"Democratic Ideals, Distinctive Tendencies: Social Inequality and Implicit Boundary-Making in the Urban Farming Movement"

By

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Submitted to the graduate degree program in Sociology and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Date Defended: March 2, 2012

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## Abstract

In recent years, the alternative food movement has flourished as a response to injustices produced by the industrial food system in the United States. As such, many people have lauded the movement for its capability to address social inequality among urban, low-income minorities negatively affected by the dominant food system. In order to do so, the alternative food movement must garner participation from the urban poor. However, a number of scholars have shown that the movement tends to bring in the participation of white, middle-class people almost exclusively. Many argue that this disparity is due to discourse and practices that lead to implicit exclusion. Using semi-structured interviews and participant observation with urban farmers, the present study extends this literature by showing that participants of the food movement in Kansas City employ democratic language and ideals meant to create broadly inclusive environments but that in fact unintentionally build symbolic boundaries along the lines of race and class. This paper refines this literature by uncovering the mechanisms that make up a universalizing and thereby exclusion-producing habitus, through which unintentional boundary-making occurs.

## Introduction

In this study, I examine the contradictions between the goals and outcomes of urban farming organizations in Kansas City. Urban farming is a part of what I call the alternative food movement, which is made up of various forms of alternative food initiatives (AFIs), including urban farming, farmers' markets, community supported agriculture projects, organic agriculture, food cooperatives, community gardens, and school gardens. This movement hopes to address the problems associated with the conventional food system (i.e. violations against humans, animal, and the environment) by offering alternative means of producing and consuming food. One of the main goals often cited by food movement proponents is helping alleviate the growing problem of food insecurity in the United States. In 2010, 14.5% of American households fell under the category of food insecure (Coleman-Jensen et al. 2011), up from 10.9% in 2006 (Nord et al. 2007). Food movement participants, along with many researchers and scholars, argue that alternative food production is highly capable of addressing the problems of food insecurity, thereby creating a more socially just and equitable food system (Mougeot 2006; Feenstra 1997; Kloppenburg et al. 1996; Ferris, Norman, and Sempik 2001; Castillo 2003; Garnett 2006; Blay-Palmer 2008; Christian 2010; McClintock 2010; Fieldhouse 1996; Hendrickson and Heffernan 2002; Kerton and Sinclair 2010).

Success on this account requires garnering participation from the food insecure. "Participation," in this sense, is broadly conceived as any form of involvement with the alternative food movement, from participating in a community garden to purchasing locally-grown foods at a market. If one is not involved at all, then one is unable to reap the benefits AFI leaders hope to offer. Despite the aforementioned optimism about the role of AFIs in helping the food insecure, many scholars note that the current alternative agriculture system fails on this

account. These scholars find that white, middle-class individuals are overwhelmingly the patrons of alternative food practice, even among those organizations that claim food insecurity alleviation as a main goal (Hinrichs and Kremer 2002; Guthman 2008b), meaning the alternative food system largely neglects disadvantaged populations (Lawson 1997; Cone and Myhre 2000; Perez, Allen, and Brown 2003; Slocum 2006).

My study addresses this contradiction between the goals and outcomes of the alternative food movement, with a focus on Kansas City urban farmers. Why does a movement lauded as highly capable of alleviating the problems of urban food insecurity tend to garner the participation of white, middle- and upper-class individuals over low-income minorities, even among those groups who claim greater food access as a main goal? One possible explanation is that the problem lies simply with cost and access, but this is an insufficient response considering that organizations established in low-income areas with the purpose of offering inexpensive produce still oftentimes fail to reach the urban poor. What creates barriers to participation where access and cost are not obstacles? I conducted fourteen in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Kansas City urban farmers and did fieldwork at two urban gardens to address these questions.

My findings show that Kansas City urban farmers engage in discourse and rhetorical strategies that seem explicitly democratic, but that actually build symbolic boundaries and distinctions between themselves and the urban poor (see Johnston and Baumann 2007 for a similar argument concerning cultural omnivorousness in food consumption). However, the nature of this boundary-making is unintentional and is in fact in direct opposition to the stated goals of many urban farmers, who hope to help increase food security among the urban poor by getting them involved in urban agriculture. I show that the gap between goals and outcomes is due in part to a particular type of habitus shared by many white, middle-class Americans,

including Kansas City urban farmers. This habitus constructs and is constructed by American ideals of cultural omnivorousness, neoliberalism, and colorblindness, ideas that, on the surface, discourage exclusivity in favor of inclusivity. However, this inclusivity is characterized by a belief in the homogeneity of people. This leads to universalizing tendencies among urban farmers, who assume that the urban poor share or should share their ideals. In doing so, they unintentionally inhibit greater diversity of participants even while meaning to do the exact opposite.

The ideals that constitute the habitus of urban farmers, namely colorblindness, omnivorousness, and neoliberalism, are all part of a larger American belief system that highlights democracy, freedom of choice, and individual responsibility. While I argue that urban farmers create a culture of exclusivity due to their uncritical acceptance of hegemonic American ideals, I recognize that being unaffected by one's cultural surroundings is impossible. I attempt to uncover hegemonic American ideals that generate inequality and to show how those egalitarian ideals are in reality not egalitarian at all. I do not mean to place all the blame for food movement inequality on the proponents of the movement. The need for greater reflexivity on the part of food movement proponents is indeed part of the answer, but the issue is larger than that.

I begin with a discussion of prior research concerning social inequality in the alternative food movement. I then provide further detail concerning the mechanisms that make up the universalizing habitus of my respondents. From there, I elaborate on why Kansas City is an appropriate place in which to research urban farming and detail my data and methods. In my findings section, I show how four major themes indicate the outwardly democratic, yet inwardly distinctive nature of my respondents' approaches to urban farming. They are 1) noting the importance of education, 2) making morality claims, 3) appealing to neoliberal ideology, and 4)

using outreach strategies that rely on personal interest. I conclude with a discussion of how their exclusion-producing practices are unintentional, why this is important to consider, and offer some brief suggestions for moving beyond this issue.

## Literature Review

Problems concerning the industrial food system have been a topic of recent scholarly debate. Authors such as Michael Pollan (2006) and Eric Schlosser (2001) have written monumentally popular accounts of the injustices of this system against humans, animals, and the environment. They and others document the response of the alternative food movement, which encourages reacting against this structure for the betterment of society (see Blay-Palmer 2008; Feenstra 1997; Kloppenburg et al. 1996; Lyson 2007; Kerton and Sinclair 2010). This movement has brought many people healthier food options and has helped raise awareness about environmental and economic sustainability. However, in recent years a number of scholars have uncovered the shortcomings of the alternative food system. They show that despite all of the good generated by the alternative food movement thus far, it still has distance to cover before it successfully addresses all of the concerns facing the industrial food system, particularly social inequality.

