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Refugees, Racialization, and Resistance: Examining Lewiston, Maine's Farmers' Market

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**Refugees, Racialization, and Resistance:
Examining Lewiston, Maine's Farmers' Market**

An Honors Thesis

In Partnership with
Sherie Blumenthal, St. Mary's Nutrition Center

Presented to
The Faculty of the Program in Environmental Studies
Bates College

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts

By
Zsofia Duarte
Lewiston, Maine
March 28, 2018

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Abstract

Scholarship on the cultural politics of the local food movement asserts that the movement often “hails a white subject, entitling people marked as white to define the rhetoric, spaces, and broader projects of agro-food transformation” (Guthamn 2008, 395). Common representations of local farming within American culture affirm that a white image is provoked when exploring the following questions: Who has historically produced local food? Who knows how to produce local food? Who should produce local food? Who produces the best quality local food? Who cares about producing local food? Who are people comfortable with touching and tending to local food? In Lewiston, Maine, however, the local food movement has been shaped by overtly anti-racist practices and by the agency of minority – mostly Somali Bantu immigrant – communities of color since its early years, making Lewiston an interesting case to research. This thesis examines the culture of Lewiston, Maine’s Farmers' Market, analyzing the role race plays in participant’s perceptions of, interactions with, and policies involving producers of color, drawing on theories of racialization and anti-racist practice. While many studies on race and food have focused on minority consumers, this research focuses on perceptions of, interactions with, and policies involving minority *producers*. What work does race do around people, and what work do people do on race in the Lewiston Farmers' Market? What are the processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market? This thesis offers an analysis that can help enhance anti-racist and food justice practice in communities where race is further complicated by other racialized identities.

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Introduction

“There is an idea of farmers’ markets and who shops there,” a Lewiston Farmers’ Market participant put bluntly. The participant went on to further develop her point, and detailed what I have noted over the years—the most popularized images associated with farmers’ markets, an initiative within the local food movement, are of middle to upper middle class white people. For example, as I concluded this research project I received an email from a Bates student advertising the upcoming showing of the new film “Growing Local.” The email read “the film points to the vibrancy and the growing pains of the local food movement in Maine” and the film’s poster displayed a sole white male wearing a button down and carhartts holding a handful of harvested carrots.

As the participant and the email highlight, common representations of local farming within American culture affirm that a white image is provoked when exploring the following questions: Who has historically produced local food? Who knows how to produce local food? Who should produce local food? Who produces the best quality local food? Who cares about producing local food? Who are people comfortable with touching and tending to local food?

Several scholars have researched the whiteness in the local food movement, such as Rachel Slocum (2006, 2007, 2008, 2010), Alison Alkon (2010, 2011, 2012), Christie McCullen (2008, 2010), Julian Agyeman (2005, 2011, 2013), and Julie Guthman (2008, 2017). Within American culture, whiteness refers to “a set of structural privileges, a standpoint of normalcy, a particular cultural politics” (Guthman 2008, 389). Farmers’ markets have been widely critiqued for “entitling people marked as white to define the rhetoric, places, and broader projects of agro-food transformation” (2008, 395). However, the leading scholarship on whiteness in farmers’ markets, or the local food movement at large, more heavily analyzes the whiteness of the

consumer community (Slocum 2006, 2008; Alkon and McCullen 2010; Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Guthman 2008, 2017; McCullen 2008). The whiteness of the producer community, however, has been less researched.

Reading this literature, I was curious how these larger trends relate to the local food movement in the city I have lived in for the past three years and counting for my undergraduate experience: Lewiston, Maine. Lewiston is the second largest city in the the state of Maine, and located in southwestern Maine, it is the most central city in Androscoggin County. Lewiston is one half of the Lewiston-Auburn metropolitan statistical area, commonly referred to as “L-A.” In the early to mid-2000s, Lewiston, a conservative city, welcomed a massive wave of immigrants, many of whom were from Somalia, fleeing the Civil War.

As the Somali Bantu population practiced subsistence farming in Somalia, upon their arrival to Lewiston several white anti-racist and food justice scholars, activists, and organizers began working with them to create farming opportunities here in Lewiston. Thus, according to several Lewiston residents who started the Lewiston Farmers’ Market and local food programming, the local food movement - both the mainstream interest and the market - were *started* in the interest of and with majority immigrant, mainly Somali Bantu, farmers. One of the original white organizers told me, “the farmers’ market currently running was born from Mainers eager to offer immigrant farmers a market to sell local produce and to offer the entire city of Lewiston an opportunity to buy locally grown food directly from local growers.”

Alongside the Lewiston Farmers’ Market’s anti-racist history is the emboldened white supremacy across the country, and specifically in southern Maine. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), “the radical right was more successful in entering the political mainstream in 2016 than in half of a century” (Potok 2017). Trump’s run for office “electrified

the radical right, which saw him as a champion of the idea that America is fundamentally a white man's country" (2017). In the aftermath of election day, a wave of hate crimes and lesser hate incidents swept the country. The SPLC counted 1,094 bias incidents in the first thirty-four days (2017). Anti-immigrant incidents remained the most reported at 315, followed by anti-black at 221 and anti-Muslim at 112 (Hatewatch Staff 2016).

Bringing it home to the state of Maine, and southern Maine in particular where Lewiston is located, there has been an alarming distribution of Klu Klux Klan anti-black and anti-immigrant recruitment flyers resulting from the election. In January 2017, fliers were distributed in Freeport, Augusta, Appleton, and Union residential communities (Bouchard 2017). In April, Waterville residents found flyers in their driveways (Amour 2017). In August, flyers were spread on various main routes in Boothbay Harbor, Southport, and Wiscasset (Hoey 2017). As the president of the S.P.L.C. said, "White supremacists are celebrating, and it's their time, the way they see it" (Okeowo 2016).

Knowing the white imagery popularly associated with the local food movement, the trend of whiteness dominating farmers' markets, the less researched whiteness in producer culture, the anti-racist history and producers of color in Lewiston's Farmers' Market, and the surge of anti-immigrant, anti-black, and anti-Muslim sentiments across the country and in southern Maine, it felt *vital* that researchers ask questions about the role race plays in Lewiston Farmers' Market participants perceptions of, interactions with, and policies involving producers of color. While race is an intersectional process and cannot ever exist or be productively analyzed as fully fragmented from other identities (discussed further in chapter two), I believe questions of race can and *must* be kept at the foreground, while also being attentive to the multiple other relevant forms of difference, given this moment in research and political history.

Research Questions

This thesis examines the culture of Lewiston, Maine's Farmers' Market, analyzing the role race plays in participant's perceptions of, interactions with, and policies involving producers of color, drawing on theories of racialization and anti-racist practice. What work does race do around people, and what work do people do on race in the Lewiston Farmers' Market? What are the processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market? My research adds to the existing scholarship on whiteness pervading local food movement representation and practice, contributing an analysis of whiteness in regards to producers of color, where anti-racism has informed the development of a farmers' market since its inception. This thesis offers an analysis that can help enhance anti-racist and food justice practice in communities where race is further complicated by other racialized identities.

From my research I identified seven cases of oppressive racialization. In addition, I also identified six cases of anti-racism which demonstrate the work Lewiston Farmers' Market participants do to resist oppressive uses of racialization. I hope my research findings illuminate how to identify and start conversations about race in farmers' markets, enhancing anti-racist and food justice practice in communities where race is further complicated by other racialized identities as anti-black, anti-immigrant, and anti-Muslim sentiments increase.

Why Race?

In pursuing this research, I have been asked multiple times "Why race?" Some say that my focus on race is "myopic," "not the proper lens," and "ignoring other forms of difference." The reasons for my focus on race are threefold. First, there is an incredible history of race being overlooked or discarded in analyzing food systems and food movements in the U.S. Even as food

studies has exploded since the early 2000s, “normative ideas of justice are not always explicitly addressed” (Bedore 2010, 1418). In addition, when scholars *do* address justice, race is not often the focus. As Julie Guthman explains, “most scholarly studies of alternative food institutions have paid more attention to class than race” (Guthman 2008, 389).

Second, consider the state of Maine’s racial demographics. I believe the question of race is indeed salient in a state that is constantly competing with Vermont to be the whitest state in the country, a country which is itself a racial state, “with specific historical and spatial forms” (Slocum 2010, 310). As a country built on the division and subordination of black and brown bodies, “race, everywhere, is an organizing principle” (Slocum, 2010, 310). As geographers of race have noted, “no space is race neutral” (Saldanha 2006, 18). Knowing this, the question when discussing race and the local food movement is not, “is race present?” but rather, “how is race present?” or “what is race doing?” Since food must be understood within circulations of power, “race must be analyzed with a keen awareness as to what is politically at stake in use of this [food] concept” (Slocum 2010, 303).

Third, this moment in political history, when white supremacy is emboldened across the country, demands attention to race. As I mentioned previously, Trump’s run for office emboldened the radical right, igniting a surge of hate crimes across the country and locally in southern Maine with continual distribution of Klu Klux Klan recruitment flyers. Cornell William Brooks, the president of the N.A.A.C.P., said any Klan activity was “very alarming” because of what he sees as similarities between the current political climate and that of the 1920s, when the Klan re-emerged after a period of post-Civil War dormancy (Stack 2017). Hate groups are feeling increasingly emboldened. As Robert Gregoire, the police chief of Augusta, Maine, said, “I think it seems like a trend going on across the country (Stack 2017).

In addition to these three reasons propelling my focus on race, I must note that the question of race is not ignoring other forms of difference, but actually quite the opposite. With focusing on race, I use a framework that offers the tools to unpack how “any diacritic of social personhood... comes to be essentialized, naturalized, and/or biologized” turning “fluid characteristics into fixed categories of otherness” (Silverstein 2005, 364). In other words, using racial theory, specifically racialization theory, allows me to forefront questions about race while simultaneously addressing how other aspects of participants’ identities come to be racialized for subordination and domination.

Methods

From September to December 2017 I conducted an ethnographic study on the outdoor Lewiston Farmers' Market at Bates Mill 5 and then in the YWCA when the Market moved indoors. Ethnographic methods consisted of library research, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews, for which I was granted institutional review board (IRB) approval. I chose ethnography for my methodology because I believe immersing myself *in* the context in which processes of racialization and resistance take place, with library research informing that immersion and interviews unpacking that immersion, was the best way to examine the culture of the Lewiston Farmers’ Market and analyze the role race plays in participant’s perceptions of, interactions with, and policies involving producers of color.

In combining library research, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews I was able to learn the larger social theory that examines processes of racialization and resistance in the U.S., see the material function of that social theory in the Market, and then, have extended conversations with Market participants to unpack how they understand and inform the processes

of racialization and resistance. Library research, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews informed each other to provide a thorough set of data, honoring the complexity of the work race does around people and the work people do on race in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

Library Research

Library Research was the method I employed consistently throughout the entire research process, from narrowing my research question to reflecting on participant observation and interview findings. I used formal academic scholarship to understand the history of agriculture, alternative food movements, and immigration that precede the Lewiston Farmers' Market. In addition, library research allowed me to map the local context of the Market onto or in opposition to larger trends across the U.S. And third, library research offered the larger theories that informed the foundation and validity of each case of oppressive racialization and anti-racist practice. In sum, library research both developed the questions that guided this research project, and provided the scholarship to critically engaged with my participant observation and semi-structured interview findings.

Participant Observation

From September to December 2017, I conducted about fifteen hours of participant observation at the Lewiston Farmers' Market. Performing participant observation allowed me to see and feel the context in which processes of racialization and resistance were taking place. My ways of participating in the space varied from week to week. Some days I would move leisurely throughout the space taking on the role of a consumer, both observing and engaging with the other consumers and producers as if I was shopping myself. Other days I would sit with a

producer at their booth, spending an hour or two talking to them and other producers or consumers nearby. On occasion I hung out with the Market Manager near the Market entrance, engaging her one-on-one and also engaging in the conversations she had with other Market participants.

As for my observations, I primarily watched for 1) consumer's movement patterns, mapping trends in how they walked through the space; 2) who consumers and producers tended to flock to and linger around; and 3) all participants' affect throughout their stay at the Market, from set up to lulls to rushes to break down. Participant observation offered me insight into the Market's organization, traditions, and norms, offering patterns or inconsistencies to be further unpacked in semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured Interviews

From September to December 2017, I conducted twenty-two interviews with Lewiston Farmers' Market participants. Interviews allowed me to learn, in-depth, how participants understand and inform processes of racialization and resistance in the Market. I made contact with interview participants through direct approach at both the indoor and outdoor market. In approaching consumers and producers, I said something to the effect of:

“I am a Bates student writing my thesis on Lewiston's local food movement, focusing on the Lewiston's Farmers' Market, and would love to interview you one-on-one at a later date to hear your thoughts and opinions! The interviews can be as brief as twenty minutes, can occur at any date and time in the coming month that is convenient for you, I can treat you to a cup of coffee, tea, or lunch, and I can promise confidentiality. Are you interested? Can we pick a time and date?”

If interested, I collected the individual's name, number, and email, and either set up the interview in-person, or followed up through their preferred contact method. As reciprocity is important in ethnographic research, I tried to arrange most interviews at a public cafe, Forage Market, and used a Bates grant to offer a cup of coffee, tea, or lunch.

All names of interviewees were kept confidential, and no one except my thesis advisor will ever have access to the confidential identifying materials, as detailed in my consent form in Appendix A. Recordings collected from the interviews were recorded with my cell phone and then transferred to a personal computer where they remained confidential. The results of the interviews, both abstract ideas and direct quotes, were used within the body of my thesis, however all names were changed first, ensuring that all references to cultural and organizational identification are referenced in such a way that maintains anonymity. I gave a consent form to all people I interviewed, making sure there was an understanding between us about what the interview responses were going to be used for. In performing semi-structured interviews, I asked questions informed by my library research and participant observation (listed in Appendix B), and also gained detailed insight into perceptions of, interactions with, and policies regarding producers of color in the Market.

Methodological Shortcomings

After concluding my research and having time to reflect on the process, I can note a few methodological shortcomings. I would like to be explicit about these limitations. Out of my twenty-two interview participants, twelve were consumers and ten were producers. Two out of the twelve consumers and three out of ten producers were people of color (POC), and I marked the rest as white. Because the majority of my interview participants were white, I must be clear

that I am telling an incomplete story. Rather than an encompassing analysis of the Market, I am able to tell particular stories that illustrate several, not all, processes of racialization and resistance in the Market.

In reflecting on why the majority of my interview participants were white I have come to several conclusions. First, since I am racially ambiguous, half Dominican and half Hungarian, I am inconsistently marked as white or as a woman of color. Being unaware of how participants perceived me was difficult to navigate. If people were marking me as white, I was nervous about the potential discomfort and intrusion people of color could feel from requests to talk about the culture of the market, particularly questions regarding racialization and resistance. I did not want to present as a white person that felt privileged to hearing, codifying, and explicating people of color's struggle. Thus, I was more nervous approaching people of color for both smaller casual conversations and interview requests.

Adding to my worries regarding approaching people of color and easing my approaching white participants was that white participants were the majority in the Market, and also more emboldened in the Market. From my observations, white participants lingered for longer and unabashedly initiated more conversations with strangers. The extreme comfort most white participants seemed to have in the Market was another factor that eased my request for their interviews, and even in several cases, white participants approached me.

When I did interview people of color, I felt more comfortable asking the non-Somali Bantu people of color about their experiences of racialization and resistance, and these participants of color appeared more comfortable divulging those experiences. In contrast, when I spoke to the three Somali Bantu producers, I was less willing to ask pointed questions about racialization and resistance since I have been told by leaders in the Somali Bantu community that

Somali Bantus with limited English skills might not be fully aware of the ways in which they are oppressively racialized, and the need for resistance. Thus, I did not want to be the person that so pointedly opened that door. In addition, during the interviews the Somali Bantu producers answered briefly and politely, which makes me think they refrained from divulging their full experiences as they were unsure of the risks despite my assurance that their answers were confidential, which I completely understand.

Given what I know now in hindsight, if I were to go back and do this project over again I would do three things differently. First, I would arrange this project so that I had twice the amount of time to perform the participant observation and semi-structured interviews, as I think fitting this project into a year-long timeline was limiting. Second, I would do a better job establishing causal relationships with all of the Market participants, particularly participants of color. I created many comfortable relationships and I believe most participants recognized me each week, but if I had more time, and more understanding of the necessity, I would foster stronger relationships during the participant observation period. This would lead to greater and more honest insight in the interviews, especially with the Somali Bantu producers. Third and last, I would push myself to risk being more uncomfortable. I would urge myself to accept that I cannot know how people racially attribute me and experience my presence, and by being a little less cautious, I might be able to tell a more representative story.

