



Photo: Farm hand on Tractor 1940, Reflections Chinese Women in Canada

"That's not the \$#!+ our Community Eats!"

GILLIAN DER 謝美華 & BLAKELY BROWNE | GEOG419

Land Acknowledgement

This report was researched and produced on the unceded, ancestral, traditional lands of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) nestled within broader Coast Salish territories. As settlers, migrants, and uninvited guests on this land we find it important to preface our research on local food systems by acknowledging that the current local food systems, including those built by Chinese and Chinese Canadians, sits on top of and has colonized and endangered the continuation of Coast Salish foodways. Our research focuses on the impacts of suppressing cultures and we are mindful of the entanglements and tension that comes with unveiling Chinese Canadian culture in the context of ongoing colonization of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

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Abstract

This report looks into the ways that Chinese Canadian communities in Vancouver preserve, protect, and continue to contribute to their local food systems. In the context of historic racial discrimination in Vancouver's food landscapes, we seek to illuminate the ways these legacies continue to affect Chinese Canadian communities and outline how these communities resist those legacies. Through the lens of visibility politics, this report demonstrates how visibility can be both a positive force and a detriment for marginalized communities. By geographically fixing these visibility politics on agricultural practices in the Lower Mainland, particularly on seed distribution networks and the creation of productive land, this report will highlight issues that pertain to the ways in which visibility and invisibility render labour, food systems, and people as inherently valuable or invaluable. In doing this work, the report seeks to flush out the relationships that exist between visibility and invisibility, the valuation of labour, and the implications of these entanglements on racialized and otherwise marginalised communities within Vancouver's local food systems.

ABSTRACT



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Summary of Report

Methodology

Using both relevant literature as well as conducting interviews with community knowledge holders allowed us to access both academic expertise and lived experience.

Policy Context

The following City of Vancouver Policies are directly related to issues of food justice and food security in Vancouver

- **Vancouver Food Strategy (2013)**
- **Greenest City Action Plan (2011)**
- **Urban Agriculture Guidelines for the Private Realm (2008)**

Academic Context

The following academic literature significantly grounds the theory of this report

- **Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds* (2006)**
- **Rachel Slocum, *Whiteness, Space, and Alternative Food Practice* (2007)**
- **Gibb & Wittman, *Parallel Alternatives: Chinese Canadian Farmers and the Metro Vancouver Local Food Movement* (2012)**
- **Stephanie Lim, *Feeding the "Greenest City"* (2015)**
- **bell hooks, *Eating the Other* (1992)**

Key Findings

- **Chinese Canadian food systems continue to be marginalized**, undervalued, and overshadowed by Vancouver's mainstream, white local food movement
- Chinese Canadian involvement or reluctance in participating in mainstream local food systems in Vancouver can be **understood as both a process of intentional, or self invisibilization as well as one of forced invisibilization**
- Simply adding Chinese Canadian and other marginalized food systems into the predominantly white mainstream local food movement is more assimilationist than exemplary of what marginalized communities might seek

Key Recommendations

- Recognize the reasons for self-invisibilization and become comfortable with its existence
- The City of Vancouver must engage in meaningful reconciliation with marginalized and undervalued without the expectation of these groups wanting to engage with the white local food movement
- Build policies and opportunities that are accessible to as many communities as possible

TURNING WATER INTO LAND

Introduction

特大走地鸡 10.99
贵妃走地鸡 10.99
贵妃走地鸡 10.99

pink 1.99
叉烧 2.8

内有秘制走地沙姜鸡 4.99
卤水墨鱼 猪耳 牛柏叶
猪生肠 无骨鸡脚

Introduction

This report seeks to tie together academic and community based knowledge of local food systems of Vancouver in order to investigate ongoing **structural power imbalances** and **marginalization** of specifically Chinese Canadian folks and their **foodways**. We recognize that there are multiple parallel local food systems occurring in Vancouver. As such, it becomes necessary to uncover which of these systems are being granted visibility, and what the implications are for those which are not.

The City of Vancouver adopts a specific conception of local food as outlined in the *Greenest City Action Plan*, *Vancouver Food Strategy*, and Urban Agriculture policies. The space borne out of these policies is a white western space.

The mainstream local food movement that these food policies prop up, heralds a particular form of local food which is imagined by and services a particular group of people while claiming to represent all. We therefore take issue with the singular idea of the local food movement and are troubled by how, when combined with power, this singular idea of local food can be dangerous for folks who are not serviced by, or want to abstain from this specific idea of food. We take the stance that these food policies are marginalizing foodways that lie outside of the dominant group at best and are **white-supremacist** at worst.

