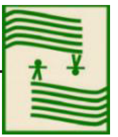


Food Utopias, (Mature) Care, and Hope

Paper first received: 02 November 2020; Accepted: 05 October 2021; Published in final form: 28 March 2022
https://doi.org/10.48416/ijsaf.v27i2.92

Paul V. STOCK[1]

Abstract

The current period is one of worry and concern over collapse. While many still go hungry, we anticipate a future of food without farmers. Yet in the wake of multiple disasters, the new can emerge. With a focus on food systems centred on care, utopias provide us with tools for dialogue that communicate problems, but also point to possible pathways forward. Following a theory of (mature) care focused on agri-food, food utopias offers a trialectic of critique, experimentation, and process to shape agri-food scholarship of the hopeful, care-centred stories of food and transformation. In combination with ideas about agri-food systems futures, this paper offers examples of care and food utopias from the US Midwest. This is an invitation to combine feminist ideas of care theory and food utopias scholarship that can help broaden our understanding of justice and scholarship around food, farmers, community, and feeding the world.

[1] Department of Sociology and the Environmental Studies Program, University of Kansas.
Corresponding author: Paul V. Stock, paul.stock@ku.edu

Bibliographical notes

Paul Stock is Associate Professor of Sociology and the Environmental Studies Program at the University of Kansas.

ISSN: 0798-1759 | This Journal is double blind refereed.
© 2021 The Authors. Published by RC40.

Imagination, (Mature) Care, and Food Systems

Imagining the future evolution and outcomes of our food systems remains a vital and important collective exercise to be undertaken at multiple community scales. All too often we relegate our choices to an either/or dichotomy: local/global, rural/urban, organic/conventional. Not only do these dichotomies start pulling us into theoretical cul-de-sacs (e.g., organification vs. conventionalization), they also encourage competition rather than an orientation to the common good. The food utopias framework is an example of thinking about future food systems while examining cases from the United States Midwest as an illustration of the (bio)diversity and vitality of these models. Underpinning many of these discussions of the future of food systems are normative assumptions about what and whom are cared for and what we conceptualize as “good”, related not just to food but also to what our future societies feel and taste like.

In imagining futures of food systems, we can start with a very specific place (See Figure 1).

Figure 1.

This is a farm 50 km from my campus, in a different county with slightly different laws and values regarding the role of agriculture and farming in the contemporary world. It is about 40 kilometers from the nearest major urban center. The farm is surrounded by a relatively major road, and the warehouses in the background belong to a lifestyle clothing company and FedEx. Tyson (chicken), Amazon (the online retailer), and Garmin (the GPS company) have large facilities down the road (e.g., Horsley, 2018).

We have plenty of theoretical agri-food tools to justify saying: “Wow, this is terrible – for the land, the farmers, the family, the community, the ecosystems!” “This is capitalism run amok.” “It abandons the importance of the rural and of local food production.” “How can this community treat its farmers this way?” But to leave our analysis only at the level of critique obscures our vision about emerging food system experiments. Think about trying to defend studying urban agriculture in the 1970s. What would the reaction have been? My guess is it would have been ridiculed both because it was a rare actual occurrence and because the theoretical landscape

did not exist for it to have been thinkable as an agri-food topic. Forty years later, the landscape—geographically and theoretically—is far different. Just as the land around this farm has changed dramatically, so too has the realm of what is thinkable about the future of food systems. This paper therefore explores food futures by looking forwards in time, at tomorrow's agri-food systems. It develops an agri-food theory of care, describes the food utopias framework, and then illustrates some examples from the US Midwest that might be interpreted as caring possibilities going forward.

* * *

Horsely (2018) lays out the competing values between a rural idyll or countryside (see also Shucksmith, 2016; Little and Austin, 1996), and an economic development model predicated on growth. Michael Bell's study (1994) of the changes that came with population growth of a rural English village highlighted this very real strain on people's identity and relationship with the natural world. Much of the residents' consternation revolved around a struggle to maintain their own sense of self as a "real country person" compared to the interlopers from the city. Lowe et al. (1997) traced the evolution of what it meant to be a good farmer, related specifically to agricultural pollution, and how that changed as urban folk impinged on the countryside and introduced urban environmental values (see also Burton et al., 2021). Justin Farrrell (2016) describes these kinds of conflicting environmental values as competing sets of moral orders. By drawing on what we mean by care in relationship to other people, nature, and the food system we can articulate the kinds of food futures we might be hoping for when we talk about more just food systems. This exercise in combining mature care (adapted from feminist theory) and a food utopias framework offers new ways to talk about just food futures.