A Road Map

My first chapter offers the ethnographic context that informs my theoretical approach and analysis of processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. I first discuss the history of the alternative food movement (AFM), from the movement's inception to

this thesis' focus on the local food sector. Following, I discuss the history of racial injustice in the food system that is often overlooked in food studies. I then move on to discuss how this history of racial injustice also manifests in the AFM, specifically the local food sector, which propelled the demand for and growing research field on food justice. Next, I suggest some foundational theory for practicing anti-racism in the local food movement, and then finally I move onto discussing this history in relation to Lewiston, Maine, detailing the local food movement in Lewiston, and the history and present-day logistics of the Lewiston Farmers' Market. This chapter provides the foundational history necessary to understand the landscape in which processes of racialization and resistance manifest in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

In chapter two, I detail the theoretical approach that is my tool for analyzing processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. This chapter begins with the framing, history, and definition of the theory of race that I use to analyze what work race does around people and what work people do on race—racialization theory. I then discuss how skin color, religion, and nationality are bundled in the Lewiston Farmers' Market, and then how each are racialized. This chapter offers the set of tools I use to unpack and respond to processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

My third chapter contains the first part of my analysis: cases of oppressive racialization. The cases are categorized as erasure, or removing immigrants of color from the Market's history; colorblind identity; white resentment; shopping with who one looks like; saying producers of color use the language barrier as a means to an end; claiming producers of color are unfriendly; and not knowing producers of color personally. This chapter illuminates how to identify and start conversations about racialization in farmers' markets.

In the final chapter I detail the second part of my analysis: cases of anti-racism. I detail the work people do on race in the Market, resisting oppressive racialization. The cases are categorized as food as a gathering point for mutual sharing, active empathy, whiteness abolitionists, nutrition incentive programs, social commitments to buy from producers of color, and spatial arrangements as anti-racist practice. I hope this chapter mobilizes more Lewiston Farmers' Market participants to partake in and forefront these cases of resistance, and also serves as a model for people practicing anti-racism and food justice in communities where race is further complicated by other increasingly racialized identities. Finally, in my conclusion I lay out how my research adds to the larger world of scholarship, what my findings offer to the Lewiston Farmers' Market, as well as potential next steps.

Chapter 1: Ethnographic Context

Introduction

In this chapter I offer the ethnographic context that informs my theoretical approach and analysis of processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. I first discuss the history of the alternative food movement (AFM), from the movement's inception to this thesis' focus on the local food sector. Following, I discuss the history of racial injustice in the food system that is often overlooked in food studies. I then move on to discuss how this history of racial injustice also manifests in the AFM, specifically the local food sector, which propelled the demand for and growing research field on food justice. Next, I suggest some foundational theory for practicing anti-racism in the local food movement, and then finally I move onto discussing this history in relation to Lewiston, Maine, detailing the local food movement in Lewiston, and the history and present-day logistics of the Lewiston Farmers' Market. This chapter provides the foundational history necessary to understand the landscape in which processes of racialization and resistance manifest in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

The Alternative Food Movement and The Local

In the United States, discussions about building an alternative food system in opposition to industrialized agriculture “gathered momentum in the late 1990s” (Maye, Kneafsey, and Holloway 2007, 1), propelling the alternative food movement (AFM). The movement had three goals: to highlight small, family-owned farms and to “create a community of food filled with interpersonal interactions, working against modern alienation” (Alkon and Agyeman 2011, 2); to

increase ecologically sound farming methods; and to offer healthier food options across the U.S. (Slocum 2006b, 522).

As the AFM developed, the variety of alternatives to the mainstream food system increased. Thus, a singular alternative food system under the AFM does not exist (Maye, Kneafsey, and Holloway 2007, 16). Instead, “alternative food systems” is an umbrella term encompassing “a range of organic, fair trade, and local initiatives” (Alkon and McCullen 2010, 938). Within the range of initiatives in the AFM, all alternative food system practices are those that seek to transform the conventional food system that “privileges corporate agriculture, commodity subsidies, transcontinental shipping and foods high in fats, salts, and sugars” (Slocum 2006b, 522).

As efforts that characterize the AFM are quite vast, for this project I focus on one element of the local food sector, which contains “alternatives that emphasize social and ethical values specific to the supply chain” (Maye, Kneafsey, and Holloway 2007, 7). In other words, the local food sector is the group of alternative food system practices that focuses on localizing the processes of producing and distributing food. As the AFM grows there is declining support for the organic, since the organic is being incorporated into the mainstream food system. With support for the organic declining, the local has become a key site of transformative alternative food system projects (Goodman and Goodman 2007, 23). Accordingly, as smaller organic growers are marginalized by the increasing scale of organic markets, they have sought new sources of livelihood by going “beyond organic” and “finding refuge in the local food movement” (2007, 23).

Within the local food movement, there are a variety of local food initiatives. Some examples include farmers' markets, community supported agriculture (CSA), and small-scale and

specialty food growers and processors (Allen and Hinrichs 2007, 255). For many people involved in the AFM, localisation is a source of vitality, or, as one scholar writes, food system localization is a part of “progressive participant democracy movements around the world” (Dupuis, Harrison, and Goodman 2011, 284).

From the perspective of these individuals, local food systems foster sustainability, democracy, and justice (2011, 284). But do they really? Do they always? Is a local food system built on sustainability, democracy, and justice? Many scholars, activists, and organizers have found that justice is often overlooked in the AFM’s culture, and therefore, often overlooked in local food systems as well.

Racial Injustice in the U.S. Food System

What interests me the most in conversations about justice is race, and looking at practices of racism and anti-racism within the AFM, specifically the local food sector. In order to discuss racial justice in the the local food sector, I must first offer a brief history of the racial injustice that built the U.S. food system, which is often overlooked in food studies (Holt-Giménez and Harper 2016, 1). While some organizations are committed to dismantling racism in the food system and actively center this mission, others “are sympathetic but inactive, and most see racism as either too difficult or tangential to their work” (2016, 1).

In North America and much of Europe, people of light complexion and Northern European ancestry are privileged institutionally, structurally, and interpersonally. This institutional, structural, and interpersonal centering is often called “whiteness.” The systems privileging whiteness were developed to justify European colonialism and enable the economic exploitation of land in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. People from West African regions were

enslaved, shipped across the Atlantic Ocean and sold as chattel to do backbreaking labor, predominantly on sugar, tobacco, and cotton plantations. Acquiring slaves through war and trade had been a part of societies across the world for thousands of years, however widespread commerce in human beings i.e. chattel slavery was specific to the emergence of capitalism and the European conquest (Baptist 2014, 13-24).

As researchers Holt-Giménez and Harper highlight, the centrality of slavery and dispossession in the emergence of nineteenth century capitalism created many myths about the U.S. food system, and the U.S. economy at large. Specific to New England myths, Harvard American historian Sven Beckert writes,

“[It] was not the small farmers of the rough New England countryside who established the United States’ economic position. It was the backbreaking labor of unremunerated American slaves in places like South Carolina, Mississippi, and Alabama... After the Civil War [and abolition], a new kind of capitalism arose, in the United States and elsewhere. Yet, that new capitalism – characterized first and foremost by states with unprecedented bureaucratic, infrastructure, and military capacities, and by wage labor – had been by the profits, institutions, networks, technologies, and innovations that emerged from slavery, colonialism, and land expropriation” (Beckert 2014).

Here, one can see the foundational racism that built the U.S. food system—the erasure of the black and brown slave labor that built the U.S. food system, and an incorrect history praising New England farmers.

In addition to erasing black and brown slave labor, there is the history of exploiting immigrant labor to build the U.S. food system. For example, during World War II, when much of the US’s labor force was fighting in Europe and the Pacific, the Mexican Farm Labor Program

Agreement of 1942 imported Mexican peasants to keep the food system thriving. This example is like many instances in U.S. history when immigrants of color were legally exploited for cheap labor to develop U.S. agriculture. To this day, central sectors of the U.S. food system continue to be developed by “dispossessed and exploited immigrant labor from the Global South or POC labor and are justified by the history of privileged whiteness” (2016, 3).

While white farmers dominate as operator-owners, farmworkers and food workers are overwhelmingly people of color (Billings and Cabbil 2011, 106). Most are paid poverty wages, have inordinately high levels of food insecurity and experience nearly twice the level of wage theft than white workers (2016, 4). According to the USDA 2012 Census of Agriculture, of the country’s 2.1 million farmers, only 8% are farmers of color, and only half of those are owners of land (Holt-Giménez 2014). Instead, people are color compromise most seasonal farm *workers*.

Consider this trend in the state of Maine. Maine's agricultural sector is large and diverse, contributing significantly to Maine's overall economy. Data in the 2012 Census of Agriculture by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service lists 8,173 farms in Maine. Most Maine farms are small, family-operated enterprises employing *few people beyond family members*, with the median size of farms being 67 acres. The 2012 census lists 2,415 Maine farms reporting a total of 15,072 workers, or hired farm labor. 125 farms reported hiring 2,706 migrant workers. In effect, 18% of paid hired farmworkers reported by Maine farm operations are migrant workers (Maine.gov 2016a).

In addition, the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center performed a research project in 2015 on the migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) population in Maine. Of the MSFW observed in the broccoli and blueberry harvest, only seventeen percent were born in the United States, and within that seventeen percent many were of non-U.S. heritage with migrant parents.

The remaining eighty-three percent consisted of fifty-six Mexican born seasonal farmworkers as well as people from Haiti, Canada, Honduras, El Salvador, and the Philippines (Maine.gov 2016b). In an article in the Portland Press Herald about farmers and their reliance on migrant workers, one apple farmer, Art Kelly, discussed his incredible reliance on his seasonal migrant workforce (Pols 2017). As the Portland Press Herald wrote, “he needs his foreign born pickers and they need him” (Pols 2017).

As the United States developed, it became the greatest agricultural nation the world has ever seen through exploiting and benefiting from people of color (Billings and Cabbil 2011, 108). Throughout U.S. history, migrant workers picked the fruits of the harvest, but “rarely owned that which was produced by the sweat of their brow or the strength of their backs” (2011, 109). As researchers David Billings and Lila Cabbil write, “from field to fork, the production and consumption of food is racialized” (2011, 103). Given the U.S. food system’s racialized history mistreating people of color – particularly migrants – scholars, activists, and organizers must pay particular attention to who is being privileged in the alternative food movement.

Racism in the AFM and Bringing in Food Justice

There is increasing evidence that the the AFM “disproportionately serves white and middle to upper middle class individuals, organizations, and institutions” (Agyeman and McEntee 2014, 213), and in particular, the local food movement “hails a white subject, entitling people marked as white to define the rhetoric, spaces, and broader projects of agro-food transformation” (Guthman 2008, 395). Scholars Alison Alkon and Julian Agyeman describe the AFM’s predominantly white and middle class character as something of a “monoculture” (Alkon and Agyeman 2011, 2).

In calling the movement a monoculture, Alkon and Agyeman are noting that the AFM – again, an umbrella term encompassing a range of organic, fair trade, and local initiatives – consists of “like-minded people, with similar backgrounds, values, and proclivities, who have come to similar conclusions about how our food system should change” (2011, 2). Like many other scholars, Alkon and Agyeman highlight that the AFM operates within a white and middle class positionality. In other words, the AFM narrative is largely created by, and resonates most deeply with, white and middle class individuals since it is defined by their lived experiences and worldviews (2011, 3).

From the white middle to upper middle class monoculture, or as scholars Alison Alkon and Christie McCullen call it, an “affluent, liberal habitus of whiteness” (Alkon and McCullen 2010, 937), come five prominent ways racism plays out in the AFM. These five cases are major findings informing critical race and food theory. In addition, each finding informed the cultivating of my research practice at the Lewiston Farmers Market. The cases can be categorized as follows: universalizing white forms of AFM engagement; claiming race will distract the AFM; the racial mapping of AFM spaces; and finally, two imaginaries: the white farm imaginary and the community imaginary.

The first way the AFM centralizes whiteness is through universalizing a white form of knowledge about and subsequent engagement with the AFM. Universalizing white forms of knowing is often illustrated by the rhetoric “if only they knew” (Guthman 2008, 388), used by white people in referring to POC’s supposed disengagement with the AFM. When researchers ask members of the AFM why certain spaces of the AFM are predominantly white, people often respond “If only they knew.” Rather than responding with curiosity about the accessibility and inclusivity of an AFM space defined by a white positionality, many members of the AFM simply

assume that if only POC knew the knowledge that white participants know, they would enter the space, universalizing how whiteness engages with the AFM (Guthman 2008)

Second, research employs a common theme where interviewees redirect racialized questions towards “the true object of struggle: corporate power” (Slocum 2006a, 342). Researchers find that organizational leaders in the AFM consistently identify corporate power as the target of struggle, claiming conversations about race will derail the momentum and compromise the mission of disrupting corporate power. Conversations about race are often met with an urgency to change the subject, or a declarative, “let’s not forget the big picture [corporate power]” (Slocum 2006a, 342-344). This tendency displays that the individuals researched are blind to white coding and are unwilling to discuss race, leaving whiteness as an unmarked category. Consequently, they bar any discussion of antiracist practices and the racialized history of food that corporate power, their “object of struggle,” relies on (Slocum 2006a, 337).

Next, is the racial mapping of AFM spaces, and the structure and norms of spaces being more welcoming for white bodies than bodies of color. In looking at the materiality of raced bodies in certain spaces of the AFM, particularly local food markets, researchers find that movement and activity is easier for white bodies than bodies of color, since “centrality and extreme distance from other racialized groups is what whiteness achieves” (Dwyer and Jones 2000, 212). Since white bodies cluster and dominate the central spaces in the markets, bodies of color are increasingly excluded, and pushed to exist only in the periphery. As such, bodies of color often move through farmers’ markets with more hesitancy than many emboldened white bodies (Slocum 2006b, 524).

The final two theories are imaginaries proposed by Alison Alkon and Christie McCullen, grounded in their ethnographic research at two northern California farmers' markets. An

imaginary is a set of values, institutions, laws, and symbols common to a social group and the corresponding society through which people imagine their social whole (Thompson 1984, 23-24). As Alkon and McCullen research how whiteness is performed and perpetuated through AFM's discourse and practices, they notice the *white farm imaginary* and the *community imaginary*.

The white farm imaginary romanticizes and “universalizes an agrarian narrative specific to white history” (Alkon and McCullen 2010, 945), rendering invisible the struggles and contributions of POC throughout the history of American agriculture, and also present-day food production. One example of the white farm imaginary is the poster for the film “Growing Local” which features a sole white man on a scenic backdrop, as discussed in my introduction. Put simply, the white farm imaginary ignores the role of race within the U.S.’s food systems by only recalling a valorized white history of food (2010, 944-947).

The community imaginary depicts farmers' markets as the opportunity to build community with both producers and consumers, a place where locals create a sense of togetherness that is assumed to be representative of the demographics in the city or town. This imaginary ignores the ways in which one's race can alter someone's comfortability with or allegiance to a community, and the very real ways in which POC often don't feel comfortable in majority white spaces, or spaces characterized by whiteness. With the community imaginary, farmers' market participants further construct their community as white by asserting that farmers' market demographics are indeed representative of the city or town. (Alkon and McCullen 2010, 947-950).

Research shows that since white and middle class individuals are in a privileged position, they “often do not see the exclusivities embedded into the AFM narrative” (Alkon and

Agyeman 2011, 3), and therefore do not embrace concepts of justice in their discourse or practice. In response, scholars, activists, and organizers, started engaging in and articulating concepts of *food justice*, a space to “imagine new ecological and social relationships” (2011, 5). The food justice movement has responded to the growing body of literature, and the on-the-ground dynamics this literature describes, which argues that the AFM is unjust and centralizes a white, middle class experience, and as a result, food justice demands “food be understood within circulations of power” (Slocum 2010, 303).

As anthropologist David Sutton writes, “food does not merely symbolize social bonds and divisions; it participates in their creation and recreation” (Sutton 2001, 102). In recognizing that food informs relationships, and that those relationships exist within circulations of power, members of the AFM can consider food justice to create a new narrative that accounts for the intersection between food and personal and cultural identities. Members can start to ask questions that will disrupt the monoculture narrative, such as “what kinds of markers of food exclusion and inclusion are being created in the current situation, how are these markers maintained by certain projects, and what do they imply for developing sustainable places to live?” (Slocum 2010, 309).

Anti-Racism in the AFM

Just as food justice is rooted in the unjust organization of the AFM movement, it is also rooted in the powerful transformative potential of food. In noting the transformative potential of food, food justice scholars, activists, and organizers provide examples for how the AFM movement, and the local food sector in particular, can “better align food system goals with objectives centered on social justice, well-being, and respect for racially, culturally, and

economically diverse populations” (Agyeman and McEntee 2014, 213). Over the past five to ten years, many scholars, activists, and organizers within the AFM have thought critically about race and food, and have implemented a variety of anti-racist practices, working against the monoculture narrative.

