

**BOSTON'S EMERGING
SOLIDARITY FOOD ECONOMY:
LESSONS IN TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE**

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ABSTRACT

A pathway is an analytical lens that describes discourses, theories, and practices that are commonly associated with each other. In food justice, the two dominant pathways are economic development and social welfare. While the two pathways appear at odds with each other, they are a false dichotomy in which the status quo is perpetuated. Using a case study and grounded theory analyses, this paper explores how four organizations in Boston, MA are forging an alternative solidarity economy pathway for food justice. Of the four case study organizations explored, all fall into the dominant food justice pathways at various points. However, they also frequently participate in the solidarity economy pathway, thereby revealing that there is an emerging solidarity food economy in Boston. Planners should support programs and organizations from the solidarity economy pathway lens, so as to affect transformational change and avoid the traps of the dominant food justice pathways.

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I. INTRODUCTION

For about five years, my professional and graduate student life straddled two worlds. In one, urban planning and economic development focused on creating policies that expand individuals' opportunities for wealth. I witnessed these efforts struggling to reaching their target demographics or failing to make a broader impact beyond the jobs created by a single restaurant opening, for example. In the other world, food security and food systems work, grassroots nonprofit agencies worked on expanding food access through urban agriculture or community meals programs. They too, struggle to stay afloat or reach enough of their constituents. Furthermore, both worlds were susceptible to the white-dominated discourses of the local foods movement. I began to question if these efforts were so challenged because of the broader frameworks in which they existed; perhaps there would be some sort of happy medium between a continuum of economic development-driven and grassroots and nonprofit-driven food systems work.

Urban food projects, policies, and programs – or “pathways” – are often situated amongst the strategies of either neo-liberalist economic development or social welfare. For example, a city might highlight its burgeoning restaurant or food scene, marketing its local chefs like rock stars. This strategy is motivated by the promise of economic development that restaurants bring; a trendy restaurant often represents the turning point in a city's economic reinvestment (at best) or gentrification (at worst). In contrast to the economic development pathway, cities

can also host food projects and programs that are social welfare focused. Food banks, food desert mapping, and the like, are designed to address areas of need that are created by failures in our current social economic system to care for everyone; they provide necessary and immediate relief for hunger or food insecurity. A more critical eye towards them, however, notes how these programs perpetuate the problems they aim to fix because they patch up the holes in the system without challenging how the system itself might be broken.

The surface level division between the motivations behind these broad approaches to urban food projects are best described as “pathways”. Organizations or programs do not fall into neat theoretically categories, however they are often framed like they are. The pathways lens – as this paper’s primary analytical unit – describes how theories, discourses, and practices are often paired together in food justice efforts. Furthermore, pathways can be contradictory or even overlap at points. The two dominant pathways that are seen most often in discussions on food justice are economic development and social/community welfare. Amongst other discourses, theories, and practices, the economic development pathway is characterized by external investments and profit driven practices, while the social welfare pathway is characterized by food access practices and discourses of “good” food. For example, economic developments might include a situation where a singular restaurant comes into a neighborhood and brings others like it soon after (creating the potential for neighborhood gentrification), or a social enterprise arises in a community (a financially

unsustainable “street level robin hood”). Therefore, with an eye solely fixated on economic development, social justice and sustainability are easily ignored.

A possible next conclusion following that critical understanding of urban food pathways is that even though they appear at odds with each other, economic development and community welfare oriented food pathways constitute a false dichotomy. Even when paired with good intentions, they are two means to the same end. An alternative framework (pathway) is thus an appealing opportunity. Because the “solidarity economy” lies outside of those pathways while still containing similar discourses, it has the potential to create change that is truly transformative and challenging to the status quo.

Using theories of social and political change and change processes, as well as an in-depth exploration of the theories that motivate urban food pathway models, this paper will explore the concept of the solidarity economy in relation to common urban food discourses and theories of transformational change. The three main themes covered by the aforementioned theoretical frameworks are food and economic development, food and community welfare, and food and transformational change. Subtopics include traditional economic development, community economic development, community welfare/food security, food justice, urban political ecology, and transformational change. Those frameworks will then be applied to a case study of an emerging solidarity food economy in Boston, Massachusetts. Whatever similar discourses are found between the

literature and the case studies dictates the extent to which a solidarity economy movement is forming in Boston's food system.

The primary lesson to be gained from this case study is not that other cities should create a solidarity food economy from scratch; rather, the theoretical frameworks are a way learn about the current food system and economy and build up from there. Especially as urban food projects and programs are being brought to greater public attention, city planners and community leaders would do well to understand these consequences and discourses of their food strategies and pathways so that an urban food system is just and sustainable for all.

This paper begins with a discussion of methodology. Chapter II, Methods, formalizes the study proposition driving this research and explains how a case study approach informed my conclusions. Chapter III, the Literature Review, attempts to outline how academic and professional discourses are framed around the food movement and economic development in urban planning. It also delves into theories of what makes change actually significant, as well as alternative frameworks in food systems and economic development. Having established the theoretical framework, the Case Studies (chapter IV) go in depth into four Boston organizations that participate to varying extents in a solidarity economy. Each case study vignette outlines the organization's history and operations, as well as how it sees itself within broader economics and food systems. Chapter V, Discussion, synthesizes the case study data and organizes it along the frameworks

found in the literature review. The Discussion's primary purpose is to ascertain the degree to which the case study organizations are participating in a solidarity economy, and how their work is and is not transformational. Lastly, this paper concludes with Chapter VI, Lessons Learned, which pulls out themes, successes, and challenges from the case studies that can be applied elsewhere. These are pertinent lessons for both urban planners and organization leaders on how to avoid participating in a self-defeating system.

II. METHODS

Study Questions

The original study question of this paper was ‘What is the history of Boston’s emerging new food economy and what lessons can planners in other cities take from it?’ However, given the relative young age of the organizations, the question of their history became less important in favor of perhaps a more nuanced question about what their role is in the history of food movement organizations. Thus, the research question shifted to asking how these food organizations participate in a solidarity food economy, how their participation might be transformative for the food system at large, and what lessons can urban planners, policy makers, and organizational leaders take from these organizations to create sustainable and systematic change?

Study propositions:

The primary proposition for this study is that Boston’s emerging solidarity food economy is transformational because it avoids the pitfalls of the false dichotomy of economic development/welfare. This proposition has serious implications because food projects and policies can have different consequences for local sustainability. What those consequences look like can be predicted by the language in which they’re framed; this particular language exists in a false dichotomy of economic development -focused urban projects or community welfare -focused urban projects. However, the economic development/community

welfare dichotomy is a false one: both discourses still inevitably lead to maintaining the status quo of neo-liberal capitalism. Even when paired with good intentions, food pathways that fall solely into either economic development or social welfare discourses fail to be transformative. The former maintains wealth as its goal, while the latter is a mere social safety net. Thus is the transformative nature of Boston's emerging solidarity food economy: it defies this false dichotomy. Comparing the entities that comprise Boston's solidarity food economy to other entities in Boston's food system will illustrate more clearly how unique the former are.

Units of analysis:

The broader unit of analysis is the emerging Boston solidarity food economy. This unit comprises a number of organizations, businesses, and collaborations, and this paper focuses on City Growers, an urban farming organization that works in formerly vacant lots, Commonwealth Kitchen, a food business incubator, Haley House, a café and catering business with a job creation and recidivism prevention program, and Dorchester Community Food Coop, a worker and community owned food cooperative grocery store. These organizations were chosen for study because of their range of involvement in the food movement (labor, production, consumption) and their different relative spans of history. (Haley House, for example, was founded in the 1970s, whereas Dorchester Food Coop was founded in the 2010s, and as of 2017 is still raising capital to build their physical location.)

In the spring of 2015, I gathered data by conducting key informant interviews with Bing Broderick of Haley House, Jennifer Silverman of Dorchester Food Coop, Darnell Adams (formerly) and Roz Freeman of CommonWealth Kitchen, and Glynn Lloyd of City Growers. When possible, I audio recorded the interviews and transcribed them, but otherwise took detailed written notes. I also collected data via the organizations' websites and through my prior experiences working with these organizations in professional and academic settings. Generally speaking, from the interview data, I used discourse and practice analysis to see how the organizations operated – their general practices and programming – as well as the discourses that came up during the interviews. I compiled vignettes for each case study organization, outlining their history, current operations, discourses on wealth, and self-identifications with solidarity economy.

Linking data to the propositions

In order to connect data to the study propositions, a case study analysis was used to conduct a systematic analysis of how the units of analysis fit into the solidarity economy framework as developed in literature. This analysis was conducted through analyzing how the aforementioned food projects, policies, and programs are framed in relation to the theories in the literature review. A case study was selected as the primary research method because it is able to explain complex organizational, social, and economic phenomena. According to Robert Yin, a “case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, organizational

and managerial processes, neighborhood change, international relations, and maturation of industries” (Yin, 3). While the aforementioned subjects are used as examples, it is telling that three of them (organizational processes, neighborhood change, and maturation of industries) apply – amongst other subjects – to this particular research.

The analysis also draws largely from grounded theory. With grounded theory, theories are developed directly from the systematic collection and analysis of data, as opposed to developing a theory before collecting data (Cohen and Crabtree 2006). These methods do not “aim for the ‘truth’ but to conceptualize what is going on by using empirical research” (Wikipedia 2017). The case study organizations do not fit neatly into theoretical categories; thus, a grounded theory approach allows me to assess the extent to which they align with the theories in the literature review, but also the extent to which they don’t. I eventually use the data to shape a description of how each case study organization operates in each of the food justice pathways (i.e. economic development, community welfare, and solidarity economy).

Criteria for interpreting study’s findings

Key to the study’s interpretations is the assumption that the units of analysis comprise an inchoate movement for an emerging Boston solidarity food economy. The analysis therefore begins with a cross-organizational comparison, highlighting key themes and illustrating how these themes unite the organizations. Having established the units of analysis as an inchoate whole, they can then be

analyzed as a unit of a solidarity food economy in relation to the theories developed in the literature review. I use the theories in the literature review as the initial primary frameworks for analyzing the data. However, how the data relates to these theories is only a halfway step to the conclusions. Instead, these theories are parts of larger systems – that is, the pathways – that serve as stand-ins for how the organizations operate in the pathways. The theories and their contradictions are what inform the case studies' pathways. Tellingly, aside from performing a systematic coding (Wikipedia 2017) on the data, there are no precise criteria for determining how a certain case fits into a pathway. This is primarily strategic, given this paper's caution to avoid over-analysis or over-theorization, as well as grounded theory's empirical methods.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Food systems are no longer being ignored in urban planning discussions. From urban agriculture ordinances to the rising recognition of the connection between urban poverty and food insecurity, urban food planning is an emerging field. Like any other systematic element that plays a role in an urban landscape, food systems are increasingly being scrutinized for their relationship to sustainability and social justice. Food justice is often seen as the intersection of where food meets those values. What food justice actually means and how it operates, however, creates significant debate. Through the lens of urban political ecology and theories of transformational change, the first section of this literature review aims to outline critical approaches to determining how certain food justice efforts are more or less radical or revolutionary than they appear.

Food justice, rooted as it is in discussions of poverty and power, is also about economics. The secondary goal of this literature review is therefore to outline different approaches to economic development as they are commonly understood in urban planning. At first, it may be tempting to create a duality that contrasts economic development with community welfare, the latter of which implies a non-market approach to improving people's lives. However, as the section that illustrates two main types of community welfare shows, both economic development and community welfare have similar yet important implications for social justice and sustainability. The overlaps between these

discourses mean it is a false duality, and that neither can necessarily be preferred for creating the best outcomes for social justice and sustainability.

Therefore, a third discourse is explored: alternative economic development. Based off of a discussion as to what creates societal transformative change, various alternatives to economic development are perhaps the best framework for creating a food system in which social justice and sustainability are maximized. Specifically when viewed through the lens of urban political ecology and transformational change, we can identify the areas of alternative economic development that have greatest potential for enacting the most genuine form of food justice. I conclude that, as opposed to the false dichotomy of economic development and community welfare, the alternative economic development framework best aligns with theoretical and operational food justice.

As stated in the methods section of this paper, the purpose of these theories is to be the initial point of reference for coding the case study organizations. While the case organizations do not prescribe directly or wholly to these theories, their interactions with and challenges to them inform how the organizations are aligned with all of the pathways at discreet points.