### *Shortcomings of the Alternative Food Movement*

Researchers note a variety of limitations on the part of alternative food initiatives (AFIs) in creating equal access to nutritious and affordable foods. One limitation develops from the assertion that sustainability movements inevitably work toward greater social equality (Agyeman et al. 2003; Allen and Wilson 2008; Allen 2008, 2004; Guthman 2008b; Allen and Sachs 1993, 2007). If true, one might expect that urban farms help alleviate the widespread problems of poor

food access and nutrition in urban areas. In order to do so, they must find ways to garner participation from the urban poor, whether that be through working in a community garden or buying produce from farmers. However, scholars show that these organizations have difficulty reaching low-income, minority residents, illustrating that this link is more elusive than some contend. Why might this mismatch occur? Why, despite the explicit goals of some groups to help the urban poor, might the alternative food movement more easily garner white and middle-class participants than low-income or minority ones?

One possible answer is that the issue lies simply in the cost of the produce or in a lack of access in the urban core (Associated Press 2011). However, studies show that even organizations that sell produce in the urban core for low prices or offer free community garden plots still do not find participants easily (Hinrichs and Kremer 2002; Fisher 1999; Guthman 2008b). Consequently, we must search for explanations that look more closely at the movement itself, including its culture and discourse, in order to discern where the disconnection occurs.

*Value Contradictions, Race, and Universalism*

Scholars in various fields point to social justice deficiencies in the alternative food movement. One such deficiency is that the goals and values AFIs espouse often conflict with one another. For instance, the goal of affordable food seems contradictory to that of supporting small-scale farmers with fair prices that cover the costs of sustainable farming. In fact, many proponents of the alternative system feel food should *not* be cheap, but instead should reflect the true costs associated with food production, including hidden costs such as poor wages for workers and ecological damage (Fieldhouse 1996; Hughes 2010; Guthman 2008a; Allen et al. 2003; Allen 1999; Guthman et al. 2006; Alkon and Norgaard 2009). One may find, then, that organizations often focus on either increased access to nutritious foods in the urban core or on

supporting small-scale, sustainable farmers with fair prices. Those organizations who do not consider increasing food security their main goal might acknowledge its importance, but are often ambivalent about their own roles in addressing the problem (Guthman 2006; Allen 2008).

The idea that alternative food systems necessarily support social justice paired with the tendency to consider some goals more pressing than others leads to a lack of successful moves toward creating a more inclusive alternative food system. Scholars note that focusing on developing local food systems often "produce[s] social justice 'blinders'" (Hinrichs and Allen 2008, p. 339) by emphasizing the concerns of one group and thereby excluding other marginalized groups (Allen 1999; Hinrichs 2003; Allen 2008; Dupuis and Goodman 2005). Local food initiatives also tend to advocate reforming the system through the free market, entrepreneurship, and individual purchasing power. Doing so favors participants with enough capital, both economic and cultural, to take part, thereby reinscribing exclusive privilege in the movement (DeLind 2010; DeLind and Bingen 2008; Allen 2008). As such, some scholars recommend strategies for local food initiatives to bring issues of social justice to the fore, but do not believe local movements have the power to solve these issues alone (Allen 2010; Jones and Bhatia 2011; Andreatta et al. 2008; Melcarek 2009).

Moving beyond AFIs' goals, some scholars argue that the values expressed by food movement proponents create implicit barriers to the participation of marginalized groups. For instance, some argue that blaming lack of education and individual desire for people not participating as well as the use of rhetorical devices like "getting your hands dirty in the soil," betray the universalizing tendencies of the movement. Statements like this alienate those who often must already perform physical, hands-on labor for their livelihood, and they can be insensitive to America's racialized history of land and labor relations (McCullen 2001; Guthman

2008a). In other words, movement participants assume that everyone shares their ideals (and if not, they should). This reasoning further marginalizes the experiences, value-systems, and desires of others by claiming those who do not participate are simply choosing not to conform to the proper ideals. This reiterates hegemonic power and privilege in the movement, ignores structural barriers affecting participation, and may implicitly deny access by making the spaces feel uncomfortable and unwelcoming (Guthman 2008a, 2008b; Moore, Panadian, and Kosek 2003; Slocum 2007; Patel 2007).

Many scholars of food do not mention the unintentional nature of AFI participants' boundary-making, and those who do only do so in passing. My analysis will uncover some reasons why those who genuinely attempt to help the urban poor may not reach their social justice goals. Understanding why and how the food movement has come to be exclusionary, despite their efforts to do the opposite, will move another step closer to finding a solution to inequality. The next section offers a theoretical discussion to help explain the exclusionary nature of the urban farming movement. I argue that Kansas City urban farmers erect symbolic boundaries along the lines of race and class through the very rhetoric they employ in trying to be democratic and inclusive. They do this because they share a similar habitus constituted by universalistic traits. This habitus leads them to employ discourse that is far likelier to resonate with people who are similar to the urban farmers and is less likely to inspire the urban poor, who may not share the same ideals and may even feel affronted by them.

**Conceptual Framework**

Symbolic boundaries are distinct ways groups classify and define reality (Lamont and Molnar 2002: 168-169). Different groups construct boundaries between themselves and others, creating feelings of dissimilarity and exclusion between them. Much work on symbolic

boundaries implies that people intentionally create boundaries between themselves and certain "others," (for example, in religion [Edgell et al. 2006 and Yukich 2010], culture [Lamont 2000], and social movements [Taylor and Whittier 1992]). Some who study symbolic boundaries in the realm of culture, however, note that groups often create boundaries implicitly, based on the cultural traditions, narratives, and repertoires people have available to them in a given social context (Lamont and Molnar 2002; Swidler 2001; Lamont 1992). In such cases, boundary-making is often unconscious. Further, as is the case with Kansas City urban farmers, people can construct boundaries despite their desire to do the opposite; it is as if they create barriers in spite of themselves. How can this be so?

I postulate that Kansas City urban farmers construct boundaries where they mean to overcome them because they embody a common habitus that encourages a particular type of universalistic ideology and rhetoric. According to Bourdieu (1984), the habitus is an internalized set of dispositions. It is unique to every individual and develops based on one's environment and social interactions. People raised in similar circumstances develop similar habitus and therefore share common tastes and dispositions. In other words, members of different social classes have differing habitus and lead different lifestyles that seem normal and natural to each (Bourdieu 1977). Race also crosscuts with class to create a particular "racialized habitus" (Bourgois and Schonberg 2009: 85).