STRUCTURAL POWER IMBALANCES

Ongoing and pervasive power concentrated within specific populations at the expense of other populations. These exist along many social axis such as race, class, gender, and ability

MARGINALIZATION

The treatment of certain groups of people and their practices as insignificant or peripheral with significant material consequences such as lower earning potential, environmental racism, or displacement

FOODWAYS

Cultural, social, and economic practices relating to the production and consumption of food.

MAINSTREAM LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENT

Food systems elevated by the City of Vancouver in one or more of their food policies (ie. farmers markets, community gardens). It is important to note that these are significantly white spaces which do not adequately provide culturally appropriate foodways for non-white folks

Introduction

Through the lenses of **visibility, processes of valuation**, and space we examine how these phenomenon work together to construct a certain kind of local food system as above others and singular and seek to outline the ways in which that impact folks whose foodways lie outside of this construct. We are especially interested in visibility and valuing processes in conjunction with food systems within Vancouver for three reasons. First, we recognize that visibility can directly affect valuation and as such, has the potential to render certain labour, space, and food as valued or devalued. We are however, unsatisfied with this and will also need to consider central questions of who is doing the seeing and valuing and to what end. Finally, we outline the ways that invisibility is sometimes necessary for marginalized to undertake food systems which further complicates narratives of

oppression, visibility and valuation.

This report focuses primarily on Chinese-Canadian foodways with most emphasis on the **Cantonese Canadian** community. We focus our study spatially within the City of Vancouver with particular interest in Chinatown and North Arm of the Fraser River from Musqueam to the border of Burnaby

WHITENESS & WHITE SUPREMACY

Whiteness is the pervasive belief system, world view and cultural system Vancouver functions under. White supremacy holds this dominant belief system above all others working together with colonization and racism to ensure the continuation of whiteness as the dominant lens through which the world is interpreted. This is achieved by the consistent violence against non-white people, their practices and world view

PROCESSES OF VALUATION

The ways through which the marking of certain bodies, practices and spaces come to be understood as inherently useful within a community

VISIBILITY

Those afforded widespread social acknowledgement of their existence and practices

CANTONESE CANADIAN VS. CHINESE CANADIAN

Chinese Canadian tends to act as a catch all term for folks of Chinese descent who are also Canadians. There is however significant heterogeneity within the Chinese Canadian community including the Cantonese Canadian community. Cantonese migrants were some of the first people of Chinese descent settle in what is now called Vancouver and were the community most directly affected by historic racist legislation and its legacies