Unlike popular conceptions, anti-racist practice and “pervasive whiteness and acts of solidarity can exist alongside each other, rather than in direct opposition” (Alkon and McCullen 2010, 939). As historian Ibram X. Kendi recently explained in a talk at Bates, no person or institution is fixed as racist or anti-racist. Rather, it is about who people are and what institutions are doing at particular *moments*. Because it is about *moments*, people and institutions can be both racist and anti-racist, at different moments (Kendi 2017, lecture).

In order to practice anti-racism, one must first understand whiteness. As Julie Guthman writes, “whiteness is a messy and controversial concept marking characteristics of a particular people that are privileged as a result of a historical and social process of racialization” (Guthman 2008, 389). Within American culture, whiteness refers to “a set of structural privileges, a standpoint of normalcy, and particular cultural politics” (Guthman 2008, 389). In addition, “whiteness is a hegemonie in the U.S. that is is dominant *regardless* of the number of bodies in a certain place” (Slocum, 2006b, 521).

As such, whiteness is “more than white bodies in a room, it occurs when certain politics and practices are marked as normal, placing whiteness at the center and all other politics and practices at the periphery” (Guthman 2008, 390), and this can occur even with the presence of many people of color. Important to note here, when explaining whiteness, is that there are multiple axes of difference and “the power of whiteness is not spread equally across all white people” (Slocum 2006a, 338). In that vein, identification with and commitment to whiteness is

not uniform across all white people. I want to make sure all readers understand the fluidity and complexity of these spaces, and that there is room, and it is quite common, for both racist and anti-racist practices to occur in tandem.

Since being white does not necessitate racist actions, and, racist and anti-racist action can indeed occur in tandem, the five prominent ways racism plays out on the AFM can exist alongside of, or be disrupted by, a variety of anti-racist actions within realms of whiteness. Several communities within the AFM have actively incorporated food justice demands, and many scholars have found instances of the AFM, specifically the local food sector, disrupting whiteness.

I, like Rachel Slocum, would like to focus on the progressive possibility in the AFM, and, as she says, “would like to see where alternative food practice can go, to see how racial difference and racial connection can be better understood through these practices” (Slocum 2006b, 522), which brings me to my fascination with Lewiston, Maine’s AFM, specifically their local food sector and farmers' market.

The AFM and Lewiston, Maine

Lewiston is the second largest city in the the state of Maine, and located in southwestern Maine, it is the most central city in Androscoggin County, as mentioned in the introduction. The Lewiston area was originally home to the Abenaki people, many, but not all, of whom were pushed out when settlers arrived in the late 1700s. The Androscoggin River and Lewiston Falls made the town an attractive area for manufacturing and hydropower businesses, and quickly housed a rapid rise in textile tycoon Benjamin Bates’ textile manufacturing.

The increasing job opportunities attracted thousands of French Canadians to migrate south to Lewiston, mainly to work in the Bates mills. During the mid-19th century, Lewiston was the wealthiest and most rapidly growing city in Maine, but when the textile industry moved south in the fifties and the mills closed, seventy percent of the city's workforce was out of a job. Following, Lewiston suffered years of economic turmoil, with high unemployment rates and downtown stagnation (Lewiston Maine City Website n.d).

In the early to mid-2000s, Lewiston welcomed another massive wave of immigrants, many of whom were from Somalia, fleeing the Civil War. In 1999, the U.S. government began preparations to accept 12,000 Somali Bantus, the minority ethnic group in Somalia, for resettlement as "persecuted minorities," and resettled them in select cities throughout the U.S. In 2001, many ethnic Somalis, *not* Somali Bantus, began migration to various cities in the U.S., and as word spread that Lewiston has a low crime rate, good schools and cheap housing, many began a second migration to Lewiston. Shortly after, Lewiston received an Unanticipated Arrivals grant (2001-5) from the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement. In 2004, Somali Bantu immigrants began arriving in the United States, and shortly thereafter, in 2005, many Somali Bantu families relocated to Lewiston, similar to ethnic Somalis. The arrival of so many poor, illiterate, and unexpected residents sent a shockwave through the city, as it was already struggling with years of economic decline (Besteman 2016, xi-xii).

Anthropologist Catherine Besteman outlined the three different responses to the Somali and Somali Bantu communities' arrival in Lewiston. One response was from city officials, highlighting the financial burden of accommodating unexpected immigrants in the context of a retreating welfare state. A second version was a xenophobic version, characterizing the immigrants as as uninvited, unwelcome, and a dangerous intrusion. Finally, a third response was

a communitarian response that insisted on expanding Lewiston's definition of community, delighted about the new possibilities the immigrants brought to the city (Besteman 2016, 110-111). Then current mayor of Lewiston, Laureier T. Raymond, called the individuals advocating for the third, tolerant response, "boo-hoo white do-gooders and their carpetbagger friends," and wrote an open letter to the Somali and Somali Bantu communities discouraging further location to Lewiston (Besteman 2016, 112).

As a predominantly white city prior to the influx of East African immigrants, one could assume the history of AFM in Lewiston would align with the white monoculture narrative that dominates scholarship. Interestingly, that is not the case. According to several Lewiston residents that started the Lewiston Farmers' Market and local food programming, the local food movement - both the mainstream interest and the farmers' market - were started in the interest of and by minority groups, including immigrants of color. The farmers' market currently running was born from Mainers eager to offer immigrants that were traditionally farmers a market to sell local produce and to offer the entire city of Lewiston an opportunity to buy locally grown food directly from local growers (Hanna 2017, Interview)

Lewiston Farmers' Market History

The Lewiston Farmers' Market began in 2004, propelled by a collaboration between the Lots to Garden Program, a founding program of the St. Mary's Nutrition Center, the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project (NASAP), and a few local farmers. Located in Lewiston, Maine, St. Mary's Nutrition Center promotes community health through organizing, advocacy, and education, intentionally using food as a tool for community building, youth development, and neighborhood revitalization (St. Mary's 2015). NASAP is a refugee and

immigrant farmer-training program that empowers New Americans to launch independent farm businesses, to adopt leadership roles in their community, and to attain increased economic independence (Cultivating Community 2015). NASAP, while originally funded by Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI) was inherited by Cultivating Community of Portland, Maine in 2009.

At its first stage in 2004, the Market set up on Tuesday afternoons in Kennedy Park, Lewiston's biggest park (Lewiston Maine n.d.) with a skateboard park, in-ground pool, benches, swing sets, a slide, two basketball courts, and plenty of green space. The park also functions as an informal community gathering space, comprised of cohorts of Lewiston residents, from seasoned veterans, to new mothers, to free running children. The Market decided to set up at the Park to encourage civic engagement amongst Lewiston residents and to combat the stereotypes about Kennedy Park. The Market contained a group of Lewistonian youth from across Lewiston's racial demographics working a Lots to Gardens stand, and Guatemalan and Somali Bantu immigrants farmers working NASAP-funded stands.

As one of the NASAP founders pointed out, at this point the Somali Bantu growers had just recently arrived, and since the Bantu were the oppressed group in Somalia, they were not very forward with their incredible farming skills and less comfortable in overt positions of leadership that distinguished them from ethnic Somalis, the dominant group in Somalia. In an interview, a NASAP founder told me,

“At this point the people that were growing enough food to sell [within the Somali population] were the Bantu, and it was an interesting situation because the Bantu were traditionally oppressed, I don't think they were particularly forward about identifying as Bantu yet, right around that time there were enough Bantu arriving and they were beginning to be recognized as a distinct community from the ethnic Somalis... But even

still, there were folks that were early arrivals that were Bantu that weren't identifying as that because they were like – the way black people are seen in this country ... that racism... it was different but there were similarities... they weren't really forward, but they were the people with the farming skills, and began to grow more than just for their family and saw an opportunity to generate some income.”



Figure 1: Kennedy Park Market in 2011 (Lewiston Farmers' Market Facebook 2011).
Figure 2: Kennedy Park Market in 2011 (Lewiston Farmers' Market Facebook 2011).

From 2005 to 2008, the Market experienced turnover within the organizational leadership and farmer buy-in. With this, the market had many different iterations. All of these factors slowed the market's momentum. During this time, CEI provided operational support for the market. In 2009, NASAP announced it was leaving CEI and was bought by Cultivating Community, a nonprofit organization. All market accounting planned to move to St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. St. Mary's, partnered with Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC), approached the Nutrition Center staff for support. St. Mary's Nutrition Center became the fiscal backbone of the Market. Sherie Blumenthal of the Nutrition Center was then hired as the Market Manager, and the Lewiston Farmers' Market started gaining momentum.

Original producers from the Kennedy Park market, mainly Somali Bantu producers who Market Manager Sherie calls “anchor farmers,” connected with the nearly defunct farmers' market at the Auburn Mall. Participants decided to revive the Lewiston Farmers' Market and included both Lewiston and Auburn in the revitalization. This began the Great Falls Farmers' Market Association, where markets were held at four distinct locations: Kennedy Park as in previous years, St. Mary's Hospital, CMMC, and the Great Falls School in Auburn. The four locations were intended to reach a greater audience, to give farmers more opportunity to sell, and to be open on different days and times. The Kennedy Park market was held on Tuesday, the St. Mary's Market was held on Wednesdays, CMMC on Thursdays, and Great Falls School on Fridays.

In 2010, the Great Falls Farmers' Market Association was growing at its different sites, attracting more producers and consumers. As a result of the Kennedy Park market's increasing growth and the growing landscape of winter markets across the state of Maine, organizers instituted an indoor market at St. Mary's Nutrition Center, in Lewiston, across the street from Kennedy Park, once a month on Thursday evenings. As the indoor market was extremely successful, Sherie and her team decided to conduct a survey amongst customers. The results showed that customers wanted the following: a singular market, a market on the weekend, a market in a visible location, and a market with more parking. In response, organizers worked with the city to find an available location that met the four criteria, which propelled the Great Falls Farmers' Market Association's consolidation to a singular market and move in 2011 to its present outdoor location, Bates Mill 5 on Main Street in Lewiston.



Figure 3: Bates Mill 5 Market in 2011 (Facebook n.d.).
Figure 4: Bates Mill 5 Market in 2011 (Facebook n.d.).

With this move, the Kennedy Park market continued on Tuesday afternoons as a weekday satellite market. However, by 2012, it fully became a part of Cultivating Community’s Refugee and Immigrants Farmer Training Program. Upon solidifying at Bates Mill 5, seasoned Kennedy Park producers, mainly the Somali Bantus that had been consistently selling there since 2004, joined with those selling at the Great Falls School to become the core team at Bates Mill 5. Many of these producers are the current producers selling today. Upon this move, the name shifted from Great Falls Farmers' Market Association to the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

From 2011 to present-day, the outdoor market has been at the Bates Mill 5 in the summer months, weekly on Sunday mornings from late May through mid October. From 2011 to 2014 the indoor market was at the St. Mary’s Nutrition Center, from November to April, once a month on Thursday evenings. From 2014 to 2016, the indoor market was held bimonthly on Sunday mornings. In 2016, the indoor market moved to the YWCA for a larger space and more parking, and in the 2017-2018 winter season, the indoor market increased from bimonthly to weekly.

Lewiston Farmers' Market Present-Day: Logistics and Culture

The Market is sponsored by the St. Mary's Health System and is supported by a manager and two Nutrition Center Fellows from the St. Mary's Nutrition Center, which is a local and statewide center dedicated to promoting community health through organizing, advocacy, and education. The Nutrition Center serves as the liaison between the Market and the City of Lewiston; provides a variety of in kind support including management, advertising, and outreach; manages a separate budget account for the Market; and provides general liability insurance to the Market

To sell in the Market, producers must apply and are then subject to the approval of the current voting membership, or current producers, where majority votes carry the motion. The members are led by a board of directors – a chair, an assistant treasurer, and a secretary – all elected by a majority vote. Two annual member meetings are held each year, one at the end of the outdoor season in October, and another at the beginning of the outdoor season in April.

The Market Manager, Sherie Blumenthal, designs how the Market is spatially organized, then asks producers for their feedback and addresses any issues with their placement. Finally, members pay dues twice a year. The first fee is due at the meeting in October and the second is due in April, however exceptions are made for people that cannot immediately pay in full (Blumenthal, 2015).

As a shopper at the farmers' market, people have various ways to purchase local goods. Some producers control transactions immediately at the moment of purchase, accepting cash and some accepting cards through their own debit and credit card processor. In most cases, however, if a consumer wants to pay with a card - credit, debit, or electronic benefit card (EBT) - the

producer writes the cost of the purchase on a slip and when the consumer is done shopping, they bring all of their slips to a Nutrition Center Fellow who process the purchase.

As for the general culture, my participant observations immersed me in an overload of crocs, many baby feet, several hijabs, and a couple of wheelchairs. At both the outdoor Market and the indoor Market, consumers and producers appear relaxed, most looking like they had eagerly awaited these few hours at the market. In observing the consumers, I noted some moving through the space polite yet reserved, while others stayed for hours conversing with anyone and everyone. In talking to producers, the consensus is that the consumer base is majority regulars, with new people occasionally showing up. A producer told me, “I tend to see the same people over and over again... I recognize a lot of them.”

Amongst the producers, there is more obvious behavioral variability. Some have their close friends that they visit every few minutes. Others are more preoccupied by prolonged conversations with consumers, and there are also a few that simply keep to themselves. In talking to producers, I gathered that most across races claim to feel very supported by other producers. One white producer told me, “I feel really welcome across the board.” Similarly, I heard “[This is] really the friendliest market out of all that we’ve gone to” from another white producer, and another white producer went so far as to say “It’s just like family here, really.” One of the Somali Bantu producers told me, “There is a lot of of people who are very supportive,” and another enthusiastically stressed, “Most people are friendly!”

As for demographics, the producer and consumer racial demographics matches up proportionally. The majority of consumers present as white, with about ten percent people of color. Within the consumers of color, dark skinned people entering are either African American or from a middle or eastern African country, as the middle and eastern African immigrant

communities continue to grow in Lewiston. On the side of roughly twenty producers, about five to six, depending on who shows up that day, are people of color. Within the people of color on the producer side, things are less nebulous than with consumers of color, with all but one producer of color identifying as Somali Bantu.

Within both the white and POC populations, class and gender presentation vary greatly. The demographics of the Market seem to match Lewiston's demographics being that Lewiston is eighty-eight percent white (Statistical Atlas 2015). From my observations, the booths of white producers seem to be more frequented by consumers. Additionally, presumably white lower to middle class consumers, appear to be the most emboldened in the market space, staying longer, speaking and laughing louder, and moving more freely than consumers of color, with puffed chests and heads held high.

The outdoor Market has greater foot traffic, live music, and more conversation than the indoor market. At the outdoor market the producers are lined up in two rows facing each other spanning one hundred and twenty feet, leaving about thirty feet in between for consumers. The indoor market is quieter. With less producers, less foot traffic, and no live music, the indoor space takes on more of a relaxed energy, most evident by most producers sitting stoically rather than standing excitedly behind their booths. In addition, the indoor market is set up differently than the outdoor market. The outdoor market contains two rows of booths all facing each other within a small parking lot, while the indoor market positions producers along the wall of a large room in the local YWCA, with two producer setting up in the middle of the room behind two long tables.

The Lewiston Farmers' Market history, logistics, and culture are all quite unique. As the Market Manager Sherie Blumenthal stressed in an interview, “unlike most farmers' markets that

begin from a group of established farmers' organizing an additional platform to sell their produce, the Lewiston Farmers' Market developed to provide the Lewiston community with greater access to healthy food, as it is a human right.” As a market committed to developing the Lewiston community, I was curious to see what was happening with race at this site in Lewiston’s local food sector. Since the U.S. is a racialized state and therefore no space is race neutral, race must be doing *something* in Lewiston’s local food sector. What that something is, I was not sure, and but I was eager to find out.

Chapter 2: Racialization Theory

Introduction

In chapter one I offered ethnographic context, and in this chapter I detail the theoretical approach that is my tool for analyzing processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. This chapter begins with the framing, history, and definition of the theory of race that I use to analyze what work race does around people and what work people do on race—racialization theory. I then discuss how skin color, religion, and nationality are bundled in the Lewiston Farmers' Market, and then how each are racialized. This chapter offers the set of tools I use to unpack and respond to processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

Racialization: Framework

Traditional theories of race were “primarily concerned with biological explanations between people marked as black and people marked as white in the United States” (Selod and Embrick 2013, 644). These preliminary theories of race in the seventeenth century propose race as a biological fact or reality (Considine 2017, 7). Defining race based on physical and genetic variations is now widely rejected in the field of anthropology—the field that most strongly informs the research methods employed for this project.