White and middle-class participants of the alternative food movement base their discussion of and strategies toward alternative food in their particular habitus. This habitus is a specifically American one that is especially common among white and middle-class members of the society. It is constituted by their confidence in the notions of colorblindness, omnivorousness, and neoliberalism as means of creating an inclusive, democratic society. This

kind of discourse leads my respondents to present their worldview as universal and to assume minorities and the poor share their values and ideals, not realizing these very strategies might be excluding others from participating.

*Cultural Omnivorousness*

The theory of cultural omnivorousness is a recent development in the study of cultural boundary-making. This body of work refutes Bourdieu's (1984) claim that the upper classes in a given society create boundaries through high-brow, exclusionary consumption practices (See Warde 1997; Warde and Tomlinson 1993; and Mellor et al. 2010 for similar arguments in the sociology of food). Scholars of omnivorousness argue that, in some cultures, high-status people no longer mark distinction through exclusion. Instead, they do so by having eclectic tastes, encompassing high-brow, middle-brow, and low-brow goods and activities. In other words, it is a mark of high-status to have "omnivorous" tastes (Peterson and Kern 1996; Bryson 1996; Cheyne and Binder 2010; Zavisca 2005; van Eijck 2001).

The shift toward omnivorousness may seem to indicate a lowering of symbolic boundaries between the classes, but this is not the case. Omnivorousness is an alternative way to achieve high-status because it is characterized by a wide array of cultural knowledge (Peterson and Kern 1996) that provides omnivores with "multicultural capital" (Bryson 1996), which allows them to navigate nearly the whole spectrum of cultural life, a condition unique to high-status, omnivorous consumers (Emmison 2003). In other words, cultural omnivorousness is a new form of status distinction and boundary-making based on anti-snobbery and wide cultural knowledge, which distinguishes high-status people from those with more narrow cultural tastes and knowledge.

High-status Americans use omnivorous consumption of foods (omnivorous in the cultural sense) to navigate tension between the desire to mark status distinction and the need to appear inclusive and democratic in a society that discourages snobbery (Johnston and Baumann 2007, 2010). I will show that Kansas City urban farmers, similarly, adopt omnivorous rhetorical strategies in order to be explicitly democratic and inclusive on the surface, while implicitly creating symbolic boundaries between themselves and the urban poor.

*Colorblindness and Neoliberalism*

The era of overt racism in America is over, as it is no longer acceptable or, in many cases, legal to engage in overtly racist behavior. However, stark racial inequalities persist, leading many scholars to consider how a society that claims to be "beyond race" is still dealing with such obvious racial disparities. For many, the answer is that America is not in a "post-racial" society, but rather has entered an era of "colorblind racism," wherein people refuse to see or admit to racial differences or systemic racial disparities in society (Bonilla-Silva 2010, Carr 1997). In a purportedly colorblind society, racism becomes implicit as people use the language of both liberalism and neoliberalism to justify a system of white privilege.

Key concepts underpinning liberalism, such as "individualism, free competition, and neutrality," and neoliberalism, such as "privatization, individual responsibility, and the free-market," serve to normalize racial hierarchy by ignoring structural and historical factors that led to disenfranchisement in favor of linking both racism and inequality to individual moral failing (Esposito and Murphy 2010: 40). Ignoring systemic racism exacerbates inequality by refusing to acknowledge its power and thereby weakening the possibility of fighting against it.

I will show that my respondents employ both neoliberal and colorblind rhetoric in their discussion of the alternative food movement. These three ideologies -- neoliberalism,

colorblindness, and cultural omnivorousness -- come together to constitute the universalizing and unintentionally exclusionary habitus of Kansas City urban farmers. From here, I elaborate on the details of my study, present findings that support my argument for a universalizing habitus that creates symbolic boundaries while meaning to do the opposite, and provide a discussion of these findings that emphasizes the unintentional nature of this exclusion and offers suggestions for improving the alternative food movement.

## Data and Methods

### *Site Selection*

Kansas City is an appropriate city in which to research urban farming because most of the scholars discussed above conducted studies on the East or the West coasts, meaning there is a dearth of work on this topic in the Midwest. Also, Kansas City has seen a burgeoning of urban gardens in the past few years. An organization called Kansas City Community Gardens (KCCG) helped establish 98 school gardens during the past three years, and 125 apart from this throughout its 30-year history (Hellman 2011). Farmers have established many other farms and gardens beside those linked to KCCG. The recent economic downturn is partly responsible for this rapid growth, as people look for ways to supplement their incomes (ibid.). Kansas City is an especially rich site to study AFIs because of its association with the industrial meat industry, a pillar of the conventional food system. Due to the growing distrust of the conventional food system throughout the country, one might assume a city with such close connections to this system would be quick to take action against it.

Kansas City is also "hypersegregated" (Gotham 2002), and although segregation has been declining throughout the last decade (Montgomery 2010), it remains high. Kansas City's population is rather diverse, being 54.9% white, 29.9% black, and 10% Hispanic (U.S. Bureau of

the Census 2010). This may mean that Kansas City residents, although segregated, experience more diversity due to "proximity of living," as one of my respondents put it. Accordingly, many AFI organizers in Kansas City have established themselves in underserved, low-income, often minority areas specifically to increase access and because they take issue with the sharp divisions between races and classes in their city. As such, one might expect to find more knowledge (or acknowledgement) of structural barriers among Kansas City urban farmers than in cities with less stark demographic divides and less racial diversity (including many cities in which researchers conducted prior studies). For these reasons, in addition to helping determine whether other researchers' findings are more widely generalizable, a study done in Kansas City can help fill a gap in the alternative agriculture literature.

*Methodology*

I conducted fourteen in-depth, semi-structured interviews with people who run or manage urban gardens in Kansas City to assess their views on three main topics: first, their reasons for joining the alternative food movement; second, their feelings about the participation of low-income minorities (whether they are underrepresented and how the movement might gain more participants); and third, how they run their gardens, especially concerning any strategies they use to reach the urban poor. I define urban garden broadly, including for-profit and not-for-profit gardens, community gardens, school gardens, and home gardens. I also conducted 50 hours of participant observation in the form of volunteer work at two urban gardens.

I chose to use in-depth interviews because this method is especially useful for accessing participants' interpretations of a given movement and what they feel is of the greatest import for that movement to address. Additionally, interviews are useful for uncovering the common discourse employed by participants of a given movement, including implicit meanings one might

find in their words (Johnston 1995; Blee and Taylor 2002). Data from my participant observation serves as a complementary source, allowing me a more detailed understanding of the ways organizations with different goals run on a day-to-day basis. It also gives me insight into the ways gardeners actually implement strategies, information I cannot gain through conversation alone.