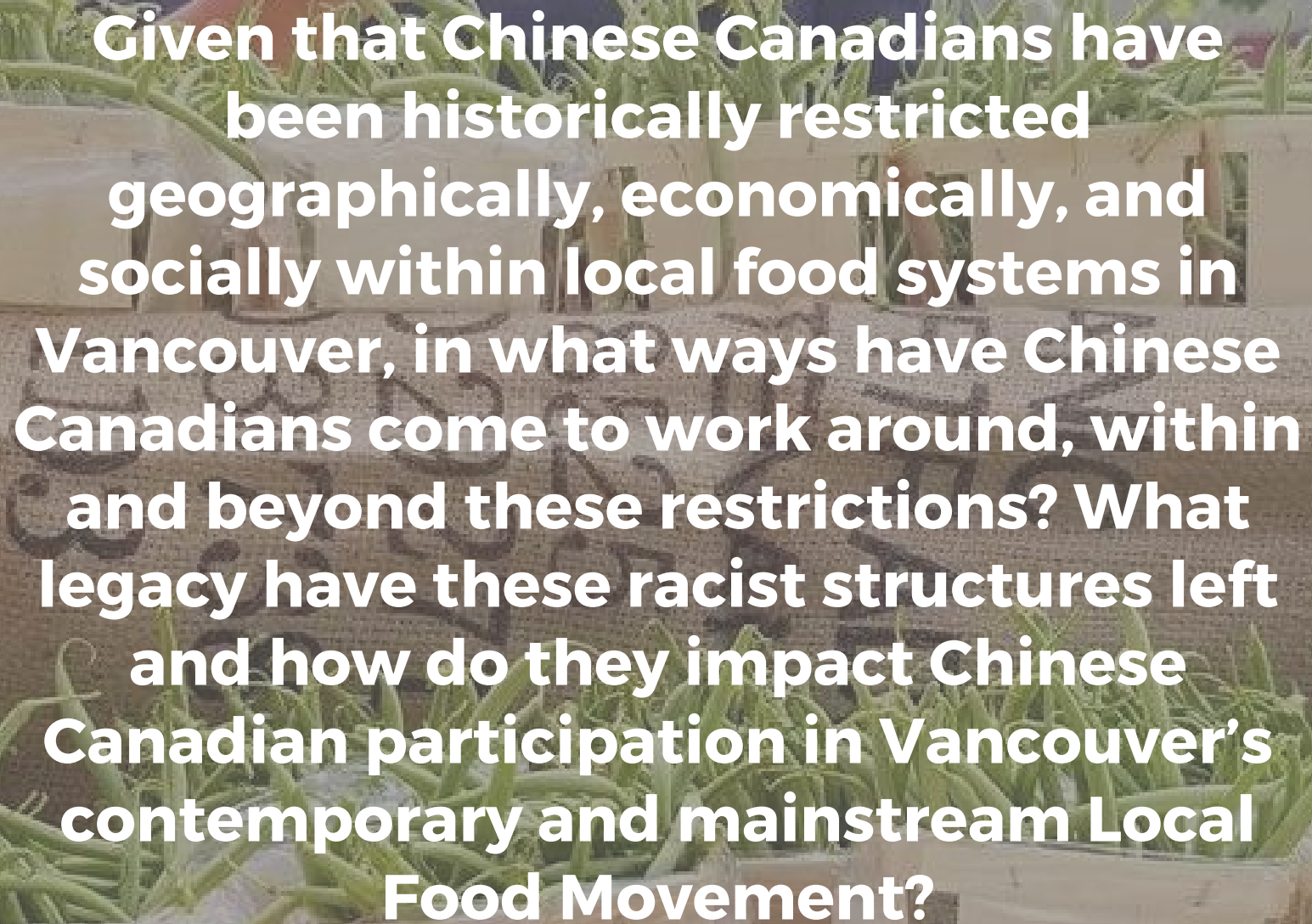
Objectives



Demonstrate the intricate and sometimes paradoxical nature of **visibility and valuation**

Discuss the ways that the **mainstream local food movement is failing Chinese Canadian foodways**

Recommend first steps to addressing systemic inequality in the local food system



Given that Chinese Canadians have been historically restricted geographically, economically, and socially within local food systems in Vancouver, in what ways have Chinese Canadians come to work around, within and beyond these restrictions? What legacy have these racist structures left and how do they impact Chinese Canadian participation in Vancouver's contemporary and mainstream Local Food Movement?

Methodology

We will highlight the systemic whiteness in Vancouver's mainstream local food movement by drawing on academic literature pertaining to both local food and critical race and gender theory. In addition, in depth and critical readings of City of Vancouver policies were essential in situating us in the current state of food legislation in the city. We believe however, that academic and City literature cannot fully speak to the lived realities and community held knowledge that is essential to unpacking the legacies and finding appropriate recommendations. As such both a deep dive into academic theory and conversations with community members and knowledge holders are essential forming a well rounded analysis of Vancouver's local food systems. This qualitative method of conducting

research will allow for diverse and nuanced understandings of the effects of Vancouver's food legislation and the mainstream local food movement on the Chinese Canadian community.

Methods

To carry out this report, we drew on relevant scholarly literature and conducted a series of interviews with knowledge-holders in the community. The group of interviewees included journalists, professors, researchers, and community activists whose particular area of interest and work lies in raising awareness about equity related issues in Vancouver's local food movements. From these interviews, a discourse analysis was performed to flush out themes and situate them within the relevant literature and lenses utilized. From these interviews we utilized a snowball approach asking for references from our interviewees. We hope that by employing a snowball approach we can diversify the kinds of viewpoints we will encounter in our research.

TURNING WATER INTO LAND

Background

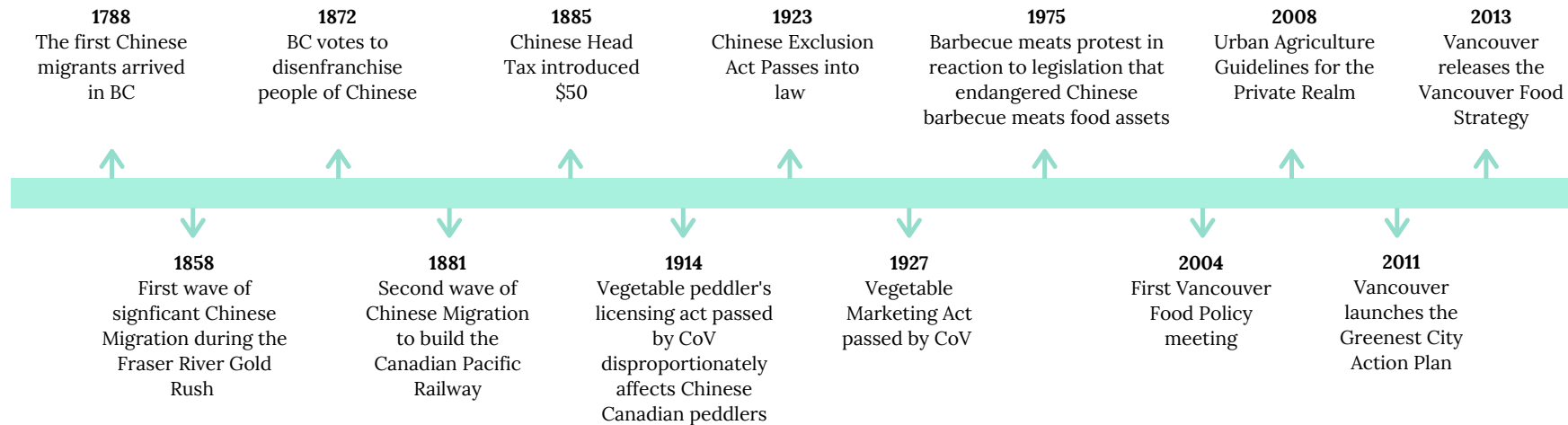
A Chinese vendor. BC Archives I-63406. [190-]

