Silverman et al., 2019 Spence & McClerking, 2010 Reid & Montilla, 2002

Figure 4.2 Impact Frames of Structural (Re)engineering

Within the context of low-income communities, local ties are important because both higher rates of crime and displacement of residents over decades has weakened sociocultural and trust ties that were once common among neighborhoods. Local ties is an impact frame that captures the extent to which there is mutual trust and connection between the farm and long-term residents. Long-term residents are prioritized in this frame because they, in many cases, are community gatekeepers and arguably have the greatest interest in the type of local

impact that an urban agriculture project will create. In Figure 4.3 below I list the indicator items from the survey used to assess the theorized dimensions of local ties.

LOCAL TIES
One (or more) of the senior leaders of our organization has a personal history of leadership within the neighborhood(s) that we serve. (LT 1)
One (or more) of the senior leaders of our organization has a trusting relationship with a locally-serving, minority-led organization in the neighborhood(s) that we serve. (LT 2)
One (or more) of the senior leaders of our organization has a trusting relationship with a long-term local resident who is a community "gatekeeper" in the neighborhood(s) that we serve. (LT 3)
Long-term local residents in the neighborhood(s) we serve have expressed that they value our organization's contribution to the local community. (LT 4)
The programs that our organization offers reflect the cultural values and interests of the long-term local residents in the neighborhood(s) we serve. (LT 5)
Long-term local residents of the neighborhood(s) we serve regularly participate in our organization's activities. (LT 6)

Figure 4.3 Local Ties- Composite Items

Further, *capacity building* describes urban farms that are helping to equip low-income residents with the information, practical support, and resources needed to live healthy lives. This concept is related to community development and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989, 2002), both of which note that human behaviors are constrained by the resources and skillsets that are available to them. I focus specifically on health as opposed to the myriad other dimensions of capacity building because poor health outcomes are strongly associated with both poverty and racialized populations (Williams & Sternthal, 2010; Assari, 2018). This definition of capacity building acknowledges both the structural and personal factors undergirding these health outcomes and the linkage between the two. Urban farms that score high in capacity building are doing more to help improve the physical and mental health of local residents through

activities and programs that address the social determinants of health. In Figure 4.4 below the capacity building items are listed.

CAPACITY BUILDING
Our organization helps to eliminate food insecurity by supplying fresh produce to food insecure residents in the neighborhoods that we serve at below market cost (or free of charge). (CB 1)
Our organization provides life skills and/or job skills training for local youth. (CB 2)
Our organization provides opportunities for local marginalized residents to improve their health in a supportive and engaging environment. (CB 3)
Our organization trains and equips local low-income residents with the skills and resources needed to grow their own food. (CB 4)
Our organization provides local residents with (or connects them to) training programs that can enhance their employment prospects. (CB 5)
Our organization intentionally helps to connect local low-income residents to community services, resources, and/or opportunities that can help them to achieve their goals. (CB 6)

Figure 4.4 Capacity Building- Composite Items

Additionally, *Policy Advocacy* refers to the extent to which an urban farm works to amplify the political voices of low-income residents and to advocate on their behalf among decisionmakers. Related concepts include political mobilization, community engagement, and grassroots advocacy. This frame seeks to assess the extent to which the farm is helping to advance the interests of politically marginalized communities. Figure 4.5 below lists the policy advocacy composite items.

POLICY ADVOCACY
Local policy advocacy is a central part of our organization’s work. (PA 1)
Our organization works to change power dynamics within the food system for and through local marginalized populations. (PA 2)
Our organization is represented on at least one local government committee or advisory board related to equitable urban development. (PA 3)

Figure 4.5 Policy Advocacy- Composite Items

Further, *Community Ownership* refers to the contribution that an urban farm or garden makes towards building a local culture of collective economics. This includes the creation of opportunities for community wealth building, such as through the establishment of a land trust, cooperative, or a community currency (formalized barter system). These wealth building opportunities may be based on existing community resources (e.g., vacant land, real estate) or the generation of a new resource, such as a value-added food product through a locally-owned small business. The opportunities created by these activities constitute meaningful ways that low-income residents can participate in community wealth building. In their study of urban agriculture in six cities, Vitiello & Wolf-Powers (2014) find that it is this ability of urban farms and gardens to catalyze local economic activity and provide a source of supplemental income, that urban agriculture is best suited to accomplish, as opposed to the large-scale, place-based development initiatives that many neoliberal developers attempt to use it for.

Related concepts include “the commons” (Ostrom, 2000), cooperatives (Gordon-Nembhard, 2014), collective economics (Haynes & Gordon-Nembhard, 1999), asset development (Frisch & Servon, 2006), and community economy (Gibson-Graham et al. 2013; Morrow et al., 2019). Within high poverty, racialized communities that have experienced ongoing economic exploitation and marginalization for generations, the opportunity to build

wealth through collective economics constitutes a critical shift from mainstream development models. Farms that score high in this impact frame are actively and intentionally creating opportunities for community wealth-building within high poverty communities. Figure 4.6 below contains a list of the community ownership survey items.

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP
Our organization has helped to start a locally-owned, food system-related business. (CO 1)
Our organization has helped to start a community land trust. (CO 2)
Our organization has helped to convert privately-owned, abandoned or underused resources into community-owned and operated resources. (CO 3)

Figure 4.6 Community Ownership- Composite Items

The fifth frame, *identity reclamation*, is about the restoration and celebration of marginalized racial and ethnic identities— in particular, Black cultural identity. This frame is perhaps the most direct counteraction to the harm of racialized structural violence. The ubiquity of anti-Blackness continues to have a harmful and traumatic effect on the wellbeing of many communities, in particular the Black underclass who have the fewest defenses against its many manifestations. Resultantly, the internalization of anti-Black racism and structural violence leads some to self-hatred and a lack of self-worth. The concept of *identity reclamation* emphasizes both the restoration and celebration of Black cultural identity, which mainstream society has, for generations, shunned and feared. This is well demonstrated in the case of the Black Panthers and other vocally “pro-Black” organizations that were once on the FBI watchlist.

Although the concept intentionally centralizes Black experiences— again, reflecting the focal subjects of this study (Black urban growers) and the massive overrepresentation of Blacks

in both poverty and high poverty neighborhoods— *identity reclamation* may also be relevant for the experiences of other racially marginalized populations. This study does not intentionally test these other possibilities, but they may be useful to consider in future research. Farms that score high in identity reclamation are likely doing more to assist individuals with reclaiming their racial and cultural identities, and concomitantly, their lives. Figure 4.7 lists the items corresponding to identity reclamation.

IDENTITY RECLAMATION
Our organization intentionally helps to connect local low-income residents to community services, resources and/or opportunities that can help them to achieve their goals. (IR 1)
Our organization uses food cultivation as a means to reclaim, restore and/or redefine marginalized cultural identities. (IR 2)
Our organization provides resources to help local residents of all backgrounds “start fresh” and redefine the trajectory of their lives, if they so choose. (IR 3)
Our organization helps to prevent cultural erasure by protecting local placemaking within the neighborhood(s) we serve as they experience transformative changes. (IR 4)
Our organization helps to liberate marginalized residents in the neighborhood(s) that we serve from the bondage of racially segregated urban poverty. (IR 5)
Our organization helps to strengthen local low-income residents’ connections with their own cultural foodways. (IR 6)

Figure 4.7 Identity Reclamation- Composite Items

4.2.4 Black-led and Equity Oriented Urban Agriculture

The third hypothesis in this study asserts that Black-led and racial-equity oriented urban farms are more likely to engage in structural (re)engineering than their white-led and market-oriented counterparts. Black-led urban agriculture includes farms and gardens whose senior leadership (e.g., owner, executive director) identify as Black or African-American. These farms are

assumed to identify more with a racial equity orientation, which I situate between the food system ideologies of “food sovereignty” and “food justice” in Figure 4.8 below. Food sovereignty proponents advance the right of all cultural groups to control and define their own food systems as appropriate for them, and food justice proponents seek more democratic, healthy, and equitable food systems that are not based in human exploitation and marginalization (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; La Via Campesina, 2009).