I. CRITICAL APPROACHES TO FOOD JUSTICE

A working definition

While the definition of food justice is hard to pin down, it is best summarized as the intersection of social justice, sustainability, and food systems. Alkon and Agyeman summarize food justice as any “analysis that recognizes the

food system itself as a racial project and problematizes the influence of race and class on production, distribution, and consumption of food” (Alkon and Agyeman 2011, 5). Although they may not identify as such, food justice encapsulates food system reform movements that work in communities that suffer the most from being marginalized by the mainstream food system (e.g. low income and people of color), as well as those efforts that operate in languages of environmental justice’s claim to equitable decision making and access to environmental benefits, and lastly with the food movement’s focus on establishing more environmentally sustainable alternative food systems (Alkon and Agyeman 2011, 7).

Something that food justice is not is any effort that – often unintentionally – is coded as “white.” Guthman (Guthman 2008) wrote a case study examination of college students who engaged in field studies where they worked with projects that brought, sold, etc. food to African American communities, or those that aimed to educate these communities on the benefits of locally grown, organic, etc. food – what Guthman terms “bringing good food to others.” While such projects were often touted with the food justice tag, Guthman notes how the students who participated in them quickly became disappointed in how these projects actually resonated with the community itself. Notably, these projects often fell flat because they were deeply rooted in cultural narratives of white history. Guthman makes the point to explain how exactly these narratives are coded as “white,” as well as, more importantly, why these narratives have become so dominant that they make certain food movement activists “colorblind” to their whiteness and adherence to these narratives.

While Guthman argues for a more critical lens when applying the food justice label, other literature provides concrete examples of food justice activism and discussion. Morales (Morales 2011) writes about Milwaukee's Growing Food and Justice for All Initiative (GFJI), and its emergence as an approach to the lack of people of color advocates in the food system, specifically in food security conversations. McCutcheon (McCutcheon 2011) details a case study of the Nation of Islam (NOI) and the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church's (PAOCC) acquisition of farm land and activism around food and health. Moreso, though, is that these organizations embody food justice's aims in that their discourses around food is distinctly their own, especially when these discourses run counter to those of the dominant "food" movement: they are inextricably linked to "black community" itself. Lastly, McEntee's (McEntee 2011) discussion of what he terms "contemporary and traditional localisms" expands the discussion of food justice towards power and class itself. McEntee notes how the discourses around localism are dominated by urban (or "contemporary") intentions and barriers to access, which are different from the discourses amongst rural ("traditional") populations. Although these two discourses occasionally overlap, "contemporary" localism dominates, in part because rural communities are more marginalized and typically less wealthy than their urban counterparts.

Urban political ecology

The mislabeling of food justice occurs when an approach focuses only on outcomes (e.g. more farmers markets) and ignores how the solution may

perpetuate the problem itself (e.g. ‘localist’ discourses crowding out marginalized voices). Urban Political Ecology (UPE) (Agyeman and McEntee 2014) shows that outcomes and processes are interrelated; it offers a framework for understanding which food justice initiatives may be transformational. UPE is a theoretical framework that applies transformational outcomes to the food systems and injustices context.

Agyeman and McEntee ascertain that the FJ label is often inappropriately labeled as such, thereby diluting its power as a social movement. For example, the federal government’s food access mapping system that identifies so called “food deserts” is one instance in which neoliberal forces coopted the FJ name. First of all, the system imposes market solutions: that people can simply buy their way out of hunger if a grocery store is located in a spatially delineated area. Moreover, this approach focuses exclusively on outcomes, i.e. alleviating hunger. It ignores the cyclical nature of this solution: that neoliberal markets are one source of hunger in the first place. Markets create poverty and socio-historical circumstances that lead to power imbalances. By showing how FJ is coopted, UPE brings to light just how outcomes and processes are interrelated. UPE relates specifically well to food, as the latter exists in a similar interrelated (or “hybrid”) space; food is both uniquely cultural and personal, yet it coexists with the material world.

Lastly, Agyeman and McEntee note what may be the truly transformational potential of food justice. FJ efforts that occupy a hybrid space – they may function within the neoliberal market world (and are outcome-focused), yet in also working to change the processes that lead to those cyclical outcomes

(for example, establishing processes for having people source their food from within their communities), FJ reformulates the process itself, an even more radical project. UPE's "hybridity" connects closely with McClintock's analysis of urban agriculture's contradictions.

Transformational change

While UPE is a helpful framework for analysis of social movements as they're happening in communities, theories of transformational change focus on how social movements transform all of society. Erin Olin Wright (Olin Wright 2010) describes three approaches to social transformation, or "Real Utopias." These approaches are categorized as ruptural, interstitial, and symbiotic. The ruptural approach is similar to a revolution; it is ruptural in that it happens "decisive[ly]" (Olin Wright 2010). On the other hand, both interstitial and symbiotic approaches to social transformation are gradual. The interstitial approach works within the status quo (read: capitalist) system and builds its own institutions through the "cracks" of that society. The goal is to build a new society from out of these cracks. Lastly, the symbiotic approach entails using capitalist society itself, but in a way that makes it more effective and creates expanded social empowerment. Olin Wright makes the point to note that transformational strategy in reality utilizes elements of each approach to varying degrees (Olin Wright 2010).

For example, applying Olin Wright's approaches to transformational change to food systems, McClintock (McClintock 2014) argues that the

contradictions in urban agriculture – from those who condone or criticize it – are what make it actually transformational. These inherent contradictions will eventually lead to deeper conversations about how to use urban agriculture for systematic change. The act of urban agricultural is ruptural – the change of land from other use to agricultural is a dramatic transformation, especially when it is done without permitting (i.e. illegally). It is also interstitial – it creates a food system for those who have fallen through capitalism’s cracks. Lastly, it is symbiotic – urban farms still work within capitalist logic and have neoliberal outcomes (Allen and Guthman 2006, Guthman 2008, Holt-Gimenez and Wang 2011, Alkon and Mares 2012, via McClintock 2013). In stating that the contradictions of urban agriculture are what make it transformational, McClintock agrees with Olin Wright’s point that transformational strategy uses bits of each ruptural, interstitial, symbiotic approaches collectively. Furthermore, urban agriculture’s contradictions align with UPE’s notion of hybridity.

Reform vs. Transformation

In another critical approach to distinguishing temporary reform from lasting transformation, Holt-Giménez (Holt-Giménez 2011) uses power analyses as a litmus test for transformational potential. Understanding the initiatives that attempt to tackle issues of hunger and environmental destruction also means understanding the power structures that underlie the current food system, the “corporate food regime” (Holt-Giménez 2011, 310). Therefore, a power analysis

reveals which of these initiatives can “either transform, reform, or inadvertently even reinforce” the status quo.

The corporate food regime is defined as “the monopolistic concentration of power in the global food system” (Holt-Giménez 2011, 310). Whenever a new food crisis emerges, its solution is often one that also creates profit for corporations; one example of this sort of profit-inducing solution to crisis is patented technology of genetically modified seeds in the face of drought. Capitalism is reinforced. Similarly, such as with capitalism’s boom and bust cycles, corporate solutions fail and governments step in until the corporation can get their feet back on the ground. The government solutions are thereby reforms, and “merely prop up the existing food regime.” Capitalist and reformist solutions are therefore “two sides of the same system” (Holt-Giménez 2011, 314).

Holt-Giménez identifies various “food movement” alternatives to the corporate food regime: “Food enterprise” creates solutions from private-public partnerships; “food security” stresses the human right to food; “food justice” works by revealing structural racism and classism; lastly, “food sovereignty” is situated amongst broader efforts at social change. Each of these alternatives have common tendencies, discourses, institutions, models, and approaches, yet they are divided by how they may reinforce the corporate food regime or begin to tackle it; some of these approaches are better at dismantling the corporate food regime than others. To illuminate these tendencies, there are four trends amongst the approaches: neoliberal, reformist, progressive, and radical.

The neoliberal trend is characterized by the food enterprise discourse. Holt-Giménez points out that by expanding global markets and increasing output through technological innovations, neoliberalism reinforces the corporate food system. Although the reformist trend, characterized by “food security” discourses, does not explicitly reinforce the corporate food system, Holt-Giménez implies that it is complicit in reinforcing it. Reformism does not work on the structural change level but merely seeks to improve social safety nets.

In contrast to the above, the progressive trend, with its “food justice” discourse, better challenges the corporate food regime because it emphasizes grassroots activism and power. It often ties together healthy food access with sustainable agriculture. Lastly, the radical trend also challenges the corporate food regime by addressing the root causes of poverty and hunger. With its “entitlement” discourse, radicalism understands that these causes are also intimately connected with power over production resources and wealth distribution. The radical trend is perhaps the most explicit challenge to corporate food systems; it proposes the dismantling of corporate monopoly power in the food system and redistributing rights to food production resources.

Because the progressive trend has potential to challenge the corporate food system but holds more social weight than the radical trend, it perhaps has the greatest promise for pragmatic success. However, Holt-Giménez, recognizing that categorizing the trends should not be so fragmented, suggests that real transformation occurs when the categories strategically partner. Therefore, such transformation will not occur if progressivism ends up aligning disproportionately

with the reform trend. In that sense, Holt-Giménez's implication is that a transformative food movement's biggest challenge is the reform trend itself.

II. ECONOMIC APPROACHES TO FOOD JUSTICE

As noted earlier, food justice contains the effort to address the market inequities of traditional neoliberal economics. In this section, we will see the ways in which economic development efforts are employed in planning. While some economic approaches unabashedly maintain traditional neoliberal economics, others are subtler. Despite good intentions, their processes and outcomes are ultimately intricately connected to dominant power structures and "laws" of market-driven economics. Therefore, the economic development approach to food justice is unsatisfactory.

Traditional economic development

Economic development, as it is most commonly found in urban planning discourses, is neoliberal. Market-driven economics contingent on market ebbs and flows, as well as vestiges of creative class theories perpetuate the conditions that food justice initiatives attempt to reverse. One of those economic development theories in this realm belongs to Richard Florida's influential and controversial book, *The Creative Class* (Florida 2002), which, although its criticism has been productive, still retains a dominant narrative amongst much of food systems development planning literature. Creative class theories are still easily implemented, despite their discrediting (Grodach 2013).

At the heart of Florida's argument is that the "creative class" is the key driving force for urban post-industrial economic development. The creative class is defined as professionals who engage in creativity and innovation; this categorization includes jobs such as computer programming, designers, media workers, and research. Also included in the creative class are professions that utilize intensive knowledge bases and often require higher education, such as in healthcare, business, and legal. In summary, the creative class is defined by its innovation and creativity. In Florida's original 2002 study, he projected that the creative class would grow by over ten million jobs, almost half of the country's population, by 2010 (Wikipedia 2015).

Since the publishing of Florida's book in 2002, his theories have received much criticism. For one, empirical studies have shown Florida's projections to be completely false. Other grassroots criticisms have emerged that are wary of Florida's theories because they ignore the socioeconomic realities of the non-creative class; that is, groups with lower socioeconomic status and histories of disenfranchisement (Creative Class Struggle 2010). Furthermore, Florida's policies lead to even far more socioeconomic inequalities. Case studies of Toronto, Ontario (Catungal et. al. 2009), Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Zimmerman 2008), and Austin, Texas (McCann 2007) reveal how those cities, identified as hotbeds for the creative class policy, are rife with displacement, economic and racial polarization, and limited regional livability.

Even outside the realm of economic development, such as in public health, economic theories persist in maintaining the economic status quo. A toolkit

written for California’s public health administration explicitly ties “economic development and redevelopment” to “healthy, vibrant communities.” While the toolkit’s connection between economic wellbeing, access to healthy food, and community wellbeing is hardly problematic, the assumptions the toolkit makes about what economic wellbeing entails offers a limited view of who can participate in that success. The economic activities described in the toolkit are primarily supply-focused or market-driven, i.e. those that concern the bringing in of healthier food to a community through producers and retailers. The lasting results from these activities are that consumers benefit from improved health while the producers and retailers that benefit from economic development. Consequently, the toolkit is only helpful insofar as it pertains to supply-side economics, and even then, does not fully explore the implications of those transactions for consumers.

Other pieces of literature illustrate the problematic nature of focusing on the “bringing in” – the supply side – of economics. Havlik (Havlik 2013) considers how in Chicago’s West Side, middle-class led alternative food movements (e.g. gardens, restaurants, farmers markets) contribute to gentrification. Notably, the alternative food movements Havlik illustrates are decidedly on the supply side of economics; retailers and producers benefit from supplying goods to consumers. Furthermore, beyond the urban setting, Jarosz (Jarosz 2008) states evidence that consumer demand for alternative food networks via local and seasonal food, etc. does not actually improve the economic wellbeing of rural farmers. Implicit in this evidence is that consumer demand,

when standing alone, does not necessarily create benefits for all. There is perhaps room to extrapolate this failure in traditional market-driven economics to other elements of the food system.