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History

Since the late 1800s, Chinese and Chinese Canadians have played central roles in the establishment of agricultural landscapes within the Lower Mainland. Playing such a large part in the development of these landscapes, they also became the target of racist legislation which sought to reinstitute white dominance within local food systems. For example, the peddler's law, Head Tax and Chinese Exclusion act. Of particular importance to this report is the spatial confinement of early Chinese Canadian migrants who were not allowed to own land in

Vancouver. Additionally, they were not allowed to rent or live in certain areas in the city. The two sites which will come up repeatedly in this report is Vancouver's Chinatown and the North Arm of the Fraser River from Musqueam to the border of Burnaby. Both these spaces were home to Chinese migrants who built farms, homes, association buildings, and communities which sustained Chinese Canadian foodways as well as contributed significantly to the white food systems of Vancouver.



Key Literature

Key literature that informed this research was by scholars Jeffery Yu, Stephanie Lim, Natalie Gibb and Hannah Wittman, Rachel Slocum, bell hooks, and Katherine McKittrick.

Jeffery Yu

In Yu's research, he examines how racism and discriminatory regulations, such as the Peddler License, left the Chinese communities with only "menial" work— specifically market gardening and peddling. His investigation highlights the presence of the Chinese community within historical local food movement/systems, and therefore raises questions regarding their lack of presence within Vancouver's current mainstream local food movement.

BACKGROUND

Natalie Gibb and Hannah Whitman

Natalie Gibb and Hannah Wittman's research revolves around the establishment of parallel food systems in Vancouver as a response to systemic forms of racism against Chinese Canadian food producers and distributors. In doing this, Gibb and Wittman point to more subtle areas of difference and exclusion, such as issues of language accessibility in the mainstream local food movement.

Stephanie Lim

Stephanie Lim takes an economic and class-based look at what the history of marginalization towards early Chinese farmers reveals about today's labour conditions. In outlining the City of Vancouver's civic bylaws and large annual fees on vegetable peddlers, while noting the inability of Chinese market gardeners to own land, Lim details how a racial hierarchy was established within agrarian economies in the Lower Mainland. Especially important to this research is Lim's noting of the

discourse provided in the Vancouver Food Strategy, a plan brought about in conjunction with Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan, which seeks to increase food security and access to local, healthy greens, and a means to produce them, while pointing to the need to engage "ethnic" communities. This rhetoric, rendering agricultural work by non-white migrant labourers and marginalized communities invisible, requires breaking down.

Key Literature

bell hooks

bell hooks discusses the idea of eating the other or the allure of white folks to desire proximity to racialized or other people in the attempt to experience or know the other. This is not a permanent transgression of racial lines but is rather a temporary foray for folks who benefit from systems of white supremacy and dominance to move easily between white and non-white spaces. It is in some ways a kind of tourism of the other underpinned by the need to understand, see and make sense of not only the other but their own selves in relation to that other..

Rachel Slocum

Slocum critiques the mainstream local food movement utilizing **critical race theory**, noting that “whiteness emerges spatially in efforts to increase access to healthy foods, support farmers and provide organic food to consumers”, and it is the “objectives, tendencies, strategies, the emphases and absences and the things overlooked in community food [that] make them so white” (Slocum 2007, p.526). Additionally, she speaks about the desire of whiteness to be close to the other. Of interest is the idea that white propertied bodies are able to stick to and flow from spaces, in-turn “opening spaces to some and closing them to others” (Slocum 2006, p.524). This denotes how the “physical clustering of bodies” (Slocum p.524, 2006), marked by customs and ways of moving about space, produce exclusion.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Critical race theory is a theoretical framework which focuses on how categorizations of race function and affect different different groups of people in relation to law, power, economics, and space

Katherine McKittrick

Katherine McKittrick's work on the **Shape of Mystery** and **Logics of Visualization** stands out from other academic research to provide the theoretical lens through which we have come to conceptualize Vancouver's local food movements.

