

COMMUNITY FOOD ASSESSMENTS SERIES

An Introduction to Community
Food Assessments



MSU CENTER *for* REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

FOOD POLICY NETWORKS

Building Community | Applying Research | Cultivating Action

Partnerships

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MSU CENTER *for* REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Mission:

The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future's Food Policy Networks (FPN) project supports the development of state and local food policy through networking, capacity building, research, and technical assistance.

Mission:

Food Communities Network – Réseau Communautés Nourricières (FCN-RCN) facilitates sharing ideas, knowledge, tools and experiences around building food resiliency and decreasing food insecurity across Indigenous Territories/Canada*, networking a wide diversity of communities.

Mission:

The Michigan Local Food Council Network (MLFCN) brings together food councils to build their individual and collective capacities to work on food and food policy issues, operate effectively, and engage their communities, through peer-to-peer learning.



Webinar Housekeeping

- Please use chat function to add in your ideas, comments. Please use question function to add your question.
- Please add resources you are aware of



**What do we hope
to accomplish?
Why this series?
Why this
webinar?**



STORYTELLING
**NEIGHBOURHOOD
FOOD ASSESSMENT**

MORE VAILE

A photograph of a vast field of wheat under a warm, golden sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a soft glow and long shadows. In the distance, several people are visible, some standing and some sitting, enjoying the view. The foreground shows the detailed texture of the wheat stalks.

STORYTELLING
**COMMUNITY FOOD
ASSESSMENT**

MORE VAILE

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. The image is divided into several distinct agricultural zones. On the left, there is a large field of bright yellow flowers, likely rapeseed. To the right, there are several large green fields, some with visible rows of crops. In the foreground and middle ground, there are brown, tilled fields with visible furrows. A dirt road runs through the center of the image, and a small red tractor is visible on it. The overall scene is a vibrant and detailed view of a working farm.

STORYTELLING **SYSTEMS** **PERSPECTIVE**

KEESA V. JOHNSON, MDES



REMEMBER THIS:

It is pleasant to know that in color, form, and features, I am related to the first successful tillers of the soil; to the people who taught the world agriculture.

Frederick Douglass, 1873





"Community cannot take root in a divided life. Long before community assumes external shape and form, it must be present as a seed in the undivided self: Only as we are in communion with ourselves can we find community with others."