Developing an Agri-Food Theory of Care

Care in agri-food literature often equates with care farming or the feminist care ethic (for a good summary see Hassink et al., 2020). Care farming refers to agricultural ventures with therapeutic aims for the participants (for an example see Stock and Brickell, 2013). Care ethics incorporates feminist moral philosophy and theory, often as a direct counterweight to justice orientations (Gilligan, 2003; Held, 2006; Noddings, 1984; Tronto, 1993).[1] In agriculture, care ethics examples exist, but have not been fully integrated into agri-food scholarship (Beacham, 2018; Cox, 2010; Cox et al., 2013; Curry, 2002; Mol et al., 2010; Miele and Evans, 2010). I propose some literature on care to help integrate care perspectives more fully into our agri-food theorizations. Why do we need to think more about care in relationship to agriculture and food? First, in the agri-food literature, too often the incorporation of care stops at what is called care work (Curry, 2002; DeVault, 1994; Shisler and Sbicca, 2019). According to some feminist care ethicists, care work is an immature theorization of care in that it is too focused on the selfish aspects of care, where those who do the actual work of care (of elders, children, etc.) are un- or under-appreciated and thereby taken advantage of. This kind of unidirectional care is not a proper, full and mature care (to be fully developed a bit further on). Pettersen (2008), extending Carol Gilligan's work on the ethics of care, argues: "The selfish as well as the selfless care are pathological rather than ethical and are not what an ethic of care should be founded on" (Pettersen 2008: 59). An agri-food of care based on mature care helps develop a significant theorization of care-filled and potentially flourishing food futures (Stock, 2015).

Second, whether unfairly or not, arguments originating in feminist literatures get pigeon-holed and sidelined (Brandth, et al., 1994; Jarosz, 2011; 2014; Wells and Gradwell, 2001; Wilmer et al., 2019). As Petterson (2008: 125) argues, "when care-work like nursing is associated with altruism, while male-dominated occupations like the fire service are not, it is probably an expression of gendered history and culture". Yet, "If we believe that care is a value that deserves to be appreciated more and protected, the best way of achieving this would be to

[1] Pettersen (2008: 94ff) offers a nice discussion on the relationship between care and justice that moves beyond this binary assumption and puts forth a possibility that, "Care and justice are 'reconcilable'. By 'reconcilable', I mean that the two moral approaches can be brought together in ways that put an end to the conflict between them" (p. 96). See also Stock and Szrot (2020).

insist on a gender-neutral ethics of care. If care is a valuable moral ideal, it is valuable for women as well as for men" (Pettersen, 2008: 27). Just like Indigenous, Black, and other marginalized scholarship, these important arguments are redlined out of our mainstream literature, to our detriment.

Third, often agri-food scholars argue ethical discussions via relationality with non-humans and the language of affect, agency, and responsibility, while avoiding engagement with Indigenous cosmologies and ontologies that also take relationships with non-human others seriously (Whyte and Cuomo, 2016). The avoidance of writing about these relationships in the plain language of care and love of one another, animals, plants, crops, soil, organisms, and the planet that sustains all life indicates a deep separation from relationality rather than its so-called embrace. While there is limited space here to develop these claims in depth, it strikes me that much theorization of relationality and affect serves only to deflect our concerns down theoretical rabbit holes rather than acknowledging a collective level of concern we share. There is no way to "solve" these major dialogues in one article, but I do hope to open up some discussion on the fact that there has been a drift towards putting animals and other non-humans on the same moral plain in our sociological investigations, which tend to be ideological in orientation rather than empirical. These assumptions deserve our attention as much as do our conclusions stem from our investigations. I hope this article can contribute to such a discussion.

Mature Care

Here I build on the work of Tove Pettersen's (2008) Comprehending Care, Tzevetan Todorov's (1996) care as a humanistic virtue, and Monica White's (2018) collective agency and community resilience articulated in Freedom Farmers. As Todorov (1996) writes (following Noddings, 1984), "An ethic of caring is practical and made for this earth" (p. 128). Together we can build care as an umbrella concept that partners with justice and envelops the family of liberatory, exploratory, and innovative practices and theorizations related to current challenges and the hope for a flourishing of global agriculture (along with the persons involved).

"Flourish" offers an explicit telos or goal for what we, as scholars, advocate, and (possibly) what farmers, citizens, and community members hope for. While it is impossible to find a single definition of what flourishing might mean, from a humanist perspective, we can articulate some semblance of universal goals that include clean air and water, unpolluted food, and the balance of what's included in the Declaration of Human Rights, sustainable development goals, happiness indexes, and sovereignty manifestos.