The rejection of race as a biological distinction propelled many theories concerning race as a socio-historical concept, where race is defined “in terms of social relations and historical contexts” (2017, 7). For this research, I am pulling from a social constructionist framework of race. In my experience, many individuals in American culture incorrectly believe race to be a

biological phenomenon. Without knowledge of race as a social construction, Americans often misunderstand racial categories to be obvious and rigid. While human biological variation does exist, there is no human subspecies based on skin color, for 'race' is a "social construction derived mainly from perceptions conditioned by the events of recorded history and it has no basic biological reality" (Brace 1996, 106). As a biological concept race is meaningless, but as a socio-cultural construct, race is powerful.

Cultural geographer and race historiographer Kay Anderson describes race as "a cultural concept, a label used to define and differentiate people, anything but a biological or genetic fact of nature fixed at birth" (Anderson 2001, 64). In other words, while race is not a biological or genetic fact, race is not "just" a social construction. Rather, race is an extremely *powerful* social construction that uses material features, such as skin color, to determine immaterial features. Essentially, "race is a discursive practice to perpetuate power relations between groups of humans presumed to be fundamentally different" (Anderson 2001, 72).

From a social constructionist framework of race come various theories. I will be using racialization theory, which theorizes the construction of race as discursive through material and human social processes (Kobayashi and Peake 2000, 393). Racialization theorizes the actual production and process of making race, which is "when physical and cultural differences are ascribed to individuals and groups" (Barot and Bird 2001, 601). In using racialization theory, I am able to critically analyze race with careful attention to the processes and lived experiences of race being bundled with other identities.

Racialization: History and Definition

Racialization is not a new concept. Scholars, mainly European, have been defining and redefining racialization for the past few decades (Selod and Embrick 2013, 647). The most frequented definitions of racialization are Banton's (1997), Omi and Winant's (1986), Miles (1993), and Eanon's (2004). Banton wrote about racialization as the process where European imperialists applied racial categories to individuals from colonized nations. Here, the process is about "misclassifying humans based on biological differences, or race-making" (Selod and Embrick 2013, 647).

In the U.S., Omi and Winant employed racialization to discuss the changing meanings association with race in the U.S. landscape, where racialization signifies "the extension of racial meaning to previously racially unclassified relationships, social practices, or groups" (2013, 647). Unlike Banton, Omi, and Winant who all view racialization as married to race, Miles argues that racial meaning can be applied to various forms of difference, such as ideological traits, "without relying on phenotypical differences" (2013, 647). Miles' definition is frequently used to understand how racial meanings are assigned to groups that are racially classified as White but not afforded the privileges associated with whiteness, such as Jews and Arabs. Lastly, Eanon uses racialization to talk about the "racialization of thought" as a way to describe how Africans who were colonized by Europeans adopted a "colonized way of thinking about their identities" (2013, 647).

With this long and varied history, "racialization" faces some critiques. The two major critiques are as follows. First, scholars claim that it is impossible to talk about racial experiences without racial classification based on phenotypical differences. Second, others argue that

racialization as a concept becomes “too broad and can incorporate a myriad of differences that are not inherently racial” (2013, 647).

I argue these critiques are problematic since they privilege biological definitions of race, ignoring the nuances of racism. In addition, I think race *should* incorporate a myriad of differences that are not inherently racial, because in a U.S. context, racial meanings *are* applied to differences that are not inherently racial, and that tendency within U.S. culture to essentialize assumptions about an identity and also pair them with racial meaning needs to be properly analyzed.

Race scholarship particularly in the U.S. has “historically been in a black/white paradigm, ignoring the experiences of many other racial and ethnic groups in the U.S” (Selod and Embrick 2013, 644). Race in the U.S., and especially in the context of the Lewiston Farmers’ Market, does not actually fit into a static black/white paradigm, and rather is a fluid concept. It is thus necessary that I use an analytical framework that allows me to look at how race and racism impact a variety of racial groups and also their intersections with other identities.

Over the past ten years, scholars have been conducting work with communities that, like the community I am researching, are not well represented in racial analysis. These scholars thus demanded new theories of race that account for the changing U.S. racial context. This push to understand race within the current U.S. landscape propelled an appeal to the concept of racialization. In this thesis, I use Sociologist Saher Selod’s definition of racialization. She writes,

“...Racialization is understood as a process where new racial meanings are ascribed to bodies, actions and interactions. These meanings are not only applied to skin tone, but other cultural factors such as language, clothing, and beliefs. Racialization enables a discussion of how new racial meanings are created, transformed, and destroyed. It aids in

understanding how race and racisms are constantly fluctuating and being transformed due to the political and social contexts in which they exist. (Selod 2015, 79)

In other words, I use racialization to refer to the process through which an aspect of social personhood – class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, nationality, etc. – are given racial meaning, or essentialized, naturalized, or biologized as racial (Silverstein 2005, 364). Since modern U.S. society was historically founded on concepts of racial exclusion, race remains “integral to the contemporary workings of the state” (Inwood and Yarborough 2010, 299). As Selod and Embrick write, racialization can be used to understand how race and racisms “mutate and change depending on the social and historical context” (2013, 647), which best informs my analysis of the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

Race, Religion, and Immigrant Bundling

In the context of the Lewiston Farmers' Market, race, and Somali Bantus' race especially, is bundled with other identities. When talking to the Market Manager Sherie about race she insisted, “It is more nuanced here, there are more layers [than skin color].” In the Market context, race is most powerfully bundled with religion and nationality, as the producers and consumers are comprised most obviously of East African Muslim immigrants, and White, presumably Christian given Lewiston's history of Irish Catholic and French Canadian Catholic immigrants, multiple generation Americans.

When talking to a white consumer, whom I will call Sam, about how he understands race in the Lewiston Farmer's Market context, particularly regarding Somali Bantu producers, he told me,

“Farmers from Syria had an easier time sliding in... They [Somali Bantus] arrived with black skin first of all... in a state that is ninety-eight percent to ninety-nine percent white, competing with Vermont every census to be the whitest state... and then all of a sudden in this community there is a two, three, four, five percent of the population suddenly black Americans in a three or four-year period... that had a really visceral impact on the community, and not only that, but they have a Muslim religion which is very different... Not to mention the different language...”

Another white consumer, whom I will call Ellen, had similar thoughts on the matter. In talking about why many of her older friends do not frequent the Market, and then discussing identities in the market space, she said,

“Well I think race is the most overt... but I think nowadays the idea of Muslim is... *shakes head* I can remember a conversation a couple weeks ago and I made a comment about a friend I had in college that was Muslim... and they [her girlfriends] said ‘You have Muslim friends?!’... [Also, regarding where they come from] I hear from people my generation say that ‘my parents came and they learned the language’ and they were Franco they came from Canada... and I’m thinking well yeah you people still speak French when you meet somebody in the supermarket... doesn’t matter that I’m with you and I don’t speak French... they don’t make that connection.”

I argue religion and nationality are most prevalently bundled with race in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. I omit class, gender, and sexuality, as per my observations, these three identities are less obvious signifiers of supposed difference in the Market context. In an interview with a critical race scholar, I asked how I should address the various identities interacting with race at the Market. They encouraged me to focus on the context of what I am analyzing, for “you can never fully parse things out, rather the question is, ‘Which identity is most at work in any particular context?’”

My discussions with members of the Lewiston's Farmers' Market, many of which are like the two excerpts I have provided, offers evidence that there are many levels at which an identity, such as race, can be experienced. Knowing this, I must look at how race lies at the intersection of a “multiplicity of differences that are produced in conjunction with one another” (Inwood and Yarbrough 2010, 300).

To do so, I look at how this bundling of race, religion, and nationality is a product of *racialized* identities. In arguing religion and nationality are also racialized in the Lewiston Farmers' Market context, I foreground race, but do not make it my sole focus. Instead, in bringing in racialization, I keep race at the foreground while also being attentive to the other relevant forms of difference—religion and nationality.

I do this by observing and listening for when racial meaning is ascribed to signifiers of a participant's religious practices, such as dress, and markers of a participant's home nation, such as language. Through offering a racial analysis that reflects the “current contextual influences on race” (Selod and Embrick 2013, 644), racialization theory provides a framework for understanding the fluidity of race, racism, and resistance that best informs my analysis of the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

How Skin Color is Racialized: Somali Bantus Becoming Black

When I am talking about race in Lewiston, I must note that the Somali Bantu growers in discussion, that are marked as black in the United States, were not “black” until they arrived in this country. The process of racialization in the United States produces race from skin color in a way that was not present in Somalia. As African American Studies scholar Jesse Mills writes, “one of the primary ways racialization permeates black immigrant communities is in the experience of becoming black Americans” (Mills 2012, 57). Resettled Somali Bantus recited to anthropologist Catherine Bestman what they remember learning in the refugee camp’s cultural orientation classes, and only after they arrived in the U.S. did they learn about racism (Besteman 2014, 431). She writes, “that they [Somali Bantus] would experience racist hostility as black people was not part of their cultural orientation classes, and came as a great surprise” (2014, 431).

In Somalia, there was an ethnic hierarchy. One ethnic group was constructed as inferior—Somali Bantus, since ethnic Somalis believed themselves to be superior to the Somali Bantus. The physical and cultural signifiers that motivated discrimination towards the Somali Bantu minority was regardless of skin color. As an ethnically stigmatized minority in Somalia, Somali Bantus were subject to abuse and exploitation in Somalia and in refugee camps (Besteman 2016, 78). While not every Somali Bantu suffered to the same extent, the Somali Bantu label gave a name to the history of injustice the ethnic group faced (Besteman 2016, 98). One Somali Bantu describes their experience as,

“Before the fighting started I thought I was Somali, but after the [ethnic] Somalis pushed us aside I understood I was different. Before that all I knew was I was a Somali, same culture, same religion, but when they [ethnic Somalis] took over Banta and ordered

everyone around and called us adoon I realized I was different. After we escaped to Kenya was the time we understood we had another name, Somali Bantu” (Besteman 2016, 77).

This quote displays the construction of the Somali Bantu identity as inferior to the ethnic Somali identity.

In Somalia, Somali Bantus were socially constructed as inferior in contrast to ethnic Somalis. In the United States, since it is a different cultural context, there is a differing socially constructed hierarchy where people are placed in contrast to the white identity. Thus, the organization of hierarchy in the U.S. is dominantly racial, where whiteness is privileged. This contrast to whiteness often homogenizes people of color, and creates a homogenized “black” identity that rarely accounts for the cultural variability amongst those presenting as “black” in terms of nationality, language, religion, tradition, etc. I say all of this to keep in mind that, while Somali Bantus are racially marked and defined as black in the U.S., this identity of blackness was something they acquired upon entering the U.S. cultural context.

How Religion is Racialized

Knowing that religion is bundled with race in the Lewiston Farmers' Market context, and the process of racialization, I must now look at how religion is sometimes racialized, specifically the Muslim identity. Before I offer the theory on racialized religion, I would like to provide excerpts from three interviews. When I asked a black consumer (African American, not Somali), who I will call Angela, about her own analysis of religion in the Lewiston Farmers' Market, she said,

“There is this discourse, this anti-Muslim discourse in the country, and I think that here in this part of Maine, the identities of religion and race have been fused in a way that it is brown skin just immediately marks people and then I think for people who perceive that, it is already threatening to their own lifestyle, they just have this package of ideas, narratives and discourses in their heads that they just martial, and it is there, and it is very hard for anything to kind of break through that... plus Islam has been racialized in US discourse... where is the God in the talk about where Muslims are and what Muslims do?... they don’t recognize that, they just talk about Muslims as terrorists and not as people of faith... so I think that is the effect of racializing it.”

In talking to Sam I heard, “They [Somali Bantus] arrived with black skin... so there is the very visual surface reaction.... and not only that, but they have a Muslim religion which is very different... so that compounds it and complicates it because their spirituality, not only do people not understand it, but it is associated with a threat to our country.” Additionally, in talking to a white participant, who I will call Morgan, about the Somali Bantus involved in the Market, she told me that many Mainers see the Somali Bantus’ growing business as a zero sum game for the “original Mainers.” When I asked if she thought Mainers would think it was a zero sum game if the Somali Bantus were not Muslim, she replied, “I think it would make a biiiiiig difference [if they were not Muslim]... I really do, sad to say.”

As displayed in these conversations, many people involved in the Lewiston Farmers' Market claim that religious identity in this context is bundled with race, and, certain traits are naturalized as a result of having the Muslim identity. The Lewiston Farmers' Market context, like many others in the U.S., exhibit why racial scholars need to explain how a cultural trait like religious identity becomes essentialized.

Historically, discriminatory religious discourse preceded racial discourse. Prior to imperialistic classifications of race based on biological differences, “religion was used as a way to place individuals into social hierarchies” (Selod and Embrick 2013, 645-646). In this context, Muslims and Jews were categorized as having the “wrong” religion and deemed biologically inferior to Christians, and not “being of pure blood” (Selod and Embrick 2013, 646).

The historical relationship of religion to race informs why Muslims must be included in contemporary race dialogue, as the creation of Muslim as “other” is a racial project. So how is Islam racialized in the modern U.S.? Sociologist Craig Considine describes this well,

“Despite the heterogeneity of the American Muslim population, Muslims in the United States are racialized, meaning they are cast as a potentially threatening Other based on racial characteristics. Racialization, in this light, is a process by which American Muslims are identified and labelled through racial differentiation, such as genetics or skin color, and also through perceived cultural features such as religious symbols, like a beard or head covering. While Muslims are not a “race,” they are examined through a racial process that is demarcated by physical features and racial underpinnings... Through this racialization, racism surfaces to demonize Muslims as “threats” who need to be handled through racial profiling, coercion, and violence (2017, 6).

Considine showcases why it is necessary to use racial theory to analyze the Muslim experience in the U.S.

Muslims are racialized as “threats” both in a literal sense and a figurative sense. Literally, their racialization positions Muslims as “inferior to whites because of their stereotyped proclivity toward violence, and are then subject to policies that criminalize them” (Alimahomed 2011,

385). More figuratively Muslims are racialized as “threats to the American values of democracy and freedom” (Selod and Embrick 2013, 647).

As threats, Muslim men and women are racialized differently. Women are most often racialized and targeted in public, since Muslim women’s signifiers are more overt. They are assumed to lack the American ideals of gender equality, as “wearing the hijab is assumed to represent patriarchal values of male dominance” (Selod 2015, 85). Contrary to Muslim women’s public racialization, Muslim men are more often racialized in private spaces and subject to “endure interrogation about their ethnic and religious affiliations, forcing them to defend their religious beliefs and practices in relations to their values as an American citizen” (Selod 2015, 91).

Currently in the U.S., the idea of a “Muslim enemy” has “become common sense” among certain white populations (Naber 2005, 481). This racial project of positioning Islam as a threat necessitates an analysis of Islam through racial theory. Racialization theory offers new and interdisciplinary ways to talk about Islam, and without such, I wouldn’t be able to accurately analyze the experience Somali Bantus have in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

How Immigrants are Racialized

Since nationality is the other identity most powerfully bundled with race in the Lewiston Farmers' Market context, I must also discuss how immigrants are sometimes racialized. I must flag that the Somali community in Lewiston is a community of majority refugees that therefore fled their country and did not have the same choices that other types of immigrants have. By discussing how immigrant is racialized I am in no way saying that the refugee and immigrant experience is synonymous. Instead, I am applying immigrant racialization to a refugee

community because the majority of research participants encountered the Somali community in accordance with the scholarship on *immigrant* racialization.

The U.S. has “a tortured history regarding race, immigration, and citizenship” (Gordon 2007, 2497). In the middle of the twentieth century, the Immigrant and Nationality Act of 1965 lifted restriction on immigration from non-European countries such as those from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East resulting in “a new racial, ethnic, and religious landscape” (Selod and Embrick 2013, 644). In addition, as I discussed in my first chapter, Lewiston, Maine, an overwhelmingly white state, welcomed an influx of Somali immigrants in the early 2000s, and since, has continued to welcome a significant number of immigrants from other African countries. With the U.S.’s changing landscape, and Lewiston continuing to welcome brown and black immigrants, I must analyze race with attention to immigration. Racialization scholarship allows me to do just that.

In talking to Angela about the Market’s complicated racial context she told me “I mean I think the whole idea of immigrant is racialized... so immigrant is already racialized, that is part of what is going on here [in the Market].” From my observations and interviews, I completely agree. In discussing how white immigrants are welcomed into mainstream American culture, another interviewee discussed how Lewiston residents now revere the French Canadian immigrants that came to Lewiston in the twentieth century. While white immigrants are welcomed into mainstream culture, immigrants of color are racialized. Anthropologist Paul Silverstein explains this process well. He writes,

“Immigrants [of color] in these [white] settings are racialized in terms of their perceived inviolable cultural differences and presumed intimate relationship with mobility. In this respect, the particularities of individual migration processes and patterns are erased

within the structuring perception of immigrant otherness and the discursive construction of said differences as a national problem... accordingly, [these] immigrants, by the very nature of their history of mobility, become the racialized national others par excellence, the object of a white national fantasy of dominance” (2005, 366).