Alice Waters Foundation

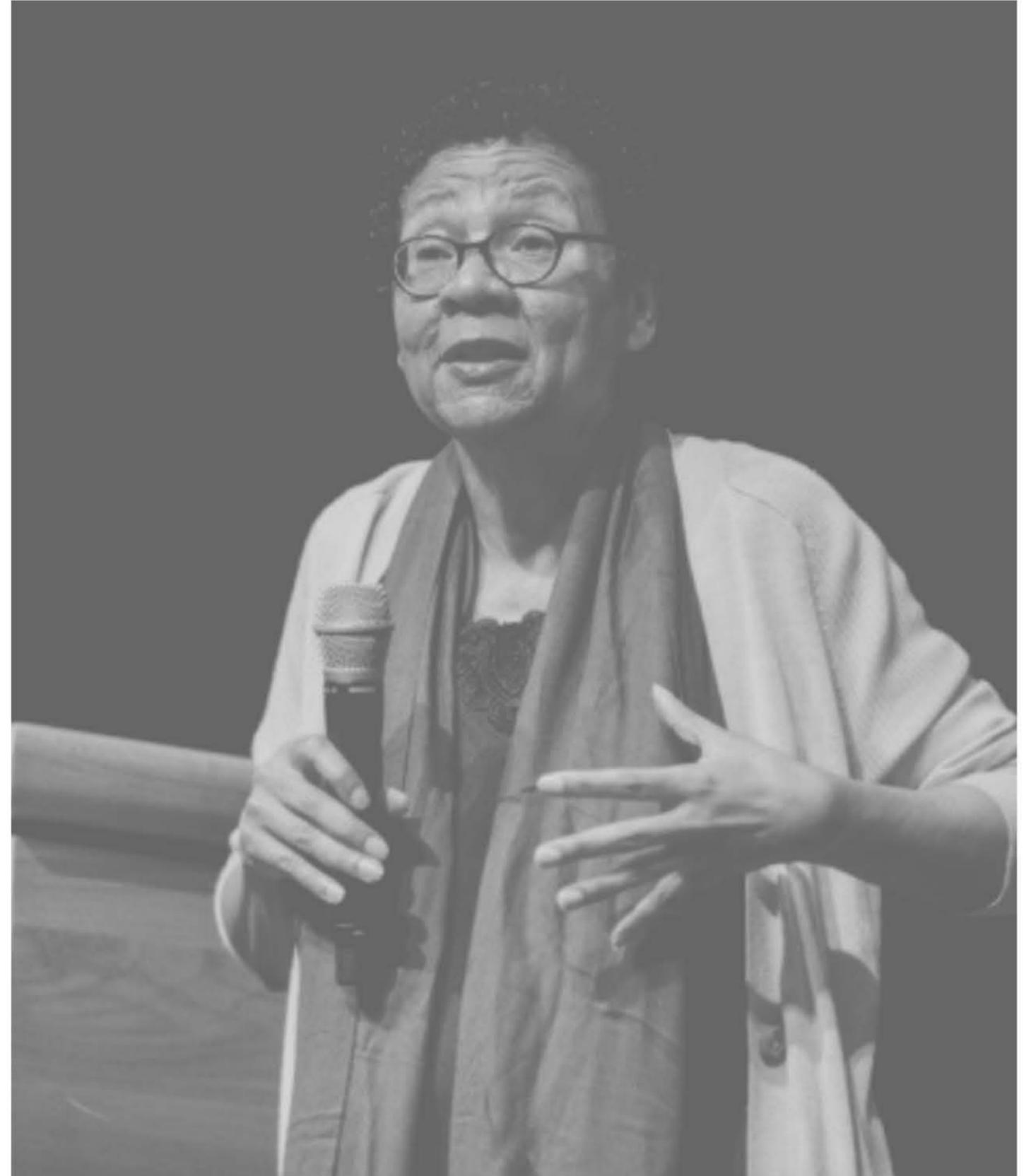




BELL HOOKS

Imperialistic, colonial
capitalistic, white supremacist,
patriarchal system.

These are interlocking systems
of domination that define our
reality.