McKittrick, develops these theories through discussing the experience of Harriet Jacobs (Linda Brent), an enslaved woman in the 1800s who confined herself to her Grandmother's attic on the plantation she and her family were enslaved on to avoid the violence of the slavemaster and ensure her family's freedom. The shape of mystery acts as a space which at once blends oppression, captivity, control, and agency, and can be understood as the geographical conceptualization of what freedom looks and feels like for those that have never been free. From the Shape of Mystery we begin to draw out the idea that geographic freedom, for oppressed peoples, works within and around racial and bodily constraints.

McKittrick's second geographical theory is Logics of Visualization. Logics of visualization place the subordinated body and well as that person's sense of place as subordinate to whiteness and masculinity. The oppressor needs to see the subordinated body in order to maintain his geographic power and form his own sense of place. Therefore, processes of self-invisibilization are powerful tools which undermine the oppressor's ability to control and know and thus destabilizes their sense of place.

SHAPE OF MYSTERY

A strategic Geography through which oppressed peoples are at once confined but also resist domination and assert their agency in forms that are not easily recognizable for the non-oppressed population

LOGICS OF VISUALIZATION

- Subordinate certain bodies and senses of place as that which is below the white masculine sense of place
- The act of seeing the subordinated body informs the white masculine sense of place and ability to control the subordinated subject

TURNING WATER INTO LAND

Findings

Findings

Relevant to all discussions with community knowledge keepers was the idea of valuation which we rounded out with McKittrick's Logics of Visualization. Interviewees highlighted how the affordance of visibility to certain food systems and spaces is the result of preferential treatment by power structures in place. These preferred systems tend to service relatively wealthy white folks who have the time to tend a community plot, purchase local, often organic produce from a curated and well staffed farmers market, and find food that is culturally relevant and familiar to their households in these spaces. We are careful not to conflate visibility with inherent value because, one there are multiple local food systems servicing multiple communities in Vancouver,

and two the City of Vancouver should not be the only arbiter of what is understood as inherently valuable and what is not. We are however, concerned that the power the city does wield over defining and valuing certain food systems is representative of who has power, which is largely a white colonial caucus. This power has significant and very real economic, spatial, and community consequences for folks who are under-serviced by Vancouver's mainstream local food movement. We diffuse this tension through our key findings utilizing McKittrick's theories to at once untangle the systemic issues facing the local food movement and complicate narratives of oppression and agency for folks who are experiencing marginalization within local food systems.

FINDINGS



Making Water into Land

We begin our findings with the land because it demonstrates the ways in which the marginalization of Chinese Canadian foodways is tied to physical spaces in Vancouver, while also demonstrating the effects of spatial constraints on community and Chinese Canadian foodways. When Chinese migrants were relegated to certain spaces in the Lower Mainland, namely the False Creek flats and the north arm of the Fraser River, they took on the arduous task of creating livable, arable land from geographical spaces that were physically underwater and effectively invisible. Swampy and requiring labour to be reworked, early Chinese migrants, largely coming from Zhongshan County, dredged and drained the land using farming technologies they brought from hundreds of years of farming partially flooded fields in Southern China.

FINDINGS

The work of these farmers along the north arm of the Fraser as well as the builders in downtown Vancouver turned water into land, building the fertile agricultural land and what would become Chinatown. Once Chinese agriculturalists made this land visible, these spaces and bodies became subject to Logics of Visualization. For example, when the City of Vancouver saw that Chinese vegetable peddlers were producing goods and outcompeting white farmers, they, along with the lands upon which they lived and worked, became problematic for white Vancouver. This manifested in the economic marginalization caused by the Vegetable Peddler's licensing act of 1914 and the Produce Marketing Act of 1927. Likewise, Chinatown became increasingly problematic in the geographic imaginary of white

Vancouver as it continued to visibly exist as a community despite the colonial government attempting to legislate Chinese Canadians out of the city and country through means such as the Head Tax and subsequently the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1923. We understand these barriers to be **forced invisibilization** of Chinese Canadian local food systems.

Logics of Visualization in the context of Vancouver's historic local food systems demonstrate the ways in which those in power need to **physically see the other** and their sense of place in order to inflict violence against them.

Simultaneous to the attempted destruction of Chinese Canadian food spaces was the solidification of a white sense of place as superior to other conceptualizations of place reinforcing the idea of Vancouver as a white city feeding back into the justification for violence against non-white bodies.

Seed Distribution Networks

One interviewee highlighted the fact that **Asian seed distribution systems continue to remain largely invisible to white Vancouver and the City**, functioning as parallel food networks. From making water into land came contestation over space and value, and the subsequent systematic attempts to exclude Chinese and Chinese Canadians from markets and the land. It would be too simple, however to categorize Chinese Canadian communities as just victims of oppression. In response to racist legislation, these communities established a

"When you take someone's food away, you kill them"

parallel food system in the lower mainland which exists to service their communities and remains largely hidden from the racist bureaucracy of Vancouver's mainstream food system. This self invisibilization when viewed through the lens of the Shape of Mystery **demonstrates a significant act of agency and compelling example of marginalized folks thwarting and working beyond the system.** Chinese Canadians engaged in these practices to continue existing in a politicized landscape which sought to eliminate their foodways.