*Description of Sample and Sample Selection*

I began my interview sample selection by consulting the 2011 Kansas City Urban Farms and Gardens Tour online list of participants because this was the most comprehensive list of city-wide farms and gardens available. I contacted the majority of people on the list, excluding those not based in Kansas City (some are located in suburbs) or who do not grow produce (i.e. bee farms). This initial strategy did not result in a large enough sample, so I found additional respondents using snowball sampling (learning about other farms through initial respondents) and by searching other online sources that list urban farms in the area.[1] By limiting myself to an online search, I may have excluded farms and gardens without an online presence, which may be smaller and less well-known. Using the Kansas City Urban Farms and Gardens Tour list alleviates some of this concern because their list includes farms without their own online presence.

I contacted most people through email and contacted by phone those without an email address listed. In all, I contacted 35 farms and gardens. I interviewed all who agreed to participate, which yielded a non-representative sample of 14 urban farmers. The sample included three farms run as self-sufficient businesses, six community focused farms (although there is much variation in structure among these), four farms focused on helping children (not

[1] Particularly www.localharvest.org

necessarily school gardens), and one home gardener. Twelve of my respondents were female, two were male. Twelve were white, one black, and one Hispanic. Interviewees' ages ranged from early-30s to mid-60s. Their annual incomes ranged from $28,000 to $150,000, with a median of about $40,000. [2]

Non-profit organizations fund both farms at which I volunteered. One garden, which I am calling Woodgrove, is located at a community outreach center. The purpose of the garden is to provide access to affordable produce in a low-income, mostly Hispanic neighborhood. They sell or give away their produce at their food pantry. The other farm, which I call Poppyseed, is a relatively large, 2-acre operation run on a business model. They sell their produce at two farmers' markets in affluent areas and run a CSA (community-supported agriculture). Their goal is to be self-sufficient through their sales (i.e. to not need money from the non-profit to begin the next growing season). I chose these two farms because they base their operations on two differing main goals, community security/increased food access and farmer security/environmental sustainability, respectively, and I hoped to understand some of the ways these goals structure everyday activity.

*Analysis*

I transcribed my interviews verbatim and without the use of transcription software. I recorded all fieldnotes within 24 hours of each interview and day of fieldwork. Although the literature gave me ideas about what I might find in my analysis, I analyzed my interview transcripts and fieldnotes inductively to ensure accurate representation of my participants' responses (Charmaz 2006). I completed my analysis by hand, and I then organized my data by theme in a program called SuperNotecard. I developed initial themes early in the data collection

[2] See Appendix 1 for characteristics of individual respondents

process to better direct data collection throughout. Themes that are more detailed emerged during the analysis stage, resulting in a list of 22 themes. I then grouped the most relevant themes into general categories. I chose themes based on frequency of use and relevance to my research questions. Final categories included universalism, recognition of structural barriers, individualist/neoliberal rationale, economic tension, and morality claims.

**Findings: Democratic Intentions, Universalizing Outcomes**

My data indicate that despite the good intentions of my respondents and their clear desire to help the less advantaged gain better access to fresh, affordable foods, the ways they discuss the movement and the outreach strategies they use to recruit participants may act as implicit barriers to reaching this goal. My respondents intend to show that the alternative food movement is open to all types of people by using democratic language in discussing it. However, this same type of language implicitly and unintentionally creates symbolic boundaries between themselves and those who occupy less advantaged positions in society.

This tendency is a product of their habitus, which is characterized by the notions of colorblindness, omnivorousness, and neoliberalism. Together, these three mechanisms create a mindset that assumes others do and/or should share their values, does not recognize some of the more significant systemic or structural effects on the lives of the urban poor, and leads to individualistic ways of viewing the world. The fact that the habitus is deeply embedded within a person and that this particular habitus is the product of hegemonic notions in American society means that informants are often unaware of the inequality-producing tendencies of their rhetoric, instead thinking they are building inclusive environments. This creates a culture explicitly open to all but implicitly closed-off to people who do not share similar dispositions to those who partake in the alternative food movement.

Based on my research, there are at least four main reasons why there is a disconnect between AFIs and the urban poor. They are respondents' 1) call for greater education about farming and nutrition for both adults and children, 2) use of neoliberal ideals, like the laws of supply and demand and the merits of entrepreneurship and individual consumer activity, 3) implicit morality claims that hint at the moral superiority of alternative food movement proponents over others, and 4) outreach strategies operating on notions of individual desire to participate.

*The Importance of Education*

Among my respondents, the need for more education about the benefits of alternative food is the most common explanation for the underrepresentation of low-income people and minorities in the food movement, with eleven of my respondents discussing it as a main theme. They assume people will be far likelier to take part if they become better educated concerning nutrition and the negative consequences of the conventional food system. For example, Luisa, a 33-year-old white woman who manages a community outreach center garden located in a low-income area, discusses the importance of better education in addition to increased access to fresh foods:

> […] with access is also included education. Increasing the education, the knowledge of how to use it and why to use it. So kind of that, we want them to have access to it, but we want them, we want people to know why it's so much better for you and what the benefits are to it. [3]

She also notes that education is the key to why more white and middle-class people are involved in the movement than low-income people and minorities:

[3] I gave all study participants and their organizations pseudonyms.

> […] I think a lot of it is education levels and having an understanding of the nutritional benefits of local food and the, the long term benefits, not just to a person but to the community in general. And I think that because of someone's education level it's easier to grasp that concept.

This type of reasoning might be tempting for food movement proponents, partly due to its democratic qualities. On the surface, it says all anyone needs to do is learn about the movement and its causes to get involved and implies that anyone is able to do so. However, this assumes that the knowledge and values held by movement participants are ultimately the right ones, and people who disagree simply have yet to learn about it. In reality, as my only respondent who argued against this notion put it:

> And you might think that those people, you know, the problem with them is just a total lack of information and education on proper nutrition. But you'd be surprised, um, you know, people watch TV, people read magazines, and um, you know, they know what's good for them.

In other words, it is likely that people understand, and possibly even agree with, the notion that fresh, local foods are better for both themselves and for the environment. So, while better education might be part of the solution, other barriers keep people from participating. By expressing their own values as universal and education as the solution, respondents mask systemic and structural inequalities affecting participation rates (Guthman 2008a). Relying on notions of education is also a type of victim-blaming that uses neoliberal logic by implying that the plight of the urban poor is their own fault for not taking advantage of the free education offered to them, thereby reinforcing their exclusion.