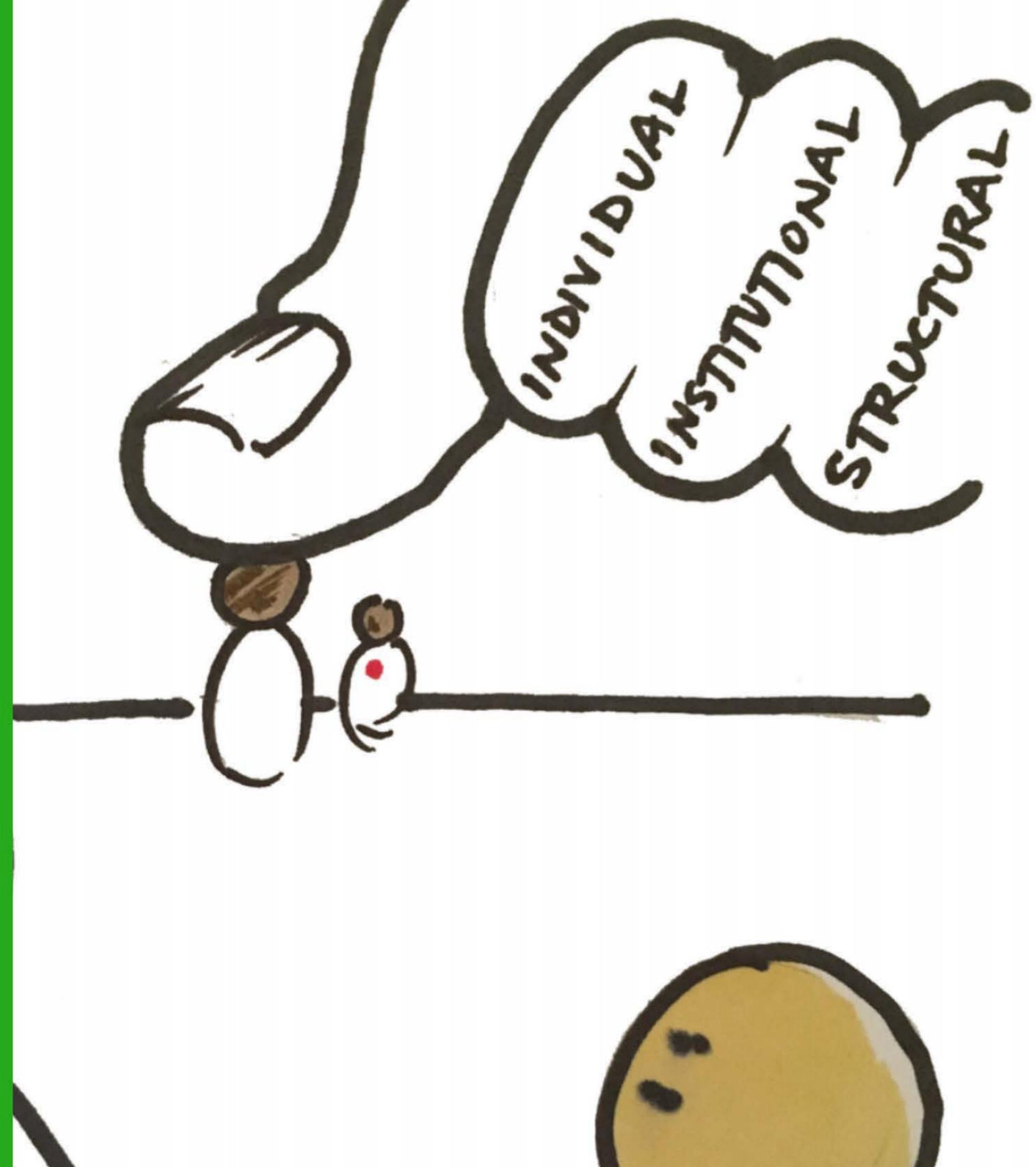
**“The U.S. Food System
has created and been
shaped by racial
injustices since its
inception.”**