Seed Distribution Networks

By acknowledging how these two different forms of invisibilization played out on and were adopted by Chinese Canadian communities we trouble the idea of victimization, visibility and valuation. Noting the history of marginalization towards not only Chinese Canadian foodways, but Japanese Canadian and South Asian migrant labourers too, the manners in which these groups have adapted to oppressive systems and continue to engage in practices of self-preservation and anti-oppression by functioning in an invisibilized parallel.

“POC farmers are afraid that the more information you give to the government the more likely of a crackdown there will be, because that’s how it worked traditionally, so they have found a way to survive and make an opportunity for themselves”

Assimilation

Working off the knowledge that this City is under servicing and undervaluing Chinese Canadian foodways to prioritize a local food system that looks like weekly farmers markets and private developer owned temporary community garden spaces, what are the implications of this narrow field of vision? We know that there are other food systems which are highly valued by various community groups throughout Vancouver, still there is pressure put onto racialized bodies to populate these mainstream local food movement events and spaces. One community knowledge holder mentioned:

“Farmers Markets associations have put a ton of effort into trying to get non-white bodies into those spaces, with varying degrees of success, and so these questions of the forms of culture and forms of labour that map onto these market systems have to be questioned. So for example, for a Chinese farmer that has an established market system, and is now being asked to operate in a farmers market culture, that requires a whole set of skills.”

Assimilation

"Non-white people don't want to be in your white space, let's not force it."

Additionally, Interviewees noted that Vancouver Food Strategy seeks to implement certain food spaces throughout the city, giving people direct contact with those that grow food, yet

there continues to be a disconnect between the racialized bodies that remain central to Vancouver's foodscapes, and the image portrayed by the city regarding local food production. The City and farmers market associations are pushing to increase racial diversity in spaces which are white. While there have been pushes, the underlying issues of who these spaces are created by, and who they are created for, still stand. Community knowledge holders noted that bringing people of colour into white food spaces is not the answer to redistributing power in Vancouver's food systems, as this is simply assimilationist.

Findings

“The history of exclusion and racism, interrelations of POCs and aboriginal communities with government, and all these types of historic fractures between peoples, plays into why we have parallel economic and social and cultural systems”

From these findings we can conclude a few major things. First, Logics of Visualization have been and continue to be at play in Vancouver's local food networks. These logics have cost economic livelihoods, endangered communities' ability to thrive and broken ties between the city and folks legislated against such as the Chinese Canadian community. As such, the second major findings is how Chinese Canadian food systems continue to thrive in parallel to the mainstream local food movement through the Shape of Mystery and self invisibilisation tactics. These tactics ensure the continuation of Chinese Canadian food ways in Vancouver and demonstrate agency

Finally, we note that an "add in and stir" approach of encouraging non-white bodies to populate the white spaces the mainstream local food movement is built on does not benefit racially marginalized communities. This approach, which is currently being used recalls ideas of whiteness craving to be proximate to the other. This is tokenizing and does not actually support parallel food systems, it simply supports non-white bodies performing whiteness in white spaces.

These findings ask us to envision a radically different future and demand immediate first steps which work toward building renewed relationships between and within communities in regard to their food assets.

TURNING WATER INTO LAND

Recommendations

Summary

When spaces and processes of valuation and invisibilization are mapped onto white colonial systems, they require acts of reconciliation to be reorganized, in-turn creating meaningful change. Interviewees noted that the key to creating shifts in a colonial system where power is unevenly distributed requires relationship building. It requires unpacking white supremacy and privilege, and opening discourse not just when people of colour are at the table, but in white spaces between white people. It also requires that we note who is setting the table, who is sitting at it, and on what terms these discussions are occurring. This means recognizing positionality and how it plays into the relations we create. Ultimately, processes of invisibilization and valuation are systemic, meaning that they require systemic change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First Steps