My interviews regarding the Somali Bantu producers align well with Silverstein’s claims.

Interviewees either biologize the Somali Bantu producers supposed cultural differences and have little to no knowledge about or interest in the Somali Bantu migration story. Or, my interviewees are well-versed in the Somali Civil War, actively working as an advocate for acceptable, and presenting interest in Somali Bantu culture and how it has positively transformed Lewiston. It is evident that there is indeed a community of people in the Lewiston Farmers' Market that are racializing brown and black immigrants.

Intersecting Racializations

The Somali Bantu community in the Market faces a “clash of racializations” (Considine 2017, 5) between being racialized as black, as a threatening Muslim, and also as an excluded immigrant. In other words, these individuals may be racialized as bad for society, disloyal to America, and *also* “subject to exclusion from a sense of belonging within the state for they are racialized as perpetually foreign” (Selod 2015, 81). Racialization thus provides the appropriate language to talk about, analyze, and address how racial meanings are applied to the black Muslim immigrants in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

This chapter offers the set of tools to unpack and respond to processes of racialization and resistance in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. With an understanding of racialization theory and how it can be applied to skin color, religion, and nationality, I can best unpack perceptions

of, interactions with, and policies involving producers of color. More specifically, racialization theory allows me to foreground race to ask what work race does around people and work people do on race while still remaining attentive to other relevant forms of difference.

Chapter 3: Racist Practice in the Market

Introduction

In chapter one I offered ethnographic context, and in chapter two, theory. In this chapter I offer the first part of my analysis: cases of oppressive racialization. The cases are categorized as erasure, or removing immigrants of color from the Market's history; colorblind identity; white resentment; shopping with who one looks like; saying producers of color use the language barrier as a means to an end; claiming producers of color are unfriendly; and not knowing producers of color personally. In each of these case listed, an aspect of Somali Bantu producers' social personhood was given racial meaning, and then discriminated against on that basis.

What follows is by no means an encompassing statement about racism in the Market. Because of the methodological shortcomings detailed in my introduction, I am only telling a particular story, or a partial story. Therefore, this chapter is not insight into all processes of racialization in the Market, but rather an analysis of the results I gathered from my ethnographic research. I hope that a reading of each case is done with a desire to understand power, possibility, and change at the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

I encourage people to keep in mind what one participant of color, who I will call Alexis, told me,

“There is this constant balance between people wanting to be supportive and inclusive [of the Somali Bantu producers] and I think not necessarily always knowing how to do that, and I think it is a learning process for everyone, it's challenging, yeah, it's challenging... I think everyone is doing their best, I like to think that a lot of it is not ill intentioned, I think a lot of it is people are learning as they go... In America we are socialized to be

racist, we are a part of a white supremacist culture, and that is something where every single day I try to check in with myself about that and I try to recognize my own privilege and my own bias... I think it is a constant process.”

It is important to note that the following chapter discusses racial oppression not simply in terms of individual behavior, but also in terms of institutional and systemic forces, both of which inform the Market space. Read each case with a willingness to critically analyze and challenge institutions and systems rather than solely individuals, as this chapter illuminates how to identify and start conversations about racialization in farmers' markets.

Erasure: Removing Immigrants of Color from the Lewiston Farmers' Market History

When I began my research in September, I knew that in order to understand the work race does around people and the work people do on race in the Market I had to first understand the context. I began to ask participants about the Lewiston Farmers' Market's history. I quickly learned that there are a variety of histories floating around in Lewiston, many of which diverge from the history that the fiscal backbone – The Nutrition Center – recounts. Most notable is that nearly all of the alternative histories I heard erased immigrants of colors' leadership, both Guatemalan and Somali Bantu.

The Guatemalan immigrants were amongst the original farmers and then left soon after, and the Somali Bantu farmers were consistent producers, or as the Market Manager calls them, “anchor farmers,” starting in the Market's early years and remaining throughout the Market's many iterations to sell currently. In my interviews with three Somali Bantu producers, they all told me that they started selling in 2007 during the Market's early years, and they each know the Somali Bantu farmers who were selling even earlier.

In addition, it was a part of the current Market Manager's job in 2009, when she was first hired, to “diversify” the producers, “both in terms of product and where they were coming from culturally,” she said. At this point a large portion of the producers were Somali Bantu, and the Market Manager knew that growing the Market meant bringing in new vendors from different communities, including the large portion of local white farmers. When I asked, “so are you saying that in an attempt to grow the Market, part of your job was to whiten the market?” She laughed in seeming discomfort at my summation and responded, “Wow I never thought of it like that, but yeah I guess so.” In my twenty two interviews, besides the three Somali Bantu producers and the Market Manager, only three participants knew the history of immigrant spearheading, two of whom are organizers whose work *is* knowing about Somali Bantu farmers’ successes and obstacles, and the other was a consumer.

The Market Manager told me, “[Somali Bantu] have been growing food however they can and wherever they can since they came here [to Lewiston], because that’s what people did.” She was highlighting that not only were the Somali Bantu producers vital in the development of the Lewiston Farmers' Market, but also that producing for the Lewiston Farmers' Market was a way for Somali Bantus to practice their way of life—farming. As a white organizer, whom I will call Sam, told me, when the market started, since the Somali Bantus had been finding ways to grow food since their arrival to Lewiston, they were “of the few farmers in Lewiston that were growing enough to sell.” An older white consumer, whom I will call Ellen, recalled the history that the Nutrition Center recounts and was well informed on the demographics of Lewiston farmers. She stressed, “A lot of the people that I see growing the food for this area are New American farmers.”

I could understand how a consumer could potentially be unaware of the Market's history, but I was shocked when producers who had been with the Lewiston Farmers' Market for several years affirmatively told me that the Somali Bantu producers had joined the Farmers' Market "recently" or "a few years back" or "they weren't at the beginning several years, I know that for sure." As for consumers, most said that they they were not sure of how the Market's history. When I for their best guesses for who spearheaded the Market, they all guessed three big name white producers.

When I explained the history that the Nutrition Center recounts, most were embarrassed and shocked, particularly because, as they all said in one way or another, the Somali Bantu producers do not seem to have the consumer base they deserve for being anchor farmers. From my observations, I agree. The Somali Bantu booths seemed consistently the least frequented, and many consumers I recognized after several weeks were in the habit of walking around and past the Somali Bantu booths—this could be racism, or it could simply be a preference for organic certification, I am not completely sure. But, what I am sure of is, as one white consumer whom I will call Gabby said confidently, "There is this absence of awareness that there is a large population [of Somali Bantu] doing this." She was right. But is it an absence of awareness? What exactly is going on?

First, I must mention that logistically, the history of the Market is complicated given the multiple iterations because some happened simultaneously. So, there is the possibility that some producers are genuinely recalling their version of history, which was at an iteration of the Market other than Kennedy Park, so they did not interact with the Somali Bantu producers until the convergence with the move to Bates Mill 5 in 2011. But I do not think that is reason enough to

account for the consistent erasure of immigrants of color from the Lewiston Farmers' Market history, particularly the Somali Bantu growers who are still producing today.

So what is the reason, and why is this erasure a racial process? This erasure is consistent with U.S. history of erasing leaders of color from the story. Sam, a white consumer who also organizes for and with the Somali Bantu population, highlighted, “In terms of recognition, I think it is a common trend in this country, where people of color have been pioneers, that history gets buried and lost and co opted... those Latino and Somali and mixed groups of youth were forerunners in creating that Kennedy Park market... certainty I don’t see them getting the recognition they deserve for their role in that... I don’t think that recognition has taken place at all” (Interview).

Whether the erasure is from people not knowing or not remembering correctly, both are results of an investment in whiteness. If people do not know and then assume white producers spearheaded the development *and* if people are not remembering correctly, both are products of a standpoint of white normalcy defining the rhetoric, spaces, and projects at farmers’ markets. This investment in whiteness is why there was no inquiry into Somali Bantu involvement, no overt commemoration of Somali Bantu involvement within the Market, and no correction of the false narratives over the years.

Erasure can be defined as the practice of “collective indifference that renders certain people and groups invisible” (Sehgal 2016). Sehgal recently wrote, “The word migrated out of the academy, where it alluded to the tendency of ideologies to dismiss inconvenient facts, and is increasingly used to describe how inconvenient people are dismissed, their history, pain and achievements blotted out” (2016). Whose stories are taught and told? Whose leadership is commemorated? Whose suffering is recognized? The casualties of “erasure” constitute familiar

cases— “women, minorities, the queer, and the poor” (2016). Wherever it is found, erasure, as a practice, can be detected by its preference for what Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie called “the single story — for easily legible narratives that reinforce the existing order” (Sehgal 2016).

In addition, recall researchers Alison Alkon and Christie McCullen’s “white farm imaginary” which I detailed in chapter one. The white farm imaginary, which romanticizes and universalizes an agrarian narrative specific to white history, erases the struggles and contributions of POC throughout the history of American agriculture, and also present-day food production. This imaginary found in Northern California’s farmers’ markets is *exactly* the localized process I found in my research at the Lewiston Farmers’ Market. This process of immigrant, particularly Somali Bantu, erasure maps onto a larger trend in U.S. narratives.

From my ethnographic research and limited conversation with the Somali Bantu producers, I am unable to provide insight into if or how they experience this erasure. Further research should be pursued to assess how the Somali Bantu producers feel, understand, and react to their erasure, as well as the lesser consumer basis. In addition, this case requires a discussion about how Lewiston Farmers’ Market can resist this invisibilizing and silencing process, and what it would look like to like to emerge from erasure. Two ideas, as participants suggested (listed in Appendix C), are for the Market to forefront a “history of the Lewiston Farmers’ Market” plaque detailing immigrants of color’s efforts, and the Market space including visuals of its history, specifically showcasing immigrants of colors’ roles.

Colorblind Identity: “I don’t see color; I don’t see anything”

Towards the end of my interviews, after I established a foundation of trust, I asked most participants more explicitly about race relations in the Lewiston Farmers' Market, or relations between white people in the market and Somali Bantu producers. About a fourth of my participants, all of whom I would assume were over fifty years of age and I marked as white, self-identified as “colorblind.” What’s interesting, however, is that the individuals that identified as colorblind were not espousing what is typically defined as colorblind racism, which “denies the effects of racism by reframing structural inequalities as issues of choice” (Hartmann 2015, 868), but rather making colorblind declarations as a way of arguing *against* discrimination towards the Somali Bantu community.

I heard from an older white woman and a regular consumer at the Market, who I will call Anne, “I don’t see color. I don’t see anything. I just look at people as human beings like me.” A white consumer who I will call Hazel described how saddened she was by her friends who won’t even approach Somali Bantu booths despite the Somali Bantu’s “tough life” she said, “color doesn’t matter.” Another white producer who I will call Greg told me, “We are all human beings!” when expressing frustration about the other producers who “don’t have much to do with them [the Somali Bantu producers].” Another white producer, who I will call Eileen, said, “We are all human beings no matter what color we are... God loves them [the Somali Bantu] just as much as he loves anyone” in disagreement with some people who are “just mad that they [the Somali Bantu] are here.” These claims to universal humanity and assertions of not seeing color are both representations of colorblind identity in that both refuse to examine whiteness.

My encounters with colorblind identity – people claiming colorblindness as “an important dimension of their personhood, value commitments and social ideals” (Hartman 2015,

870) – were not embraced to obscure or deny the effects of racism by

“reframing structural inequalities as issues of individual choice and ability” (2015, 868).

Colorblind identity was not espoused to claim that American society has moved into a post-racial era, where “the concept of race and thus potential experiences of racism is obsolete” (Mekawi 2017, 207). I am confident these moments of self-identification with colorblind identity is not in attempt to ignore that segments of American society have become more and more segregated since integration (Alim 2011, 379). Instead, these people identifying as colorblind are willing to discuss the racial discrimination present in the Market and the city of Lewiston at large.

But, just because the racial colorblindness I found from my research was not clearly a form of ultra-modern prejudice, or oppressive racialization, can I call it resistance? Is it anti-racism? Consider that the colorblind identity in this case is adopted in an attempt to reverse diversity. The individuals espousing colorblind identity *believe* they are being anti-racist. These statements are made in a desire for race not to matter in response to an awareness that it does matter deeply in the Lewiston Farmers' Market.

I argue anti-racism requires a critical and reflexive examination of whiteness, thus even benevolent colorblind identity, no matter how well-intended, is an impediment to resistance. The colorblind identity separates race out from “the complex matrix of social dimensions that are part of everyday lived experiences” (Alim 2011, 380), making it impossible to practice reflexive anti-racism that examines the histories and privileges of whiteness. As educational philosopher Audrey Thompson argues, confronting and challenging racism is contingent on *never* forgetting race (2003, 24).

What I did not do in my research, however, and I should have done, was ask Somali Bantu producers about their relationships with the individuals that claim a colorblind identity. If

Somali Bantu producers feel understood, validated, and supported by those who claim a colorblind identity, then who am I to say that even benevolent colorblind identity is an impediment to anti-racism and resistance? Follow up research must ask Somali Bantu producers about those relationships. The work that the colorblind identity does on race in the Lewiston Farmers' Market is incredibly complicated. As it is rather prevalent, and a barrier to a reflexive examination of whiteness in the Market, I argue addressing and respecting racial difference as a means of practicing anti-racism *must* begin.

To start, white participants that already critically examine whiteness must engage white participants who claim the color blind identity, encouraging them to reflect on their privileged social positions. White people speaking in community with other white people should stress the possibility and the reality of many white people moving out of guilt and into a place of great responsibility, responsibility that pushes white people to create spaces that recognize race in order to actively decentralize whiteness. Once this begins, Market participants that claim a colorblind identity might start to understand and resist the various privileges and barriers that accompany racial differences, opening more participants up to instituting the list of participants' suggestions for anti-racism (Appendix C).

White Resentment: The Somali Bantus are “Taking from the local”

When I started my research on the Lewiston Farmers' Market, I knew xenophobia, or the intense dislike and fear of people from other countries (UNESCO, 2017), is prevalent in the city of Lewiston at large. Knowing that Somali Bantu immigrants had been a part of the Market and thus a part of the local food movement since its inception, I was unsure whether the xenophobia present in the city at large would be a factor in the role race plays in participant's perceptions of,

interactions with, and policies involving Somali Bantu producers. I eventually learned that xenophobia is embedded in the culture of the Market, and is a product of the work race does around people, specifically white resentment towards the community of black immigrant producers—the Somali Bantu.

In conversation with one of the Somali Bantu producers, who I will call Rakiya, I was told about people's initial confusion about the Somali Bantu farmers selling food. She told me, "when we started there was confusion from folks who are buying.... Like 'why are they [Somali Bantu] selling?'" Throughout my research I never encountered an individual directly asserting xenophobic philosophies, however my interview participants and also the people I had more casual conversations with at the Market consistently referenced their white friends who were upset that the Somali community came to Lewiston, and continue to be resentful towards the economic stability Somali Bantu producers have gained in Lewiston, many from farming. When asking a white consumer how he thought the Lewiston community reacted to the Somali Bantus' arrival in general, he shook his head and could only say, "Just negative..."

In addition to the more general dislike and fear of the Somali Bantu community's influx into Lewiston, participants stressed how little faith they had in the Lewiston community's awareness or care to know Somali Bantu's stories. In recounting her reaction to their white friends' xenophobia towards the Somali Bantu community, Anne frustratedly shared, with burrowed eyebrows and a stare fixed to the floor, "I'm going 'well, I don't really know their stories, I don't know what happened to them!"

When I asked Greg if he thinks their discriminatory neighbors know the trauma the Somali Bantu people have faced, he responded, "No, I don't think so. A lot of them are down on them [Somali Bantu] because they are getting all of these benefits and stuff. I am glad they are

getting what they are getting.” Eileen said, “I don’t think they [discriminatory people] care to know... I hear people talking about all the give-a-ways they [Somali Bantu] get, so they think the money should stay here for our people, but I do not feel that way. They’ve suffered, they deserve a better life.” Similarly, Gabby added, “These people came from a terrible war-torn country, but people don’t have pity. It is very weird. People might think they [Somali Bantu] are getting what they deserve.”

In addition to not knowing and not caring to know where the Somali Bantu community is coming from, my participants stressed a white resentment towards Somali Bantus getting any resources, which Ellen summarized as “people are afraid they [Somali Bantu] are taking from the local.” In following up with other participants about the phrase “taking from the local,” a white consumer who I will call Morgan shared, “People were upset saying they were going to take our jobs, they were going to get free welfare, they are getting cars when we can’t afford them.” Ellen later added, “I think some people see it as a zero-sum game, and if something is available for the New Americans, it takes away from them... which just blows my mind I can’t understand that mindset, but I find that [to be] a very strong theme with some people.”