In contrast, “market-oriented” urban agriculture projects seek to maximize their profits through urban land grabs and by cultivating high revenue crops like microgreens that can be sold, wholesale and retail, to an affluent clientele. These farms often attract considerable public attention by using innovative, controlled-environment agriculture (CEA) growing systems (Goodman & Minner, 2019). Many also use the rhetoric of “equity” and “justice”, although few articulate a strategy of how they plan to achieve it (Horst et al, 2017). Importantly, these three dimensions— food sovereignty, food justice, and food security— are not mutually exclusive categories; indeed, many farms that identify with a racial and social justice orientation are for-profit businesses. And many market-oriented farms are, no doubt, genuinely interested in advancing racial and social equity. However, I assert that each farm has a fundamental orientation that is either towards market opportunities or towards the marginalized people in high poverty communities. This orientation is indicative of their likelihood of engaging in structural (re)engineering and thereby of creating transformative local impact.



Figure 4.8 Racial Equity Oriented v. Market Oriented Urban Farms

4.3 METHODS

4.3.1 National Survey of Urban Farm Leadership

To test the measurement model of structural (re)engineering I conducted an online national survey of urban farm leadership between June and August 2021. Preliminary drafts of this survey were reviewed by two colleagues, both middle age white women with several years of experience working with urban and rural farmers of all backgrounds. These individuals provided feedback on question wording. An additional academic reviewer provided feedback on the structure of the food system orientation question. This question was ultimately left as six standalone variables, two for each of the three main ideologies- food security, food justice, and food sovereignty (all Likert-type).

All respondents had to be at least 18 years old, competent in English (as some questions were open-ended), and in a “senior leadership” position (e.g. executive director, CEO, board member, or equivalent position) of an organization that 1) operates a food-producing farm or garden, 2) has existed at least since May 31, 2019 (the last summer growing season before the

COVID pandemic began), 3) located in the United States, and 4) located in an urban or peri-urban area. Respondents self-determined their eligibility based on these criteria, and they were recruited through direct emails which were sent to a list of individual farms, national food systems listservs, and through a flyer containing a QR code that was also distributed via social media. A \$20 gift card incentive was offered to the first 100 survey respondents.

4.3.2 Variables

All variables in this study, excluding the indicator items (see Appendix C for full list) are listed in Appendix D. These include *Direct-to-Consumer* (binary 0-1), *Equitable Food Oriented Development (EFOD)* designation (0-1) (EFOD Collaborative, 2019), *Public Private Partnership* (0-1), *Land Tenure* (continuous), *Annual Budget* (interval/categorical); *Homestead* (0-1), *Primary Mission* (categorical); *Gender* of respondent (categorical); *Race* of respondent (categorical), *Role* of respondent (categorical), *Total Staff* (interval), and *Acreage* (continuous).

Food system orientation is based on participant responses to a series of statements following the question “Please indicate the extent to which the organizational mission of your farm/garden aligns with the following statements” (see Figure 4.9 below). Two statements correspond to each of the three main food system ideologies— food justice, food sovereignty and food security. I generate a binary (0-1) “*equity orientation*” variable using the average of the four items corresponding to food sovereignty and food justice. Averages equal to or greater than 4 are coded 1 (equity-oriented) and all values under 4 are coded 0 (market-oriented).

Additionally, I use Chi-square tests of independence to test the third hypothesis that Black-led and equity-oriented farms are more likely to engage in structural (re)engineering

practices. That is, each group is expected to score higher on each impact frame of structural (re)engineering. These include both the equity orientation variable and a race variable (*Black-led*), which is a binary variable equal to 1 if the respondent identified as Black/African-American and 0 if the respondent identified as white. All other racial/ethnic identifications are not included in this variable. I also test a binary race variable called “*people of color*” which includes anyone who did not self-identify as white.

Food System Orientation Question: Please indicate the extent to which the <i>organizational mission</i> of your farm/garden aligns with the following statements:			
Statement	Food System Ideology	Values/Scale	References
Addresses “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and culturally appropriate methods”	Food sovereignty	Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree	Nyé lé ni Declaration on Food Sovereignty 2007, pp. 673–674; Clendenning, Dressler and Richards, 2016
Addresses the “rights of people groups to define and control their own food and agricultural systems”	Food sovereignty	Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree	La Via Campesina, 2008; Holt- Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; Lindemann, 2019
Seeks to increase the level of localization and/or democracy within the food system	Food justice	Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree	Guthman, 2008; Horst et al, 2017
Addresses “injustices that disproportionately affect people based on race and class”	Food justice	Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree	Gottlieb and Joshi 2010; Mares and Alkon 2012; Clendenning, Dressler and Richards, 2016
Seeks to ensure that “all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”	Food security	Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree	FAO, 1996
Seeks to increase the productivity, quality, and market efficiency of the food system to meet consumer demands	Food security	Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree	Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; Ghose & Pettygrove, 2014; Alkon & Agyeman, 2011

Figure 4.9 Food System Orientation/Ideology Variables

4.3.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

I conduct exploratory factor analysis (EFA) based on the theorized measurement model of each impact frame that comprises the structural (re)engineering construct. The EFA is based on the model illustrated in Figure 4.10. Factor analysis is a statistical method used to identify latent concepts through a set of observable indicators that covary. It is commonly used in disciplines like educational psychology and business, but several scholars like McClintock & Simpson (2017) and Silverman et al (2015) have also demonstrated its utility in critical urbanism and sociological scholarship. There is very little consensus in the literature about a minimum sample size for factor analysis (Wolf et al, 2013; Byrne, 2005), and while larger sample sizes (greater than 100) are generally agreed to be best, Cooperman and Waller (2021) and Pearson and Mundfrom (2010) both indicate that other attributes of the data, such as overdetermination, can compensate for small samples.

There are two primary types of factor analysis— confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and EFA. As Lance & Vandenberg (2002) note, the demarcation line between the two types is not always as clear. CFA is used to test a theory about the number of dimensions (distinct concepts) contained within a set of observable indicators. It also enables the testing of the replicability of a set of items and their ability to measure a latent construct. In contrast, EFA is primarily used as a first step before CFA to establish whether a set of observed indicators represent a single latent factor. This “unidimensionality” of the indicator scales must be established to proceed with testing reliability and the fit of a structural equation model (SEM), which is the regression-specified relationship between all observed and latent variables in a

theoretical model. EFA is also more robust than CFA to small sample sizes, and for this reason, among others, it is the best choice for this study.

There are two types of EFA— Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Principal Axis Factoring (PAF). PCA is a data reduction technique used to distill a small number of latent factors from a larger amount of observable, multivariate data. It does not recognize measurement error, which exists in my data due to both the preliminary nature of this survey instrument and the variation in the organization types and locations of survey respondents. PAF is the other type of EFA, which I use in this study because it recognizes measurement error. While I have a theoretical model that I am testing, I use EFA to establish the unidimensionality of my indicator scales. No SEM is conducted in this study because SEM uses regression analysis that is contingent upon data normality and large sample sizes. I also use principal factor estimation rather than maximum likelihood because it does not require normality assumptions to be met (Baglin, 2014; Fabrigar, et al, 1999). I use PAF rather than PCA because my objective is not to reduce the number of indicators into composite latent variables but rather to determine if the sets of indicators are indeed unidimensional. Thus, EFA PAF with principal factor estimation is ideal for the purposes of this study. All analyses were conducted in Stata 15.

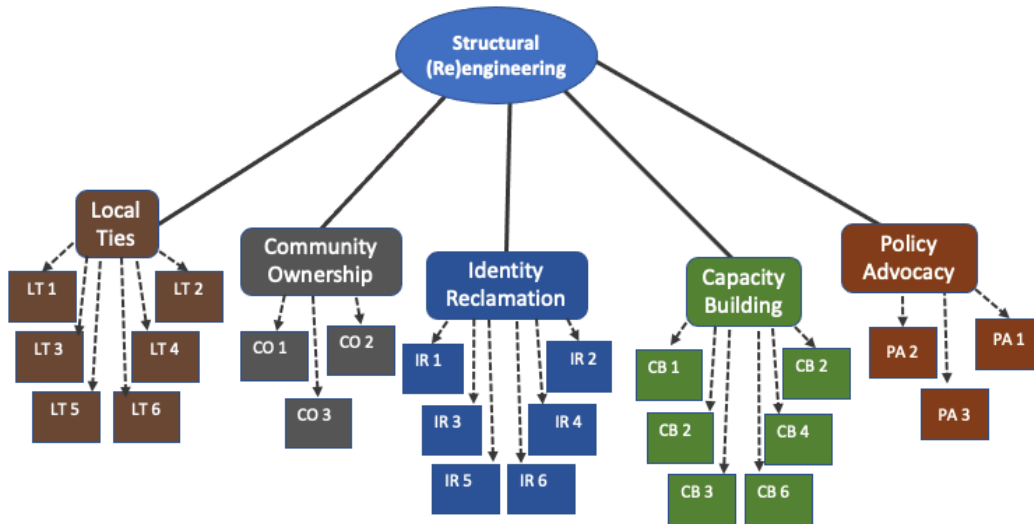


Figure 4.10 Theorized Measurement Model of Structural (Re)Engineering

4.3.4 Chi-square Tests of Independence

In addition to the EFA, I conduct a Chi-square Test of Independence between the two focal variables of this study (race and equity orientation) and each of the items used in the impact frame scales (24 total). These were done as a preliminary test of my third hypothesis about Black-led and racial equity-oriented farms being more likely to engage in structural (re)engineering. I test Black-led, “people of color”, and equity-orientation as binary variables.