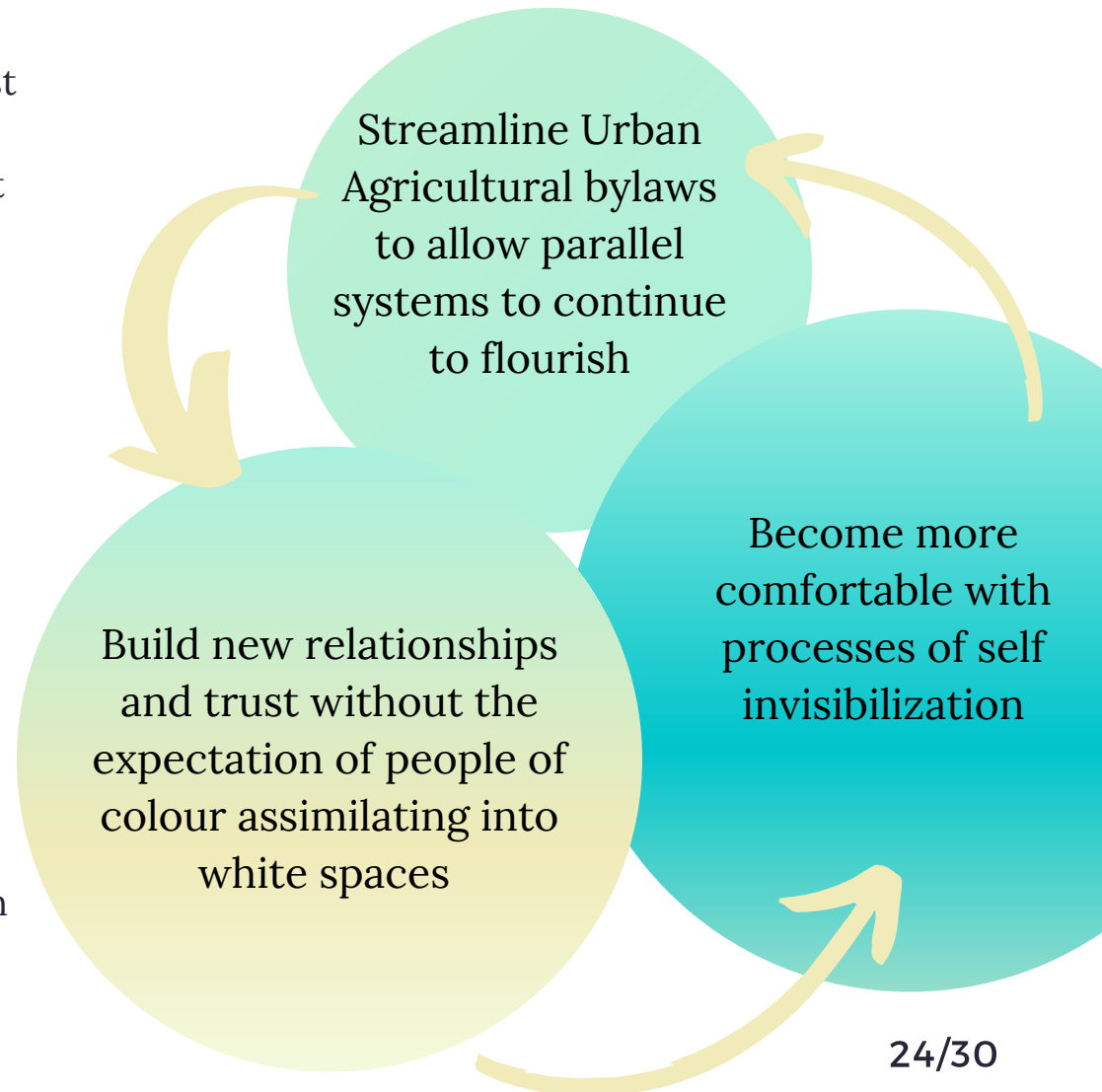
- **Streamline access** to resources, grants, and other supports for folks operating in parallel food systems
- Make space for and **become comfortable with self-invisibilization** processes
- Reconciliation between persons in power and marginalized folks must lead to **relationship building** without the expectation **no expectation that marginalized communities will participate** in the mainstream local food movement

Long Term Vision

- **Dismantle hierarchical difference** without disregarding the specific and nuanced differences in needs, priorities, and histories of different communities and their food systems
- **Rethink how we value certain bodies, lands, and food practices** beyond a white, capitalist gaze