It is also important to acknowledge that just not doing harm[2] is not care. Pettersen (2008) argues that "Caring, however, is not only refraining from harming, it also involves active beneficence" (p. 41; see also p. 174). What is care if it is not just not doing harm? What is care if it is not just care work? These become eminently important questions if we are to formulate (mature) care as foundational ontologies for developing food utopias and food futures.

Following Gilligan (and keeping in mind she was studying moral development), Pettersen (2008: xiii) demonstrates three distinct types of care: selfish, altruistic, and mature. Petterson would classify care work (mentioned critically above) as immature care insofar as it is a one-way relationship, either because it is selfishness or because it is construed as self-sacrifice (Pettersen, 2008: 14). The most important contribution that Gilligan and Pettersen offer us in the sociology of agriculture and food related to mature care, is exemplified in a balance between self-care and care for others within specific contexts or situations (Pettersen, 2008: 14). Pettersen (2008) also distinguishes between thin and thick care. Thin care occurs between persons without significant intimacy. "Thick care is carried out towards those we have concrete and established relationships with, such as family and friends—our related others" (Petterson, 2008: xv. See also p. 145).

[2] Pettersen (2008: 152) declares, "I will . . . take for granted that the failure of care causes injury." And this can be sociological, too. See, for examples, the experiences of Vietnam soldiers (Shay, 1994) and the violence of climate change (O'Brien, 2017). The failure of care in agriculture leads to many problems that we can equate to trauma, such as the experience of farmers in the wake of mass elimination of cows during a foot and mouth outbreak (Law, 2010) or the willful neglect of officials that knew of disease outbreaks (Leighton, 2018). Sometimes there exist competing notions of harm (Kessler, Parkins, and Kennedy, 2016).

"Mature care implies the ability to balance between different groups of potential recipients as well as between the interests of self and others. Hence, the concept of mature care defies those care theories based on an altruistic conception of care" (Pettersen, 2008: xv). Mature care, so balanced, can then begin to extend beyond one's immediate circumstance so that care can eventually be extended to animals and the planet. In all cases, mature care is considered a virtue or the right thing to do. Like Todorov (1996), each instance of care is specific to the person doing the caring.

Tzvetan Todorov (1996), in his examination of morality in the Nazi concentration camps, focuses on the importance of care as an ordinary virtue that contributed to some persons surviving the experience. Todorov (ibid.: 27) "uses the extreme as an instrument, a sort of magnifying glass that can bring into better focus certain things that in the normal course of human affairs remain blurry". In parallel to Petterson's mature care, Todorov describes care as an ordinary virtue and "acts of ordinary virtue are undertaken not in behalf of humanity or the nation but always for the sake of an individual human being [person]" (ibid.: 17). Channeling Martin Buber, Todorov writes, "The moral action par excellence is 'caring.' Through caring, the 'I' has as its goal the well-being of the 'you' (whether singular or multiple)" (ibid.: 287).

Mature Care in Agri-Food

This ethics of care in agri-food is often based on a food justice-oriented relational ontology (e.g., Leslie, Wypler, and Bell 2019; for a criticism of justice in agri-food, see Stock and Szrot, 2020). But relationality, the connectedness to other persons and beyond, moves away from principle-based forms of care for others and maybe even conservation. Care is about practice and actions; behaviors towards others as opposed to an ethical system of shoulds. The idea of relationality, along with feminist and Indigenous perspectives, aim to recoup a holism, humanism, and cosmology that Eurowestern thinking replaced with the autonomous individual.

I propose, along with care, that agri-food scholars will benefit from following personalism's emphasis on flourishing and dignity with an emphasis on connectedness. Counter to much Eurowestern celebration of the autonomous individual, personalism as an ontological starting point sees human persons as persons with centers and those persons are ineluctably connected with other persons, both from a biological origin standpoint (e.g., biological parents) and in their inherent dignity as human beings (Stock, 2014; Stock and Szrot, 2020; Smith, 2010; 2015). "Persons . . . are originally, constitutively, and inescapably social, interactive, and communicative in origin and being. Sociality helps constitute the essential character of personhood." (Smith, 2010: 67–8) In conversation with personalism, both Bernard Charbonneau (2018) and Jacques Ellul (1980) emphasize the centrality of person-to-person work when addressing issues of planetary healing.