4.4 RESULTS

4.4.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Respondents (N=36) represent farms located in 21 states, with the Southeast/South Central and Midwest/East North Central regions being most represented. Table 4.1 below shows the geographic distribution of respondents. I conducted reliability tests on each set of indicators corresponding to the five theorized latent variables (impact frames) to establish the internal relatedness of the items within the set. Cronbach’s alpha values were generated for item sets

and ranged from $\alpha = .6179$ to $\alpha = .92$ with average inter-item covariance for each set at over .80. Most scholarship reporting alpha values suggest that 0.7 is considered “acceptable” with inter-item covariance being less consistently reported (Taber, 2018; Herman, 2015).

Region	N	States
West	5	CA (3) WA (1) CO (1)
Southeast/ South Central	14	GA (4) TX (1) TN (1) NC (3) AL (1) VA (2) FL (2)
Northeast	4	PA (2) MD (1) VT (1)
Southwest	2	UT (1) NM (1)
Midwest/ East North Central	11	IA (1) MO (3) MI (2) OH (3) IN (1) NE (1)

Table 4.1 Geographic Distribution of Respondents

I also conducted a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test for sampling adequacy. This test establishes how well the data is suited for factor analysis by generating a statistic that measures the proportion of a sampling variable that is attributable to a common factor (Kaiser, 1974; Delaney, 2017). I run this as a post-estimation test for both the full set of 24 items (KMO = .6756) and separately for each of the five sets of items corresponding to the five theorized latent factors. According to Kaiser (1974), the data is sufficient for EFA, with KMO scores ranging from “mediocre” (Community Building KMO = .624; Policy Advocacy KMO = .651) to “meritorious” (Identity Reclamation KMO = .864). Most scholars advise proceeding if $KMO \geq .6$ with some accepting values as low as 0.5 (Field, 2013). Table 4.2 below shows all KMO and reliability values generated.

Latent Factor Scale	KMO	Alpha	Avg Inter-Item Covariance	Number of Items in Scale
Community Ownership	.624	.618	.873	3
Identity Reclamation	.861	.920	1.162	6
Local Ties	.778	.881	.949	6
Capacity Building	.773	.854	.907	6
Policy Advocacy	.651	.714	.893	3

Table 4.2 KMO and Reliability Values of the Latent Factors

I conduct an EFA using principal factors as the estimation technique. The principal factors estimation option determines communality by calculating squared multiple correlations within the factor pattern matrix and is better suited for data that does not meet the normality assumption than other estimation techniques (Kořar & Kořar, 2015; Baglin, 2014; Fabrigar et al, 1999). In the default model (Model 0) I did not specify the number of factors for the model to retain and did not apply any factor rotation. 18 factors were retained by this model, 4 of which met the Kaiser Criterion of eigenvalue ≥ 1 . Table 4.3 contains a full list of all models run in this analysis along with corresponding eigenvalues and cumulative variances. Model 1 was also unrotated, but 5 factors were specified to correspond with the theorized five-factor model. A minimum loading of .3 was applied as a threshold of factor loadings. There is no agreed upon standard of factor loading thresholds in the literature (Howard, 2016). Osborne (2015) uses .1 cutoff in their EFA models, and Castro et al (2015) use .2 and .25 in their CFA models.

Models 2 and 3 included five specified factors using oblimin (.5) oblique and oblimin (0) oblique rotation, respectively. I apply the same item-factor loading threshold to the analysis of the results. Orthogonal rotation, the default setting in Stata used in Models 0 and 1, restricts

correlation between the latent factors to zero. Conversely, oblique rotations allow the factors to correlate freely as determined by the data. These involve a rotation of the factor axes on which the individual item-factor loadings fall, thereby shifting the distribution of the loadings based on the nature of the rotation. The degree and direction of rotation is determined by the type of rotation and the delta value specified. In the case of my models, I theorized that the factors were correlated so I expected oblique rotations to improve the “fit” of the data along the axes, as determined by the extent to which each factor showed unidimensionality. Indeed, both oblique rotations (Models 2 and 3) were an improvement on the unrotated models, with Model 3 (delta=0) being slightly more unidimensional than Model 2. I include the original Scree Plot (Model 1) and factor loadings matrix of Model 3 in Figure 4.11 and Table 4.4, respectively. I also include a score plot of the observations across the factors for Model 3 in Figure 4.12.

Eigenvalues and Explained Variance- Models 0-3						
	Model 0 <i>EFA, unrotated (no specification)</i>			Model 1 <i>EFA, unrotated, (5 Factors specified)</i>		
	Eigenvalue	Cumulative	Proportion	Eigenvalue	Cumulative	Proportion
Factor 1	11.45	.55	.55	11.45	.55	.55
Factor 2	1.96	.64	.094	1.96	.64	.094
Factor 3	1.63	.72	.078	1.63	.72	.078
Factor 4	1.10	.78	.053	1.10	.78	.053
Factor 5	.93	.82	.045	.93	.82	.045
	Model 2 <i>EFA, Oblimin (.5) Oblique rotation (5 Factors specified)</i>			Model 3 <i>EFA, Oblimin (0) Oblique rotation (5 Factors specified)</i>		
	Eigenvalue	Cumulative	Proportion	Eigenvalue	Cumulative	Proportion
Factor 1	10.60	-	.510	9.42	-	.453
Factor 2	6.74	-	.324	5.45	-	.262
Factor 3	6.01	-	.289	5.28	-	.254
Factor 4	2.98	-	.143	4.30	-	.207
Factor 5	2.02	-	.097	2.64	-	.127

Table 4.3 Eigenvalues of EFA Models 0-3 (Note: All models use principal factor estimation)