Despite the evidence (Havlik 2013 and Jarosz 2008) that would argue against creative class theory's futile dependence on successful market-driven economics, Grodach (Grodach 2013) uses the case studies of Toronto, Ontario and Austin, Texas to show just how easily these theories are put in place in cities. Grodach outlines the real-life policy situations in which creative class theories are adapted to cities. Although these situations may not necessarily warrant creative class policy solutions, creative class theories are instead adapted and easily adopted. Grodach's implicit point is that, despite its criticisms, the creative class theory is alive and well in urban planning.

Lastly, there is little academic analysis of food itself used as a proactive economic development tool. David Bell (Bell 2007) notes how urban development literature often ignores the hospitality (that is, restaurant and other food service) industry, which he argues is critical to the branding of cities. This city branding ties into Florida's creative class theory by prioritizing the creative minds behind marketing and restaurateurs, while ignoring who are essential to a functioning hospitality industry: the non-salaried workers themselves. Bell laments that economic policy for planners ignores the potential of food for city branding; however, the implication here is that this potential will always be positive. The assertion that the hospitality industry is necessary for city branding ignores how the hospitality industry may also contribute to economic inequality

by providing only low-wage entry-level jobs, or if a restaurant/food store is a harbinger or symptom of gentrification.

Community economic development

An alternative to creative class theories of economic development is the concept of community economic development. Rather than a simple supply and demand system, community economic development delves deeper into asking who are the suppliers and consumers, and whether or not the system benefits those who live in it directly. Community economic development in food systems serves as a contrast to creative class theories in that it prioritizes social capital (Glowacki-Dudka, et. al. 2012).

Glowacki-Dudka, et. al. examine how social capital – which includes economic capital – is affected by local food systems production, and vice versa. This approach is in line with community economic development, as it seeks to determine who is benefiting from economic capital and how. The article's findings state that social capital best expands when it emerges from systems of reciprocity, trust, and community vision. Furthermore, in contrast to the traditional economic development models explained prior, this interplay of social capital and food systems prioritizes both supply and demand equally. Therefore, even though CED does emphasize community empowerment, it also operates in the realm of commoditized goods and services, thereby remaining in a broader neoliberal economic framework.

Food, in some cases, is tied to community economic development when it is used as a tool for implementing and indicating community economic stability. A press release from the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) (Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs 2014) for its urban agriculture ordinance connects (administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, MDAR) food security with community development. Among the rationale in support of urban agriculture are business creation, public health, improving food access, and youth civic engagement. In addition to economic development, the overarching theme to the press release is that all of the aforementioned reasons are tied to food security. As was the case with CED, however, the outcome – the social goal of food security – assumes market-driven solutions for government programs. MDAR’s urban agriculture suggests that the solution to food security is market-driven; it assumes that food insecurity will be alleviated if urban agriculture provides more local produce available for purchase. The premise behind the urban agriculture policy may intentionally set goals for who the supplier is, thus satisfying community economic development. However, the secondary outcome of food security is still subject to the market because the policy does not specify who the consumer is nor how that customer can gain empowerment beyond what the market offers.

Community welfare and food security

Community welfare is often regarded as the opposite of economic development. Welfare implies a support system where capitalism, for instance,

has failed. This section aims to present, however, that this is a false dichotomy, as welfare systems still suffer from power imbalances.

Although food security may be an indicator of community economic development, as per MDAR's urban agriculture promotion (EEA 2014), food security is more often nested under the framework of community welfare. Community welfare serves as a contrast to economic development in that it is often situated outside of economic discourse and is perceived as a social safety net. However, community welfare is similar to both types of economic development in that it perpetuates the conditions that lead to inequality underneath the veil of helping people. Community welfare's reliance on outside funding sources (namely, state government susceptible to corporate influences) compromises its stability and integrity, while its empowerment strategies are also compromised by the power structures that build them.

Analyses of two Boston non-profit organizations exemplify the welfare approach to food security. These analyses are located in a report for the Massachusetts state-wide Food Plan process that presents a detailed description of what food insecurity looks like in Massachusetts, some organizations that aim to approach the issue, and recommendations for addressing food security based on the state's needs and the current approaches to fixing it (Foster West, et. al. 2014). The authors use the USDA's definition of food insecurity: the "lack of access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life." They also list some factors associated with food insecurity, such as poverty. Massachusetts needs to address this issue because its rate of food security is rising at a rate higher than the

national average. The report sketches profiles of six organizations across the state, two of which are based out of Boston (Community Servings and Project Bread). Community Servings fills the role of providing meals to those who suffer from chronic illness, while Project Bread engages in a number of activities on a state-wide basis, notably funding and collaborating with community-level hunger relief organizations. Overall, the report notes how each of the organizations effectively address the immediate needs of hunger, and make some efforts to change the underlying causes of it. However, these organizations face challenges, including limited organizational capacity, lack of funding, inadequate infrastructure, and working with a diverse range of clients who each have different food needs. Consequently, Community Servings and Project Bread, along with other food security non-profit organizations, are significantly challenged to affect sustainable change to food insecurity across Massachusetts.

While some organizations' potential to effect change is limited by their capacity, others are limited by the power structures that underlie the program decisions. Like Foster West, et. al. (2014), the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch (NEOPB) within California's Department of Public Health takes on food security through welfare programs, in this case, federal/state nutrition welfare programs. NEOPB works primarily through SNAP benefits, and in this way functions as a social welfare program. What's unique about this program is that "empowering individuals" is central to the program's goals, meaning empowering people to be healthy, not social or political empowerment (California Department of Public Health 2014). However, that these strategies are

predetermined – as if the answer to food insecurity lies solely in health empowerment – means that the strategies are formed top-down and therefore exist in the status quo. Furthermore, the actual funding of these programs is not sourced from the communities they intend to benefit, thereby creating a level of dependence that belies its empowerment goal and makes it oddly similar to traditional economic development’s reliance on the balance of supply and demand.

So although food related community welfare may focus on the communities forgotten by economic development strategies, it does little to change the underlying conditions that perpetuate inequities. The following section outlines how reaching beyond any sort of pathway system – be that economic development or community welfare – is what is actually essential to creating substantive positive change in the food system.

III. ALTERNATIVE CHANGE FRAMEWORKS

As outlined prior, economic development and social welfare approaches fail to meet the criteria for attainable and genuine food justice since they constitute a false duality that fails to truly transform the food system; both approaches perpetuate the status quo. And yet, these frameworks are most often the system that food system activists turn to. Alternatives to economic development and social welfare have more potential for greater transformational change because they work on systemic levels that address underlying causes.

Local sustainability planning

With a significant focus on inclusionary and critical processes, local sustainability planning provides frameworks where solutions are intricately connected to how the problems came about. While not all of local sustainability planning is critical and inclusive, its process interventions are opportunities for transformation. Concepts of sustainability, mapping, and comprehensive planning are familiar to the world of urban policy and planning and thus are accustomed to a critical view of processes. In Olin Wright's framework, local sustainability planning would use the symbiotic approach the most – it uses dominant planning paradigms to create greater public access and empowerment.

'Sustain Ontario' (Baker 2011) uses inclusionary planning processes to obtain its goals. The Sustain Ontario vision is notable for its socially just process insofar as it uses a collaborative approach that includes the public, media, and policy makers to increase “economic viability and health across the food chain.” Furthermore, the tools in the Ontario vision are designed for implementation throughout a decade, so their feasibility is duly noted. With its inclusionary planning and tools designed for long-term sustainability, Sustain Ontario challenges hegemonic decision-making and shortsightedness.

Representing another form of planning discourse, geographic information systems (GIS) data is often used to identify “food deserts.” These data are subsequently often used for policy and planning decisions. However, there is a vast array of what defines a food desert, and Leete, et.al. (Leete et. al. 2012) conclude that this array results in disparities in which some communities are

missed. These communities – those that are lowest in socioeconomic status – need policy and planning attention the most. Leete, et. al. propose an alternative definition, titled a “food hinterland” that disregards the previous criteria for food deserts but perhaps more accurately describes low food access. The particular identification of a new name, “Food hinterland,” makes it a potentially helpful tool for urban planning, while the revised definition represents a critical response to process.

Lastly, comprehensive planning is often seen as a golden ticket in urban planning. In Mansfield and Mendes (Mansfield and Mendes 2013), the same can be said about comprehensive food systems planning. Comparing cases from London, UK, Toronto, Canada, and San Francisco, CA, the authors present the ways in which urban planners present their goals and strategies for their food system. London’s food system plan is perhaps the most comprehensive, separating it into strategies: initial definitions of the food system (e.g. primary production through disposal), possible areas of impact, and priority areas for best opportunity for impact. Mansfield and Mendes then further go on to explain best practices for structures in which these plans can be implemented. Lastly, there is a discussion about the limitations of structure, insofar as political shifts and power structures go, in having municipal food policy implement successful change. Comprehensive food planning rounds out the discussion of how local sustainability planning can be inclusive, process-focused, and appropriately critical, and therefore, potentially transformative. Comprehensive planning only goes so far, however, in affecting societal change; economic frameworks ground

the process of change in everyday human interactions while still creating shifts in power and resources.

Although local sustainability planning is a useful framework for addressing transformative food systems, it still dances around an issue that often underlies barriers of race, class, and planning tools: economics. Economic struggles, especially in an urban setting, are one of the leading factors of food-related problems like obesity, for example. Critical analyses that assess what criteria determine those in need, such as GIS mapping (Leete et. al. 2012), are a first step towards creating change. Moreover, as noted above, community welfare also has its pitfalls when it comes to “solving” food system failures as its solutions don’t address their underlying causes. Therefore, the missing link here for creating a transformative food system must be system-wide: to address the socioeconomic system itself. There are various terms for what essentially boils down to an alternative to status quo economic development framework. We shall see, as well, that these alternative economic systems have a unique connection to UPE and Olin Wright’s theory of transformational change.

The solidarity economy

The ‘solidarity economy’ recognizes that cultural activities encompass economic activities; economies of the market, public service, and social economic transactions are thereby merged. Altuna-Gabilondo (Altuna-Gabilondo 2013) provides an explanation of the “social and solidarity economy” (SSE) in the context of the well-known Mondragon cooperative in Spain. SSE is characterized

by bringing to light the cultural activities that also encompass economic transactions. In this way, SSE adheres to the UPE framework that requires a hybridity between cultural and material worlds. Moreover, SSE can exist within traditional market settings and still maintain its collaborative nature. By “penetrat[ing] the marketplace with its own logic and different way of performing,” (Altuna-Gabilondo 2013) SSE aligns with Olin-Wright’s logic of interstitial change.

Further emphasizing SSE’s alignment with UPE’s hybridity, Kawano (Kawano 2013) argues that SSE is a merging of three general types of economies; the first system being characterized by private markets and profit-driven (market-driven trading), the second characterized by public service and planned provision (i.e. government focused “planned economy” and “non-trading”), and the third including social economic interactions such as social enterprises, voluntary organizations, and the family economy. SSE seeks to harness each of these economic systems “in a pluralist approach”; by using existing systems, solidarity economy approaches are able to build momentum from concrete practices. Miller (Miller 2006) echoes the pragmatism of the solidarity economy as a democratic alternative to capitalism that is important because it does not prescribe to any one economic system. The economic space is open to all sets of actors and actions.

Although SSE is relatively non-prescriptive (it isn’t open to all economies, just the multiple ones that are rooted in solidarity values), there are certain key characteristics associated with it. Kawano (Kawano 2013) outlines a list of

statements that may comprise a manifesto of sorts for SSE: 1) SSE is an alternative to capitalist, authoritarian, and state-dominated economies; average citizens are actors in shaping their economic lives. 2) SSE has a distinct set of values that accompany economic development (not growth), including,

Humanism; solidarity/mutualism/cooperation/reciprocity, including globalization of solidarity (anti-imperialism); social, political and economic democracy; equity/justice for all including the dimensions of gender, race, ethnicity, class, age and sexual orientation; sustainable development; pluralism/inclusivity/diversity/creativity; territoriality/localism/subsidiarity—decision-making and management on as local a level as makes sense.

3) SSE requires self-management and collective ownership. 4) SSE prioritizes women and other marginalized groups, thereby engaging SSE with anti-poverty and social inclusion movements. 5) SSE is aligned with and has potential for allying with other movements such as the popular/informal economy and organic/green/fair-trade labeling systems.