First Steps

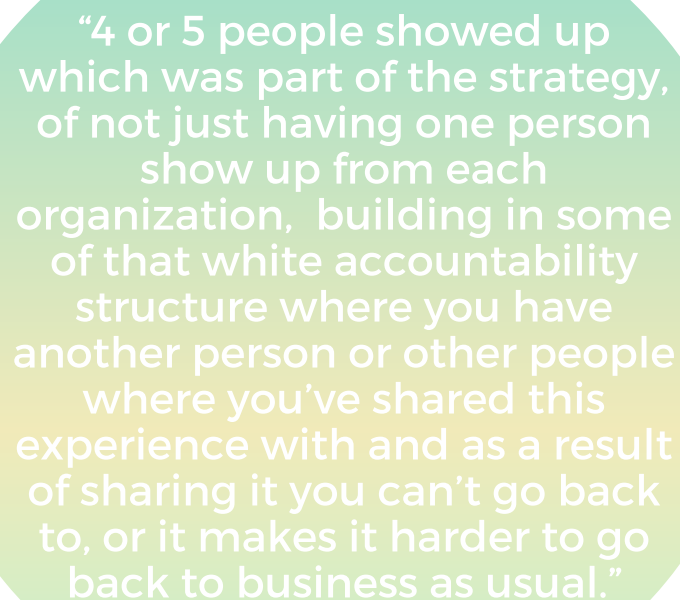
Our interviews with community knowledge keepers consistently pointed to three major first steps. First, although not necessarily in order, relationship building and reconciliation without expectations needs to be undertaken by the City of Vancouver in a meaningful way. Second, the City of Vancouver needs to recognize that there are food systems parallel to and invisible to the mainstream food movement. The City must become comfortable with instances of self-invisibilization remaining humble and cognizant that many of these instances are a direct reaction to racist legislation against parallel food systems. Finally, the City of Vancouver must work to streamline urban agricultural bylaws so that these parallel systems can continue to flourish. These three first steps must be undertaken in earnest and in tandem.



First Steps

Reconciliation and Relationship Building

Interviewees noted that instead of seeking to assimilate Chinese Canadian and other racialized agricultural bodies into white mainstream food movement spaces, the solution to tackling the hegemony and devaluation of invisibilized bodies lies in building relations and opening up discourse, not just when racialized bodies are at the table, but also in predominantly white spaces. Relationship building can not only occur between white and racialized people because this often puts a significant and unbalanced burden on racialized folks to teach white folks how not to oppress them. These interactions can often be traumatizing and laborious for racialized folks to undertake. The first steps of working through and unlearning whiteness needs to be done in a way that does not endanger or retraumatize racialized folks. As such it is necessary that some of this work is done by white folks through building structures of white accountability within their own communities. Some methods to achieving this are holding white and light skinned only conversations which emphasise white accountability. One of the community knowledge keepers we interviewed spoke to the benefits of building in accountability structures into workshops:



“4 or 5 people showed up which was part of the strategy, of not just having one person show up from each organization, building in some of that white accountability structure where you have another person or other people where you’ve shared this experience with and as a result of sharing it you can’t go back to, or it makes it harder to go back to business as usual.”

First Steps

This work of dismantling whiteness cannot be done with the expectation that the mainstream local food movement can now benefit from the inclusion of non-white bodies but rather with the intention of building relationships and trust. As interviewees noted, the key to establishing equitable practice in Vancouver's local food movements is not by assimilating parallel food systems into the white one backed by the City, convening these various systems into one, but by evenly distributing power and bringing different communities and food systems into relation with one another. Through establishing truth and reconciliation groups and practices, and by bringing discussions of race to the forefront of food planning and policy, relationship and trust building can begin, and assimilationist perspectives on local food can be avoided.

"I think we have to go after the actual change of culture, not ethnocultural, but culture of how we behave and relate to each other both in the education and in the public discourse"

Streamline Access

In order to streamline access to urban agriculture, the City of Vancouver can do a variety of things. First, increasing language accessibility will provide individuals participating in parallel food networks or whose community does not speak English greater access to economic and jurisdictional resources. By recognizing that not everyone has the same capacity to navigate bureaucracy the City of Vancouver should endeavour to make permitting systems, grant applications, and access to space as simple as possible for as many people as possible. By making policies which don't make vulnerable groups feel the need to continue to self-invisibilize, local food systems, in all their plurality, might flourish and not be restricted. These steps are integral to reconciliation may begin to occur.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Self Invisibilization

Self-invisibilization is a response to legacies of historical racist legislation towards Chinese-Canadian food systems. Recognizing this, the City of Vancouver needs to understand that these histories continue to inform how these parallel food systems organize and function today, and become comfortable with these consequences. This means allowing for hidden networks to exist without their required assimilation into bureaucratic structures present within the white colonial City. The City and white Vancouver should hope that one day these hidden networks will feel safe enough to make themselves visible, but it must be understood that Vancouver is not yet ready for this.

Long Term Vision

In the future, recognizing that these goals are still a long way off, we envision a Vancouver where whiteness and white supremacy no longer hold the City of Vancouver captive. Hierarchical difference is dismantled, and replaced with acknowledgements of, and support for the specific and varied cultural needs of Vancouverites. We hope that hidden networks might continue to exist but are not borne out of inequality and duress. We envision a radical shift in how we value certain bodies, lands, and food practices which makes space for the visible and the invisible and moves toward recognizing the inherent value the communities we are a part of, live next to, engage with occasionally, as well as those we might never encounter.

“Everybody has a role to play, everybody has a different role to play based on their positionality, so why can't we honor that?”

RECOMMENDATIONS



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