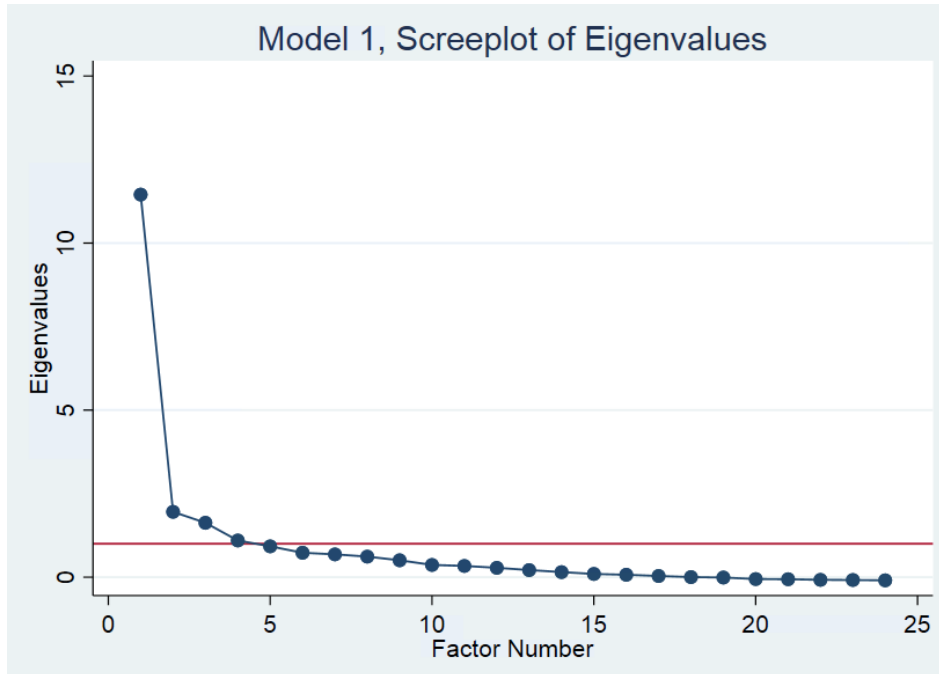


Figure 4.11 Scree Plot of Model 1



Figure 4.12 Combined Score Plot, Model 3

Model 3 EFA Factor Loadings Matrix						
Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Uniqueness
(IR 1)	.7369553					.2096384
(IR 2)	.7256979					.2967324
(IR 3)	.3645709	.371547	.3232193			.3452684
(IR 4)	.6166201		.3139029			.2385714
(IR 5)	.4012741	.4135714	.3453393			.2537943
(IR 6)	.532539		.4152623			.2104947
(CB 1)					.7874744	.2492866
(CB 2)	.4665171		.3725872		.4065066	.3419201
(CB 3)	.8124317					.1780406
(CB 4)	.8604936					.1647423
(CB 5)	.5006036		.5025844			.2720514
(CB 6)	.5570313		.2120954			.4006867
(LT 1)		.3918232		.4775315		.4150690
(LT 2)		.6795122				.2951467
(LT 3)		.8566483				.2091264
(LT 4)		.5656905		.3174206	.4129353	.3005146
(LT 5)				.5278448		.2175146
(LT 6)	.3277115			.6446687		.1818598
(PA 1)			.3286817	.7755781		.1882599
(PA 2)	.7896801			.3786386		.1842338
(PA 3)	.3971013					.5952472
(CO 1)			.8372333			.2629662
(CO 2)			.5176777			.5305941
(CO 3)			.3526021		.3538686	.3943121

Table 4.4 Factor Loadings Matrix of Model 3 (Negative Loadings and Loadings Under .3 Omitted)

4.4.2 Chi-Square Test of Independence

Chi-square tests using both race variables (black-led and “people of color”) showed significance on several indicators. I used a threshold of $p = .1$ to determine significance, but most p -values fell under .05. Identity Reclamation (IR 2, 4 & 6) were significant for both race variables with p -values ranging from .004 to .101. Capacity Building (CB 1, 3, 4, & 5) was also generally significant on one or both race variables, ranging from $p = .02$ to $p = .227$. Community Ownership (CO 2) was also significant; Black-led $p = .006$ and “People of Color” $p = .014$. Policy Advocacy (PA 1 & 2) was significant on both variables as well, ranging from $p = .008$ to $p = .010$. Appendix F contains the test results of each of these impact frames that yielded significant chi-square values using the Black-led and “People of Color” variables. In these tables, one asterisk indicates significance at $\alpha = .1$, two asterisks for $\alpha = .05$, and three for $\alpha = .01$. Any items not shown did not yield significance on either of the two race variables. Chi-square test results using the equity-orientation variable are listed in Appendix G.

4.5 DISCUSSION

The use of oblimin (0) oblique rotation (Model 3) yielded the strongest results. From this model, Factors 2 and 4 are the closest to unidimensionality. Factor 2 appears to be Local Ties with loadings ranging from .39 to .86 and Factor 4 is a combination of Local Ties and Policy Advocacy with loadings ranging from .32 to .78. Still, all factors showed considerable cross-loading, so none of them should be considered as entirely unidimensional. Further theorization is needed to determine how best item scales should be recombined and adjusted to maximize unidimensionality of item scales.

While all five retained factors of Model 3 met Kaiser's Criterion, there are potentially additional factors that could have been retained. I re-ran Model 3 specifying the retention of 6 factors instead of 5, and this provided slight improvements in the magnitude of the factor loadings of Factors 1-5, but it did not improve the dimensionality of any factor nor did Factor 6 contribute any useful insight. I also tested these same models using both iterated principal factors estimation and PCA. Neither of these changes resulted in significant improvements in the dimensionality or factor loadings of the data.

Additionally, the combined Score Plot suggests that there may be a positive association between the likelihood of a respondent scoring high on multiple factors. This aligns with my theorization that the impact frames of structural (re)engineering function in tandem with each other for maximal effect rather than functioning independent of one another. The high level of correlation between the factors supports the validity of these findings and the use of oblique rotation, suggesting that a higher order construct may be present. Future studies should revisit these scales and test for the presence of a higher order construct using 2nd order CFA.

Recombining the items and adding additional items to each scale, especially to Community Ownership and Policy Advocacy which only had three items each, may also help to improve unidimensionality of the scales, therein improving their future utility as an applied measurement tool for assessing the social impact of urban agriculture initiatives.

Moreover, the chi-square test revealed very interesting findings that largely supported my third hypothesis. While the tests on the Local Ties indicator items could not confirm an association between race and local ties, at least one item corresponding to each of the other impact frames yielded a high chi-square statistic and p-value significance at .05 or less. In all

but a few cases, switching from the “People of Color” led variable to Black-led increased the significance of the p-value. Other chi-square tests (not reported here) were nearly significant with p-values ranging from approximately .15 to .35. These nearly significant p-values along with the significant ones reported here provide strong preliminary support to the validity of my third hypothesis that Black-led and equity-oriented urban farms are more likely to engage in structural (re)engineering and thereby generate transformative local impact.

4.6 CONCLUSION

4.6.1 Limitations

This study has a central limitation— the small sample size (N=36). The sample size was originally N=840; however, the overwhelming majority of these survey responses were from bots triggered after I posted the survey link to social media. I tagged several urban agriculture related accounts in one Twitter post to maximize recruitment, which likely lead to the bot responses. Most of these were easily detected through the survey platform’s built-in flagging system, ReCaptcha scores, and by the distinctively irregular email addresses associated with each bot response. However, there was also a large amount of more subtle human fraud. I used a rigorous data cleaning process that involved both myself and a volunteer research assistant manually checking each response, searching online for any verification of the responding organization’s existence, and contacting respondents to confirm legitimacy. The final sample N=36 represents verified, quality data and was sufficient in size to run the EFA models without any challenges (e.g., Heywood case). Results of the EFA regarding factor unidimensionality should be considered cautiously; measurement error (and resultant standard errors) are, no doubt, high due to the small sample size. However, this error is accounted for by

the EFA PAF estimation technique. Future studies of urban agriculture organizations should prioritize targeted recruitment through direct contact and snowball sampling.

Additionally, future studies should include farms and gardens created since 2019, as the pandemic era has triggered a surge in interest in urban agriculture. I excluded these newer projects primarily because the nascency of these organizations and the context of the pandemic may cause them to have important differences in structure and impact than those established in the pre-pandemic era. Incorporating perspectives on social impact from long-term locals and low-income residents in high poverty communities could also provide valuable insight into the type of impact that these projects are having with residents in these neighborhoods. Such a study could also incorporate geo-spatial data to assess how the presence of urban agriculture corresponds with the presence or absence of other structural factors that shape local quality of life.

4.6.2 Contributions

In this study, I introduce and operationalize structural (re)engineering as a theoretical framework through which the transformative local impact of urban agriculture projects, specifically those impacting low-income, racialized communities, can be understood and comparatively measured. I emphasize that this transformative impact is neither exclusively social (several impact frames are economic and political in nature) nor are they ubiquitously associated with all urban agriculture projects. I assert that structural (re)engineering is a praxis of Black-led farms and their allies that are working to demolish structures that perpetuate racialized structural violence and build new paths forward toward more equitable futures. It is

both a paradigm and action-oriented strategy to achieve that future, and it functions as both a precursor to and proxy of transformative local impact.

The findings of this study provide preliminary support of my hypotheses, suggesting that the impact frames of structural (re)engineering resonate more with the goals, strategies, and impact of Black and minority led farms than with white-led and market-oriented farms. The theorized five-factor model and corresponding measurement models were also supported by findings from the EFA. Of course, the small sample size of this study limits the scope of generalizability of these findings, as does the fewer items in the scales of two of the impact frames. Additional research with a larger sample size would be needed improve the unidimensionality of the measurement models and test these theorizations through SEM. However, when considered in aggregate with the findings about Black-led urban farms in the previous chapter; the findings from the literature about other Black-led urban agriculture projects (for example, Lindemann, 2019; White, 2011); the consistent racial and social justice rhetoric of Black, indigenous and people of color urban growers; and the strength of these preliminary findings as supported by both the EFA and chi-square tests, there is reason to believe that these findings are indeed generalizable across U.S. based urban and peri-urban farms. This conclusion is also supported by unsolicited comments from multiple survey respondents, which indicate that the study resonated with them. Comments like “I thank the Folk responsible for the content of this survey ... it is respectful and intentional!”, “I think this is a very cool study to get farmers thinking” and “Thank you for creating such an insightful survey and would love to see the results!” suggest that at least some of the survey respondents saw value and relevance in the survey questions.