On a local level as it applies to food, Loh and Lloyd (Loh and Lloyd 2013) have described a set of organizations in the Boston area that adhere to solidarity economy (what they term the “new community economy”). These organizations are initiated and led by residents, often people of color, while still partnered with important other resources. They share values of community building and organizing, work to create more democratic control of community resources, and represent a range of organizational types from non-profits to worker-owned

cooperatives. These characteristics are what Loh and Lloyd identify as those that show how a solidarity economy – one that is “just and sustainable” – is possible in the context of food.

The cooperative economy

The cooperative economy implies that success is not measured in growth but by a community’s ability to provide for itself; stakeholder ownership and governance of processes are prioritized. Cooperative alternative food networks (Anderson, et. al. 2014) are an extension of the cooperative economy applied to the food system. Similar to solidarity economies, the successful development of cooperative alternative food networks (CAFN) is not about growth but about a community being able to provide for itself. Like UPE’s hybridity and being steeped in history, CAFNs entail the creation of new types of spaces that contrast with and build out of already established food sourcing types in a way that entails many stakeholders’ ownership and governance of these processes. CAFNs are the result of combining cooperative principles (Gray 2008 via Anderson, et. al.) with food movement politics (Levkoe and Wakefield 2014 via Anderson et. al.) as well as practices rooted in acknowledging socioeconomic positions. The transformative possibilities of CAFNs thus lie in how they operate both for process and outcome, are politically charged, and acknowledge the affects of social history.

The informal economy

Recognizing that informal transactions (i.e. the complexity of social life) are legitimate as economic transactions, the informal economy draws attention to the shift in dominance between formal and informal transactions. Morales (Morales 1997) defines the informal economy based on a philosophical duality between “economic” life and regular “social” life, the former being labeled “formal” and the latter labeled as “informal.” In many cases, the essential complexity of social life – being associated with informal economies – entails that formal economic transactions are taken as the traditional and only route for economic interactions. However, this duality itself is problematic for many reasons: it ignores the complex yet still legitimate world of informality, it ignores where assigning categorization under this duality is difficult, and it generates a “capitalocentrism” where one approach dominates over the other (i.e. the formal of the informal). The political and economic institutions of capitalism reinforce and are constructed by separating the social from economic. Therefore, an informal economy approach, where social complexities are productive or useful, legitimizes the overlap between traditional and non-traditional transactions (and especially the latter), as well as recognizes that the dominance of approaches is continually shifting via institutions that are shaped by individuals.

IV. CASE STUDIES

This paper began with the proposition that economic development and social welfare together constitute a false dichotomy that food movement efforts often fall into, and that more substantial (or even transformational) change can occur amongst organizations that sidestep the broader systems in which the false dichotomy lies. Considering that transformational change is a weighty and often speculative subject, the case study organizations offer a real illustration for what this transformation can actually look like.

Leaders from Haley House, Dorchester Community Food Coop, Commonwealth Kitchen, and City Growers offer valuable insight as to how their organizations participate in a solidarity economy. While they might not identify this framework by name, their missions and musings on what defines wealth or growth imply that they operate within a similar sort of alternative discourse.

HALEY HOUSE

The Setting

Today, Haley House café is a fixture in the Dudley Square neighborhood, located at the northern most tip of Roxbury, connecting Roxbury and Dorchester to city of Boston's downtown by less than a mile. When one walks into the café, the impression given is of an average community coffee house or café. A mural adorns one wall, tables and chairs along a “communal” table with benches are

there for seating, and a counter display of muffins and cookies separates a glimpse into the kitchen in the back.

Once one becomes acclimated to this familiar setting, however, Haley House's nuances become more obvious. The wall mural to one's left of the entryway is actually a collage of news clippings that tell Haley House's history over the past decade interspersed with postings for community events. The people occupying the tables are a mix of community members meeting over a social lunch and others siloed into the glow of their computer screens. Lastly, however, the nuances behind the counter are not so obvious. Many of Haley House café's staff are those who face trouble finding employment elsewhere, namely those with criminal records.

History and Mission

What is less obvious about Haley House café, however, is its unique history and mission. Haley House as we see it today has its roots in the Catholic Workers Mission, opening as a soup kitchen in 1974. Inspired by a farm associated with the Catholic Workers Movement in the 1980's, Haley House purchased Noonday Farm in Winchendon, Massachusetts in 1982. However, the farm struggled to get its food to Haley House's kitchen; most of the food went to hunger relief causes and agencies instead. Haley House held a strategic planning meeting with the goal to reduce the siloed nature of the organization. As a result of this meeting, Haley House decided to get involved with urban agriculture projects closer to the city center and focus more on food justice. Subsequently,

Noonday Farm was acquired by a land trust in 2012 and Haley House moved its bakery out of the soup kitchen and opened its café in Dudley Square in 2005. The café was acquired with Madison Square Development Corporation as part of a housing program.

Since the café's opening, Haley House's programming expanded to include community art events and a transitional employment program. Underlying its history and programming is the integration of food, community, and culture; community and cultural events are as central to the café's operations as the food itself. Bing Broderick, Haley House's executive director, argues that this integration is central to community health.

Promoting economic development

Another essential element of Haley House is the way that it defines wealth and growth. Bing notes that business traditionalists are "baffled" by Haley House's success; it is inherently less transaction oriented and more focused on community benefits. In this case, wealth and growth are defined as the "warmth of the café." Although Bing acknowledges this definition isn't so easily measurable, he thinks measuring growth could be answered by the hypothetical question of asking what would happen if the café closed. While Bing cannot answer this question for sure, the question implies the high importance of the café for the community. He is uncomfortable with the traditional idea of wealth, that money is more important for success.

Bing is able to point to Haley House's recent expansion to the Ferdinand Building in Dudley Square, a newly reconstructed city-owned building down the block from the café. Haley House is building out a pizza shop, the Dudley Dough, which will likely serve the many city employees who work out of the building. Accompanying the quantitative success shown by the *Dudley Dough's* expansion is still Haley House's programming where it will hire those from its Transitional Employment program.

Despite the previously mentioned diversity of café patrons, Haley House is intentional about its wealth staying in the community. One way it works on this is through its Community Tables events. Recognizing that "the front door of the café is in itself a barrier to entry" (Broderick 2015) (that is, that the café's food is not affordable to all members of its community), Haley House invites its community partners to host regular pay-what-you-can dinners. Furthermore, Daily Dough is especially conscious about this goal. With a perhaps slightly wealthier clientele than the Haley House café's, Daily Dough has benefited from the local foods movement and can use that to start the conversation around keeping wealth in the community.

Haley House and the "New" Economy Movement

Haley House is not alone in its social mission, and as such, is part of a larger movement to a certain extent. For example, DC Central Kitchen in Washington, DC is a nationally recognized social enterprise that employs and trains unemployed adults in a kitchen that makes school meals out of recycled

food. Haley House shares many values with places like DC Central Kitchen, and it is also in a place where it sees opportunity to grow in the movement.

Furthermore, Haley House has numerous indicators of its own leadership in this movement. Haley House has started to be approached by other community organizations asking about how they can do what Haley House is doing; there are parts if not most of its operations that are replicable. Additionally, Daily Dough was created out of funding awarded to Haley House specifically for building a model restaurant that has high benefit for employees. More than a simple pizza shop, Daily Dough is to be a model restaurant; it will be a profit-sharing restaurant where the staff will have a higher stake in the business. The extent to which Daily Dough is worker owned is still being figured out. In order to share profits, the restaurant must make a profit first, so it is being a little more conservative in its early stages.

Aside from profit sharing, Daily Dough and Haley House Café are situated with other forms of employee ownership. New staff members are voted for hire by the current “cohort” of employees. Each employee at Haley House is also trained in as many skills as possible. For example, line cooks are not just line cooks; they are also inventory counters and caterers. Haley House’s roots in the Catholic Workers Movement are especially evident here; the latter is explicitly socialist.

Summary

Food justice is at the core of Haley House’s work, evident in much of its programming. It maintains partnerships with several community development and community based organizations. It prioritizes fair wages for its employees, as well as building skills and preventing recidivism. Even though it takes on a non-traditional approach to wealth, Haley House recognizes it needs enough wealth to pay its employees enough. Its non-traditional approach includes measuring the rates of its employees’ recidivism, how “warm” is the café, and the Daily Dough an experiment in itself in success and replicability. Haley House identifies with a movement insofar as its similarity with other businesses/organizations across the country and that it strives to be a replicable model. Speaking to sustainability, even though Haley House has received grants for its work, it primarily strives to be a for-profit organizational model. Lastly, recognizing the strong public interest around the local food movement, Haley House sees the possibility in "piggy backing" and building off of it.

DORCHESTER COMMUNITY FOOD COOP

Current Day

The Dorchester Community Food Coop (DCFC) exists today in the abstract. There is no building to house the coop – yet – there is no food to line grocery shelves – yet – and there are no employees to be scheduled for shifts – yet. However, DCFC has been in existence, growing momentum, since 2011. Since 2012, DCFC has organized an indoor winter farmers market that hosts

fifteen vendors. A Board of Directors, an intentionally racially diverse entity consisting mostly of Dorchester residents, organizes DCFC. The Coop itself is incorporated in Massachusetts as a cooperative structure. To that extent, it is a hybrid of worker/community ownership. This hybridity is difficult, as certain tensions need to be negotiated between the community who may want affordable food and workers who want good wages. Since DCFC is not yet up and running, this tension has time to be figured out later.

In summer 2015, DCFC offered a Direct Public Offering (DPO) for the coop. Each share value is the same, however the DPO consists of non-voting and voting stock. In this way, shareholders are differentiated not by the dollar value extent of their ownership, but whether or not their share represents wealth staying in the community via voting stock, held by residents of Dorchester and its surrounding communities, or out of the community via non-voting stock. In addition to the Board and shareholders, DCFC's organizing strategy includes a list of many partners who represent different sectors of food-related economic development; e.g. urban agriculture, other food coops, and food waste recycling.

History

DCFC got its start around 2010 when Jenny Silverman, a long time resident of Dorchester, felt frustrated at the type of food available in the area; the little there was – it was difficult to get any grocery store to locate in Dorchester – was mostly unhealthy, little was produced locally, and her neighbors were therefore shopping elsewhere. Jenny approached Harvest Coop, a well-established

community-owned food coop with locations in Cambridge and Jamaica Plain, about locating in Dorchester, however they were not interested. At this point, Jenny began to think beyond her personal frustrations. A new vision of the coop was thus formed, to use the coop in areas of most need. It would be centrally located with easy public transit options and serve communities of color. She then set up a steering committee to plan the coop, which eventually moved to the Board of Directors structure as explained earlier.

Defining Wealth

Growth or wealth are intentionally broad terms in the cooperative environment. “Economic development, like food, is important because everyone needs it to a certain extent.” (Silverman 2015). Therefore, wealth for DCFC is measured by making a profit and being sustainable. Importantly for DCFC’s cooperative structure, wealth can also be defined by ownership structure. When the workers are owners, those jobs therefore carry a lot of importance for determining growth. At DCFC, many of the jobs are entry level but are set up for skill acquisition. Employees will have the opportunity to be trained in understanding budget sheets or be responsible for voting on business matters, for example. The bottom line for coops is that they are built on values; therefore, this sets an understanding that there is no need to make a large profit.

The hybrid worker and community owned coop inherently maintains that wealth stays in the community. In fact, since DCFC has no employee ownership yet (on account of there being no employees), the community owns the store.

While there may be wealth for these owners, equally important is the very fact of something being community owned means that it will have “sticking power” (Silverman 2015). Jenny notes how, in comparison to a family business for example, a community-owned entity has nothing to gain from selling itself. There are more people who have a stake in the operation, and each of these people also would not gain much by it being sold as the ownership shares are more spread out. Therefore, DCFC hopes to be an anchor store in Dorchester to bring other businesses in to the community and thus create an economic development ripple effect.

DCFC is also community oriented insofar as its support of community leadership. For one, coops tend to be community spaces. Community ownership sets coops (especially those like DCFC that are rooted in solidarity values) apart from corporate owned stores in that they are more likely to incorporate community activities alongside the economic activities of grocery store shopping. DCFC in particular has invited community coalitions and organizations to table at their winter farmers market, and it frequently partners with other organizations to host events. Children’s activities, special events, and prepared food to eat on site contribute to the market’s appeal as a destination. Rather than being a place to purchase food and leave, the market’s goal is to be a place where people can gather, meet local farmers, and learn about local food. “Everything about the market is an invitation come in and stay a while” (Silverman 2015).