Discussion about the need to educate children in particular is just as common among my respondents. In this case, eleven interviewees assume that teaching elementary school-aged children about nutrition and growing food for themselves will instill them with lasting values. They will then pass these values on to their parents when they go home, as well as on to their

own children later in life. I noted this concern during my fieldwork, too, when a middle-aged white male with whom I was harvesting okra told me about his children. He explained that his son's school is planning to implement a horticultural education program and that he wished his daughter's school would do the same. He reasoned that learning how to grow food would keep his children out of trouble and interested in school. It would also provide them with important knowledge and values, leading them to be more appreciative of their food and better able to care for themselves.

Sally, an older white woman who manages a church-run garden and farmers' market, put this idea in more general terms:

> I think, I think maybe one of the keys is to educate the children when they're young and as they're growing up, and then that will maybe cause them to teach their children a more healthy lifestyle.

Theresa, a Hispanic woman who works in a community garden in a low-income area, adds to this:

> It's gotta go into the schools, we gotta train the kids when they're young. They learn easy when they're young […] Then they go home and talk to Mom and Dad, hopefully Mom and Dad are gonna listen to them.

However, statements like these make a number of assumptions. For one, they assume parents have enough extra time to fully invest in their children's education. In reality, as only two of my respondents mentioned, many low-income parents may work at least two jobs to make ends meet, which limits the time available to take part in their children's education, let alone learn about gardening with them. Additionally, lower-class and middle-class families, as well as white and black families, take differing approaches to their children's education (Lareau 2000). Various studies show that middle-class and white parents tend to feel more comfortable being heavily involved in their children's education, while lower-class and minority families are more

reserved, feeling less welcome to interfere with the teachers' jobs. This is often due to a climate of implicit exclusion in the schools (Lareau 2000, 2002; Lareau and Horvat 1999; Diamond and Gomez 2004; Epstein and Dauber 1991; Carter 2005). As such, white and/or middle-class respondents' assumption of parental involvement shows how their particular habitus relies on colorblind and neoliberal ideologies to universalize their experiences to the whole population.

Although the notion that education is the key to higher rates of participation is democratic in that it means anyone can take part if they simply learn about it, this purely individualistic solution ignores larger structural barriers to participation created by institutional inequalities. This kind of rhetoric can also be potentially offensive because it assumes people do not already understand the issues. It denies the legitimacy of alternate worldviews by assuming that an understanding of the issues necessarily leads to participation. In these ways, an idea that sounds democratic actually creates symbolic boundaries by universalizing the values of one group and assuming that others share those values. Consequently, respondents subtly, if unintentionally, slight those living with different circumstances and perspectives while blaming them for their plight.

*Morality Claims*

Some scholars discuss particular forms of symbolic boundaries called moral boundaries (see Lamont 1992, 2000; Alexander 1992; and Edgell et al. 2006 for examples). Oftentimes, groups mark moral boundaries explicitly; it is clear who "the good guys" and "the bad guys" are. In some cases, groups construct boundaries both above and below their own social position. Lamont (2000), for instance, found that working-class men use moral boundaries to differentiate themselves from both the poor (below) and the middle-class (above) in order to

create a sense of self-worth and identity. My respondents also draw boundaries above ("Big Agriculture") and below (the urban poor).

Every one of my respondents drew explicit moral boundaries against those involved in "Big Agriculture," painting them as "the bad guys" against whom we must fight by creating an extensive alternative food system. For example, Amber, a 30-year old white woman, explains some of the problems with agribusiness, a topic that she could "write a whole book about":

> It's even down to the way that the, the material is planted. Um, you have agribusiness, and it's a monoculture, and you're using Round-Up Ready seeds that are not, uh, well, they can't reproduce themselves. And you are spraying highly, um, you know, you make nitrogen fertilizer out of natural, compressed natural gas, and so you're just taking mad resources out of the environment to pump it into something that is not even healthy to eat.

On the other hand, respondents only implicitly and perhaps unconsciously drew moral boundaries between themselves and the urban poor who do not participate in the alternative food movement. Ten of my respondents did this by claiming they have a "natural" propensity for taking part in social and environmental justice activities. This is in contrast to people who do not participate, whom some of my respondents consider so stuck in their eating habits that the habits become hard to break.

For example, Luisa, a respondent mentioned above, noted that:

> I mean, people who naturally get into this, that's their natural inclination anyway. They're not usually doing it because they have this idea that they're gonna make this grand profit, but I think that they really wanna make the community better.

At another point during the interview, she claimed that people in poor areas do not readily participate in alternative food initiatives because:

> It's unfortunate but people need incentives to change their behavior. You know, if you've had your behavior your whole life, it's what your parents did, then that's

> the way you continue. So in order to change your behavior you have to have an incentive.

Gina, a white, middle-aged woman who works on various urban farming projects as a Master Gardener, echoes the notion of eating habits as one of the greatest barriers to spreading the movement to a wider population.

> I think it will just take a lot, a lot of work because people are very, very attached to their eating habits, you know, what they've grown up with. And, uh, they just believe that to be true, and you just practically have to hit them over the head with a rock to convince them otherwise.

Amber, a 30-year-old white woman who runs a farm for business, feels similarly:

> If there are neighborhood, community organizations that are failing in urban areas, then it could potentially be [the residents'] fear of, or their lack of understanding of how to cook with food. Their, their lack of feeling like it's something that is appealing to them, so you kinda just gotta coerce them into learning how to appreciate it (laughs). Sounds terrible! Poorly put, but you get the picture.

Here the morality claim appears in the suggestion that food movement proponents are naturally inclined toward good habits and therefore have a responsibility to "break" or "coerce" others without this natural inclination out of their bad habits. All three cases exemplify the positive notion of morally sound "natural" ways of being in opposition to others' bad habits that need changing.

The fact that respondents explicitly make morality claims against "Big Agriculture" but only implicitly do so against the urban poor speaks to the unconscious nature of the latter type of boundary-making, as does the fact that they explicitly express a true desire to help those lacking their "natural" propensity for working toward social and environmental justice. This is another case of outwardly democratic ideals (wanting to help the urban poor break their bad habits) being paired with implicit and unintentional boundary-construction implications (we are naturally

inclined toward this and so exist on a moral high-ground compared to others). The mechanisms of colorblindness and cultural omnivorousness are at work here in causing respondents to miss structural forces that might keep people from changing their eating habits and to think everyone desires at some basic level to eat locally and organically.

