OTHERING & BELONGING IN THE US FOOD SYSTEM/MOVEMENTS

Building an Equitable and Inclusive Food System
UC Berkeley

Elsadig Elsheikh

November 19, 2015
Agenda

Context
- Implicit bias
- Structural racialization
- Structures of opportunities
- The food system

Challenges
- The current economic system
- Climate change
- Corporate control
- Financialization

Alternatives
- Food as a human right
- Reversing the current systemic crises of food
- The role of land-grant universities (e.g. UCB)

Discussion
CONTEXT
Implicit Bias influences our feelings, judgments, and perceptions

- Human brain processes **11 million bytes** of information in a second
- The process of **othering** occurs in our unconscious ‘network’, which can lead to racial, ethnic, gender, or religious bias
- Only **2%** of emotional cognition is available to us consciously
- Messages can be **framed** to speak to our unconscious
Structural Racialization

Not dependent on individual actor, beyond the practice of one institution, and produces predictable unjust & cumulative outcomes at many levels:

- Institutional
- Interpersonal
- Internalized
Structures of Opportunities

Not only are people situated differently with regard to institutions & opportunities, people are situated differently with regard to physical infrastructures.

People are impacted by contradictory relationships between principles and actions of institutions and systems...

... but people also could live or die because of the structure’s & system’s behaviors.
Corporate Directors of Fortune 500 Companies, 2010

- **Whites**
  - Share of population: 13.3%
  - Male directors: 72.4%
  - Female directors: 5.3%

- **African Americans**
  - Share of population: 5.3%
  - Male directors: 12.6%
  - Female directors: 1.5%

- **Latinos**
  - Share of population: 2.4%
  - Male directors: 16.3%
  - Female directors: 0.7%
Globalizing Hunger in the Global South

91% of hungry people live in Global South

- **34.3 Million** Latin America and the Caribbean
- **220 Million** Sub-Saharan Africa
- **24 Million** Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
- **490 Million** Asia and the Pacific
Racializing Hunger in the Global North (US)

**Food Insecurity in Households, 2013**

- **Whites**: 10.6%
- **Latinos**: 23.7%
- **African Americans**: 26.1%
- **Very Low Food Security**: 5.6%
- **Income 185% above FPL**: 6.7%
- **Food Insecurity National Average**: 14.3% (17.5 million)
- **Income below FPL**: 42.1%
CHALLENGES
The Current Economic System

The Logic

- Assumption of infinite growth based on carbon economy
  - Puts stress on our ecosystem
- The impact on the food system vis-à-vis this logic
  - Contributes to climate change
    - e.g. GHG, degradation of: soil, water sources, etc.
  - Commodification of the commons
    - e.g. land grabs, seeds monopoly, privatization of water, etc.
  - Financialization of natural resources
    - e.g. speculation on: weather, food commodities, etc.
Global Climate Change

- Changing Rain and Snow Patterns
- Changes in Animal Migration and Life Cycles
- Higher Temperatures and More Heat Waves
- More Droughts and Wildfires
- Thawing Permafrost
- Damaged Corals
- Rising Sea Level
- Warmer Oceans
- Changes in Plant Life Cycles
In 2011, 99% of biofuels produced and consumed worldwide were made from food crops.

In 2012, 4% of the world’s transportation fuel was biofuel.

86% of biomass (e.g. wood, sugarcane, corn, animal matter, etc.) is located in the Global South where food crisis is pandemic.

By 2017, biofuel production could significantly increase prices for oilseeds, wheat, coarse grains, and vegetable oil.

Source: 2008 OECD report
Corporate Control in the Food System

**Four corporations own**
- 85% Soybean Processing Industry
- 82% Beef Packing Industry
- 63% Pork Packing Industry

and manufacture
- 50% Milk

**Five corporations control**
- 53% Grocery Retail

Globally, **500 companies** control
- 70% of Food Choice
Financialization has changed the relationship between the financial and real sectors of the economy.

Financialization has enabled financial institutions to create new “non-real money” assets (e.g. derivatives, securitization, credit swaps, etc.).