Moreover, structural (re)engineering presents a framework through which the mechanisms and implications of racialized structural violence on low-income Black and minority communities can be both understood and strategically counteracted. This study introduces both the framework and preliminary measurement model of structural (re)engineering, which can ultimately function as an assessment tool for planners, policymakers, institutional investors, and grassroots community actors who are interested in supporting equitable development through urban agriculture. Critical assessments of externally driven urban agriculture projects located high poverty communities are necessary to determine the extent to which local marginalized residents directly benefit from, or are harmed by, their presence. The theoretical framework and measurement model of structural (re)engineering can help to inform such an assessment, therein helping to prevent the cycle of top-down, neoliberal development initiatives that ultimately reinforce existing racialized hierarchies and perpetuate segregated poverty. Because when it comes to urban agriculture projects and urban development in these rapidly transforming, politically contentious neighborhoods, there are no innocent bystanders.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

We have found that something shakes loose inside of and among Black people when we activate public spaces that we used to be at and can be at again. Something shakes loose in us, when we as Black people come together, from different practices and geographies, to share ideas and collaborate. In cities built on exclusion new blueprints can be envisioned, and art, in conjunction with community organizing, can interrupt the continuum of a relentless white spatial imaginary that builds its cities by undermining Black Life, and it can point us toward the spatializing of reparations and restructuring the places that we live. (Bates, 2018, p.255)

5.1 STUDY SUMMARY

This three-part study of the nature, context and impact of Black-led urban farms is based on the assertions that these farms meet the “triple bottom line” of sustainability and thus are an equitable, economical, and environmentally beneficial solution to segregated urban poverty. Through this study, I illustrate how Black-led urban farms build local food-based economies and cooperative economic platforms (economic sustainability), advance racial and social justice by edifying and advocating on behalf of low-income, racialized communities (social sustainability), and by utilizing traditional agriculture practices that restore soil quality and maintain healthy ecosystems (environmental sustainability). This study centralizes the first two of these sustainability dimensions by examining the socio-political context of segregated urban poverty in which Black-led farms are embedded, as well as the motivations, mechanisms, and local impact of their work.

In the first study I asked, “How and why does segregation continue to influence the nature of urban development in cities, and what are its quality-of-life implications on local Black

populations”? I used Policy Feedback Theory and the racial logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism as a theoretical framework to answer these questions in relation to the maintenance of segregation across three cities. I contribute “multidimensional segregation” as a means of identifying how this institution functions as a mechanism of both cognitive and behavioral control. I also introduce the concept of an “urban development policyscape” as an analytic tool through which multidimensional segregation can be studied and navigated across both time and space. The findings of this study constitute a fundamental shift in how racial segregation is understood and, potentially, in how it is addressed through policy.

Building on this contextual understanding of segregation and urban development in Atlanta, Detroit and Portland, I ask in the second study “Are Black-led urban farms uniquely positioned to advance equitable development in high poverty neighborhoods? If so, how”? I use semi-structured interviews with Black urban growers representing a variety of organization types and backgrounds in each city to understand the shared characteristics of Black-led farms across these disparate city contexts. Through this study, I contribute theorizations about what distinguishes Black-led and white-led urban agriculture in low-income communities (Motivation, Strategy, Problem Definition, and Signaling). I also contribute empirical findings about the shared characteristics of Black-led urban farms in these cities and their work to advance the wellbeing and survival of Black communities. The findings from this study highlight the historical and present role of Black-led farms as one of the “original” anchor institutions in Black communities. I identify these farms as “compass institutions” to distinguish them from mainstream anchor institutions. Black-led farms are building local food-based economies, centering cultural reclamation, advocating for structural policy changes, and resisting

marginalization in high poverty, racialized communities. In this way, they serve as compass institutions, providing navigation for these communities out of the bondage of chronic underdevelopment and into the liberation of economic autarky. Such a shift constitutes not only a fundamentally different approach to urban development from that of mainstream, externally driven initiatives, but also demonstrates transformative local impact.

The third study asks *“What does transformative local impact through Black-led urban agriculture look like? How can this impact be measured, and how does it distinctively address the issues of high poverty communities?”* In it, I introduce the theoretical framework of structural (re)engineering, which I posit is an action-oriented toolkit and paradigm rooted in the values of Black Agrarianism. I show how each of the composite impact frames of structural (re)engineering— local ties, capacity building, community ownership, political advocacy, and identity reclamation— are a strategic counteraction to the specific harms of racialized structural violence as inflicted through the racial logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism. Using EFA, chi-square tests of independence, and a national survey of urban agriculture projects, I test a measurement model of structural (re)engineering, therein generating preliminary support for the model and hypotheses. I also find support for my hypotheses that Black-led and racial equity-oriented farms are more likely than their counterparts to engage in structural (re)engineering practices.

Furthermore, the findings of these three studies highlight the value of collaborating with Black-led farms to advance racial and social equity. To be clear, I am *not* asserting that a mutually exclusive, all-or-nothing approach should be taken whereby institutional actors support only Black-led urban farms and no one else. However, I am suggesting that if urban

agriculture is to be considered as a strategy of developing high poverty, predominately Black communities, the most equitable and logical solution is to do so through Black-led urban farms. Importantly, this assertion still leaves ample room for involvement, support, and collaboration with people of all racial backgrounds, as is currently the case with all of the farms featured in Chapter 3 of this study. However, these assertions recognize, as Pettygrove and Ghose (2018) and many other scholars do, the myriad ways in which predominately Black and minority communities have been, and in many cases continue to be, deeply harmed by the actions of institutional actors said to be acting in their best interest. This includes even the well-meaning intentions of many white-led urban agriculture projects, which inevitably reinforce racial hierarchies (Pudup, 2008; Ramírez, 2015; Guthman, 2008; Pettygrove & Ghose, 2018). Again, I do not claim here that Black-led urban farms are a panacea to the problem of persistent segregated poverty, nor do I claim that these farms are faultless. Indeed, these farms have many unique challenges worth exploring further, especially as they pertain to access barriers. However, they constitute a rare policy solution to urban poverty— one that meets all three sustainability dimensions and, most importantly, meets local needs. Therefore, institutional actors genuinely interested in supporting an equitable approach to urban development should pursue collaborations with Black-led urban farms.

To this end, I provide a list of recommendations about how municipalities and Black-led urban farms might work collaboratively to build healthy communities. These recommendations are based on the findings of this study along with my ongoing food systems related fieldwork. A critical first step on the part of institutional actors is to acknowledge and respect the reality that for many Black urban growers and the marginalized communities they represent, trust of

local governance and institutional actors, let alone the possibility of “partnering” with them, is frankly absurd. However, there are likely more Black-led farms that would, at least, consider the possibility of collaboration.

In the recommendations section below, I first outline three key values and internal actions that interested institutional actors must adopt before initiating any contact with Black-led farms. If these “fundamentals” cannot be genuinely committed to, then, for the sake of respect and equity, no further action to attempt to collaborate should be pursued. For those actors that willingly commit to these fundamentals, I offer entry level “1.0” policy recommendations that can be undertaken to advance the equity work of Black growers. The remaining policy recommendations are next level “2.0” food system specific policies that build on this policy groundwork and can directly contribute to equity in both local food systems and urban development.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Fundamental 1- Shift Power:* Local governance actors involved in partnerships with community organizations often take charge and exert their power to enact their own agendas. However, a successful collaboration with Black-led urban farms is fundamentally contingent upon genuine power shifting (as opposed to superficial “citizen participation” and token representation- see Silverman et al, 2019) through which racially marginalized communities have the power to advance their own interests and determine their own food systems. It is essential for local governance to share power with Black-led urban farms and to submit to their local leadership as the compass institutions that they are. Doing so will likely require most institutional actors to

operate far outside of their normative frameworks and comfort zones, thereby enabling them to practice the racial equity that many verbally espouse.