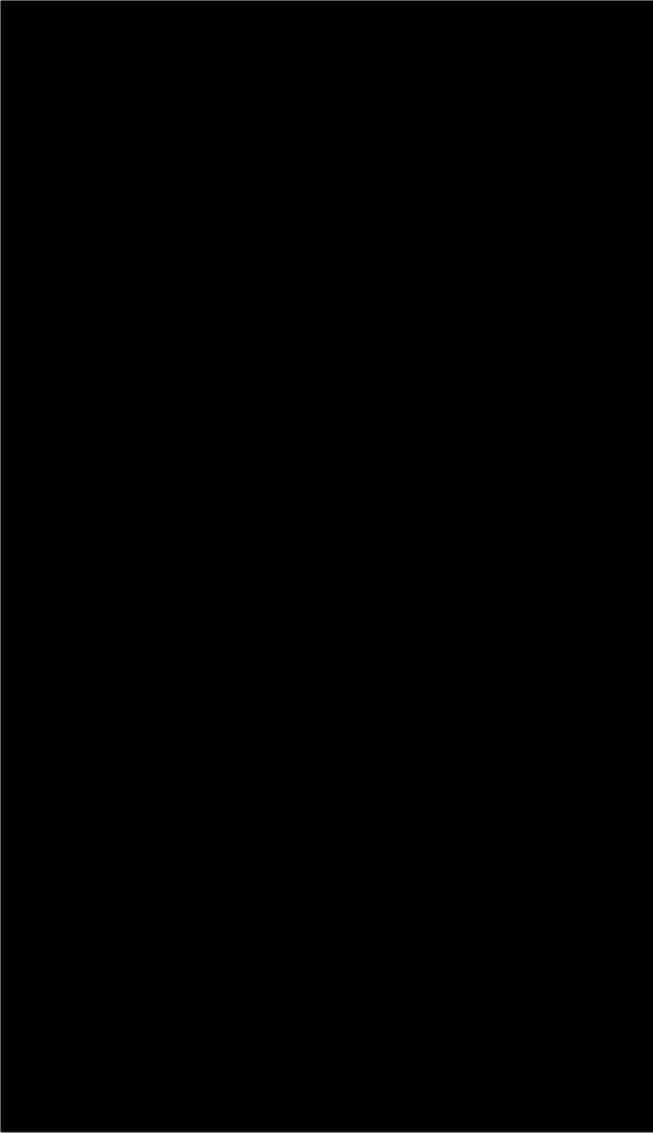


Racism is tied to a power structure and access to resources.

Oppression

A system of unjust treatment built into our daily life, beyond individual acts. It affects everything we do.





**How can we prepare for
the future if we won't
acknowledge the past?"**

N.K. JEMISIN

History of Discrimination in the Food System

Enslavement Sharecropping Terror Campaigns Black Land Theft: These and other historical attacks on Black sovereignty have left African Americans particularly