All of these accounts of xenophobia from white people in regards to immigrants of color are more than anecdotal stories floating around in Lewiston. As some participants stressed, xenophobic ideologies are present within the Market space as well, from other producers as well as consumers. James told me about talking to several producers who angrily asked, “Why are they [Somali Bantu] getting this help? Why are they [Somali Bantu] being prioritized when I am struggling too?” James reflected, “There have been these concerns expressed that ‘those [Somali Bantu] farmers are being subsidized to compete [with other farmers].’”

In terms of consumers, the Market Manager told me a story about a white woman telling her that the low-income senior facility “does not want to shop from Somali Bantu farmers because they get land for free.” In reflecting on the incident she passionately continued,

“It took me saying it in however many different ways... No they don’t actually get the land for free and it took ten minutes of me repeating the same thing over and over for her to even hear it because she had this predisposed idea! People don’t want to hear different from what they believe. It is so hard to get over that. People are always up in arms because those people ‘don’t work’ and we have people breaking their backs to grow food for YOU and it’s not good enough! It just doesn't matter what people do and it's just really disheartening... and then woman went off about how she is not racist she has multiracial grandkids.”

From this story and the many anecdotes detailed above, it is clear how xenophobic ideology, particularly white resentment towards the community of black immigrant producers, is part of the Lewiston Farmers' Market culture.

In trying to understand if and how these cases of xenophobia are racialized, I talked to a few different participants about what they think justifies and motivates the white resentment. In response I heard from a white woman named Sarah, “I think a lot of Maine has this Maine-centric point of view.” But, if this was just a matter of a “Maine-centric” point of view, why did two different white consumers tell me about how welcome and accepted they feel here in Lewiston, and particularly the Market, after moving to Maine recently, one in the past month and another in the past year. One told me “It is just a feeling of acceptance [in Lewiston], it feels good!” and the other, “It kind of just feels like home.” Why is it that black bodies entering Maine and trying to provide for themselves are “taking form the local,” and white bodies doing the

same are made to feel at home? The discourse surrounding migration is racialized in Lewiston through a process that justifies oppression towards black bodies, and acceptance towards white bodies.

This process of racialization ascribes racial meaning to Somali Bantu producers' ability to secure income in ways that fuel and justify resentment. The associations of policies with race, like welfare policies that assist recent immigrants, can be quite subtle "both in political discourse and public opinion" (Winter 2006, 417). But research shows that racial attitudes are "the *single* most important influence on whites' welfare views" (Gilens 1996, 593). Welfare is now "widely viewed as a 'coded' issue that activates white Americans' negative views of black Americans without explicitly raising the 'race card'" (1996, 593). There is, as Yale political scientist Martin Gilens calls it, "a subterranean discourse" on race in U.S. society where black Americans are linked with welfare (1996, 602), resulting from a "racial imaginary" in which the U.S. public thinks black Americans make up a much larger share of the poor population (1996, 595).

I can imagine someone refuting my analysis of white resentment, stating that my ethnographic findings are xenophobic but race-neutral language. I disagree. While the Somali Bantu community represents more than just blackness, and are indeed also discriminated against on the basis of their religion and nation origin, the white resentment towards the producers for "taking from the local" maps onto a larger discourse on particularly black and brown migrants, and thus is an example of racial meaning being made to generate oppression. Further research probing people who are resentful in order to gain more insight into the justification for that resentment would inform how to most effectively resist white resentment in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. In the meantime, another participant's suggestion could be employed to disrupt the narrative of "taking from the local." Producers of color could have signage at their booth

detailing the history of their farm, explaining both how hard they work to grow and sell at the Market *and* how their presence since the Market's early years has informed the Market's growth, benefiting all Lewistonians.

Shopping with Who One Looks Like

In the months of participant observation at the Market, I noticed a majority of white consumers flocking to white producers, and a majority of consumers of color flocking to producers of color. This observation was verified in many of my interviews, where participants said they too noticed the trend. Because of the demographics of Lewiston, which is a majority white city, this tendency results in the white producers having a much larger following, and dominating the Market space, both spatially and financially. This case is potentially the most overt example of the work race does around people and the work people do on race in the Market, and also bears immediate influence on Somali Bantu producer's experiences at the market in terms of general inclusion and success.

In some of my interviews, participants offered assumptions as to why this was the case. The Market Manager told me, "I see people not wanting to be around people that are different from them." In asking her to expand, she said, "I think it is comfort. I also think it is not strictly a case of people don't want to shop with the New American or the person of color, it is that the shopping experience can be a hair more cumbersome, so there are a few factors, however I do think there is the element of people just choosing to shop with people that look like them." Anne told me, "I have a girlfriend that I take to the Market that will not buy from them [Somali Bantu farmers] and there is nothing I can say or do to change her mind." Similarly, Sarah said, "I've heard my girlfriend who are French tell me that they won't go to their booth at all."

The culture of people shopping with who they look like is so divisive in the Market that some white Lewistonians refuse to even *enter* and be in the same space as producers of color, as several of my participants told me about their white friends and family. Ellen told me, “I was unable to get some of my friends to come out. There is a prejudice against the Somali Bantu community and they would rather drive to Jillson’s, which is further, than the Market, which is closer—it’s the same food!” In another interview Morgan said, “I have heard people overtly say they are not going to go because the Somali Bantus are there, or because ‘They do it all for ‘those’ people’... It’s unfortunately, it truly is. They say things like ‘That’s not for us, that’s for them.’” Sarah even discussed her friends all being on food stamps and still refusing to go despite the Nutrition Incentive Programs (detailed later in chapter four) at the Market. “It was odd to me because at one point I was getting food stamps, and my friends were on food stamps, and I told them about how they could use them at the Market, and they still wouldn’t do it,” she said.

Sarah believes this case of shopping with who one looks like is a matter of comfort, and another white participant, Anne, described it as a “fear of the unknown.” So, who is to say that this discomfort and fear of the unknown is a matter of racialization? Many social psychology research findings highlight the influences of in-group bias – favoring members of one’s in-group over out-group members – and also that dominant groups (such as white people in the U.S.) show stronger possession of implicit in-group bias (Rudman 2002, 294). And, groups with the least status, or minority groups, are “the most susceptible to in-group devaluation” (2002, 294). Knowing the social psychology research on in-group bias, and the strength of in-group bias increasing as the status of one’s social group increases, I must consider what sort of group is dominant in a U.S. context, and also in the Market context: *whiteness*. This makes me think that it is appropriate to foreground this case as a matter, at least in part, of race.

In addition, I argue race must be foregrounded in consideration of how the othering of blackness in the United States has an extremely violent history, and I argue othering blackness continues as the most ingrained institutional and systemic violence in the U.S. With this, there is a prevalent “white-black racial schema” prevalent in U.S. culture that is more than just in-group and out-group bias, but also a matter of attributing subordinate traits to blackness to justify oppression (Winter 2006, 402). I am making a strong case that customers ingrouping is product of racialization, where skin color is the most prevalent factor, and religion and nationality are also applied new racial meanings. Recall what Sam, a customer and white anti-racist organizer, said, “Farmers from Syria had an easier time sliding in.”

Since I cannot prove anything conclusively with an ethnographic study, a psychology study could be pursued, potentially by a Bates class, or a Bates thesis student. The study could look specifically at consumer’s social psychology, and the biases driving their ingrouping. The Market could use the results of this study to programmatically encourage customers to shop from producers across all racial groups.

Saying Producers of Color Use the Language Barrier as a Means to an End

As I began and developed this project, questions about language reoccurred. Many people I spoke to about my research project wondered how the language barrier between Somali Bantus and non-Somali Bantus could be put in conversations with the work race does around people, and the work people do on race. In my participant observation I witnessed a variety of interactions across fluent English language speakers and the Somali Bantu growers, some of whom have limited English skills. Most consumers and producers found their way across the language barrier, either pleasantly with smiles and laughter or neutrally with patience and

attention. One well established white producer, however, had rather oppressive opinions about the Somali Bantu producers' language skills. In addition, the Somali Bantu producers I interviewed said the "one thing they wish [they could change]" was the language barrier. Because of these two interviews, language warrants attention in the discussion of racialization and resistance.

The white producer with a massive following at the Market, who I will call Martha, began the conversation about language by telling me that she believes the Somali Bantu farmers have held themselves apart. "I think there is a huge amount of prejudice in these two cities... and their culture is so completely different from ours and I'm not trying to sound prejudicial myself but they have held themselves apart," she said. In asking her to elaborate she added, "I think part of it is language... The language is a huge barrier, because they are not terribly interested, at least the older generation, in learning English."

As someone who has spent the past three years and counting teaching English to Lewiston's growing adult immigrant and refugee community, mostly Somali Bantu, at both the Adult Learning Center and The Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services (MEIRS), I was absolutely shocked to hear someone make such an incorrect statement, and make it so conclusively. In contradiction to Martha's claims, over my years of teaching I have encountered hundreds of Somali immigrants from the "older generation" who diligently practice English outside of the classroom, and tirelessly participate in class. Despite the difficulty of learning the English language at an older age, I am certain the majority of the Somali population is trying their best to learn English, and absolutely *is* interested.

I tried my best to hide my shock, and asked "Why do you say that?" to which she responded "because I've witnessed it, all the time at the markets." I then followed up with "How

do you know it is that they are not interested?” She told me,

“Um they either use it as a tool I think to get a better deal in their perception, so if they come to me they won’t use their English, they will use their kids to use their English, now I am not going to say that they do that all the time, but I am definitely going to say that they use their language restrictions as a means to an ends for some of them.”

I responded, “You have felt that way when they are talking?” to which she nearly cut me off to say, with wide and deliberate eyes, “No. I have *seen* that.”

In juxtaposition to this powerful white producer’s claims, were the Somali Bantu producers’ communal pleas for more people to understand the complexity of the language barrier, and also to pursue more communication across the barrier. One Somali Bantu producer, who I will call Joseph, told me, “one thing I wish people here had was understanding the language.” In bringing this up to Rakiya she agreed and proceeded to tell me about selling food in Somali, and how it helped her when people would tell her why they aren’t buying from her and what they do not like, so then she could change things. Here, she says, “they would rather just look at it and not tell you.” She concluded, “I wish they could give us good feedback.”

In putting Martha, Joseph, and Rakiya’s comments in conversation with each other, it is clear to me how, as scholar Jonathan Daniel Rosa argues, ideologies of language standardization and “languagelessness” “call into question linguistic competences, and by extension, legitimate personhood altogether” (2016, 163). In his research Rosa states that these ideologies of language “interact with one another and assessments of particular individuals’ language use often invoke ideas about the incompetence and illegitimacy of entire racialized groups” (2016, 162). In other words, deviating from the standard language, or the standard use of the national language has

particular implications for racialized groups. With racialized groups, these deviations evoke ideas of incompetence and illegitimacy, like Martha espoused.

As Somali Bantu producers made clear, they are aware of what the language barrier costs them, specifically a more successful Market presence. But, there is a larger problem which is that an incredibly supported and beloved white producer, whom both consumers and producers flock to at the Market, racializes Somali Bantu producers' "language standardization" and "languagelessness" (2016, 162), as Rosa would say. Martha gives one aspect of Somali Bantu producers' social personhood, their language skills, racial meaning to generate oppression. It is thus necessary that a white person engages Martha, and the larger Lewiston Farmers' Market community, in a conversation about the incredible complexity of learning English while establishing yourself in a new cultural context, and also the immense effort most Somali Bantu immigrants put into learning the English language. This engagement could foster a more accurate understanding of Somali Bantu producers' experiences, and thus a more supportive producer community.

Claiming Producers of Color are Unfriendly

Throughout the months of my participant observation, I found all of the producers and consumers to be rather friendly people. Particularly in the case of the Somali Bantu producers whom I could not communicate with much verbally, we communicated across smiles, waves, and nods. With these continually pleasant encounters with the Somali Bantu producers, I was surprised to hear two white participants, one regular consumer and Martha, again, a well-supported producer, claim that the Somali Bantu producers are unfriendly, and do not have strong relational skills.

In describing one of the few times her and her husband purchased from the Somali Bantu producers, a white consumer who I will call Linda said, “They were so unfriendly, there wasn’t any interaction. [It was] just a scowling exchange of goods for money.” When I asked if she had tried talking to the farmers and engaging them conversationally, she said, “No,” did not see the absurdity in her response, and waited for the next question. Similarly, Martha told me, “It is hard for them [Somali Bantu] to create relationships. They grow wonderful produce, they do a beautiful job of it, but they just don’t have those [relational] skills.”

Beyond my own experiences from participant observation that disprove Linda and Martha’s claims, I also heard completely contradictory things from other participants in interviews. In talking specifically about the language barrier Ellen said, “if someone looks harried ya know I think ‘should I say something?’ But I always discovered that if you do, they [the Somali Bantu producers] react with a smile!” Another white consumer, Morgan, talked about how she enjoys buying specifically from the Somali Bantu producers because of how exceptionally pleasant and warm the experience is.

In addition, several producers, both white and of color, discussed the welcoming, supportive, and loving community of Lewiston Farmers' Market producers. “I feel really welcome—across the board,” one white producer said. Another, ““It is quite a loving bunch... They have been so good to us.” In another interview with a white producer I was told, “There is no in fighting here at all... and that is strange because lots of places people want the power... We get along good.” Even more, “[This is] really the friendliest market out of all the we have gone to,” and another white producer said, so confidently, “It’s just like family, really.” In asking one Somali Bantu producer if people are supportive, she said, “Most of the people are friendly, and another echoed with, “Everything seems okay!”

These songs of praise about buying from the Somali Bantu producers and selling in community with them show that there is a significant community of people that are not oppressively racializing Somali Bantu producers' affect, however there are a few that are. Those few can be addressed in conversations about the intersection of race and affect, which Anthropologist Ramos-Zayas informs. Romas-Zayas examines brown and black immigrant experiences in the U.S., and her research details that affect is often a part of a racial process (Ramos-Zayas 2011). In the case of Martha and Linda, their process makes racial meaning out of Somali Bantu producers affect in ways that generate oppression.

Further research must be done to assess the portion of consumers and producers that racialize Somali Bantu affect in a process similar to Martha's and Linda's, and also on efficient ways to address and aid in the unlearning of such racialized processes. One of the participants' suggestions could be useful. The Market could highlight a different farmer each week, a rotating spotlight of sorts. Highlighting producers of color, forefronting their skills and attributes, could provoke interest in and conversation with producers of color, potentially intervening in processes that racialize their affect.

Not Knowing Producers of Color Personally

My last case is the issue of most producers and consumers not knowing the Somali Bantu producers personally. Only four out of the twenty two interview participants knew the names of the Somali Bantu producers. Several consumers and producers knew the first names of white producers, but spoke more generally about the Somali Bantu producers. And, what's arguably worse, is that nearly everyone I spoke to referred to the Somali community as "Somalians." In calling the Somali people "Somalians," participants presented "Americans" as the standpoint of

normalcy for which other cultural groups should be pluralized. All of this displayed an obvious social distance from the Somali Bantu producers.

In discussing ways of practicing anti-racism in the Market, Sam said,

“Get to know the names of the individuals. Get to know the people as individuals. Don’t generalize about the community because everyone is an individual, everyone has their own experience and that is a really humanizing process for all of us when you get to know them people who are different from us. There is a lot of stuff that happens at the individual level.”

Sam’s localized anti-racism organizing tactics map onto the larger scholarship on how to transformatively engage difference. Both organizers and scholars claim that not only an empathy for, but also a *commitment* to knowing and understanding people who are different from you is necessary for working against oppressive institutions and systems (Yuval-Davis 1997).

With this claim, not knowing the Somali Bantu producers personally is a direct impediment to anti-racist practice, and allows room for making racial meaning to generate oppression. I hope the Lewiston Farmers’ Market, specifically white anti-racist producers, create more opportunities for community-building and humanization across white producers and producers of color, and white consumers and producers of color. While several suggestions are listed in Appendix C, I think the suggestions to connect with producers of color across youth programming, storytelling events, and a weekly spotlight on a farmer would be the most transformative.

Conclusion

In this chapter I offered the first part of my analysis: cases of oppressive racialization. This chapter illuminates the seven cases I found through my research in which oppressive racial meaning is made about the Somali Bantu producers. In each of these cases listed, an aspect of Somali Bantu producers' social personhood was given racial meaning, and then discriminated against on that basis. This chapter offers how to identify and start conversations about racialization in farmers' markets.