- *Fundamental 2- Support Not Surveillance:* There is a long history of government actors at the national, state, and local levels monitoring the actions of grassroots Black organizations that work to improve the conditions of the racialized urban poor. These surveillance actions imply that so-called Black “radicalism” and concomitant Black socio-economic progress are seen as a threat to the status quo (e.g., Black Panthers Breakfast Program). If the collaboration between local governance and Black-led farms is in any way connected to an “assignment”, formalized or informalized, to gather information about these organizations for anything other than their direct, transparent, and obvious benefit, that collaboration cannot proceed equitably.
- *Fundamental 3- Do Not Play Games:* By “games” I am referring to the tricks of manipulation and exploitation that local governance actors have often played to control the actions of organizations working to advance Black civil rights. For example, the notion of quid-pro-quo and the empty promises made by these actors to shape the beliefs and behaviors of Black people and other racialized groups constitute political. Black urban growers typically see through these gimmicks and the equity-washed language that often accompanies them. Given this sensitivity to deception and the lives of marginalized individuals and families that are at stake, local governance actors would be wise to explicitly ensure that any collaboration between them and Black-led farms is based in integrity and honesty. Clearly, these values of transparency and accountability should be a standard practice in all institutional-community collaborations.

- *Increase Land Access for Black and Minority Growers (1.0)*: There has been a consistent and ongoing call for land justice among Black, Latinx and indigenous farmers, who have largely been excluded from land ownership in this nation for decades. Black farmers, in particular, have lost millions of acres of land over the 20th century through both legal (e.g., heirs-property) and extra-legal (e.g., white supremacist violence) processes, amounting to an estimated value of over \$250-350 billion dollars (Pollack and Chung, 2020; Newkirk, 2019). Institutional actors with access to land can support the work of Black and minority urban growers to end segregated poverty by making that land available for long-term leases and purchase by these growers who not only have disproportionately lower access to land but also lower access to mainstream financial systems.
- *Displacement Protection for Local Residents (1.0)*: Low-income residents who live near green spaces are subject to rising property values in the neighborhood. While this is, in general, a sign of economic growth, it is consistently harmful for long-term local residents as property taxes and concomitant displacement pressure increases. Resultantly, these residents are often forced to move away from the neighborhoods that they are deeply connected to. With their departure also goes the cultural history and character of the neighborhood as the forces of gentrification shift local placemaking towards the cultural interests and appetites of affluent newcomers. Institutional actors, especially local government, can work to prevent the displacement of low-income residents by prioritizing the unique value that they contribute to local neighborhoods and by implementing sanctions against predatory lenders and others who target these

residents. Other policy mechanisms such as property tax “circuit breakers”, which restrict property taxes from exceeding a certain percentage of a household’s income, may also be potentially effective solutions. Such displacement-prevention policies should reduce housing instability and the exacerbation of racial inequity associated with it. These policies also help to increase neighborhood social and economic stability, thereby supporting the restoration and resilience work of Black-led urban farms.

- *Institutional Procurement Pipelines (2.0)*: The work of Black-led urban farms to build community, eliminate segregated poverty, and create economic autonomy can be supported through consistent procurement channels. Having wholesale purchaser(s) can offset imbalances in retail sales and allow farms to plan for the future. It also enables them to shift their attention away from organizational “survival mode” to focusing more their administrative and programmatic objectives. While it is unlikely that any single urban farm has the capacity to supply an entire university’s food services, mid-size organizations like a K-12 schools, early care and adult care centers, and local clinics could source from Black-led, Latinx-led and indigenous-led farms, therein benefiting both the farm and the patrons of those institutions who are able to eat fresh, quality produce rather than highly processed food that is often served in the cafeterias of these institutions. Local governments and other organizations can facilitate the relationships needed to create these institutional procurement pipelines, and they can also serve as the procuring agency.
- *Food Hub Generation (2.0)*: A food hub is a facility that aggregates, processes, stores, and distributes harvested produce in bulk. Most urban farms do not have the

equipment on-site that is necessary to do this work, and therein they may miss out on opportunities to distribute their produce through wholesale channels that have food safety code requirements. Institutional actors can support the creation of a regional food hub for Black and minority urban growers so that those who wish to do so can reach larger, regional markets. Designating this food hub specifically for these historically marginalized growers also helps to direct prospective wholesale procuring institutions and businesses to minority-owned businesses and culturally relevant food sourcing options.

- *Public Funding Mechanism (2.0)*: Socially driven urban farms, whether non-profit or for-profit, often face financial challenges to their longevity, due largely to the rising costs and inconsistent sales associated with urban agriculture. Local government actors can leverage taxpayer revenue streams to support the work of Black-led farms that are creating transformative local impact in high poverty communities. Importantly, this does not negate the responsibility of local governments and other institutional actors to address structural and systemic inequities. By designating a portion of a fixed funding stream to directly support the work of these farms, local governments demonstrate a firm commitment to the work of racial equity and a prioritization of the people-centered development that these farms are engaged in.

This three-part study reflects the reality that the forces sustaining segregated poverty and related racial inequities are active, dynamic, and adaptive over time. The findings and recommendations that I present here constitute tools for deactivating these forces and replacing them with equitable systems of development. Black-led urban farms, as compass

institutions, are facilitating the psychosocial, political, and economic liberation of racialized communities through food cultivation. Multidimensional segregation, sustained through the racial logics of white supremacy and racial capitalism, has largely convinced the mainstream public that their fate is in their own hands and that it is, in no way, tied to that of Black people, let alone to the Black urban poor. However, no one can escape the jarring reality that until the Black urban poor are liberated, everyone remains in bondage.

APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: STUDY 1 TABLE OF DEFINITONS

Concept	Definition	Application in the Study	Reference
Urban Development Polycscape (UDP)	A “landscape” of policies shaping the political economy, socio-cultural context, and urban development trajectory of a given locality or group of localities over a specified period of time.	The analytic tool used to understand the relationship between urban development policy and multidimensional segregation in cities.	Carney, 2009; Mettler, 2014, 2016; Mettler and Sorelle, 2018
Policy	"A purposive course of action or inaction undertaken by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern" (Anderson, 1994, p.5).	The building blocks or “units” of the UDP	Anderson, 1994, 1997; Smith & Larimer, 2013
Multidimensional Segregation	The manifestation of the white supremacist racial hierarchy across multiple spatial dimensions, which are monitored and transcended by members of the dominant racial group and those they deem worthy and/or profitable.	The focal institution that is produced and maintained through the UDP.	Jargowsky, 2015; Massey, 2016; Logan, 2013; Trounstine, 2020; Taylor, 2020
Racial Capitalism	The leveraging of the dominant racial group’s relative positioning in the socially constructed racial hierarchy for material gain, generally through practices of extraction from lower positioned racial groups.	The <i>economic logic</i> of the UDP, one part of the UDP operational logics, and a key mechanism through which the UDP maintains segregation.	Robinson, 1983, 2000; Melamed, 2015; Leong, 2013
White Supremacy	The rationale of white racial superiority in every dimension of human achievement and interaction that is subconsciously engrained into the psyche of all inhabitants of the ever-colonized world.	The (im)moral <i>social logic</i> of the UDP shaping all other logics and practices	Feagin and Elias, 2012; Goetz, 2020; Keisch et al, 2015; Bonila-Silva, 2001; Gillborn, 2006

APPENDIX B: STUDY 2 INTERVIEW LIST

ID #	Interviewee/ Role	Organization	City	Org Type	Type of Interview	Additional Notes
1a	Malik Yakini <i>Executive Director- Farmer</i>	D-town Farm/ DBCFSN	DET	Non- profit	In-person, semi- structured	Interview conducted during a tour of Detroit 2019.
2	Rashid Nuri <i>TLW founder; public speaker</i>	Truly Living Well (TLW)	ATL	Non- profit	In-person (other location); semi- structured	He retired from TLW in 2017. Met him once or twice prior to the interview.
3a	Shantae Johnson <i>Founder and Co-owner- Farmer</i>	Mudbone Grown	PDX	LLC	Virtual; semi- structured	On-site farm visit and initial conversation in 2019 prior to interview.
4	Malcolm Hoover and Mirabai Collins <i>Co-Directors</i>	Black Futures Farm	PDX	Non- profit	In-person (onsite at farm); semi- structured	No prior contact
5	Carol Hunter <i>Executive Director- Farmer</i>	Truly Living Well	ATL	Non- profit	In-person (onsite at farm)	On-site farm visit and initial conversation in 2020 prior to interview.
6	Natosha Tillman <i>Senior Manager</i>	Oakland Avenue Urban Farm	DET	Non- profit	Virtual; semi- structured	No prior contact
7	Jerry Hunter <i>Senior Manager/ Farmer</i>	Hands of Wonder	PDX	Gov. (Count y)	Virtual; semi- structured	Initial conversation in 2020 prior to interview.
8	Kwabena Nkromo <i>Owner-Farmer</i>	Atlanta Food & Farm	ATL	LLC	Virtual; semi- structured	Volunteered once prior on a farm project.
9	Tenisio Seanima <i>Owner-Farmer; UA Director</i>	City of East Point	ATL	Gov. (City)	Virtual; semi- structured	No prior contact
10	J. Olu Baiyewu <i>UA Director</i>	City of Atlanta	ATL	Gov. (City)	Virtual; semi- structured	No prior contact