In other words, the universalizing habitus embodied by my respondents creates a sense of their own condition as natural, preferable, and in no way a product of life circumstances while casting others' habits and propensities in a relatively negative light. While such discourse seems democratic to my respondents, it actually serves to mark as "Other" the people they are trying to help. This can work to maintain symbolic boundaries by developing an implicit comparison that separates "us" from "them" and allows for the belief that AFI participants are in a unique position to help "them." This kind of ideology may discourage residents of the urban core from participating in order to maintain a sense of self-respect and self-control that some movement proponents assume they lack.

*Neoliberal Ideology*

Another common way my respondents erect boundaries between themselves and the urban poor while in the same instance trying to be as democratic as possible is through their focus on neoliberal solutions to garnering greater participation among the urban poor. Food movement proponents are not struggling to eradicate the inequality-producing aspects of a food system based on neoliberal culture. Instead, they work within that system by advocating increased entrepreneurial activity, individual consumption, and the wisdom of the free market as ways to reach more people.

A conversation I had during my fieldwork exemplifies this. As we were harvesting tomatoes, I asked the middle-aged white male with whom I was working what he thought of

community gardens (we were working at a farm that touts gardening for business). He said that he did not "buy" the community garden model and thought all urban farming should be run for-profit. His reasoning was that selling produce for-profit is a direct form of competition with conventional farming and is therefore a more viable option in terms of creating a more just food system, overall. He did not see how community-focused gardens could truly act as alternatives to the conventional system. It is clear, then, that this man is fully invested in neoliberal culture and our current capitalist system and feels that it has inherent inequality-reducing tendencies.

Emily, a 33-year-old white woman who works at a youth center, also uses neoliberal logic in explaining that everyone has to take responsibility in order to solve the problem of food deserts. In her words:

> I think everybody kind of has to take responsibility because, um, you know, a government is only concerned with what their citizens are concerned with, and so, you know, if, if everybody just is okay with there being a food desert, like, the form of government's not gonna do anything about it, you know?

Emily notes that an unfortunate but necessary outcome of a democratic system is that some people are more disadvantaged than others. For her, food deserts are not the outcome of an unequal system that disproportionately affects the poor and people of color, but occur due an unconcerned populace not pushing the government enough to stop it. Marcy, a white, middle-aged woman who manages a community garden in a mixed-income area, expressed a similar notion, which is that in a democratic system nobody can *make* food stores move into food desert areas:

> And grocery store owners are private individuals, and we do live in a democracy, and they can build grocery stores wherever they want to.

Similarly, Gina, a middle-aged, upper-middle-class white woman, notes that:

> …you can't make them come here, uh, or any other grocery store chains, um, if it's not safe enough for them to operate, if they can't get any employees, if they can't operate because of, um, the margins of grocery stores are pretty low, and so they can't endure a lot of theft or damage, or whatever. They'll go under.

Again, these respondents fail to note systemic reasons for food deserts, nor do they consider systemic change a solution. Instead, they focus on the fact that business owners have a right to establish or not establish grocery store in certain areas, and this is simply a product of a democratic society.

Cindy, a white, middle-aged home gardener, also notes that we must tolerate the potentially negative effects of a democratic society if we are to enjoy its benefits:

> And so, if the government's doing what everybody thinks, [supporting…] cheap grain production, um, highly flavored, fast, cheap food […] and if all the people are going there and the industry profits from going there […] then that's what the government starts to come out with as a program, because they perceive it […] as what the people want. Well, one of the double-edged swords of a democracy is that we have to support the majority rule, and the majority can often be wrong. [4]

Cindy recognizes that in our current capitalist system, profitability often reigns in what type of food production the government supports. However, she perceives this as a necessary downside to a democratic system, something that must be endured until individuals begin to vote differently.

Another common idea among AFI participants is that if the food movement is able to gain greater consumer demand then the food will become more accessible to disadvantaged groups. Emily, the 33-year-old white woman, expresses this point:

> Possibly the way for it to become more accessible is through like, those who are more affluent partaking in it more. And then I think maybe the demand will be higher and so that, maybe like that will drop costs a little bit.

[4] I used ellipses to remove redundant language and improve clarity.

This quote illustrates a reliance on the notion of individual consumption as a vehicle of change. In particular, Emily assumes affluent consumer demand can help the urban poor in a trickle-down manner. Other respondents made similar observations. Sally, a white, middle-aged woman who runs a church garden and sells much of the produce at a nearby farmers' market states:

> I'd like to see […] people be more vocal about the quality of the food that they buy, because […] their voice when they're in enough numbers and when they speak with their money […] can change policies.

These examples illustrate my respondents' adherence to a neoliberal market orientation that emphasizes entrepreneurial activity and individual consumer choice as the best vehicles for change. Other scholars note similar patterns in their studies of alternative food proponents (Hinrichs and Allen 2008; DeLind 2010; Allen and Wilson 2008; Allen 2008, 2010, Allen et al. 2003; Hinrichs 2000). Similar to these scholars' findings, my respondents assume the urban poor can gain greater quality of life through "free market" solutions. By buying into the common and uncritical notion that the free market is truly democratic, my respondents undermine the ideals of social justice they desire to enact by creating alternatives far more accessible to people in positions of relative privilege, thereby constructing symbolic boundaries.

This, however, is unsurprising, considering neoliberal ideology is hegemonic in American society. Again, Bonilla-Silva (2010) argues that individuals who use colorblind ideology participate in the spread of this form of racism, but that one cannot blame the individuals who are not themselves racist and who in fact think they are playing a role in ending racism. Similarly, my respondents' reliance on neoliberal ideology uncovers both their desire to be egalitarian through a discussion of ideals such as democracy and individual consumption and the negative effects of these hegemonic norms in American society. One should not view my

analysis as simply blaming individual respondents, but as an effort to show how individuals are influenced by hegemonic cultural ideals.

*Outreach Strategies*

The potential for residents of the urban core to feel disconnected from and uncomfortable participating in the alternative food movement goes beyond the culture that proponents' discourse creates. The outreach strategies they employ can also act as barriers. Outreach strategies range from relying on word-of-mouth and personal interest, to holding educational meetings and classes, and to passing out information at key areas, among others. Like their neoliberal ideology, the majority of my respondents employ outreach strategies that seem egalitarian, but because they operate on notions of personal interest they unintentionally reinforce symbolic boundaries.

For instance, the volunteer recruitment strategies of the farms at which I did fieldwork rely largely on personal interest to gain participants. Poppyseed farm, a large farm that focuses on teaching people how to run sustainable and self-sufficient farms, is a rather well-known organization in Kansas City. For this reason, it is easy for them to find enough volunteers, unlike many of the other farmers with whom I spoke. As a result, they do not use formalized recruitment techniques to garner participants. According to the manager of the farm, people interested in urban farming simply hear of them and then join the volunteer squad. The result is that participants are those already inclined to join the alternative food movement.