Care also aligns with a different concept from Ellul. More often than not, we try to understand "alternative" agricultural examples belonging to movements in search of enough momentum to wrest power from capitalist-controlled food systems. Yet what if, following this care line, such examples of alternative agriculture were in pursuit of what Ellul (1980: 245-247) calls non-power? While we read much about smart farming or the big data revolution in agriculture (Bronson and Knezevic, 2019; Carolan, 2016), these are examples of techniques and the pursuit of power (see Stock, 2014, 2015). As Todorov (1996: 52) writes, "The appetite for power is not transitive; it does not lead to anything beyond itself. The quest for power today is not a way of doing good or of serving some ideal. Power is sought for its own sake; it is an end, not a means". Non-power, on the other hand, does not pursue power even when it could; but nor is it impotent or passive. By choosing to care for persons (and thereby places and plants), it is care-filled and thus an authentic expression of freedom (Ellul, 1980). We can see how care is an embodiment of the telos of flourishing. Our framework of care and agri-food here offers a key example of specific persons involved in specific relationships as a path for enacting care within food relationships (Pettersen, 208: 174-175).

Connectedness gives us a language to discuss issues without silo-ing them as being only about gender or only about Indigeneity, or moving towards putting persons and bacteria on the same ethical level, so to speak, as we often encounter with more-than-human formulations. There is real value in being able to theorize persons in relationship with one another and other species and ecosystems without completely flattening the relationships such that power (for good or for ill) disappears.

As an example of care in agriculture, White (2018), based on the documentation and theorization of African-American agriculture after the US Civil War, offers the collective agency and community resilience (CACR) framework. This framework provides a telos of care that is "working toward and practicing freedom—freedom to participate in the political process, to engage in an economic model that was cooperative and fair, and to exchange ideas with others who shared their goals" (ibid.: 5). White illustrates an embodiment of (agricultural) care (historically) in pursuit of both economic and social flourishing, based on historical examples of agricultural experimentation, knowledge sharing, and cooperative enterprises. As Robin Kimmerer (2013: 20) puts it, "All flourishing is mutual." By prioritizing cooperatives, "Collective agency and community resilience . . . are strategies that have to be understood within a particular social context . . . While not uniformly successful, through cooperatives, the community response to crisis was the one that engaged in reflection on structures of power" (White, 2018: 143). By foregrounding the experience of African-American farmers, White emphasizes that:

> *Excluding black farmers and others like them from the historical account has made a group of signally important actors in the struggle—namely farmers—seem passive or distant from the black freedom struggle. As a result, the histories of African Americans in agriculture do not inspire communities to reconnect with that heritage. (ibid.: 145)*

While helping to rectify the perception of black farmers' role both in the civil rights movement and in American agriculture, White also provides a model that can be adopted more broadly. White (2018: 61) furthermore adds to the literature that aims to understand farmers, autonomy, and freedom (Nelson and Stock, 2018; Forney and Stock, 2014; Stock and Forney, 2014). Care then can serve as an umbrella for various liberatory and emergent examples, including the categories of equity, justice, sovereignty, flourishing, and community.

In this way, care approaches to agri-food systems transformations are in good company with related theoretical projects like Gibson-Graham's (2008) focus on diverse economies, resilience (Dwiartama and Rosin, 2014), the prefigurative (Breines, 1980; Wald, 2015), no growth economics (Jackson, 2009), Slow Food (Piatti, 2015), biological economies (LeHeron et al., 2016: 8-9), and food utopias (Stock, Carolan, and Rosin, 2015).

With regard to moving past dichotomous thinking in the future of agri-food systems, we call to mind Mike Goodman's (2004) important work on paradigm change. Part of Goodman's argument amounts to a warning not to suffocate the new. Academic agri-fooders in particular (but also those involved in alternative agro-food networks (AAFN) work more generally) can be susceptible to an urgency and defense of the new premised on a belief in progress – all new things must be an improvement. The new paradigm of post-productivism? Let's throw a party! Local or organic? A party! Agri-environmental schemes that help protect and encourage ecosystem services? You're on the guest list. Goodman's (2004) many critiques of the celebration of AAFNs (and agri-fooders suckered in) can be summarized as follows:

> *advocacy of paradigm change that envisages AAFNs as new vectors of farm income diversification embedded in the cost-containment logic of non-commoditized production circuits seems far removed from pressing contemporary rural development issues and more aligned with an idealized*

vision of a rural Europe of resourceful yeoman farmers and the era of 'high farming' (ibid.: 7-8).

All too often, changes documented in farmers' practices reflect adaptations to economic realities (like ecosystem payments) rather than a fundamental shift in their personal values (or moral orders) towards the environment (Goodman, 2004:11).

What Goodman's prescient warnings about getting too giddy about AAFNs indicates is that there is not one solution. The food-related social movement is not one single thing, nor will it solve all the problems. At the time, Goodman (2004) warned, along with Guthman (2004) in organics, and others, that uncritical celebration of the new might yet sustain inequitable power and patriarchal relationships, particularly in regard to workers and on-farm work dynamics.