APPENDIX C: STUDY 3 IMPACT FRAME SUMMARY TABLE

Item	Mean	SD
Our organization intentionally helps to connect local low-income residents to community services, resources and/or opportunities that can help them to achieve their goals. (IR 1)	4.17	1.18
Our organization uses food cultivation as a means to reclaim, restore and/or redefine marginalized cultural identities. (IR 2)	3.75	1.38
Our organization provides resources to help local residents of all backgrounds “start fresh” and redefine the trajectory of their lives, if they so choose. (IR 3)	2.61	
Our organization helps to prevent cultural erasure by protecting local placemaking within the neighborhood(s) we serve as they experience transformative changes. (IR 4)	3	1.33
Our organization helps to liberate marginalized residents in the neighborhood(s) that we serve from the bondage of racially segregated urban poverty. (IR 5)	2.78	1.33
Our organization helps to strengthen local low-income residents’ connections with their own cultural foodways. (IR 6)	3.69	1.26
Our organization has helped to start a locally-owned, food system-related business. (CO 1)	3.64	1.53
Our organization has helped to start a community land trust. (CO 2)	1.94	1.43
Our organization has helped to convert privately-owned, abandoned or underused resources into community-owned and operated resources. (CO 3)	2.69	1.75
Our organization helps to eliminate food insecurity by supplying fresh produce to food insecure residents in the neighborhoods that we serve at below market cost (or free of charge). (CB 1)	4.11	1.34
Our organization provides life skills and/or job skills training for local youth. (CB 2)	3.81	1.31
Our organization provides opportunities for local marginalized residents to improve their health in a supportive and engaging environment. (CB 3)	3.78	1.40
Our organization trains and equips local low-income residents with the skills and resources needed to grow their own food. (CB 4)	3.58	1.40
Our organization provides local residents with (or connects them to) training programs that can enhance their employment prospects. (CB 5)	2.92	1.38
Our organization intentionally helps to connect local low-income residents to community services, resources and/or opportunities that can help them to achieve their goals. (CB 6)	3.17	1.32
Local policy advocacy is a central part of our organization’s work. (PA 1)	3.17	1.34
Our organization works to change power dynamics within the food system for and through local marginalized populations. (PA 2)	3.67	1.15

Our organization is represented on at least one local government committee or advisory board related to equitable urban development. (PA 3)	2.81	1.67
One (or more) of the senior leaders of our organization has a personal history of leadership within the neighborhood(s) that we serve. (LT 1)	3.64	1.48
One (or more) of the senior leaders of our organization has a trusting relationship with a locally serving, minority-led organization in the neighborhood(s) that we serve. (LT 2)	3.92	1.40
One (or more) of the senior leaders of our organization has a trusting relationship with a long-term local resident who is a community "gatekeeper" in the neighborhood(s) that we serve. (LT 3)	3.97	1.28
Long-term local residents in the neighborhood(s) we serve have expressed that they value our organization's contribution to the local community. (LT 4)	4.47	1.00
The programs that our organization offers reflect the cultural values and interests of the long-term local residents in the neighborhood(s) we serve. (LT 5)	3.89	1.24
Long-term local residents of the neighborhood(s) we serve regularly participate in our organization's activities. (LT6)	3.64	1.42

APPENDIX D: STUDY 3 VARIABLE LIST

Variable	Mean	SD	Values
Direct-to-consumer	.89	.319	Yes-No (1-0)
Equitable Food Oriented Development	.08	.280	Yes-No (1-0)
Public Private Partnership	.11	.318	Yes-No (1-0)
Land Tenure	3.22	1.174	Owns land that was purchased Owns land that was inherited or donated Long-term lease even if organization does not pay rent Short-term lease (year-to-year or shorter, even if organization does not pay rent) Borrowed Informal agreement
Annual Budget	2.42	1.296	\$1000-9,999 \$10,000-49,999 \$50,000-99,999 \$100,000-499,999 \$500,000- 999,999 \$1million +
Homestead	.361	.487	Yes-No (1-0)
Primary Mission	3.56	1.11	Entrepreneurship Environmentalism or Sustainable Living Youth Empowerment Cultural celebration or preservation Agricultural and/or Technology Innovation Recreation Therapy Food Access
Gender	.75	.55	Male Female Non-Binary
Race	3	1.33	Black/African-American Hispanic/Latinx Mixed Race White/Caucasian
Role	3.28	.78	CEO Executive Director Founder or Co-founder Other
Total Staff	1.53	1.444	(Ordinal)
Acreage	9.67	5.19	(Continuous)

APPENDIX E: STUDY 3 FOOD SYSTEM ORIENTATION VARIABLES

Item	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Seeks to increase the productivity, quality and market efficiency of the food system to meet consumer demands (<i>Food Security 1</i>)	3.833333	1.230563	1	5
Seeks to ensure that all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (<i>Food Security 2</i>)	4.166667	1.341641	1	5
Addresses injustices that disproportionately affect people based on race and class (<i>Food Justice 1</i>)	4.222222	1.267418	1	5
Seeks to increase the level of localization and/or democracy within the food system (<i>Food Justice 2</i>)	3.972222	1.298045	1	5
Addresses the rights of people groups to define and control their own food and agricultural systems (<i>Food Sovereignty 1</i>)	4	1.352247	1	5
Addresses the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and culturally appropriate methods (<i>Food Sovereignty 2</i>)	3.944444	1.413091	1	5

APPENDIX F: BLACK-LED FARM CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP: Chi-Square Test			
Community Ownership 2: Our organization has helped to start a community land trust. (CO 2)			
	No (Strongly Disagree to Neither Agree nor Disagree)	Yes (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Total
Black	5	4	9
White	21	1	22
Total	26	5	31
Pearson's Chi square=7.52 df= 1 P-value= .006***			
	No (Strongly Disagree to Neither Agree nor Disagree)	Yes (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Total
People of Color	9	5	14
White	21	1	22
Total	30	6	36
Pearson's Chi square=5.98 df= 1 P-value= .014***			

IDENTITY RECLAMATION: Chi-Square Test			
Identity Reclamation 2: Our organization uses food cultivation as a means to reclaim, restore and/or redefine marginalized cultural identities. (IR 2)			
	No (Strongly Disagree to Neither Agree nor Disagree)	Yes (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Total
Black	0	9	9
White	12	10	22
Total	12	19	31
Pearson's Chi square= 8.01 df= 1 P-value= .005***			
	No	Yes	Total
People of Color	1	13	14
White	12	10	22
Total	13	23	36
Pearson's Chi square= 8.33 df= 1 P-value= .004***			
Identity Reclamation 4: Our organization helps to prevent cultural erasure by protecting local placemaking within the neighborhood(s) we serve as they experience transformative changes. (IR 4)			
	No	Yes	Total
Black	2	7	9
White	16	6	22
Total	18	13	31
Pearson's Chi square=6.69 df= 1 P-value= .010 ***			
	No	Yes	Total
People of Color	7	7	14
White	16	6	22

Total	23	13	36
Pearson's Chi square= 1.92 df= 1 P-value= .166			
Identity Reclamation 6: Our organization helps to strengthen local low-income residents' connections with their own cultural foodways. (IR 6)			
	No	Yes	Total
Black	2	7	9
White	12	10	22
Total	14	17	31
Pearson's Chi square= 2.70 df= 1 P-value= .101 *			
	No	Yes	Total
People of Color	2	12	14
White	12	10	22
Total	14	22	36
Pearson's Chi square= 5.84 df= 1 P-value= .016 **			