DCFC and the “New” Economy Movement

When asked, Jenny defined the new economy movement as “getting out of the industrial food system” (Silverman 2015). She identifies with that definition itself, but also has some critiques. She is wary that this sort of movement will be “greenwashed,” referring to the dishonest presentation of an environmentally responsible image. Furthermore, Jenny is more concerned about how exactly a movement would serve the needs of the community being served; for example, affordability might just be the bottom line.

DCFC therefore adheres to the key points of its leadership structure for whatever extent it identifies with an alternative economy. These key points are about affordability and communities of color. DCFC’s leadership and ownership is subject to those key points as its bottom line, in comparison to other businesses for example whose bottom line is profit.

Summary

While Jenny says that it will take anywhere between one and five years to have DCFC up and running, she is very optimistic of the positive role it will eventually play in the community. Especially as the wage gap is getting more public attention, coops are getting more attention and there is an increased interest in expanding the cooperative economy. As evidence of this recognition, Jenny points to a new wave of inner city coops, as well as the tremendous amount of support and resources DCFC has received from other coops in Boston (Harvest) and the regional coop association.

Therefore, while DCFC is only in its infancy, the careful intention behind its organizational strategy – evidenced perhaps by how long it is taking to open – shows great promise for succeeding in its mission. While DCFC recognizes the power of profit, this profit is still indisputably intertwined with the coop’s values. The profit is there not for its own sake, but so that it can provide good wages for DCFC employees and keep DCFC products affordable for the community.

COMMONWEALTH KITCHEN

The Setting

Commonwealth Kitchen (CWK) is a 36,000 square foot facility located in Dorchester, consisting of a shared kitchen space for small businesses, a commissary kitchen for CWK to make products for other businesses, and a food truck docking and cleaning zone. Its signature space is the shared kitchen, where it hosts over forty food businesses that require a commercial kitchen for cooking and packaging. The kitchens are rented by the hour, and along with technical and business assistance on offer, CWK models itself as a food business incubator.

As an incubator, CWK is building off its success of having created over three hundred permanent jobs in the past and now projects that it will create an additional 125 jobs by 2017. As “Boston’s only non-profit food business incubator and food hub,” CWK’s mission focuses on

Promoting entrepreneurship and small business development; Creating jobs with few barriers to entry and meaningful career opportunities;

Building community wealth creation; Improving access to healthy food for low-income families across Boston; and Cultivating the infrastructure needed to strengthen out regional food economy.

History

CWK, although impressive in its operational capacity, has humble origins in a non-profit's incubator kitchen struggling to stay afloat. Nuestra Comunidad Community Development Corporation ran a small kitchen in Jamaica Plain for about ten years until the venture went into debt. Nuestra Comunidad was primarily a community development corporation, and didn't have the resources to run a kitchen. Around 2009, JD Kemp, Jen Faigel, and a small board were brought on board to sustain Nuestra's incubator with the larger goal of also making it a viable business. JD et. al. reached out the community to get feedback on the kitchen, namely abutters who were concerned about noise and sanitation and community members who were interested in local hiring.

Eventually, the kitchen became its own entity and given the name Crop Circle Kitchen (CCK). In many ways, CCK was lucky to have succeeded at all, considering that it emerged out of its previous incarnation while still holding onto the debt of Nuestra Comunidad's kitchen. The City of Boston under Mayor Thomas Menino's administration was interested in keeping the space open. Mayor Menino was known for caring about policy related to food, such as the city's first urban agriculture policy, while the City at large was interested in job creation. Therefore when CCK was able to document job creation and growth, the

City supported it via loan forgiveness. The support from the City was supplemented by some funding from the Cooperative Fund of New England, thereby giving CCK what it needed to get started fixing and growing the incubator space in Jamaica Plain.

Eventually, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DotBay) got in touch with CCK about a new space in Dorchester. DotBay was interested in bringing jobs to the former meat factory while CCK was interested in expanding. With financing from DotBay, CCK Pearl emerged as a scaled up version of CCK, its name an acknowledgement of the building's former incarnation as the Pearl Meats Factory. Eventually, the operation's name switched to Commonwealth Kitchen (CWK), a nod to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that also echoes its mission to create opportunities for more equitable wealth through job creation. In the new facility, CWK is both tenant and operator. The businesses who rent kitchen space – including CWK itself – are formally tenants of DotBay, not CWK, however CWK is responsible for the operations. This means bringing potential business owners through the incubator program and connecting them with the resources they'll need to get started and grow the business to scale.

Defining Wealth

When CCK first emerged out of the kitchen in Jamaica Plain, there was an initial conversation about how to define a successful company. After all, JD and company were tasked with making the space a viable business model. Speaking

less to wealth itself, they instead discussed other markers that would indicate a healthy growing business, e.g. growth projections, attaining skills necessary for marketing, and so forth. Capital wealth, referring to asset building, is inherently difficult for small businesses, so the alternative markers of growth were useful (Adams 2015).

Today, CWK measures its success through the businesses that are able to grow to the scale where they are sustainable. Furthermore, connecting people to business ownership may create wealth if those businesses are successful and the owners are able to pass profits on to themselves and their families (Freeman 2016).

CWK and the “New” Economy Movement

CWK imagined an alternative food economy as the entirety of food systems change and given CWK’s mission and operations, it may easily fit into this movement. However, CWK was more explicitly interested in having local people create food locally and sell locally; that is, a more localized food system. CWK aims to provide not just the space but also the technical assistance needed to grow this sort of system. Its mission understands that how food is produced and processed is part of the solution, and its operations manage a price that make this solution more accessible to start up businesses who normally could not afford those services. Furthermore, CWK’s flexibility is an asset. One imagines that CWK can leverage its problem solving capacities to become whatever role is needed in a new equitable food system (Freeman, 2016).

Summary

Like Haley House, CWK is a mission based nonprofit organization tasked with demonstrating economic viability. However, economic viability is significantly more central to CWK's goals, CWK being tasked with demonstrating that fact since its inception. Consequently, CWK has had more time to forge its own ideas of what economic viability looks like. With the baseline of its success being the sustainability of its shared commercial kitchen and food business incubator, CWK refines additional metrics of success that say more about the food system it is a part of; the ultimate measure of success is a localized food system. CWK works towards that goal by nurturing and growing businesses that hire from within the community, sell locally grown or produced products, and are owned and operated by community members. CWK tries to focus its programs for the communities of Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan.

One way of measuring CWK's success in building a local food economy is with job creation numbers. Since 2009, CWK has created over 300 permanent jobs and has "graduated" over 30 businesses (CCK Pearl 2015). While those numbers are impressive, the reality of who holds those jobs and what their impact is it is difficult to track. Of the total jobs (including business owners) directly created by CWK, about 30-40% are held by residents of Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan. That number does not include the employees of CWK's tenants, many of whom are local residents (Freeman 2016).

Furthermore, while food service jobs are great because they have low barriers to entry (they require skills that one can learn on the job and their hours are often flexible), they are not always the best jobs. Instead, the additional value of these jobs is that they are stepping-stones to other things. In the future, CWK aims to work with workforce development organizations to establish different career ladders that can start with the skills gained from food service jobs.

CITY GROWERS

Snapshot of today

At six different sites across Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, urban farmers are hard at work. They are employees of City Growers, an organization whose mission is to turn Boston's vacant lots into places where fresh healthy food is grown for community members and restaurants. The situation is not dissimilar to many other urban farming initiatives across the country. What makes City Growers unique, however, is that the workers one sees are not volunteers or college interns. They are Boston residents who work the land for living wages.

Founded in 2009 by Margaret Connors and Glynn Lloyd, City Growers now supports its urban agriculture sites through its executive director, farm manager, an annual urban farming conference, and profits made from selling the produce itself.

History

City Growers emerged out of another of Glynn's enterprises, City Fresh Foods. City Fresh was established in 1994 with the aim of being a worker owned company. Aware of the large number of non-profits and that "there might be too many" of them (Lloyd 2015), Glynn sought a creative enterprise instead that facilitated ownership and was a better fit for community control. City Fresh is a catering company that sets a premium on the type of food it makes – healthy – and who it employs – the business owners themselves (that is, worker-owners). With City Fresh being successful for what it is, Glynn then saw the next challenge being the environment.

Thus began City Growers. There were many vacant lots in Boston and large unemployment numbers, and Glynn saw the opportunity for creating a business of "microfarms" throughout Boston, what he calls "reverse economies of scale" (Lloyd 2015). City Growers got off to a rough start, as there was confusion over how to acquire the land. First, it was unclear which city entity owned the vacant lots. Second, and perhaps more importantly, City Growers was looking at permanent ownership; acquiring the land for agricultural use takes the city's land away from higher value property types. After a lot of pushing backward and forward, City Growers eventually acquired four plots of land in Roxbury and Dorchester.

Defining Wealth

City Growers' model presents an alternative yet also familiar approach to wealth creation. In being an economic model for urban farming itself, City

Growers intends for its economic success to be uniquely for the community itself and its food sovereignty. Glynn mentions that this model “plays” with the capitalist system; it is an enterprise that intentionally distorts the profit’s objective (Lloyd 2015). Furthermore, there is another layer of wealth crucial to City Growers’ understanding of it; wealth is also trust and transparency. This layer is especially important for the constituents City Growers serves; Glynn mentions that there is more wealth in those communities than we realize. This is an important type of wealth that City Growers, with its community food sovereignty goal, can leverage.

Another unique aspect of City Growers’ model is where the wealth generated actually goes. Two types of capital, dollar and food, stay in the communities. The food grown in the gardens is meant to generate living wages for the farmers, which means selling it for as high a price as possible. The infrastructure required to support growing this food is “subsidized” by consolidating those types of resources such as land ownership and logistics. Indeed, City Growers does have a non-profit arm – the Urban Farming Institute – that also supports the functioning of those elements.

Second, the dollar capital stays in the community through City Growers worker ownership structure. The workers are one important part of City Growers budget, with the theory that their earnings get recircled throughout the rest of the local economy.

Participation in the “New” Economy Movement

City Growers' represents an economy in which equity, integrity, and reallocation are key. Glynn does not think this is a "new" economy, but just "common sense" (Lloyd 2015). Recognizing the need for a new way of thinking about economics is therefore important, as the capitalist economy alone does not properly account for inequities. Race and class further exacerbate those inequities. The racial component refers specifically to African American history of cotton export and slavery that has led to today's cycle of poverty. Furthermore, the "culture of extraction," as Glynn calls it, ties together racial inequities and environmental destruction. Extraction for agriculture, be that from the land for growing cotton or for chemicals, has a history of ownership and power. Whoever owns the technology has power, and historically, the ownership of that technology is tribal: e.g. either "you are in or out." Reconciliation is a very difficult but necessary process; conversations that recognize personal luck in how one got to one's place is life shed light on the fact that it's not a level playing field.

Those types of conversations happened at City Growers at its inception amongst the founders, and all of its work has thence been parallel to this conversation. Urban farming, for instance, is already a loaded term. Urban refers to people of color while farming implies control of the land and over the community (Lloyd 2015). Most importantly though, is that City Growers' decisions come from its participants.

Summary

Glynn calls City Growers “transformative” insofar as it involves local residents and a different type of product. Those two elements alone are a direct alternative to the heavy and sustainable extraction of the standard food system. That said, Glynn acknowledges that where they are is in a relatively small position in comparison to the rest of the U.S. food supply, so their role is to push from where they are and try to create traction around what they’re doing.

Like the other enterprise owners featured in this case study, Glynn recognizes the energy that has emerged from other food movements. In regards to the energy behind urban agriculture, people are increasingly “waking up” to the instability of the system. “There is a new generation of millennials aware of this instability and older people are recognizing their mistakes,” Glynn believes. The biggest challenge is the trigger piece; what takes people off relying on the existing system. In the meantime, however, everyone needs to play a role, from government to the individual.

V. DISCUSSION

Understanding the different approaches that frame food movement work, we now ask two questions. One: Is there something happening in Boston that can be characterized as a movement in itself? And two: What about the case studies makes them more or less transformative? To answer the first question, we deconstruct common themes found throughout the case studies; indeed, their commonalities seem to indicate that each organization makes up the whole of some kind of particular food movement in Boston. The second question asks what type of food movement this is, and to answer it, we analyze the case studies in light of the theoretical approaches to food movements as found in the literature review. We see how each case does and does not fit into these frameworks, and conclude eventually that even if they are not fully functioning as something like an independent solidarity economy, they are well on their way to being transformative to the larger Boston-area food movement.

DECONSTRUCTION: COMMON THEMES

Perhaps unsurprising given the line of work the case studies are in, as well as their unique locations in traditionally disenfranchised neighborhoods, some commonalities emerge. The following is a deconstruction of the main themes amongst the content and discourse of Haley House, Dorchester Community Food Coop, Commonwealth Kitchen, and City Growers.