vulnerable to exploitation and injustice by a food system deeply immersed in white supremacy and capitalism.

Racist Urban Planning: Uneven economic development shaping systematic unjust urban environments.

Immigration Laws: Immigration and labor laws block immigrant farmers and laborers from participating in agribusiness

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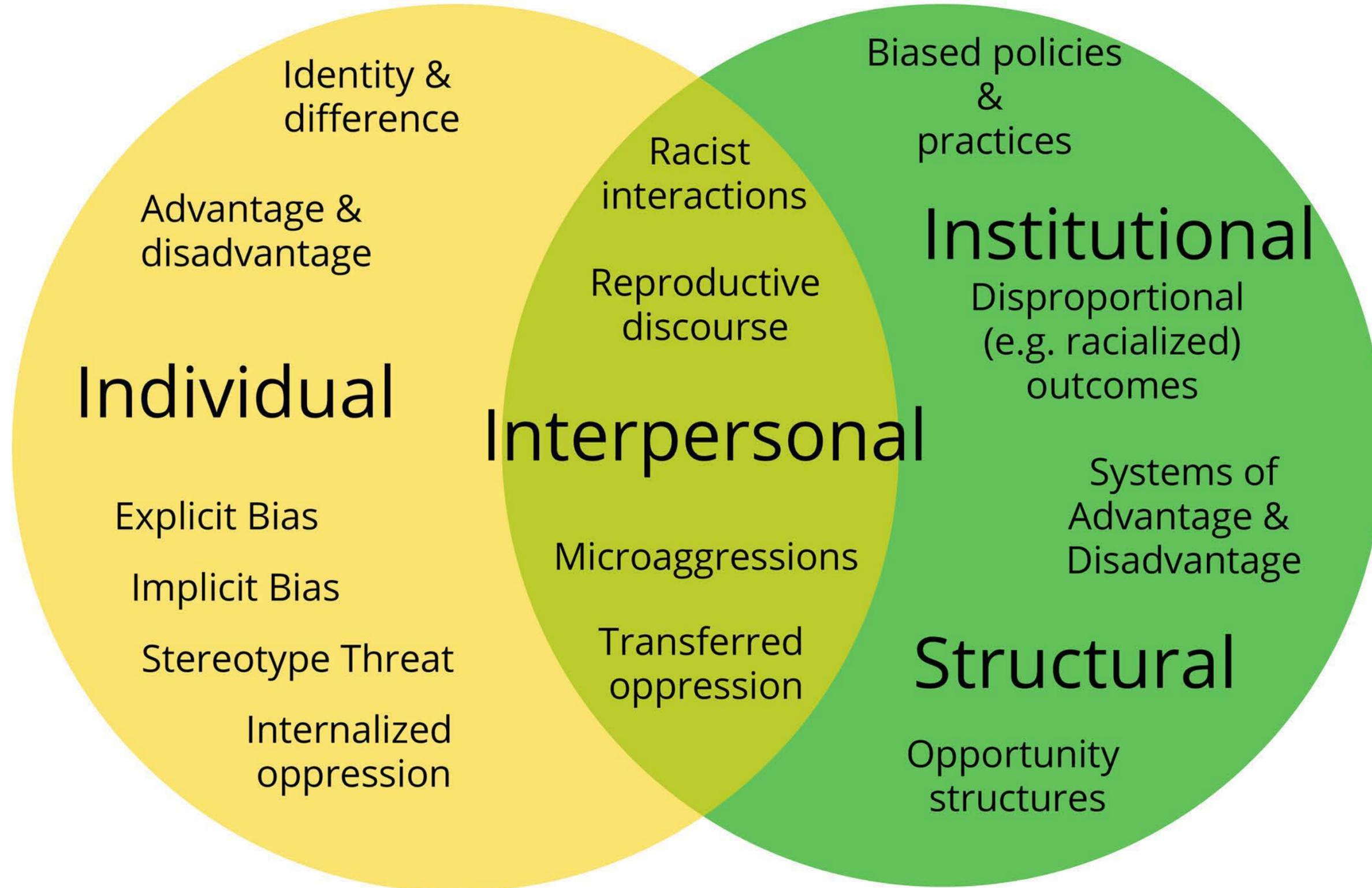
Land Appropriation: Appropriation of indigenous lands forced tribes to abandon sustainable traditional foodways.