CAPACITY BUILDING: Chi-Square Test			
Capacity Building 1: Our organization helps to eliminate food insecurity by supplying fresh produce to food insecure residents in the neighborhoods that we serve at below market cost (or free of charge). (CB 1)			
	No (Strongly Disagree to Neither Agree nor Disagree)	Yes (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Total
Black	0	9	9
White	8	14	22
Total	8	23	31
Pearson's Chi square=4.41 df= 1 P-value= .036**			
People of Color	1	13	14
White	8	14	22
Total	9	27	36
Pearson's Chi square=3.90 df= 1 P-value= .048**			
Capacity Building 3: Our organization provides opportunities for local marginalized residents to improve their health in a supportive and engaging environment. (CB 3)			
	No	Yes	Total
Black	1	8	9
White	9	13	22
Total	10	21	31
Pearson's Chi square= 2.60 df= 1 P-value= .107			
People of Color	3	11	14
White	9	13	22
Total	12	24	36
Pearson's Chi square=1.46 df= 1 P-value= .227			
Capacity Building 4: Our organization trains and equips local low-income residents with the skills and resources needed to grow their own food. (CB 4)			
	No	Yes	Total
Black	1	8	9

White	11	11	22
Total	12	19	31
Pearson's Chi square=4.07 df= 1 P-value= .044**			
People of Color	4	10	14
White	11	11	22
Total	15	21	36
Pearson's Chi square=1.62 df= 1 P-value= .204			
Capacity Building 5: Our organization provides local residents with (or connects them to) training programs that can enhance their employment prospects. (CB 5)			
	No	Yes	Total
Black	2	7	9
White	15	7	22
Total	17	14	31
Pearson's Chi square=5.45 df= 1 P-value= .020**			
People of Color	5	9	14
White	15	7	22
Total	20	16	36
Pearson's Chi square=3.65 df= 1 P-value= .056*			

POLICY ADVOCACY: Chi-Square Test			
Policy Advocacy 1: Local policy advocacy is a central part of our organization's work. (PA 1)			
	No (Strongly Disagree to Neither Agree nor Disagree)	Yes (Agree or Strongly Agree)	Total
Black	2	7	9
White	16	6	22
Total	18	13	31
Pearson's Chi square=6.69 df= 1 P-value= .010***			
People of Color	6	8	14
White	16	6	22
Total	22	14	36
Pearson's Chi square=3.21 df= 1 P-value= .073*			
Policy Advocacy 2: Our organization works to change power dynamics within the food system for and through local marginalized populations. (PA 2)			
	No	Yes	Total
Black	1	8	9
White	13	9	22
Total	14	17	31
Pearson's Chi square=5.94 df= 1 P-value= .015**			
People of Color	2	12	14
White	13	9	22
Total	15	21	36
Pearson's Chi square=7.07 df= 1 P-value= .008***			

APPENDIX G: FOOD SYSTEM ORIENTATION CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS

IDENTITY RECLAMATION: Foodways (IR 6)			
Our organization helps to strengthen local low-income residents' connections with their own cultural foodways.			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	6	19	25
Market Oriented	8	3	11
Total	14	22	36
Pearson's Chi square= 7.63 df= 1 P-value= .006***			
IDENTITY RECLAMATION: Liberate			
Our organization helps to liberate marginalized residents in the neighborhood(s) that we serve from the bondage of racially segregated urban poverty. (IR 5)			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	15	10	25
Market Oriented	10	1	11
Total	25	11	36
Pearson's Chi square=3.45 df= 1 P-value= .064*			
IDENTITY RECLAMATION: Reclaim			
Our organization uses food cultivation as a means to reclaim, restore and/or redefine marginalized cultural identities. (IR 2)			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	6	19	25
Market Oriented	7	4	11
Total	13	23	36
Pearson's Chi square=5.20 df= 1 P-value= .023**			
IDENTITY RECLAMATION: Start Fresh			
Our organization provides resources to help local residents of all backgrounds "start fresh" and redefine the trajectory of their lives, if they so choose. (IR 3)			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	16	9	25
Market Oriented	10	1	11
Total	26	10	36
Pearson's Chi square=2.76 df= 1 P-value= .097*			
CAPACITY BUILDING: Healthy Life			
Our organization provides opportunities for local marginalized residents to improve their health in a supportive and engaging environment. (CB 3)			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	6	19	25
Market Oriented	6	5	11
Total	12	24	36

Pearson's Chi square=3.21 df= 1 P-value= .073*			
CAPACITY BUILDING: Grow Your Own			
Our organization trains and equips local low-income residents with the skills and resources needed to grow their own food. (CB 4)			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	8	17	25
Market Oriented	7	4	11
Total	15	21	36
Pearson's Chi square= 3.15 df= 1 P-value= .076*			
COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP: Resources			
Our organization intentionally helps to connect local low-income residents to community services, resources, and/or opportunities that can help them to achieve their goals. (CB 6)			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	13	12	25
Market Oriented	9	2	11
Total	22	14	36
Pearson's Chi square=2.86 df= 1 P-value= .091*			
POLICY ADVOCACY: Power Dynamics			
Our organization works to change power dynamics within the food system for and through local marginalized populations. (PA 2)			
	No	Yes	Total
Equity Oriented	7	18	25
Market Oriented	8	3	11
Total	15	21	36
Pearson's Chi square=6.29 df= 1 P-value= .012**			

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Edited by Lisa K. Bates with, Sharita A. Towne, Christopher Paul Jordan, Kitso Lynn Lelliott, Lisa K. Bates, Sharita A. Towne, Christopher Paul Jordan, Kitso Lynn Lelliott, Monique S. Johnson, Bev Wilson, Tanja Winkler, Anna Livia Brand, C. N. E. Corbin, Matthew Jordan Miller, Annette Koh, Konia Freitas & Andrea R. Roberts (2018) *Race and Spatial Imaginary: Planning Otherwise/Introduction: What Shakes Loose When We Imagine Otherwise/She Made the Vision True: A Journey Toward Recognition and Belonging/Isha Black or Isha White? Racial Identity and Spatial Development in Warren County, NC/Colonial City Design Lives Here: Questioning Planning Education's Dominant Imaginaries/Say Its Name – Planning Is the White Spatial Imaginary, or Reading McKittrick and Woods as Planning Text/Wakanda! Take the Wheel! Visions of a Black Green City/If I Built the World, Imagine That: Reflecting on World Building Practices in Black Los Angeles/Is Honolulu a Hawaiian Place? Decolonizing Cities and the Redefinition of Spatial Legitimacy/Interpretations & Imaginaries: Toward an*

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VITA

Lauren W. Forbes earned a B.S in biology from Oregon State University in 2011. While there she participated in a study abroad program in South Africa where she worked alongside medical practitioners at rural and urban healthcare centers. Upon graduation, she worked for Oregon Public Health Institute in Portland, Oregon. From 2011-2013 she attended Drexel University where she earned an MPH with a concentration in Community Health and Prevention. At Drexel, she received a traineeship grant from the U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Joseph C. Tringali Memorial Scholarship. She participated in a student-led pilot initiative to provide public health evaluation services in the Gambia, West Africa. In 2013, she was inducted into Delta Omega public health honor society and served as a student speaker at one of Drexel University's commencement ceremonies.

Following graduation, Lauren served as a Fulbright scholar in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where she worked with World Vision on maternal and child health initiatives. In 2014, she began working as an ORISE Evaluation Fellow in Atlanta at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) Division of Human Development and Disability (DHDD). While there she worked on several initiatives related to healthy parenting and child development. In 2016 she became an ORISE Policy Fellow in the DHDD Office of the Director (OD) where she helped to shape DHDD internal and external policy and to support the programmatic needs of DHDD. In 2017 she entered the Public Management and Policy doctoral program at Georgia State University Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. She earned a PhD in public policy in Spring 2022.

Lauren conducts interdisciplinary, mixed methods research grounded in theories of racial capitalism and social construction. Her scholarship centralizes the elimination of intergenerational poverty and the reparation of healthy Black families and communities through cultural reclamation and sustainable food systems. She conducts comparative research on urban agriculture and community-led development initiatives to support healthy neighborhoods. Lauren's current projects explore the transformative impact of Black-led urban agriculture in low-income neighborhoods and the mechanisms of segregation. Her research interests include Black foodways and cultural resilience, Black fatherhood, sustainable development, community wealth building, and activism in faith-based organizations.