Community

One of the most prevalent themes to cut across the four case studies is the focus on community. The Haley House café prioritizes its space being a welcoming community space; its arts events and pay-what-you-can meals open up the café to as many types of people in the community as possible. Similarly, DCFC takes pride in the way that its farmers market is a place for people to gather and community organizations to table. Owners of DCFC shares are also differentiated by being community members (voting) and non-community members (non voting) stock. City Growers, as well, believes that its community control and ownership support trust and transparency. Lastly, although its community connection is not as explicit as that of the other organizations, CWK focuses on community through its attention to geographic scale. CWK has the regional food system in mind as a goal for making change, and recognizes its power in doing so lies within its own work, which is very local.

CDC/Non-profit support

Although each of the cases studies is distinctly an enterprise rather than a non-profit, they are all still rooted to non-profit support. Haley House's Roxbury café came about from the Madison Square Development Corporation (a CDC, or community development corporation) development of a housing program in Dudley Square. CWK has a similar deep connection to CDCs and non-profits. Its original Jamaica Plain location started as a kitchen site for Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation and its second location in Dorchester came about

through the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation. Furthermore, both CWK and DCFC owe their success in part to the “non-profit industrial complex” system, having received funding from the Cooperative Fund of New England (CFNE). While CFNE may not be part of NPIC and may instead be part of a ‘solidarity finance’ sector, all of the case study organizations still access conventional philanthropic funders as well. The ‘non-profit industrial complex’ is a critical look at charitable giving in which large funding organizations operate similarly to capitalist means of power, where only those with large amounts of money have decision-making power. Even though City Growers purposefully opted for being a for-profit enterprise, it has subsequently established a corresponding non-profit enterprise.

Employees

The question of “who works?” is central to the operations and mission of all four cases. Fair or living wages, providing opportunities for job development, and hiring from the immediate community are a few of the employment goals shared in common. Haley House is well known for who it hires; providing employment for those who normally would be unable to get a job is a dedicated program throughout the café and organization. Having a dedicated program to employment underscores Haley House’s commitment to the goal. Beyond merely hiring for its transitional employment program, Haley House also commits to providing livable wages and opportunities for job training and advancement, job qualities that are virtually unheard of in the food service sector.

DCFC's commitment to its employees is evidenced by its hybrid worker/community ownership structure. Although DCFC does not yet have a physical location for which it can hire quite yet, it plans that those employees will have both a greater stake in the coop and an increased potential for income beyond wages. DCFC measures growth by its staff; worker ownership means that there is room for workers to grow and attain wealth. City Growers similarly commits to the mission of its employees being in control. In City Growers' case, its employees have more autonomy in their life, being given living wages for urban agriculture, as well as having greater control over each of the gardens.

Like Haley House, CWK's mission is to provide new employment opportunities in the food system. CWK accomplishes this mission through both direct employment as well as incubating new small businesses that go on to hire new people. CWK's shared facilities create an alternative to kitchen and equipment spaces that are often prohibitively expensive. As a business incubator, CWK aims to remove as many barriers to jobs and employment as possible. Food service jobs are uniquely good for entry-level jobs because they often have part time and flexible hours, which are often ideal for someone like a single parent who needs time out of the day to take care of children. CWK conducts significant outreach to the historically underprivileged neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan in order to ensure that people from those communities are approved to the incubator kitchen space.

Success/wealth

Considering that the organizations are mission-based enterprises, it's no surprise that many of them have nuanced conceptions of wealth. Most of them are uncomfortable with the conventional idea of wealth as money and profit, instead favoring other measures of success that do not imply profitability.

Haley House's definition of success as the warmth of the café and how the community benefits is so nuanced so as to be potentially contradictory. Haley House defines success as both the warmth of the café as well as how the community benefits. However, the new opening of Haley House's pizza shops reveals the potential contradictions in their definition of success. The pizza shop intends to have a profit sharing model with its employees, which would adhere to the second half of their success definition of establishing community benefits. However, in order to share profits, the café must make enough money, thereby placing more emphasis on profits themselves. Bing Broderick and other Haley House leaders are aware of this contradiction and plan to move forward with it thoughtfully.

Similar to Haley House, DCFC's hybrid worker and community owned co-op structure requires careful proceeding with how it regards its profits. While it their goal isn't to generate wealth for wealth's sake, DCFC's profits are still very important, considering that the profits are returned in part to the workers. However, DCFC also measures its success with regards to the role that it plays in the community; its winter farmers markets are designed to be community gathering spaces, a goal that has little to do with profit. And yet, DCFC must

make enough profit to be sustainable, pay its employees adequately, and provide enough of a return to the owners (that is, the community members and workers).

Like DCFC, City Growers aims to create a system where its wealth is shared throughout the community. However, City Growers understands wealth in a nuanced way. There are two types of wealth, capital wealth being the common one and trust and transparency being the other. Trust and transparency may already be plentiful, which means that City Growers can leverage that wealth as it moves towards the goal of food sovereignty. Furthermore, City Growers engages with two kinds of capital, dollar and food. Food capital stays in the community because the gardens are able to feed the communities themselves, while dollar capital stays in the community through City Growers' worker ownership structure.

CWK's concept of wealth is similar to the other organizations in that it shares the ultimate goal of equity, however how it works to reach that goal looks very different. With its food business incubator program, CWK measures its success through the businesses that are able to grow to a sustainable scale. Wealth is created when these businesses are able to pass their profits onto their owners and their families. While this concept of wealth may not stray too far from a common one, that CWK provides a starting place for those who normally wouldn't be able to access it means that CWK is uniquely opening up wealth itself.

Racial awareness

It is no coincidence that all four of the featured organizations in this paper are located in Roxbury and Dorchester. Located just south of the downtown core, the demographics of Roxbury and Dorchester are 56.9% Black or African American and 43.05%, respectively, compared to the Boston city average of 24% (Wikipedia 2017). Furthermore, these neighborhoods have a long history with racist urban policies. In the 1950s, “redlining” mortgages became a common practice, thus securing the segregation of those neighborhoods as whites left. In the 1970s, the area became so disinvested that trash-filled vacant lots and burned down buildings were a common sight. Thanks in part to the community organizing by groups like Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, as well as the development around the MBTA Orange Line near Roxbury Crossing and Jackson Heights stations, Dorchester and Roxbury are no longer riddled with lot after lot of abandoned buildings and average per capita income has increased.

Given Roxbury and Dorchester’s demographics and history, all of the organizations are sensitive to race. Haley House and DCFC are not explicit about race; however, their goals for maintaining inviting community spaces means that they want their café and market customers to reflect the racial diversity of the community. Both Haley House and DCFC cultivate a diverse clientele by using their spaces for an array of purposes; a transaction space where goods are purchased accompanies a community meeting space where events are held. Furthermore, Haley House opens up its transaction space when it hosts pay-what-you-can dinners.

CWK and City Growers are sensitive to race in that they put their energy towards employing and bringing wealth to the people of color who live in the surrounding communities. CWK recognizes that its success rates – numbers of jobs and businesses created – still leave some things to work on. Because its programming is not designed exclusively for any specific demographic, anyone can apply, and if their business fits in with the mix of the program, will be accepted to the incubator space. However, such a system can sometimes crowd out minorities. CWK therefore does additional outreach to the surrounding communities, with the goal to increase the number of applicants from there.

City Growers' leadership is perhaps the most sensitive to race of the group. When Glynn Lloyd speaks about farming, he also speaks about agriculture, industry, and the history of extraction of resources. Historically, these resources – natural and human – were forcefully extracted from people of color for white people's benefit. Furthermore, the use of resources has always been one-sided and nonrenewable; no attention is paid to how that resource may be depleting. City Growers' mission therefore turns this history on its head. Its farming methods are sustainable and non-extractive, meaning that they return what they take. Furthermore, the farmers and consumers are people of color, a reversal of centuries-old patterns of who benefits. Lloyd believes that economics alone does not account for inequities; race – specifically, the African American history of cotton export and slavery leading to today's cycles of poverty – is also key to understanding inequity.

Ownership

Tied to each organization's understanding of wealth, shared ownership is another common thread. Ownership can refer to who earns money from the organization's profits or who has the power to make decisions. While it may be a means to obtain wealth, ownership also fosters non-capital reinvestment back into the organization in the form of ownership of the programs themselves. Haley House, for example, is working towards a shared profit model that not only brings higher than average wages to its employees, but more importantly, fosters employees' investment in the organization that has demonstrably invested in them. Haley House intends for this investment to pay off through these workers becoming more highly skilled and experienced and working their way up through the organization.

Cooperative ownership is crucial to DCFC's identity. As a worker and community owned co-op, DCFC's shared ownership means investment in the community in terms of wealth and health. The shared ownership invests in community health because DCFC was formed as a result of residents' desire to see healthier food in their neighborhood, such as organic and less processed food. Furthermore, DCFC's shared ownership intends to bring about more wealth through dividends paid out to the owners, most of whom – whether worker-owners or community member-owners, are Dorchester residents. This wealth sharing is crucial for Dorchester, considering its history of disinvestment. Furthermore, with residents in control, they are able to effectively gauge and respond to what their fellow residents want from the co-op.

Lastly, for City Growers, shared ownership means reconciliation. Facing a history of white-owned industry and resources, and the stripping of wealth from people of color, City Growers and its workers have reversed that pattern. Although the employees don't own the land – City Growers does – they earn living wages, which are intended to foster a sense of control and ownership around working the land. Furthermore, it is significant itself that City Growers owns the land. Owning land for agricultural use is a relatively new policy in Boston, instated with the passing of Article 89 in late 2013. Arriving at this policy was a long process, and even then, the amount of available land for farming is scarce. Thus is the ingenuity of City Growers' business plan; it can afford owning multiple plots of land for individual farmers to use because it consolidates logistics, such as the legalities of ownership and consumer networks. City Growers' vision of shared ownership is therefore highly pragmatic, but also one with lofty goals of reconciling racism by bringing land back under control of People of Color.

COMPARISON OF THEMES BETWEEN LIT REVIEW AND CASE

STUDIES

How can we characterize the case studies by the existing frameworks for transformational change or other food movement frameworks? By looking at how the organizations do and do not fit these structures, we begin to understand their unique (or familiar) position in the food movement and/or their potential to shake it up.

Food Justice

The food justice approach recognizes that food is racial, is guided by marginalized voices, and is concerned with sustainability and equity. Throughout the case studies, themes of employees, racial awareness, and ownership adhere to the food justice vision. The obvious link that makes the case studies food justice projects is that they are all concerned with race, either implicitly through their work in predominantly African American neighborhoods or explicitly, with their hiring practices and outreach efforts. Moreover, the case studies' shared ownership structures align with the food justice valuing of equity, while the employment practices of training workers for additional skills indirectly makes marginalized voices heard. These employees are not cogs in the labor system, low-skilled and easily replaced, but instead have been invested in and are thus more likely to heard.

Urban Political Ecology

Urban Political Ecology (UPE) brings to light the tendency for some food justice efforts to unintentionally perpetuate the problems they aim to solve by not considering which processes actually perpetuate problems. UPE therefore focuses on a hybridity of process and outcome as a more effective means for change. With the central challenge that UPE poses being how does an apparent solution actually perpetuate the problem, we then turn to the case studies to assess how much their work focuses on processes as opposed to finding solutions to a problem.

For Haley House and DCFC, who are going through an expansion and establishment, respectively, their processes are even more apparent, perhaps by necessity. As they grow, they must be careful with how they reach one of their goals of increased community wealth, while still ensuring that the organization can support itself. Both organizations work to find solutions to reach whatever bottom line keeps them in business, but they also recognize how their missions drive them to achieve these solutions in a certain way. For example, DCFC wants to solve the problem of lack of fresh healthy food in Dorchester. While an obvious solution to this problem might be to open a grocery store, DCFC recognizes that the lack of a food store represents a larger problem of disinvestment and structural inequalities. Therefore, it's highly important for whatever grocery store DCFC ends up opening to be a direct investment in the community (through worker and community ownership) and to work to dismantle structural inequalities.

The primary problem that City Growers identifies is the industrial food system. It aims to address this problem by acting independently from the industrial food system on all levels, including each level of production and sales. By putting attention to every level, City Growers is concerning itself with process; it recognizes that each time one of its processes shifts away from industrial systems and into systems where labor and resources are used sustainably means that industrial food is displaced. City Grower's solution to the industrial food system is centered on replacing that system's processes with an alternative.