So what values underpin what we have and what values will underpin what we will have? Here, the reference to "continuity and incrementalism" of Goodman (2004: 12) retains some conservative appeal yet also a desire for progressive agri-food futures that would feed people calorically without undermining culture, race, identity, sex, gender, sexuality, or relation(ality). In other words, food sovereignty/justice/equity. Yet, can we envision the various ways in which agri-food systems could be arranged if we confine ourselves to "continuity and incrementalism"? The focus on values means we have to articulate more clearly what exactly a just agri-food system looks like, and what a flourishing food system(s) means. Smith (2015: 212) argues in the wider idea of societal flourishing that, "The promotion of personal flourishing toward the common good is the criterion by which all societies must be judged, the central standard of any social ethic". By extension then, how persons experience food systems is just as important, if not more so, than the food system's market successes. To get there, to that teleological end of better food systems, we have to flex our imaginations (Meadows, 1996).

Food Utopias

As a sociologist I am familiar with problems – of injustice, of racism, inequitable housing, and pay gaps between men and women. But also as a sociologist I am trained to not be very good at saying what a good society is. We are far more comfortable pointing out what is bad and what is broken than we are at saying: "I want it to be this way," especially in a way that does not demean or insult others. Utopias allow us to use our imagination and powers of observation to think up something, put something into practice, study something that is intended to work differently—to actively create a good society (Bell, 2018; Smith, 2015; Stock, Carolan, and Rosin, 2015). Utopias are often ridiculed as impossible, childish, unimportant—and not worth spending valuable time thinking about. And yet, following Donalla Meadows' (1996) ideas about envisioning a sustainable society, we have to use our imaginations.

If we can get away from the utopia as the blueprint of a perfect future, we can use utopian stories, thinking and imaginings as a springboard. As Carolyn Steel (2009: 305) argues in her book Hungry City, "Utopianism represents the nearest thing we have to a history of cross-disciplinary thought"—an important consideration for agri-food scholars. If we think of utopias in the plural we might be able to start identifying the seeds of the future. Utopian scholar Lyman Tower Sargent (1994) describes three faces of utopia: the literary; intentional communities; and utopian social theory that articulates a "philosophy of hope". In all three, utopias provide us with stories, both fictional and empirical, that illustrate the many ways the world can be different. Rather than blueprints, green utopias, as Garforth (2018: 3) describes them, indicate that, "Desires for a better greener future are still there, but they are less explicit and powerful, more fugitive and fleeting, often framed by narratives of loss and mourning". These other possibilities help us to prefigure the future (Breines, 1980; Wald, 2015). They also help us to work across disciplinary boundaries. Utopias offer us powerful stories that help

us read our own world for difference. Rather than just looking at the stories that we can critique as bad and unhelpful for enacting social change, a utopian imagination helps us to look for the small and the experimental as potential change agents in our world. As sociologist of utopia Ruth Levitas (2013: 120) argues, “Utopias enable us to explore the structural limits of what is thinkable”.

As we expand what is thinkable we also put ourselves in a position to make a choice as researchers. J.K. Gibson-Graham (2014: s151) wrote about doing research: “This involves a political choice to enact a revolution of sorts, one that makes faint glimmers of hope into prefigurative elements of a becoming economy”. When we talk about this in terms of food, we cannot just critique policies as harmful to farmers and local ecosystems. We are called to make difficult choices that identify what our utopian futures might look like. This comes through in the projects we pursue, the communities we work with and in, and what we write for the world to read. The practice of reading for economic difference expands the possibilities for making other worlds realizable. In our case, they expand into food utopias with more than just a single goal of producing enough calories to feed the world.

Food utopias draws on the three faces of utopias, as well as on feminist theory (especially care and the work of J.K. Gibson-Graham), and on a significant history of agri-food theory to describe this framework as a way to highlight and tell interesting and potentially transformative stories of things currently happening in food and agriculture. Most importantly, these stories of the new represent multiple, not singular, methods that pose a dichotomous future which leave us with either a utopian or a dystopian choice. Food utopias as a research agenda uses the following three tools: critique, experimentation, and process.

Critique

First, food utopias is about exploring what is going wrong. The connections of utopias and ideology allow us to tackle the distortions in the logic of capitalism run amok. This kind of critique is typically associated with political economy. The ideology of capitalist agriculture that will make family farms irrelevant is predicated upon cheap, often immigrant and child labor, new markets, and economic logic. Yes, there are many things going wrong. Many utopian stories serve as satires to critique the contemporary age. And that’s a great way to understand the old story of agriculture. Critique is vital and a mode of theory we are used to; the wider food movement is great at critique.