Housing segregation and concentrated poverty: Discriminatory lending created food poverty, impacting access to food.

Racial Wealth Gap and Access to capital: Employment discrimination disparities in intergenerational wealth, less assets to raise capital.

Continued Discrimination in local policies and food systems: Example Food, Health, Economic, law, health, education, real estate, etc.

A Map of Systematic Oppression



Blindness to the reality of systemic oppression...

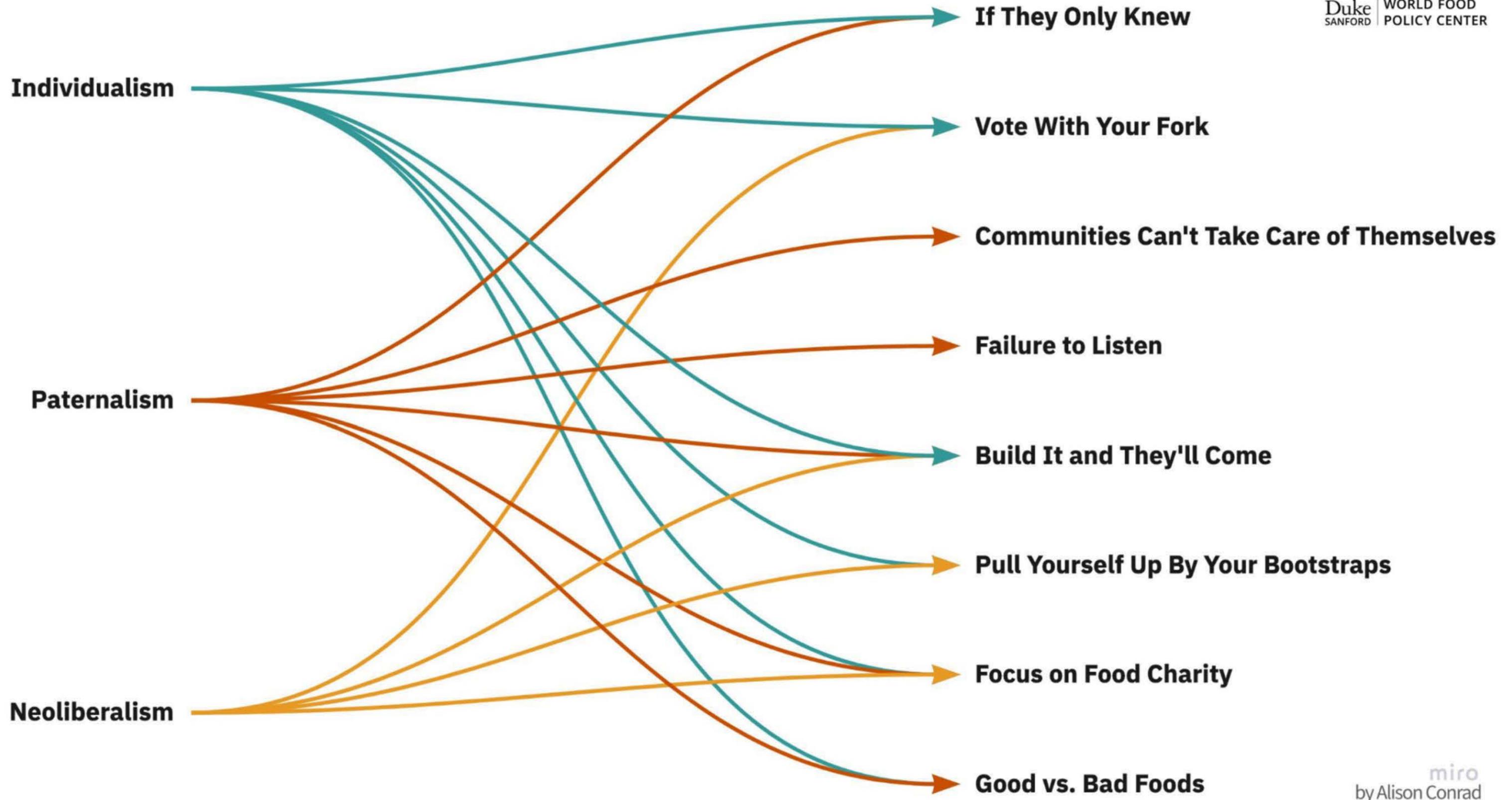
Unpacking Whiteness is necessary

"Whiteness is an ideology based on beliefs, values, behaviors, habits and attitudes that result in unequal distribution of power and privilege based on skin color.

It takes **unlearning** to recognize how we have been socialized into white supremacy culture, irrespective of race, and **relearning** about the history of systemic racism to operate differently."

Resources:

Margret Marietta Ramirez, "The Elusive Inclusive: Black Food Geographies Food and radicalized food spaces";
Alison Hope Alton and Christie Grace McCullen, "Whiteness and Farmers Markets: Performance, Perpetuations
Kelly Moore and Marilyn Swisher, "The Food Movement; Growing White Privilege, Diversity, or Empowerment?"



Whiteness and the Food System

"Whiteness permeates the food system in the ways it "articulates white ideals of health and nutrition, offers whitened dreams of farming and gardening that erase the past and present of race in agriculture, mobilize(s) funding to direct programming toward non-white beneficiaries, and create(s) inviting spaces for white people."

– Rachel Slocum, 2006





COMMUNITY GARDEN









**If systems of
oppression,
inequalities, and
inequities are
designed.**

**Designing with equity
in the first place.**



Components of Community Food Assessment



1. Assess your readiness
2. Develop a mindset for a brave and equitable space centered in a community.
3. Conduct a meeting with diverse people.
4. Create Community Agreements
5. Develop Shared Language
6. Discuss Power
7. Create a Map of your community food environment.
8. Create a team of interested community members.
9. Scan your food ecosystem as a group
10. Identify what is joyful from your scan? What information is missing?
11. Identify what first hand information is needed.
12. Identify what secondary information is useful. What story is it telling? What is missing?
13. Analysis/Synthesis the information as a team.
14. Create an Action Plan with policies that address your community needs.



The anatomy of Community food Assessment

1. Be an inclusive leader
2. Honest communication -
Discussion
3. Friendship
4. Reflection
5. Compassion
6. Forgiveness
7. Sacrifice
8. Belonging



THANK YOU!

And See You Next Time