The problem that Commonwealth Kitchen identifies is that start up costs for new businesses are prohibitively high, making wealth and job creation through business ownership inaccessible to everyone. Its solution is to lower those start up costs by consolidating the logistics of food businesses into a shared space that is more affordable. While being able to lower those start up costs may be a solution in itself, it is not a solution that's available to a greater system; it does not affect any larger processes. Lowering the start up costs for its businesses does not engage with or change broader systemic processes.

Transformational Change

One particularly attractive aspect of Eric Olin Wright's transformational change framework is how easy it is to identify which realm an organization is working in. We intuitively know how much the organization is working within the current economic and social system. Ruptural change is revolutionary and divisive, interstitial change entails new institutions being built from within the cracks of capitalism, and symbiotic change uses capitalism but in a way that is more effective and empowering.

Haley House can be regarded as participating in symbiotic changes. While it makes and values profit in the traditional sense, its profit derives less from consumption and more from community building. Haley House also participates in a more effective means of wealth recirculation by paying its workers higher than average wages and providing more opportunities for community members to get jobs and learn new skills. Similarly, Commonwealth Kitchen is symbiotic in

that it works within capitalism but brings about jobs and business ownership more effectively.

It is perhaps telling that City Growers embodies all three of the transformational change frameworks; it is an organization that has put a lot of thought not just into the immediate problems it wants to fix but also how it is situated as a change-making entity in its community. As explained in McClintock's analysis of urban agriculture, City Growers is ruptural in that it completely changes the land itself. It is also interstitial because it creates healthier food access for the community from within the cracks left behind by the food system. Lastly, City Growers is symbiotic because it has capitalist logic and outcomes, but it intentionally arrives at those outcomes in sustainable and racially just ways.

Reform vs. Transformation

The reform/transformation dialectic goes into more detail describing how food movement approaches appear and their potential for either maintaining or subverting the status quo. The neoliberal trend of food movements usually means some sort of proprietary technology that emerges to alleviate or subvert a crisis. However, because the technology is proprietary, the solution is integrated into the capitalist system that led to certain groups suffering from the crisis more than others. Reformist food movements are similarly status quo maintainers. Programs like food banks, for example, are reformist, as they offer temporary solutions to an immediate problem (i.e. hunger) without challenging, or often receiving

funding support from, the corporate systems that create the inequality that leads to hunger. In contrast, progressive food movements build in awareness of how they contribute to the status quo with the goal of eventually dismantling it. Food justice programs, for example, are rife with discussions of racial privilege. Lastly, radical food movements actively work to dismantle corporate power through redistribution of wealth.

Haley House is primarily included in the progressive food movement. By creating a welcoming space that puts community members first, it fosters community voices and discussion. In a part of Boston with a majority African American population but a significant influx of white office workers, a space that is welcoming to everyone and forces interactions between socioeconomic and racial groups is no small feat. In theory, at least, Haley House's community space can be a place for its customers to realize that food is racial and how they, unwittingly or not, are a part of that system. And although it is debatable as to whether or not a job program that pays trainees could be considered a social welfare program, Haley House is also somewhat reformist insofar as its teaching kitchen program is a social safety net for those who have struggled to find employment.

Even though it has not yet broken ground, DCFC can be seen as part of the radical food movement. Its cooperative structure aims to take economic transactions out of capitalism. Furthermore, wealth is redistributed through living wages and ownership dividends throughout the community. DCFC is similar to Haley House in its creation of a community space, and so in that sense it has a

progressive bent to it as well; however, being a cooperative means that DCFC is radical first and foremost.

CWK has both progressive and neoliberal traits. It is progressive in that it aims to expand opportunities to groups that have suffered the injustice of being barred from those opportunities. However, these opportunities are more strictly capitalist opportunities; because CWK operates in a capitalist framework with capitalist goals of wealth creation, it is also neoliberal. Not only is CWK explicitly profit-driven, but its neoliberalism is also seen in the fact that those who are benefitting from its services, its commissary kitchen for example, have no ownership of those services.

City Growers has both radical and progressive traits. It is progressive in that it emphasizes grassroots power and community. It ties sustainable agriculture not just to healthy food access but also to economics and the causes of poverty. City Growers' radicalism goes beyond the sense that DCFC practices it in redistributing wealth through worker ownership. City Growers is also radical in how it uses the land for agriculture. Taking land out of real estate use putting it into farming, as well as the sustainable and non-extractive use of resources, dismantles the capitalist logic of land value and disposable or nonrenewable cheap resources.

Traditional Economic Development

While some of the case study organizations have elements of capitalist logic, the fact that all of them have social missions as well means that they do not

fit into a strictly traditional economic development framework. However, as explained previously, traditional economic development is often manifested in urban planning discourses through the concept of the creative class. Therefore, perhaps the better question here is how the creative class framework manifests itself in the organizations, thereby making them somewhat complicit with traditional economic development.

To the extent that CWK encourages innovation in food products, it also fits in with the creative class framework. Its culinary incubator is designed to help new food businesses grow, thus tying it closely to the creative class notions of creativity and innovation. While food business owners typically would not fit the profile of creative class professions, the start up business world does. Many of the successful CWK business graduates go on to sell to bigger distributors, including local Whole Foods supermarkets. Haley House is also indirectly related to traditional economic development in that its café space caters to the creative class – its long communal tables are often festooned with laptops belonging to freelance creative types.

Perhaps the biggest irony of City Growers' radicalism is how intricately tied to traditional economic development they still are. Their shared wealth model and sustainable farming practices are essentially subsidized by the fact that City Growers sells its produce at a premium price to consumers outside the immediate community, such as downtown restaurants. This slightly less than grassroots model of generating wealth gives City Growers the freedom to create a more sustainable and just producer-focused food supply chain.

Perhaps the one organization to make the biggest effort to move beyond traditional economic development is DCFC. DCFC acknowledges how it still might interact with the creative class; its direct public offering of ownership shares – the community owned portion of the cooperative – was not limited to any particular group of community members. Consequently, someone who bought into DCFC could be a privileged food movement type who is interested in finding a new place to buy kale rather than having a personal interest in supporting the community. DCFC attempted to counteract having undue outsider influence by offering two types of ownership shares: voting and non-voting stock. Only Dorchester residents could purchase voting stock, thereby ensuring that no one could simply “pay their way in” to having influence over DCFC.

Community Economic Development

While many of the organizations wrestle with how they interact with traditional economic development and the broader capitalist system, these negotiations often express themselves in the framework provided by community economic development (CED), where the essential question asked is who benefits from an economic transaction. All of the case study organizations participate in or interact with traditional economic development to greater or lesser extents, but negotiate with it by paying attention to who are producers, suppliers, and consumers. Like traditional economic development, CED still relies on social welfare systems for those who are excluded from benefiting. Going beyond CED

therefore entails asking how to build empowerment through those transactions or make those transactions not just economic but social as well.

Haley House participates in capitalism through its café and catering business, but is motivated by the social goals in its mission. Its biggest concern is to foster social improvements through various parts of the food system: creating a café space that is welcoming and inclusive to be used as a community space, or filling its labor force with men and women who formerly faced challenges being employed. Thus, while the Haley House café and catering take on business to keep its profits growing, it has built in a system whereby who benefits from those profits is part of its social mission.

DCFC offers market solutions, albeit doing so in a way that completely reinvents who benefits. In aiming to sell products that lean towards the healthy and organic spectrum, DCFC selects what type of producers will benefit; it also makes the determination that its employees will benefit through its worker-ownership structure. The consumer, if they are community owners, will also receive additional benefit of profit sharing beyond what they're able to bring home on their latest grocery run. DCFC recognizes that they will eventually have to price consumers out – not all consumers can afford organic food and the like – and so they still rely on social welfare systems to pick up who is priced out. In that way, even though DCFC market mechanisms fall outside traditional economic development's capitalist paradigm, in using these mechanisms to increase community benefit, DCFC brings a cooperative approach to CED.

CED is at the heart of CWK's work. It opened its doors originally because of CED; a community development corporation was interested in job creation, thus fitting into the CED themes of wanting to make job and wealth creation more accessible to more people. CWK does not, however, pay attention to how the consumer benefits. Nor should that matter, however; CED is not concerned that all elements of a food system benefit from every transaction, but that at least one element of the system is consciously improved on. In CWK's case, they focus on job creation and skills training in the hopes that the wages created from those jobs ripple throughout the community.

While its goal of generating living wage jobs for farmers is considered a tenet of CED, City Growers generally does not fit into CED for the same reasons that it doesn't fit into traditional economic development. Its goals are more focused on subverting the capitalist system by creating an alternative one. The extent that City Growers cares about economic development is for the farmers and how they are benefiting from their practices, as well as how the earth benefits from those practices too. City Growers sense of who benefits is less about who benefits from a transaction and more about how a symbiotic benefit emerges. Because City Growers' economic activities are designed to be less transactional and more social or sustainable, it doesn't quite fit into the logic of traditional or community economic development.

Food Security (community welfare)

Food security through community welfare is primarily concerned with the social safety net. Although it appears to be dichotomous with economic development, its interconnectedness with capitalist systems means that it also perpetuates them. Food security approaches are usually top down and/or dependent on funding.

DCFC does not fit into the food security framework in the sense that it gives nothing away ‘for free’ as characterizes the charitable aspect commonly found in community welfare frameworks. However, DCFC illustrates how even those welfare frameworks have been “neoliberalized” in that only those who work or are trying to find work should get anything. Moreover, its funding is not dependent on big institutions of the food system but on the community itself. This ownership means that their only stake is in the cooperative itself and their community’s health and wellness, as opposed to external profits or a return on (funding) investment.

Similarly, CWK has little to no participation in food security/social welfare because none of its services or products are offered for free. As do the other organizations to greater or lesser extents, it aims to be a self-sufficient business and not rely on funding streams. Nevertheless, even if CWK were dependent on their funder’s goals, those goals would align with CWK’s; they got their building site through a community development corporation, so that investment was less about seeing a return on capital than about investing in an entire community.

City Growers is also less concerned with being a social safety net or providing food security. As discussed, the extent that its more radical programs are subsidized, they are subsidized by funds from their own programming. City Growers would still like to grow food security over time through the success of its sustainable and community owned gardens. Its primary focus is on long-term land and food sovereignty rather than immediate relief from poverty or hunger.

While Haley House's job training program does not exclusively serve previously incarcerated men and women, they are a big segment of who enrolls in the program. This program is a social welfare program not in the sense that it gives free food for the hungry, but that it seeks to fill the needs created by a broken criminal justice system. It is a food organization that is narrowly related to social welfare rather than a food security organization engaged in social welfare. In another area of the organization, Haley House also narrowly avoids the food "handout" in that its community dinners are not free but are pay-what-you-can. This element brings dignity to what otherwise would be a welfare- or food security-like program. It is perhaps unsurprising that Haley House would have the closest connection to food security/social welfare frameworks of the case study organizations, considering that it also runs a soup kitchen in another facility.

Alternative Economic Development

The three frameworks encompassed by the alternative economic development umbrella – solidarity economies, cooperative economies, and informal economies – ask how each organization can challenge the status quo by

changing economic conditions. The solidarity economy recognizes the legitimacy of different types of transactions: private/market driven, public service/planning, and social economic transactions. The cooperative economy states that success is not about growth but that a community is able to provide for itself. It prioritizes stakeholder ownership and governance of processes. Lastly, the informal economy overlaps with the solidarity economy in that it recognizes social transactions as legitimate economic transactions. It pays close attention to how formal and informal transactions shift in dominance.

Haley House participates in each of the alternative economic development frameworks to a certain extent. It aims for its employees to have more ownership through profit sharing and internal training towards more shared governance. However, Haley House is non-cooperative in that it still aims to grow. While growth can still be a goal of the solidarity economy, this goal serves as a contrast with the particular form of capitalist growth that demands high rates of growth in short periods of time in order to satisfy investors. Because Haley House's mission focuses on program delivery rather than using its economic transactions as a subversion technique, its connection to cooperative economies is more incidental than intentional.

DCFC is unsurprisingly best described by the cooperative economy. Unlike Haley House, its intentionality behind creating a cooperative is what informs the rest of its programming and operations. Its community and worker ownership, further divided into voting and non-voting stock, provides authentic stakeholder engagement and governance. And while DCFC needs to grow to be

able to build its physical location and to put out enough of a profit to surpass its overhead so that it has profit to share, it does not have any push to grow beyond this level, so long as it continues meeting the community's needs for a grocery store.

If anything, CWK identifies with the solidarity economy. It supports an easier entry to the growth-driven economy. Its underlying mission in reaching the growth-driven economy is to support how cultural activities are part of economic transactions as well, such as cultural food traditions or culinary innovations. CWK does not participate solely in the solidarity framework because it is also strongly motivated by capitalist notions of growth. However, in opening up who is able to participate in market growth to include cultural influences that have been previously ignored, CWK legitimizes the social aspect of transactions.