Concerns over GMOs and the movements they inspire (e.g., Tucker, 2013) offer one example where we still have extensive room to critique. But what about the other ways we have harnessed scientific breakthroughs to change seeds at a genetic scale? The history of mutagenesis is filled with both celebratory and worrisome stories (e.g., Howorth, 1960). In parallel with moments like the Cuban Missile Crisis we were also trying to harness “Atoms for Peace” in pursuit of great breakthroughs in agricultural yields (Alario and Freudenburg, 2007). In trying to harness Caesium 137 and other isotopes we have used mutagenesis without much or any regulatory oversight, nor studied its effects or the decision-making processes that went into it. Mutagenesis is a major part of the productivist era and yet we are woefully uninformed about its role in the contemporary food system. The point here is that there are many processes and institutions worthy of agri-food critique. In many ways, atomic farming represents one kind of experimentation that food utopias might examine.

Experimentation

Second, food utopias highlights experimentation. What are the experiments, risks, and projects happening now that might give us a glimpse into the future? And what have been the experiments in the past that started out small, but that have had a major impact on good things happening now? Much of the work on alternative or sustainable food systems focuses on the experimenters on farms and in kitchens doing interesting things. But we also should not fall victim to what Phillipov and Goodman (2017) describe as the “celebrification” of

farmers and others in the food movement.

Specifically, in imagining and designing future agri-food systems we might highlight oft-ignored stories of cooperatives (Emery et al., 2017), state-supported programs that belie free-market trade trends like the burley tobacco program in the US (Wright, 2005) or Canada's supply management program in dairy (Muirhead and Campbell, 2012), anarchism (Ashwood, 2018; Wald and Hill, 2016; Stock, 2014), and food sovereignty (Desmarais and Wittman, 2014; Grey and Patel, 2015). In short, there will not be a single solution or model to agri-food systems futures.

This "celebrification" is much of what passes for food studies and is proud of it. Nor is it enough to presume the moral certitude of the local, as Born and Purcell (2006) outlined with their description of the local trap. Maybe we can look to some communal food experiments at places like Findhorn in Scotland (Sargisson, 2001; Sanford, 2017)? Or in my own work I have tried to document the experiments of the Catholic Worker movements farms, as well as what I called original care farming experiments as mental health treatment (Stock, 2014; Stock and Szrot, 2020, Stock and Brickell, 2013).

The more we examine experiments in tinkering with the everyday and identify possibilities of a path forward, the less we may find ourselves in physical or intellectual dead ends (Winance, 2010; Stock, 2015). And some of this experimentation is so old it just looks new. The farmers markets and heirloom tomatoes simply make visible what had been rendered almost unthinkable in a productivist mindset. By thinking with experiments we recognize that the new examples of agri-food futures do not emerge out of thin air, but evolve out of multiple processes of trial and error.

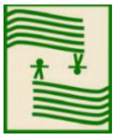
Process

Science fiction writer Kim Stanley Robinson (1990: 95) writes, "Utopia is the process of making a better world, the name for one path history can take, a dynamic, tumultuous, agonizing process, with no end. Struggle forever". Food utopias examines the how—the process. How do we incubate new ideas long enough without them getting crushed because they did not achieve economies of scale? How do we get new products to market? How do we connect more people together? How do we create "welcoming communities of alternative food practices" (Carolan, 2018: 180)?

An emphasis on process recognizes that not all of these experiments will yield success. In fact, many things that farmers, communities, and businesses do try, fail, for many different reasons. But these so-called failures also have stories that should be told (Stock, 2014). In many ways it is important to tell them, for it enlarges and enlivens what we think possible; it helps create the difference we are reading for in the first place.

It is important to note that food utopias is not aiming to supplant or undermine other ways of understanding or writing about the complex relationships in pursuit of just food systems. If nothing else, the hope is that by encouraging some utopian imagining around what might be a part of a just food future, we might simply be able to talk about these things with more people in new and creative ways. In these ways, food utopias connects to other frameworks like biological economies, human economy, new political forms, and new research methods seeking to reimagine how we do scholarly investigations and what we investigate, without only offering critiques because a new agri-food innovation did not lead to the revolution.

We are all trapped in our own ideologies. As Paul Ricoeur (1986) argues, we cannot escape ideologies, but we can identify them, recognise that we have one, then outline our utopias and do the best we can (Rosin, 2012; Rosin, 2014). Utopian stories and intentional communities challenge our day-to-day life in unconventional ways. Restrictions on child labor started out as fiction, so too did universal healthcare (for some), and credit



unions. These are what sociologist Erik Olin Wright (2011) might describe as real utopias—things that have existed at some scale that we can adopt; (but we cannot remain as narrow as Wright was because he was tied solely to a socialist imagination). The utopian can become reality. But how do we start to talk about and envision new ways of doing, growing, and sharing food?