How can readers and participants move forward from these seven cases? First, they must ask themselves in what *moments* they have participated in each case. Following, they should practice critical reflexivity on why, with the intention to move into action rather than ruminate in guilt. Third, they can use the concluding questions and suggestions for each case to guide their plan of action, as action looks different depending on an individual's positionality and resources. And finally, readers and participants, particularly white readers and participants, must engage with other people committed to anti-racist practice in order to be held accountable and supported in waking up every day and challenging oppressive racialization.

Chapter 4: Anti-Racist Practice in the Market

Introduction

In chapter one I offered ethnographic context, in chapter two theory, and chapter three contained the first part of my analysis, where I discussed cases of oppressive racialization. In this final chapter I detail the second part of my analysis: cases of anti-racism. The Lewiston Farmers' Market was shaped by overtly anti-racist practices since its inception, and has since retained those values in several ways.

It is important to remember what I mentioned previously about racism and anti-racism occurring in tandem, displaying the complexities of racialized spaces and the necessity to analyze people and institutions for who and what they are in particular moments. In addition, recall the limitations I discussed in my introduction. I am unable to fully represent participants of color's experiences of racialization and resistance. As a result, this chapter pulls predominantly from my observations of anti-racist practice and also white participants' discussion of anti-racist practice, weaving in participants of color's experiences with both as much as possible.

In my analysis I found six cases of the Lewiston Farmers' Market culture resisting racism. These perceptions, interactions, and policies disrupt the ways in which racial meanings are created and ascribed to Somali Bantu producers' bodies, actions, and interactions to generate oppression. These cases are derived from participant observation and interviews that examined whiteness in efforts to value, recenter, and support producers of color. The six cases are as follows: food as a gathering point for mutual sharing, active empathy, whiteness abolitionists, nutrition incentive programs, social commitments to buy from producers of color, and spatial arrangements as anti-racist practice.

In this chapter I detail the work people do on race in the Market, resisting oppressive racialization. I hope this chapter mobilizes more Lewiston Farmers' Market participants to partake in these six cases, and also serves as a model for people practicing anti-racism and food justice in communities where race is further complicated by other increasingly racialized identities. As a consumer color, Angela, stated, “the Market at baseline is an opportunity... I think every space ought to be a space where anti-racism becomes part of the consciousness and [is] attended to in the practices of the people involved.”

Food as a Gathering Point for Mutual Sharing

When I began my research, one of my first interview participants, a consumer of color who I will call Alexis, talked about the power of mutual sharing cross-culturally, and how food, particularly farmers' markets, can create the space for that sharing. She went on to say, “I think when you have more consistent engagement with different cultures you have a better understanding, and then people feel an investment and a commitment to this community [of Somali Bantu producers], and they want to support them and that slowly begins to spread.”

The manager of the Market had a similar perspective. Sherie spoke to me about food, first and foremost, being a commonality, “food is something that everyone has in common, everyone can connect over it.” She then expanded to talk about the connective power of gathering around food, “I think it’s kind of wrapped up in what you believe the world should be like... and I think a lot about this these days when there is what feels like, diametrically opposed ideas about ‘quality of life’ and what communities should look like and the world should look like... food is this thing that brings people together in this really beautiful way.”

From my observations, the Market space is able to attract incredibly different people, both in terms of socio-political demographics and in terms of personality type, as detailed in chapter one. Throughout my months of research, it became increasingly evident to me that food is one of few things that can pull people from such different walks of life into the same room. But, what happens when all of these people are in the same room? Is bringing people from all sorts of backgrounds together in a space, as the Market Manager claims, “a springboard for all sorts of things?” As detailed in chapter three, gathering around food has its limitations in a society structured in part by race and white supremacy. But, from my observations and interviews, for *some*, gathering around food did serve as a springboard for resisting oppressive racialization.

From gathering in the Market over the years, Sarah, a white consumer, told me how she watched the Somali Bantu producers’ market methods up other producer’s game. She said, “In the beginning [of the Market] the traditional farmers would kind of plop their food down, and the New American [Somali Bantu] farmers would set their food up very carefully, look very attractive, and it upped everybody’s game, everybody got better.” While I heard from some producers and consumers about how the Somali Bantu producers do not have the skills to be a strong presence at the Market, I also have Sarah, a woman who has gone to the Market every Sunday for six years, telling me that she believes the producers of color are responsible for changing producer culture.

In addition, a new white consumer who had just moved to Maine, Nicole, told me that after her second time at the winter Market she was most fulfilled by her shopping experience with “the Somali couple in the middle of the room.” She continued, “I think it’s their... I don’t know if you would call it reverence for food? But they really seem to appreciate what they grow

and try and give it to you so it looks good and I've been very impressed by what I've seen." Adding to what I heard from Sarah and Nicole are the more casual conversations I had with both consumers and producers about their growing appreciation for the Somali Bantu producers, some discussing the new recipes they learned from Rakiya, others talking about their plan to go visit a Somali Bantu producer's farm.

These moments of the mutual sharing open up the space for what scholars call transversal politics or transversal dialogue. Yuval Davis describes transversal dialogue as the principle of "remaining centered in one's own experiences while being empathetic to the differential positionings of the partners in the dialogue, thus enabling the participants to arrive at a different perspective from that of hegemonic tunnel vision" (1997, 17). Put simply, transversal dialogue is when people enter a space aware of their own position and speak from that position while also being empathetic to and invested in learning the different positions of others.

My research findings display that within the Lewiston Farmers' Market food has the potential to be the impetus for transversal dialogue, as "the mutual sharing, listening, and supporting is greatly effective in the continuous struggle towards a less racist society" (Yuval-Davis 1997, 22). A question remains about how some Market participants experience food as an impetus for transversal politics, and others do not? What are the conditions that propel mutual sharing over oppressive racialization? These sorts of questions must be engaged in order to increase anti-racist practice in the Market. From my participant observations and interviews, I believe one possible propelling condition is a willingness to listen and learn, which can be fostered by creating more opportunities for public intimacy either spatially or programmatically.

Active Empathy

Throughout my research, I have heard and noticed both producers and consumers expressing empathy towards the Somali Bantu farmers regarding their migration experience and their discrimination both in Lewiston at large and also in the Market. These empathetic expressions displayed the portion of Market participants that are really invested in seeing, respecting, and developing relationships with the producers of color. From participants imagining themselves in the producer's of color's shoes, these empathetic expressions operate as starting point for anti-racist practice.

In talking to Alexis, a consumer of color, about empathy as a site for anti-racist in the Market she told me, “that sort of seems like the most radical thing to me... when people take the time to really talk to one another and listen and be open and I think that is where people are really able to humanize one another, because I think that is the biggest thing about racism, it is the dehumanization, so really seeing someone and respecting and loving them... is one of the best ways to do that.”

In talking to one of the Somali Bantu producers, Joseph, about feeling seen, respected, and loved, he said that Market participants understanding the Somali Bantu producers and why they are here has most directly increased their market sales. Helping secure Somali Bantu producers' stake in the market seems like one of the most tangible ways of practicing anti-racism. He told me, “after [some understood us]... like our sales had gone up... a lot of people kind of understood us, we got to learn each other more and more and now we are selling more.” Additionally, in talking about racism towards the Somali Bantu producers, Angela told me, “The more and more I think about it, I think empathy is the way in...”

While I agree that empathy can be transformative, it is important in conversations about empathy to clarify what sort of empathy is being discussed. American philosopher Martha Nussbaum identifies empathy as, “the mental preparation of a skilled actor: it involves a participant enactment of the situation of the sufferer, but always combined with the awareness that one is not oneself the sufferer” (Eze 2012, 124). In this understanding of empathy, a clear understanding of the different histories and positionalities people possess because of their racial assumptions is crucial, yet another reason why appealing to a colorblind ideology, where race is extracted from the conversation, is a barrier to anti-racist practice.

Next, is the difference between passive and active empathy. In my research I found some passive empathy, “a benign state of empathizing with the oppressed... ignoring active responsibility to one another or failing to take action that confronts racism and reduces injustice” (Zemblayas 2012, 120), and a surprising amount of active empathy, which is invested in “overcoming emotional injury and oppression” (2012, 120). While there are numerous dangers to forms of empathy such as “pity, voyeurism, and empty sentimentality” (2012, 120), here I want to recognize a more politically focused empathy that brings the oppressor and the oppressed into active community and resistance together.

The conversations with participants regarding the Somali Bantu producers’ migration included reflective discussions about agency, culture shock, and exhaustion. In addition, in addressing racist ideology and instances of racism, participants displayed motivation for resistance. Because the Market brings people together on the seemingly apolitical pretense of food, I do not think appeals solely to justice are enough to foster an anti-racist state. Appeals to justice must also be coupled with appeals to common decency, using compassion and then active empathy to start “neutralizing the hegemonic effect of racialization” (Eze 2012, 126).

As educational philosopher Michalinos Zembylas writes, “finding commonality through identification is perhaps the most difficult yet profound step in his or her rehumanization” (2012, 121). My research findings display that there are people practicing rehumanizing active empathy in the Lewiston Farmers' Market. What’s next requires an engagement across those practicing active empathy with those either practicing passive empathy or those perpetuating racially oppressive ideology. I believe this sort of engagement would be most effective across sharing and hearing stories. How and where can that happen? Possible suggestions include a Lewiston Farmers’ Market history plaque and a rotating spotlight on a farmer, both discussed in chapter three and listed in Appendix C. In addition, agendas for producer meetings could include check-ins across producer who do not know each other well, and the Market could hold more informal gatherings for producers, such as group harvests or dinners.

Whiteness Abolitionists

The organization of the Lewiston Farmers' Market was propelled by a group of white Mainers who were committed to creating farming opportunities for and with immigrants. As I’ve said previously, the Lewiston Farmers' Market was shaped by overtly anti-racist practices since its inception, and these practices were mobilized largely by these white organizers. From the two white organizers that I spoke to and from the others that I heard second hand stories about, it is clear that anti-racist ideology was their motivation. In talking to the one of the founding white organizers, Sam, he told me about what motivated his interest in starting the Market. He said,

“Part of what motivated me to start this project was my own evolving anti-racist perspective... and working in the food system and having some awareness of the history and oppression of black farmers in the U.S. They were emancipated and not given

acres... and even when they were given land in the South had it taken away from them through racist economics... so certainly that has played a prominent role in our history... and so I thought we had a really good story of people arriving with farming skills, a community desperate to help them find a place in some ways..."

Alexis recalled the efforts of John, another founding white organizer. She told me, "A lot of what he was doing was working really hard to find land for these farmers to work on because access to land and land security has been one of the biggest challenges for these [Somali Bantu] communities and a lot of this is because they don't have a lot of assets to leverage and buy land... He has worked really diligently to talk to landowners about leasing parcels." Throughout my research I had many brief conversations with or about the founding white organizers that continue to dedicate their lives to challenge their white privilege in order to advocate for and centralize Somali Bantu producers.

Many of these individuals partnered with the Somali Bantu producers upon their arrival to access quality food, land, and loans, and have since moved out of their positions of leadership to assume lower positions within organizations or simply serve as consultants and advocates so that only Somali Bantu producers can assume leadership positions. Some of these white leaders work at or help developed the following organizations: St. Mary's Nutrition Center, Cumberland County Food Security Council, Cultivating Community, Somali Bantu Community Association of Lewiston/Auburn, and New Roots Cooperative Farm. In addition, some of the founding white organizers are now working on educating service providers such as the USDA, crop extension, and all of the agencies that have traditionally served farmers about "the skills and the challenges of these farmers," as Sam described. He explained his role as "alleviating both the challenges and elevating the opportunities [for the Somali Bantu farmers]."

These anti-racist white organizers are what I would like to call “whiteness abolitionists,” changing institutions, dismantling whiteness, and continuously working against whiteness reasserting itself. These individuals are working towards “unnaturalizing whiteness,” “recognizing their personal histories, geographies, and praxis” (Kobayashi and Peake 200, 400). Unnaturalizing whiteness, as scholars highlight, means engaging in “practical political work,” because “unlearning whiteness and racism is not the same as ending it” (2000, 400). This is white people’s greatest social and historical responsibility (2000, 400). Through engaging in practical political work, these founding white organizers are interrogating the white identity that gives whites credit for being anti-racist without actively challenging whiteness (Thompson 2003, 7).

I hope that this handful of whiteness abolitionists use the results of this research in their current work, mobilizing against oppressive processes of racialization and enhancing processes of resistance in the Lewiston Farmers’ Market. In addition, I hope by sharing my research experience and findings, and inviting Bates students to help with the next steps, the community of whiteness abolitionists in Lewiston enlarges.

Nutrition Incentive Programs

One way the Lewiston Farmers’ Market challenged classic ideas of who farmers’ markets are for was by being amongst the first farmers’ markets in the U.S. to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. In streamlining programs to increase the purchasing power of low-income Mainers that receive federal benefits, the Market interrupted the white middle-class monoculture that pervades farmers’ market culture. As one of the founding white organizers Sam puts it, “We were one first farmers’ markets to actually accept

SNAP benefits. We ran a hard phone line from a pole on the corner to the book, since there wasn't a satellite signal to process the benefit. So, we would plug the cord into the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) machine... We were pioneers in that."

As the Market Manager told me, "There is an idea of farmers' markets and I think that has shifted quite a bit since the invention of the nutrition incentive programs." One white consumer Gabby stated, "These programs were also to break down the stigma of who farmers' markets are for, and give an in to people who would ordinarily shun farmers' markets." Gabby's reflection on the intention to break down stigma was echoed in conversations I had with SNAP/EBT users as well as producers who noticed the increasing diversity of their consumer basis on behalf of the Nutrition Incentive Programs (NIP), programs to increase the purchasing power of low-income community members.

Another white consumer, Katie, told me, "I feel like they [producers] are really open to the variety of people that come." While a white producer who I will call Greg reflected, "There are people with a multitude of backgrounds that end up at the market. I have been astounded by how nonhomogeneous it has been." One white producer who I will call Dylan similarly told me, "This year especially there have been a lot more Somali, and other African, shoppers in the market... In the past there were Somali vendors and older Maine vendors and you wouldn't see any Somali or other ethnic groups as shoppers." While I do not know for sure if the increase of consumers of color is a direct result of increasing NIP, NIP definitely changes the culture of who can inhabit the Market and widens the door to even people who are not using NIP.

So how exactly are these NIP creating a more diverse consumer basis? And how does that more diverse consumer basis contribute to anti-racist practice? About eight years ago, Markets started introducing NIP to increase low-income people's purchasing power. This

reconceptualization was federally instituted in 2014, when The Farm Bill designated millions of federal dollars to fund these existing program, which are now called Nutrition Incentive Programs (NIPs), across the country through Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grants (An 2015, 86). Nutrition incentive programs (NIPs) are supported by their affiliated organizations and funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and private donors (Egan, Rosenfield, and Stoner 2016, 11).

In 2015, the Maine Local Food Access Network (MLFAN) began a Nutrition Incentive Program (NIP) called Maine Harvest Bucks. The mission of Maine Harvest Bucks is to incentivize SNAP and Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card users to buy fresh and healthy fruits and vegetables sourced from local farmers at farmers' markets. SNAP/EBT users receive a Harvest Buck for every dollar spent on locally produced fruits and vegetables, either fresh or processed with no salt, sugar, or fat added, and Harvest Bucks can be used to buy local fruits and vegetables (Maine Harvest Bucks, n.d.). Due to the influence of NIPs and the introduction and expansion of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) acceptance at farmers' markets, SNAP redemption at farmers' markets has expanded from \$4.2 million in 2009 to \$19.4 million in 2015 (Quintana and O'Brien 2013; *USDA* 2016). In the Lewiston Farmers' Market specifically, in the year 2016 \$6,968.83 were spent on using EBT and \$6,743 were spent using redeemed incentives out of a total \$36,690 (Blumenthal 2017).

The NIP in the Lewiston Farmers' Market are increasingly incentivizing and diversifying the consumer basis. These NIP are having people from all corners of Lewiston show up. In increasing the reach of who is showing up and entering the space, these NIP are increasing the portion of Lewistonians potentially urged to cultivate empathy, share, and engage in transversal dialogue for and with the producers of color. Increasing and diversifying the percentage of

Lewistonians that enter the Market is thus increasing and diversifying the people exposed to and potentially engaged in the Lewiston Farmers' Market's anti-racist practice. In addition, this increase also results in an increased financial impact for all producers, including producers of color.

Finally, given the norm in the Market of shopping with who looks like, how can the Lewiston Farmers' Market create additional incentives that bring in more people of color, and particularly people of color with increasingly racialized identities like the Somali Bantu producers? This question can help guide the Market's anti-racist practice. One possible answer is creating a more culturally relevant space, perhaps through diversifying the musicians at the outdoor market or putting Somali Bantu producers in higher positions of leadership and decision-making such as market set up and break down, communications, or advertising, as participants suggested (Appendix C).