In 2012:
- Total expenditure of the US govt. was $6.1 trillion
- Total US GDP was $16.2 trillion, and
- Total value of the US stockmarket $18.7 trillion, 3 times the total US expenditure!
### Financialization: Derivative Markets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Federal Debt</th>
<th>U.S. GDP</th>
<th>World GDP</th>
<th>Derivatives Contracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$14.7</td>
<td>$61.4</td>
<td>$508 Trillion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>$687 Trillion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Financialization: Structural Inequality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Global North</strong></th>
<th><strong>Global South</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced economies in GN accounted for 54% of global GDP @ PPP; yet they hold:</td>
<td>Less advanced economies in GS are subjected to extreme measures of:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - 77% of banks assets; | - Trade liberalization  
  - “too little exit & too much entry” |
| - 79% of stock-market capitalization; | - Debt crisis  
  - Increases the dependency & vulnerability of national economies |
| - 84% of insurance premiums; | - Neoliberal global economy  
  - Conditions and instruments of financialization |
| - 91% of non-government funds |   |
Financialization: Structural Inequality

Over 220 million hectares of arable land have been grabbed worldwide

Source: [www.landmatrix.org]
67% of total global seed market controlled by only 10 transnational agrichemical corporations

Source: ETC Group
ALTERNATIVES
UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

- **Article 25** “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, **including food**, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015)

- **Goal 2**: “End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.”
  - However, out of 17 SDGs, 12 goals are related to **food and food production**.
Over 70% of global rural food produced by women

- Share of world’s cultivated food produced by peasants: 50%
- Share of world’s food that comes from hunting/gathering: 12.5%
- Share of urban food produced by city-dwelling peasants: 7.5%
- Share of world’s food that comes from industrial food chain: 30%

Small farmers and peasants at least feed 70% of the world’s population.
Democratizing the Food System

Food Sovereignty
People’s right to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.
Mitigating Climate Change

All countries need to scale-up agroecology:

- Encourage biodiversity and discourage monocultures.
- Reduce GHG emission by discouraging industrial-scale meat and dairy production, and encouraging diets high in grains, vegetables and fruits.
- Increase support for small farming and discourage intensive mechanization of agriculture.
- Support agroforestry that reduces the use of external inputs and maximizes resource efficiency.
- Support small farmers to access land, water, funds, subsidies, and lower taxes.
- Invest in rural development by building rural infrastructure of education, health, access to water, and appropriate roads.
- Facilitate access to formal markets for peasants’ and small women farmers’ food productions.
We need to minimize corporate influence by:

- Adapting regulatory systems that encourage genetic diversity among plant, animal, and aquatic food species.
- Eliminating industrial farming and fishing subsidies.
- Eliminating intellectual property regimes or unnecessary regulations that privilege genetic uniformity.
- Expanding & supporting public research to illuminate the benefits of using microbes for soil fertility and as bio-control agents.
- Encouraging and supporting peasant-based food production and facilitating direct peasant-based consumer marketing arrangements with special attention to the role of women.
- Strengthening and enforcing environmental and social regulations on corporations.
- Strengthening customary use of land and resource rights while taking special measures to protect women’s rights to productive assets.
To feed 9+ billion people and to sustain our planet, the world needs to:

- Incorporate the Right to Food of the UN in binding law, nationally and internationally.
- Reject biofuels (agrofuels) crops except for locally produced community-based consumption.
- Prohibit land speculation and land grabs.
- Support the conservation of endangered genetic diversity for small farmers through conservation programs in gene banks.
- Reject industry-based food safety standards that discriminate against peasant farmers and small-scale businesses.
- Prohibit any measures –public or private- that constrain the right of peasants to save or exchange food genetic resources.
- Protect marginalized populations from food price volatility by avoiding excessive reliance on trade, and ensuring resilient local food production systems.
Advancing Food Equity for Social Change

- Recognize how equity issues in the food system intersect with societal equity.
- Align research with community needs.
- Increase collaboration between community and campus food equity projects.
- Increase awareness about both food system equity and its educational value.
- Create relevant curricula about food system challenges to advance social equity.
- Increase collaboration and resource-sharing with existing equity projects.
- Provide linked and experiential learning programs in food equity beyond campus.
- Leverage existing programs and seek new partners for collaboration.
- Further system-wide engagement on food equity.
Build a Food Sovereignty Movement for Social Change
Q & A