By all accounts this is a difficult moment. We began our investigation in this paper with the image of a farm surrounded by warehouses. In neighboring Iowa, the state decided to defund the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University (Cullen, 2017). There are many stories of things going wrong.

Just as the productivist ideology of feeding the world gives us what Raj Patel (2007) describes as the paradox of the stuffed and the starved, and thus confined to an immature form of care, we also need to think about what the future should look like if we are going to highlight these stories.

Methods

The stories illustrated below reflect more than six years of engagement, participant-observation, teaching, interviews, and workshops related to my work at the University of Kansas since 2012. In the spring of 2013, I hosted the Food Utopias Workshop at the Commons at the University of Kansas that featured three days of conversation on the future of agri-food systems with activists, farmers, scholars, students, and community members. Out of those conversations, Food Utopias (Stock, Carolan, and Rosin, 2015) was published, featuring many of the academic participants' contributions. That specific food utopias work has also been in conversation with the biological economics project and the various projects from Ruralis (Norway) involving scholars from Norway, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, among others (LeHeron et al., 2016; Almås and Campbell, 2012). Also evolving from the Food Utopias work has been the New Farmers Project. New Farmers is a documentary ethnographic examination of people new to farming in Kansas, that combines sociological interviews, photography, and graphic design (see newfarmersproject.com; Darby, Hossler, and Stock, 2019; Stock, Hossler, and Darby, 2019). The examples offered here do not exist in a vacuum; many of the participants are involved in multiple efforts to build agri-food futures in the region. To frame these examples of caring food utopias in the US Midwest, this paper organizes them around the idea of what good food should look like.

Good Food, Mature Care, and Hopeful Futures

There are any number of hopeful examples of things going on in agriculture and food: farmers markets, agri-environmental schemes, home gardening, farm to school, agri-tourism, amazing restaurants celebrating local, innovation, and experimentation, children learning how to cook, new programs that recognize the importance of empowering women in communities, the various initiatives to try and match land and farmers that are operating at a human scale, and all the ideas we have not yet thought were thinkable.

So what is in our food utopias? Succinctly, Ricardo Salvador (Anderson, 2009; Gillo, 2014), of the Union of Concerned Scientists, lays it out best: "Good Food should be healthy; it should be environmentally benign; it should be fair (produced without causing exploitation of workers or consumers); it should be affordable; and it should be all of those things simultaneously". Salvador has worked closely with a constellation of grants and programs related to growing the National Good Food Networks at various scales (see http://ngfn.org/ for details). For our purposes, this description of good food can help frame how we understand these examples of mature care.

Food utopias is about seeking out the hope in food futures, in possibility, in enacting new ways of doing food

and community. This paper offers some existing examples to illustrate the diversity of experimentation in just one place, in the hope that we can begin to see the small experiments happening in many places as part of a larger desire for a better future. Again, our existing ways of thinking about alternatives to our food systems are not in question here. However, as we think of these experiments in food utopias we might also think of how intimately our desire to study these things is linked to our educational institutions, and so to encouraging students, courses, partnerships, and research collaborations that might promote and encourage not only good food, but also, paraphrasing Claude Levi-Strauss, the idea that utopias are fun to think with (Stock et al., 2015: 5). To that end, here are some of the witnesses doing and experimenting with care and good food on their farms that embody some food utopias experimentation and processes (see Stock and Szrot, 2020). The examples offered below could just as easily have been chosen to highlight almost any one of the following categories. Here, I use Salvador's good food formulation as a heuristic tool to illustrate some emerging examples of care and food utopias in agri-food systems.

Healthy

The Bauman family started farming after a long history in the furniture business. With six children and no real farming experience to speak of, the family set out to challenge the norms of farming in Kansas. Since then they have started a farmers market in the small town nearest them. They also produce some of the best eggs in the region, have started a non-GMO chicken feed company, have bought and saved a local butchery (including 40 jobs in the nearby service town), and built and operate an on-farm chicken slaughter operation with the children taking responsibility for various parts of the operation while decisions are made by consensus (for a brief overview see http://kansasruralcenter.org/kansas-farm-profile-baumans-cedar-valley-farms/). Their operation aims to provide healthy food to people and animals, that also contributes to the health of the community.

Part of this comes from their Anabaptist tradition and faith in God, but more importantly, it can be attributed to a willingness to take risks with community support. The meat plant was supported by Slow Money investors (more on that in a second). Most recently they have been trialling a mobile meat market (they drive available meat around the region with predetermined locations, along the same lines as a book mobile) to provide access though different marketing and distribution networks. They have extended their caring relations through a partnership with a Ugandan coffee cooperative fostered through engagement with an international young farmers conference. Above all, they identify their mission to provide healthy food to the community.