Social Commitments to Buy from Producers of Color

The Lewiston Farmers' Market culture is also resisting racism through the several consumers I observed and spoke to who are actively invested in buying from the producers of color. In interviews, these consumers discussed their commitment to buy from the producers of color every time they shop at the Market. Ellen described it as her want to spread the money equally. Ellen told me, "My standard is to try and buy something from each Somali farmer every time I go... I don't know if it (racial difference) is at the level of hostility, doesn't seem to be... but I want to be sure I spread it (money) around."

Similarly, Gabby said, "My understanding is that the Somali immigrants are struggling economically, many are refugees which means they came with very little and they face such hostility in this community. It seems to me that any way that I can try to support them I would." In addition, Angela discussed her commitment to buy from producers of color as her "long standing commitment to solidarity with African people."

I also spoke to the Somali Bantu producers about the effect of committing to buy from them. One of the producers, Rakiya, told me about how they struggled in the beginning. She explained that people didn't understand why they were at the Market and if they should be there, but "then after our sales had gone up, a lot of people kind of understood us, we got to learn each other more." In asking follow up questions, I learned that Rakiya felt that the more consumers buy from her the more Somali Bantu producers will be taken seriously, welcomed, and respected in the market. Following up with another Somali Producer, who I will call Peter, about Rakiya's comments, he told me that buying from them, investing in them consistently, is the support they need for them to grow as farmers, and that they need more of it.

Evident in my months of observation and interviews was the power of consumer choice. In popular culture right now there is a "#BuyBlack" movement to purchase from black owned businesses and producers, motivated by the increasing media coverage of black deaths and the general Black Live Matter movement (Noguchi 2016). There are several consumers aware of the resistance embedded in their financial decisions, acting in opposition to the trend of consumers I saw shopping with who they looked like. These individuals are practicing very feasible and extremely powerful acts of resistance.

A social commitment to buying from producers of color makes producers of color feel valued, centralized, and supported and also directly enables them to continue farming and selling

in a space that has the potential to be dominated by whiteness. I hope more consumers are moved to make this commitment, thus a question remains: how does the Market move consumers in that direction? When I spoke to customers about the history of the Lewiston Farmers' Market that the Nutrition Center recounts, many people stated that they do not think the Somali Bantu farmers have the consumer base they deserve. Thus, popularizing that history could be one way to move consumers to make social commitments to buy from producers of color.

Spatial Arrangements as Anti-Racist Practice

As critical geographer Sharad Chari writes, “rather than seeing the articulation [of race] as just a matter of discourse, it is equally important to understand how racism articulates spatially and materially” (2008, 1911). Broader social relationships are expressed and reinforced through embodied practices making the arrangement of space a moment of violence or a moment of resistance.

The final way the Market is resisting oppressive racialization by way of the Market Manager's intentional spatial arrangements. As I discussed in chapter one, one of the prominent ways racism plays out in the AFM is through the racial mapping of spaces, where the structure and norms of spaces are more welcoming for white bodies than bodies of color. In the most recent winter and summer season there were three Somali Bantu booths, however most seasons average five Somali Bantu booths. The Market Manager has been responsible for centering and forefronting at least one booth, and putting the others not far off. In many farmers' market spaces, producers and consumers of color are positioned peripherally.

Sherie combats the centralization of whiteness by, at the most recent outdoor market, putting one of the Somali Bantu booths closest to the entrance in the row facing the flow of

traffic, and putting the other two halfway down the opposing row (Figure 5). In the most recent indoor market, Sherie positioned two Somali Bantu booths in the center of the room, with all other booths tracing the wall, and the third Somali Bantu booth along the wall neighboring the entrance (Figure 6). From placing producers of color in the most visible and central positions, the Lewiston Farmers' Market makes it difficult for white bodies to represent, cluster, and dominate the market space.

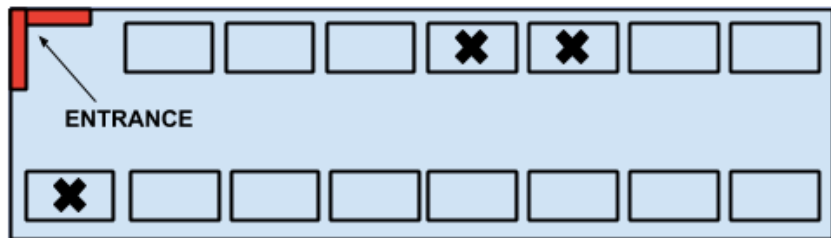


Figure 5: Spatial arrangement of producer booths at the outdoor Market in September 2017, marking Somali Bantu Producers' Booths.

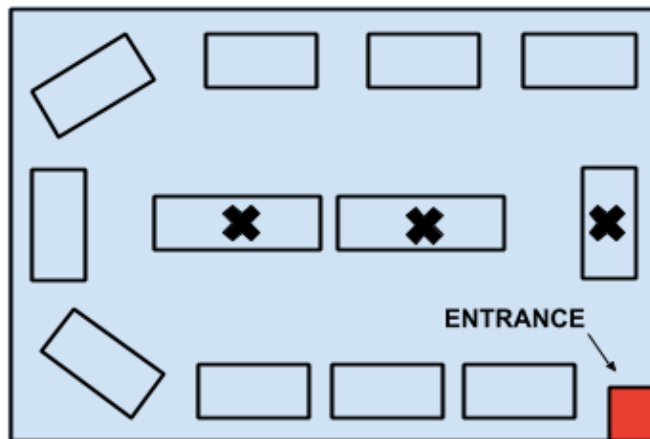


Figure 6: Spatial arrangement of producer booths at the indoor Market in November 2017, marking Somali Bantu Producers' Booths.

In addition to spatially decentralizing whiteness, the Market's spacing also creates an opportunity for empathy and humanization across proximity. As producers of color's booths are straddled by white producers, the Market forces white people, who are potentially invested in

maintaining whiteness, to be in community with producers of color, potentially challenging this investment. Two older white producers I spoke to who had surprisingly progressive and anti-racist views of the Somali Bantu producers had both been next to the Somali Bantu booths, one in the outdoor market over the summer and the other in the indoor market the previous year. I had also noticed these two white producers consistently engaging with the producers of color.

In conversations with both white producers, they shared their experiences getting to know Somali Bantu producers. Their exchanges started with inquiring about what each other is selling, and slowly but surely progressed to more vulnerable discussions, such as about each other's families. These white producers are so close to the producers of color that I often witnessed physical affirmation from both parties, mostly in the form of tight, elongated hugs.

From my research and anecdotal stories, I know many farmers' markets reproduce oppressive racialization through the embodied practices they geographically create. In the Lewiston Farmers' Market however, the spatial organizers are actively considering how anti-racism and spatial justice converge. There is a "link between racial and spatial control" (Chari 2008, 1907), and having a Market Manager that understands the convergence of space and race is a critical step towards anti-racism. Her arrangements disrupt whiteness, which engineers centrality and extreme distance from other racialized groups (Dwyer and Jones 2000, 212).

I hope the Market Manager continues to question whiteness in her spatial organization, creating the space for white participants to learn the necessity of valuing, centering, and supporting producers of color. Moving forward, the Lewiston Farmers' Market must ask, in what other ways can we practice anti-racism materially and spatially? Other practices to consider include increasing the number of producers of colors selling at the Market and thus their booths,

and dispersing visuals throughout the Market that commemorate producers of colors' role in the Market's history.

Conclusion

In this final chapter I detailed the second part of my analysis: perceptions, interactions, and policies that resist racism. The Lewiston Farmers' Market was shaped by overly anti-racist practices since its inception, and has since retained those values in several ways. This chapter illuminates the work people do on race in the Market, resisting oppressive racialization. From my interviews I also heard a variety of practical suggestions for practicing anti-racism in the Market, which I list in Appendix C. I hope this chapter mobilizes more Lewiston Farmers' Market participants to partake in and forefront these six cases, and also serves as a model for people practicing anti-racism and food justice in communities where race is further complicated by other increasingly racialized identities.

How can readers and participants move forward from these six cases? First, they must ask themselves in what *moments* they have participated in each case. Then, they should reflect on where, when, and how they can engage in more frequent and also new moments of anti-racist practice, paying particular attention to their positionality and resources. Finally, they should commit to speaking with other people within their community about the possibility and power of each case.

Conclusion

As farmers' markets have been widely critiqued for their whiteness, I pursued an ethnographic study on Lewiston, Maine's Farmers' Market to analyze the role race plays particularly in regards to producers of color. This was especially interesting because the Lewiston Farmers' Market is not solely a white space, as it was shaped by overtly anti-racist practices and by the agency of minority – mostly Somali Bantu immigrant – communities of color since its early years. Yet, the Market exists in a wider white supremacist culture that is gaining momentum locally in southern Maine and across the U.S. So, how do both dynamics play out simultaneously?

From my months of participant observation and interviews to my academic research on theories of racialization and anti-racist practice, I identified seven cases of oppressive racialization and six cases of anti-racist practice. These findings showcase that the Lewiston Farmers' Market is both a space of whiteness and racism, *and* a powerful site for anti-racist change.

This thesis contains a summary of the alternative food movement at large traced down to the local case of the Lewiston Farmers' Market, a review of theories of racialization that help readers understand the complex ways Muslim East African immigrants are positioned relative to race, and a detailed analysis of key cases of racialization and anti-racist practice, each concluding with pertinent suggestions and further questions.

My research offers three contributions to both critical race and food scholarship, and Lewiston Farmers' Market participants. First, my research urges U.S. local food movement scholarship to forefront projects that are in the interest of and/or led by black producers with other racialized identities. The most referenced scholarship on the local food movement and race

is on bringing in consumers of color. Additionally, the less-developed scholarship on producers of colors is mostly regarding African Americans producers. Researchers have spent far less time highlighting black producers with other racialized identities – such as religion, nationality, class, gender, sexuality, etc. – whose experiences are informed by both whiteness and anti-racist practice, like participants in the Lewiston Farmers’ Market.

Second, the findings illuminate the nuance and subsequent coexistence of oppressive racialization and effective anti-racist practice, encouraging local food movement research to better reflect this coexistence. In the research that informed this thesis, not enough studies or theorists paid accurate attention to how racism and anti-racism can happen in *tandem* amongst people, communities, and institutions, depending on discrete moments. I hope local food movement research, particularly food justice research, handles questions of race, racism, and anti-racism with better nuance.

Finally, this thesis offers a set of tools to improve Lewiston Farmers’ Market participants’ anti-racist practice. I was able to highlight some of the most prevalent cases of oppressive racialization and anti-racist practice. As the leaders of St. Mary’s Nutrition Center – the Lewiston Farmers’ Market’s fiscal backbone – are committed to anti-racist practice, they can use the cases I outlined, the literature that relates to the cases, the pertinent suggestions per case, and the further questions per case to enhance their practice.

Since my research faced several limitations, further research must be done to reflect on and address the cases I listed, to represent cases of racialization and resistance that I did not capture in my ethnographic studies, and to answer the remaining questions. First: How do Somali Bantu producers *experience* each case of oppressive racialization and anti-racist practice? And how can anti-racist practice be strengthened by bringing in Somali Bantu voices? For a majority

white organization – the Lewiston Farmers’ Market – to justly practice anti-racism, the practice must be led by the wants, needs, and voices of people of color. If this question is not explored, then well-intended anti-racist practice will continue to centralize whiteness, as methods of practice would be defined from white positionalities.

Second: What does it look like for the Lewiston Farmers’ Market to efficiently respond to and unpack each case? It is important that each case be analyzed in a context-specific light, as responding to and unpacking each case in a farmers’ market in Minneapolis, for example, could not be efficient in the Lewiston Farmers’ Market. In other words, a top down approach of applying popularized anti-racist methods might not be the most appropriate response in Lewiston’s rich and complicated history. In addition, the answer to this question must be identified because of the Nutrition Center’s overworked and underfunded resources, demanding an emphasis on efficient practice.

Third: How can the larger Lewiston community, and Bates College in particular, support the Lewiston Farmers’ Market as they work on efficiently responding to and unpacking each case? Once scholars, activists, and organizers understand how Somali Bantu producers experience each case of oppressive racialization and anti-racist practice *and* what an efficient response to each case looks like in the context of the Nutrition Center and the Market, the Lewiston Farmers’ Market could strongly benefit from the larger Lewiston community, and Bates College in particular, using its resources to aid the Market’s anti-racist practice. To successfully tap into this larger pool of resources, we must identify which resources are needed, where they can be found, and to what extent they are available.

I intend to answer these three questions in focus groups I will convene in April and May of 2018 as a follow-up to this thesis work. I hope both Lewiston Farmers’ Market participants

and the larger world of readers are mobilized by my research findings. As Kim Case says, it may be useful to conceptualize anti-racism as “a personal striving rather than a goal with a definitive ending, because unraveling one’s racism never stops” (Case 2012, 91).

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form for Interviews

Local Food Consumer's Images of Producers

Thesis research in Lewiston, Maine

Zsofia Duarte

zduarte@bates.edu

(516) 380-6493

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Zsofia Duarte from the Environmental Studies Program at Bates College. The purpose of the study is to examine the culture of Lewiston's multicultural local food movement. The results of this study will be included in Zsofia's Bachelor's thesis, and potentially a public presentation. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a local food consumer in Lewiston's local food movement, or you are a director or manager of a prominent local food purchasing venue in Lewiston's local food movement. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate.

- This interview is voluntary. You have the right not to answer any question, and to stop the interview at any time or for any reason. I expect that the interview will take about thirty minutes.
- I understand I will not be compensated for my time.
- Unless you give us permission to use your name, title, and / or quote you in any publications that may result from this research, the information you tell us will be confidential.
- I would like to record this interview so that I can use it for reference while proceeding with this study. I will not record this interview without your permission. If you do grant permission for this conversation to be recorded, you have the right to revoke recording permission and/or end the interview at any time.

This project will be completed by April 2018. All interview recordings will be stored in a secure work space until 1 year after that date. The tapes will then be destroyed.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

(Please check all that apply)

I give permission for this interview to be recorded.

I give permission for the following information to be included in publications resulting from this study:

my name my title direct quotes from this interview

Informed Consent Form for Interviews (Continued)

Name of Subject _____

Signature of Subject _____ Date _____

Signature of Investigator _____ Date _____

Please contact Zsofia Duarte at zduarte@bates.edu with any questions or concerns. If you feel you have been treated unfairly, or you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Co-Chair of Bates College's Institutional Review Board, Helen Boucher, at hboucher@bates.edu or by phone at (207) 786-6395.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Consumers

- What values motivate your food choices?
- For how long and why do you buy from the Farmers' Market?
- Who started the Lewiston Farmers' Market? What is the history of the Market?
- Who do you buy your food from at the market? Why?
- What influences whether or not you buy food from a producer?
- How often do you purchase food from Somali Bantu producers? Why?
- How do you feel about the presence of Somali Bantu producers at the market? Why?
- Do you think race and racism have anything to do with Market? Why or why not?
- What does it look like for the Market to be practicing anti-racism?
- How would you describe the Lewiston Farmers' Market?

White Producers

- When did you start selling at the Lewiston Farmers' Market?
- Who started the Lewiston Farmers' Market? What is the history of the Market?
- How do you feel about the presence of Somali Bantu producers at the market?
- Do you think the Somali Bantu community have increased Lewiston's interest and commitment to local food?
- Do you think race and racism have anything to do with Market? Why or why not?
- What does it look like for the Market to be practicing anti-racism?
- How would you describe the Lewiston Farmers' Market?

Somali Bantu Producers

- When did you start selling at the Lewiston Farmers' Market?
- How is growing and selling food in Lewiston similar or different than growing or selling food in Somalia?
- Who started the Lewiston Farmers' Market? What is the history of the Market?
- Do you feel welcome at the Market? Why or why not?
- Do you feel respected at the Market? Why or why not?
- Do you feel understood at the Market? Why or why not?
- Do you feel supported at the Market? Why or why not?
- Do you wish you could change anything about the market? If so, what?
- How would you describe the Lewiston Farmers' Market?

Appendix C: Participants' Suggestions for Anti-Racism

- Consumers, especially white consumers, committing to buying from producers of color
- Local businesses buy from producers of color
- Bates College buying from producers of color
- Knowing the names of producers of color
- Knowing the stories of producers of color
- Youth programming to connect with producers of color
- Community engaged programming to engage white producers and producers of color
- Improve producers of colors' marketing and advertising, particularly signage including a brief history of producers of color's farms
- The Market highlighting a different farmer each week—a rotating spotlight of sorts
- The Market forefronting a “history of the Lewiston Farmers' Market” plaque detailing immigrants of color's efforts
- The Market including visuals of its history, and the immigrants of color who helped make that history
- Including Somali musicians in the summer market's musician rotation
- Give producers of color more leadership in the market, such as helping with market setup and breakdown, communications, advertising, etc.

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