Woodgrove Community Center also does not use formal recruitment strategies, despite their explicit goal to help the urban poor gain better access to and knowledge about nutritious foods. Signs placed around the garden (which is on the corner of an intersection with a decent amount of foot traffic) serve as their main recruitment strategy. The signs explain the purpose of

the garden, offer incentives for participation, and provide contact information. Since the center is in a neighborhood where many Hispanic families live, the signs are in both English and Spanish. However, the sign-posting strategy does not seem to be working, as they have trouble recruiting participants. This may be the case in part because posting signs will likely only bring in people with prior interest in joining an urban farm.

Woodgrove also relies on "word-of-mouth" to recruit people, as reported by the manager of the garden. They hope people will go to their nutrition classes, food pantry, or walk by, decide to volunteer in the garden based on that experience, and then tell their friends and families about it. Five other respondents also explicitly mentioned relying on word-of-mouth to garner participants. It is doubtful that such a system would bring in participants who may not feel like they belong or who are uncomfortable with that form of initiating involvement. Additionally, it is likely that the initial person to "spread the word" was already interested in the movement and will bring in people similar to him or herself. Therefore, this process may leave out the most disadvantaged populations, despite being a seemingly open and democratic strategy.

Others have tried strategies such as holding weekly classes to teach about nutrition and various aspects of growing your own food, sending out leaflets and emails, and talking to the heads of neighborhood councils and at board meetings. Holding classes encounters the same problem because those who are already involved or desire to be involved are more likely to join than others. Attending classes also requires spare time and comfort with taking initiative. While passing information through board meetings and heads of neighborhood organizations may prove useful, more direct outreach strategies would be more helpful. Emailing, while more personal and direct, only reaches those who have access to such technology. Leafleting seems to be the most successful of these strategies according to my respondents, possibly because it reaches

many people who would not hear of the organizations otherwise, but still may fall victim to the problem of only recruiting those with prior interest in alternative food.

These findings relate to those of Bourdieu and Darbel (1969), who find that although art museums appear and claim to be open to the public, only a certain segment of the population actually visits them. This is due to a climate of implicit cultural exclusion that brings in only those with the prior disposition to distinguish themselves through "the love of art" and causes those without such a class habitus to feel uncomfortable and unwelcome. Similarly, my respondents' dependence on strategies that rely heavily on personal interest seem democratic because they allow anyone interested to be involved, but they mask institutional inequalities that allow some people more opportunity than others to make such choices, thereby leading to unintentional boundary-making. This is due in part to the habitus of participants, whose faith in notions of neoliberalism, colorblindness, and cultural omnivorousness causes them to universalize their experiences to others. These mechanisms lead them to assume everyone is both willing and able to eat organic, local foods, in addition to relying on neoliberal notions of free choice and personal responsibility as the means through which to gain participants. Such strategies are liable to bring in only people with similar dispositions to those who already take part.

**Discussion: Why employ such discourse?**

My findings indicate that Kansas City urban gardeners employ democratic language and ideals in both their discussion of and activity in the movement. In particular, they discuss education (including that of adults and children), construct morality claims (natural tendencies vs. ingrained habits), draw on neoliberal ideology (entrepreneurship, individual buying habits), and employ outreach strategies that rely on notions of personal choice. These tendencies

demonstrate my respondents' desires to create democratic organizations, and many of them explicitly want to help the urban poor gain access to the alternative food movement. However, the ideas and strategies they draw on are only superficially democratic because that same discourse implicitly produces distinction and exclusion between themselves and those they desire to help.

While prior studies note similar tendencies in other parts of the country, they generally under-theorize how it can be that people with the desire to help the urban poor manage to exclude them inadvertently. They also tend to overlook the unintentional nature of the exclusion and thereby over-stress the level of responsibility that one can place on food movement proponents for creating inequality. I fill this void by identifying universalizing mechanisms that construct the habitus of middle-class, typically white Kansas City urban farmers. Hegemonic notions of colorblindness, cultural omnivorousness, and neoliberalism are ingrained and influential aspects of their worldviews, and the reliance on these ideals is what causes the universalistic tendencies of my respondents.

My respondents take part in omnivorous language and consumption because 1) they wish to be inclusive of all types of people, and the explicitly democratic nature of omnivorousness appeals to that desire, and 2) they take omnivorousness for granted, assuming that most other people either do or have the ability to appreciate a wide variety of foods. In reality, cultural omnivorousness in food consumption requires access to the dominant cultural capital that allows one to navigate a diverse alternative food landscape constructed by white and middle-class ideals. My respondents use colorblind language because they do not want to treat anyone differently based on their skin color. They are, in fact, actively trying to work against racism by using such rhetoric. However, that same rhetoric masks institutionalized forms of racism that

disproportionately disadvantage people of color. Finally, respondents rely on neoliberal ideology because it purportedly provides everyone with equal opportunity and emphasizes individual choice and responsibility. Again, this type of discourse ignores systemic forms of inequality that provide some people with greater ability to make choices than others.

These elements make clear my informants' desires to be inclusive and to create a diverse culture within AFIs, considering the rhetoric used in all three is explicitly democratic and neutral. However, in attempting to be neutral when considering issues of race and class, they fail to note fundamental differences between themselves and those they hope to help, differences that, if recognized, may help them develop more successful recruitment strategies. Additionally, in using individualist rationale, they alienate others by attributing lack of participation to individual desire and lack of knowledge.

The nature of the habitus is such that it is nearly impossible to recognize since it makes one's worldview seem normal and natural. As such, one cannot expect food movement proponents to be critical of these concepts, or even to recognize their influence in the first place. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2010) offers a caveat in his discussion of colorblind racism that sheds light on this as well. He notes that one cannot attribute color-blind racism to individual racism because it is an institutionalized and hegemonic ideology. He shows how color-blind ideology permeates the discourse of well-intentioned actors who do not recognize they are reinforcing inequality, and in fact often think they are doing just the opposite. Similarly, my respondents engage in universalizing discourse that they experience as democratic without realizing they are reinscribing symbolic boundaries along the lines of race and class. In other words, the very language they use and values they profess in order to reach the urban poor are what causes the disconnect between them.