City Growers encompasses a cooperative economy. Its worker ownership means that community members have the biggest stake in the organization's goals and processes. City Growers' concern for sustainability can also be seen as an informal economic practice because it treats using natural resources as a cultural transaction; these resources are not purely extracted in an exploitative way, but are taken as part of an exchange with the promise being that the resources will be looked after. Reframing what a transaction looks like – its semiotic boundaries (i.e. availability of future resources) and what each party's relationship with those boundaries are – means that the lines between economic and cultural transactions are blurred. Like DCFC, operating in an alternative economic framework is essential rather than incidental to City Growers' mission.

VI. CONCLUSION: LESSONS LEARNED

Many planners do not talk or think about food as something in their domain. The theories and cases explored in this paper therefore situate food in discourses planners are familiar with and can utilize. Deconstructing the case in discourses planners are familiar with (i.e. economic development, social welfare) gives planners a means to start thinking about transformational change in this familiar language. The lessons here are for an internal (praxis) change amongst planners and organizations, which in turn can lead to external (societal) transformative change. Moreover, having acknowledged that the emerging solidarity food economy does not encapsulate the entirety of a food system, it is important to recognize what does exist in food pathways' intentions, and how these can be built upon. The lessons learned from the case studies are therefore also applicable to other organizations or programs operating in the food movement.

The case study organizations in Boston, even if they don't constitute a fully fleshed out solidarity economy, still contain many of its components. Recognizing what makes the organizations unique as well as what lessons can be drawn from them is important, as it would possibly lead to a more complete solidarity food economy in Boston. This possibility is even more important and exciting, as this sort of food movement shows the greatest promise for being transformational. While the proximate value in the lessons from these

organizations is that they operate similarly to a solidarity economy and thus challenge the status quo, their ultimate value lies in their ability to foster real change. The lessons one can take from these organizations all point to effecting change by avoiding perpetuating the root of problems (see Urban Political Ecology), recognize and foster challenges to the status quo (see Olin Wright's transformational change theories), and being firmly situated within the Boston food system in order to work with each other and other organizations (see Holt-Gimenez's Reform vs. Transformation).

Leverage CDC Partnerships

A common theme amongst many of the case study organizations is their connection to community development corporations (CDCs). The Haley House café and both of CWK's facilities were originally owned by CDCs and were transferred to the organizations as part of neighborhood development projects. CDCs are in a unique position to use real estate for social goals, such as job creation and community building. Therefore, cities and land use planners can encourage real estate development with CDCs, who will create developments that may be below market but are suited to the community's needs. As the case studies show, community organizations have a lot to gain in leveraging a CDC's resources. Once a CDC identifies a certain community goal, an organization can align itself with that goal, showing how its programming can help achieve it. In

turn, the CDC provides an immense resource of real estate, as well as the non-tangible asset of institutionalized support.

Demonstrated replicability

The second lesson to be gained from the case studies is the importance of proving success and being funded to demonstrate that an organization's model can be replicated elsewhere. Haley House and CWK are both part of networks of similar organizations across the country. While CWK is able to connect with its network and share the keys to its success, Haley House has also been funded to demonstrate the success of its model by expanding to a new café operation (Daily Dough pizza restaurant). Similarly, DCFC hopes to eventually be an 'anchor store' – a place in the community that spurs further investment and development. In that way, it too hopes that its success will expand to others. The replicability element of the case studies is important because it has implications for how these case study organizations fit into Holt-Gimenez's Reform vs. Transformation framework. Holt-Gimenez argues that in order to be more transformative, elements from throughout the food system must work together. Therefore, being able to serve as a model means that they can more easily spread the work they're doing.

Pragmatic ways to challenge the food system

The third lesson to take from the case studies is how to pragmatically avoid perpetuating the root of the problem. According to the UPE framework, where food movement efforts often fall short is that they work to fix a problem while, often unintentionally, perpetuate the problem itself. In the Boston emerging solidarity food economy example, the case studies identified the root of the problem at the outset, and in doing so, build their solutions around ways that directly challenged the root problem. DCFC, City Growers, and CWK all identify the corporate industrial food system as directly tied to the proximate problems their communities face: hunger, poverty, and environmental destruction. Therefore, to avoid perpetuating this system, they have found solutions to the proximate problems that also address the ultimate problem.

DCFC and City Growers circumnavigate the corporate industrial food system by creating alternative systems for transactions that lay outside of traditional capitalist systems. By creating miniature food systems where profits are shared amongst the community, DCFC and City Growers challenge the traditional mentality of profit growth. Furthermore, both organizations offer products that are either or both local and organic, which thereby supports less intensive and more environmentally sustainable food production. CWK also sees itself as purposely distancing itself from and challenging the industrial food system in that its food business incubator program effectively builds a stronger local and regional food system in Boston, the smaller scale of which contrasts with and subverts the globalized corporate industrial food system.

Keeping wealth in the community

A fourth lesson derived from the case studies is on the importance of keeping wealth in the community, and which efforts are more effective at doing so. The two primary methods that the case study organizations use in their efforts to keep wealth in the community are shared ownership structures and job creation. All four of the case study organizations have some sort of job creation program or operation; only DCFC and City Growers (with Haley House on the way) also have a shared ownership structure. With shared ownership comes shared profits, which are intended to bring wealth back into the hands of the community. While Haley House is working towards a shared profit and ownership structure, in the meantime it aims to share ownership more abstractly, insofar as cross training its employees to take on leadership roles.

The shared ownership and wealth structure is a more direct means of keeping wealth in the community, as opposed to job creation, which is CWK's primary operation. While CWK's commissary kitchen and its business graduates may create many jobs, it's not predetermined that those jobs go to people in the immediate surrounding community. That resident-held jobs are a more effective means of keeping wealth in the community is evident by the amount of outreach that CWK does to attract its neighbors to these jobs.

Expanding the definition of a transaction

The fifth lesson from the case studies is concerned with making the concept of an economic transaction inclusive of more activities. Traditional economic transactions entail an exchange of currency for goods or services; they are dependent on currency valuations that often lack cultural context. In contrast, alternative economic frameworks recognize that economic activities also include cultural and social interactions; opening up transactions to cultural context provides more opportunities for equity. Haley House, DCFC, and City Growers have all put into practice valuing cultural transactions equally to currency transactions. Haley House's emphasis on creating a community space means that part of what its customers pay for (in addition to their coffee and food) are the intangibles of community and café "warmth." DCFC also prioritizes creating a community space, as evident by the community groups and organizations it invites to its farmers markets. City Growers makes use of non-traditional transactions in a different way; its prioritization of environmental sustainability in its farming practices means that it does not simply choose whatever resources are least expensive, which are often environmentally unsustainable and nonrenewable. Instead, City Growers treats the growing of food as an economic activity where the value lies in how the land is nurtured and sustained.

Meaningful processes

The final lesson gained from the case studies is on the importance of critically questioning what is a meaningful process. Each of the case study

organizations are almost constantly questioning how their processes support their missions or larger goals of equity. Haley House must reassess its processes often to ascertain how close (either financially or procedurally) it is to offering its employees shared ownership. DCFC knows that there is some conflict between the needs of its worker-owners and its community-owners; the workers have a greater interest in being paid well while the community has an interest in having inexpensive food available. Navigating this tension means more opportunities for DCFC to be thoughtful about its processes. Similarly, CWK has also had reassessed its processes for outreach, after it realized that the majority of kitchen incubator applicants they receive come from outside their community. While Haley House, DCFC, and CWK have had to think about how their processes as they related to the operations of their organizations, City Growers was conscious of creating meaningful processes right at the outset of its founding. It created meaningful processes by including all of its stakeholders and members in decision-making; doing so was a conscious decision made by City Growers' founders at the outset.

Concluding Thoughts – What does transformation look like?

For a paper that focuses so heavily on the idea of transformational change, it dances around the task of describing what this change actually looks like. While it's beyond the scope of this paper to take on that task in detail, I can at least say that transformation offers a way out of thinking that there is no alternative to the








trap of the economic development and social welfare pathway dichotomy. While the solidarity economy will not give a solution to everyone's questions or problems, it suggests that other pathways are possible. This paper suggests that the biggest takeaway for planners is that transformational change can be launched from either of the pathways, however organizations or programs won't be anything more than good businesses or social services if they stay in those pathways. Therefore, planners should be challenged to support these organizations and programs from the solidarity economy pathway.

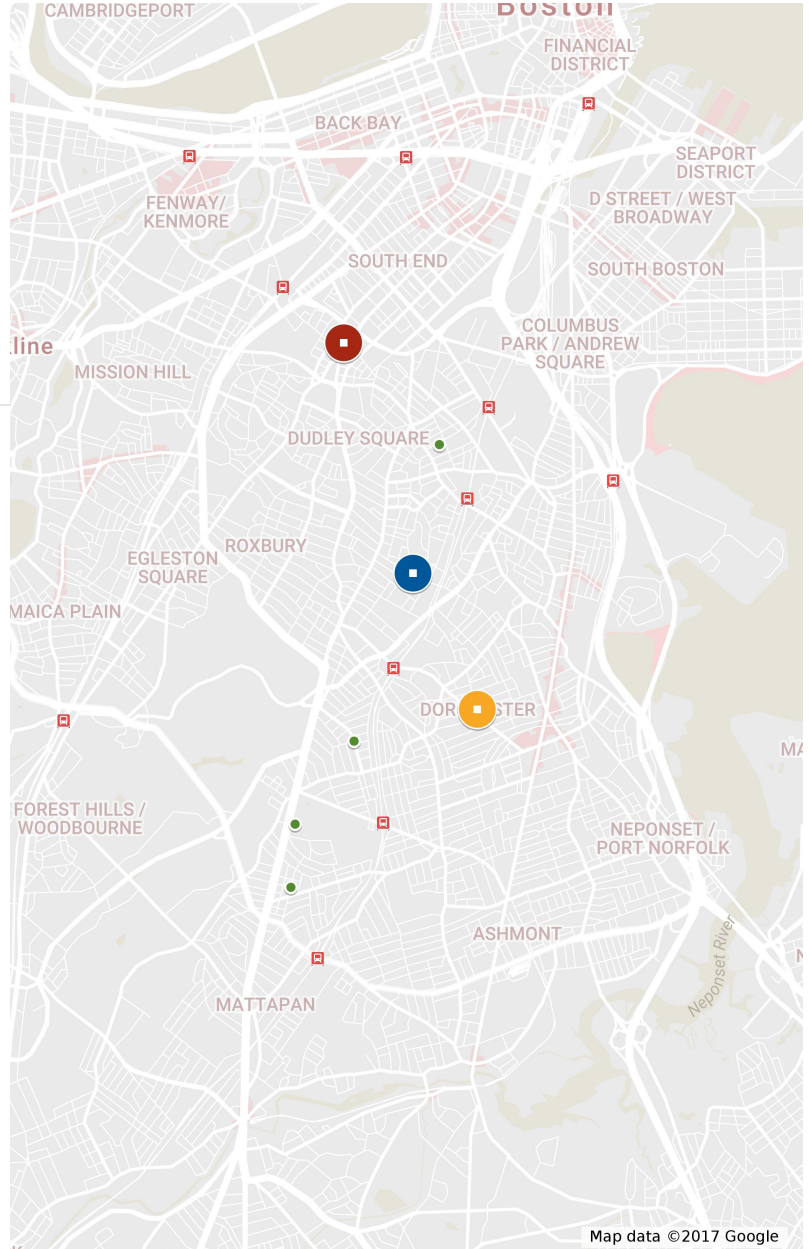
If transformational change means the increased presence of one food justice pathway over others, it opens up the discussion of paradigm shifts. With its fluidity and multiple permutations of discourses, theories, and practices, the pathways lens is perhaps similar to a paradigm. Does transformational change really mean transforming from one system to another, as paradigm shifting suggests? Maybe therein lies the nuance of the pathways as a lens to measure transformational change; pathways are not systems in and of themselves, and thus allow for a grounded theory approach for determining transformation. Paradigm shifts, on the other hand, are relatively more connected with systems change and closer adherence to prescribed theories.

APPENDIX A: MAP OF CASE STUDY LOCATIONS

Thesis case study locations

Case Study Locations

-  Haley House Bakery Café
-  Dorchester Community Food Coop
-  CommonWealth Kitchen
-  City Growers - Garden
-  City Growers - Garden
-  City Growers - Garden
-  City Growers - Garden



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