Considering this, the tendency of other scholars to, implicitly or explicitly, place blame for inequality in the food movement on food movement proponents and to call for greater reflexivity as the solution lacks nuance and ignores the complexity of the situation. While greater reflexivity will help extend the benefits to a more disadvantaged population, that alone will not solve the problem. Such a purely individualistic approach does not fully appreciate how ingrained the universalizing habitus is throughout the country, does not grapple with issues of systemic and structural inequality in American society, and tends to ignore other issues and barriers relevant to the situation, such as tensions between the practical challenges of making ends meet and offering inexpensive produce to the urban poor (Pilgeram 2011; Hassenein 2003; Hinrichs and Allen 2008; Allen 2008).

A step toward gaining more diverse participants may be finding people similar to Prudence Carter's (2005) "multicultural navigators." People in this role possess both dominant and nondominant cultural capital, and as such are able to bridge the gap between, in her case, the culture of young, low-income, black students and the dominant culture that requires white and middle-class cultural capital to be successful in school. In my case, people who are able to navigate between the dominant white and middle-class culture in the alternative food movement and that of various segments of the urban poor may help to both generate greater interest in alternative food among the urban poor and create a more inclusive environment in the food movement.

**Conclusion**

I find signs of hope in my interviews. Many researchers who studied this topic in other parts of the country note a prevalent tendency of respondents to focus explicitly on personal choice and other individualistic arguments when discussing the participation of the poor and

people of color (Slocum 2006; Guthman 2006, 2008a; Alkon 2008; Allen et al. 2003). While my interviewees do this, most recognize at least some, if not many, structural barriers keeping the urban poor from participating and note the need to find solutions that either work around or alleviate those barriers. On the one hand, it may be the case that people are still complicit in maintaining boundaries if they acknowledge some, but not the most pervasive, structural barriers (Bonilla-Silva 2010). However, it is also possible that such acknowledgments are signs of progress in the alternative food movement, at least in Kansas City.

As such, I see hope for the alternative food movement to break free of the cycle of social inequality. The findings from my interviews conclude that part of the problem is the way participants conceptualize the movement. This suggests that greater reflexivity is necessary on their part. However, it is also important to note the reasons why respondents engage in this type of talk, as well as to recognize external barriers food movement proponents face in reaching social justice goals. By recognizing these multiple issues, one is able to critique the movement's lack of reflexivity and emphasis on social justice while at the same time recognizing they, too, are affected by the hegemonic processes of American society, by external, economic barriers, and their own positions in social space. This allows one to take a more holistic view of the situation that refrains from placing too much blame on food movement proponents and can lead to the development of solutions that both contend with the inherent inequality-producing tendencies of hegemonic American ideals and address the multifaceted issues facing the food system in the United States.

**Areas for Future Research**

This paper has ultimately relied on the assumption that the habitus of Kansas City urban farmers is qualitatively different from that of the urban poor. This assumption rests on

Bourdieu's (1984) theory that people who are raised and living under different circumstances will view the world differently from one another. I also base my assumption on the small amount of research done by Guthman (2008b), who offers direct information from the urban poor about their distaste for the culture of the alternative food movement. I feel this is a sound assumption to make, but future research should study the opinions of the non-participating urban poor concerning alternative food production in order to fill this gap. It is important to study the issue from both sides in order to gain a more complete understanding of the social class and racial dynamics in the alternative food movement. Future research should also consider the role of cultural capital in entering the alternative food movement. While this study briefly touches on it, a more in-depth study of the particular form of cultural capital required to join the food movement as well as who are (and are not) likely to hold such capital can add to our understanding of how the culture of the food movement works to exclude certain groups.

## Appendix 1: Characteristics of Individual Respondents and Farms/Gardens[5]

| PSUEDO-NYM | AGE | GENDER | RACE | ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME | MARITAL STATUS | HIGHEST DEGREE | FARM/GARDEN CHARACT-ERISTICS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LUISA** | 33 | F | W | $35,000 | MR | GD | Community outreach center; Sell/give away food in food pantry; Funded by a non-profit; Low-income, Hispanic neighborhood |
| **LINDA** | 55 | F | W | $60,000 | MR | GD | Business model; goal to be self-sufficient and sell in low-income neighborhood; currently sells at two farmers' markets in affluent areas; Personally funded |
| **CINDY** | 65 | F | W | $40,000 | S | HS | Home garden; does not sell produce |
| **EMILY** | 33 | F | W | $35,000 | S | GD | Youth center garden to teach kids about food production and nutrition; Give produce to the families; Serves mostly low-income minorities; Funded by grants and donations |

[5] M: Male, F: Female, W: White, B: Black, H: Hispanic, MR: Married, S: Single, GD: Graduate Degree, BD: Bachelor's Degree, SC: Some College, HS: High School, MC: Middle-Class. Org.: Organization

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **JOE** | 26 | M | W | $40,000 | MR | SC | Community garden run by intentional community; Located in low-income area populated mainly by minorities; Sometimes give it to neighbors; Funded personally and by grants |
| **MARCY** | 46 | F | W | $45,000 | MR | BD | Community garden; Charge $15/season for plot; Goal was to help urban poor, but mostly W/MC people joined |
| **BEN** | 34 | M | W | $33,000 | S | BD | Farm org. that employs male youth; Goal to teach entrepreneurship and provide male mentors; Funded by grants |
| **REGINA** | 48 | F | B | $70,000 | MR | SC | Goal to start community/home gardens in a low-income, minority neighborhood to teach about benefits of gardening and entrepreneurship; Will soon have a farmers' market; Funded by non-profit |
| **AMBER** | 30 | F | W | $40,000 | S | BD | Run on a business model; Personally funded; Sell at a weekly market and wholesale to upscale restaurants |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GINA** | 64 | F | W | $150,000 | MR | BD | Runs a demonstration garden to teach about growing in the city; Also runs a community garden in a W/MC with annual fee |
| **AMY** | 44 | F | W | $28,000 | S | BD | 2-acre farm in a rural part of the city; Funded by a non-profit with goal to be self-sufficient; Train new farmers and tout farming for business; Sell produce at upscale markets and offer CSA shares |
| **SALLY** | 59 | F | W | $45,000 | MR | GD | Church garden oriented toward teaching children about nutrition and growing food; Host a weekly farmers' market; Located in low-income, racially diverse neighborhood |
| **MARTHA** | 54 | F | W | $28,000 | S | GD | Training farm for incoming refugees to provide extra income and teach entrepreneurship; Funded by a non-profit; Located in a low-income area populated mainly by minorities. |
| **THERESA** | 52 | F | H | N/A | MR | SC | Community garden located in low-income, mainly Hispanic neighborhood; Plots are free; Goal to teach kids about growing; Funded by grants and donations |

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