Without a grand expansion plan, their farm's growth exhibits a critique of the existing ways of doing things (why have someone else process our meat when we can do it ourselves?) and experimentation (they had never been a part of any of the kinds of operations they now successfully run, in particular the coffee partnership). Finally, each of their new operations has been carefully debated within the family and made with the consideration of neighbors, competitors and markets in mind. Various members of the operation stay involved in various regional networking conferences and events to share their process of decision-making and success.

Environmentally benign

Salvador's second point is that good food should be environmentally benign. In this respect, raising animals for consumption ranks as a major contributor to carbon emissions and many of the ills of agriculture in a productivist era. That being said, there is a network of farmers practicing and evangelizing regenerative agriculture practices that prioritize soil health. One such organization promoting regenerative techniques is the Savory Network and their holistic management strategies. As part of the wider Savory Network (https://www.savory.global/), following the ideas of Allan Savory, a global network of farmers, families, researchers, and scientists promotes regenerative practices, including rotational grazing and other systems planning to restore both the ecological health of grasslands, and the financial health and well-being of family farms. In Kansas, the multigenerational Mettenburg family farm–very near where the Bauman's are–has enrolled as a Savory Network

hub called the Tallgrass Network. As part of the global network, the Tallgrass Network (https://www.tallgrassnetwork.com/) joins other farms and families and research teams to share knowledge, experiments, and ideas across languages and time zones. In short, the idea is that raising cattle can restore the ecological health of the farm by closing the ecological systems of waste, productivity, and biodiversity. The Savory Network's holistic management strategy is betting that systems-level thinking can help navigate both the ecological and the social hurdles, to provide hope in agri-food systems of the future.

The network represents an embedded critique of grassland conservation strategies as well as mainstream on-farm decision-making. By adopting a radical shift in on-farm decision making, the Savory Network models a process for improving certain farm health measurements based on trial and error experimentation.

These examples should not be construed as endorsements. Allan Savory is a contentious figure in the wider world of sustainability advocacy (Gosnell et al., 2020; Sherren and Kent, 2017). Much of this has to do with metrics and what is measured as indicative of health (Burch et al., 2018). Nonetheless, it is fascinating to see the role that the cult of personality can play in how we understand what are deemed good or bad practices. As agri-food scholars we are torn between the necessity to study the world and its projects as they are, while reigning in our hopes for a desired world as it could be. This struggle illustrates both the utopian lens and Goodman's (2004) caution against celebrating the new too much.

Fair (without causing exploitation)

Fairness in food, one of the key components in food justice, incorporates issues of sovereignty and scales of decision-making (Stock and Szrot, 2020). Most notable in the discussion of fairness is how workers are treated and remunerated, including battles for wage increases amongst fast food workers and agricultural workers who do not share the same protections as other workers (Wolf and Bonanno, 2013; Sbicca, 2017).

Fairness also implies working in the here and now, like another program based out of Kansas City called New Roots for Refugees (NRFR) (https://catholiccharitiesks.org/new-roots-for-refugees/). The program is a non-profit collaboration between Cultivate KC (http://www.cultivatekc.org/)–a typical foodie and local agriculture advocacy group–with the local Catholic diocese. New Roots for Refugees offers training, start up capital, access to land, and overall support to help women refugees–primarily from places like the Sudan, Somalia, Burma, and Burundi—to develop entrepreneurial undertakings and small businesses. Based at a training farm for urban gardening and small business development, New Roots for Refugees offers food for these families as well as nascent business opportunities, thus offering both a welcome to the community and caring support to create a livelihood.

NRFR marshals local resources to help integrate new refugees into the local community and thereby demonstrates a food utopian process. While the refugees' new business entities are encouraged to experiment with new kinds of crops and ventures, including raising prickly pear cacti as both a food ingredient and home decoration, they are also afforded some incubatory support by the institutions.

Affordable, Not Cheap

As documented by many people, but most clearly by Michael Carolan (2011), the policies and practices of agriculture since World War II constitute a system of cheap food. A system built upon cheapness leaves us just where we are, with perpetual hunger and crisis (Rosin, Stock, and Campbell, 2011). How do we make food affordable?

In Lawrence, Kansas city-owned land is offered (essentially free) to anyone with a plan to make a business growing food. This is essentially a usufruct relationship where the city owns land and offers its use to anyone

who makes a claim that they will make productive use of it. This Common Ground[3] program (https://lawrenceks.org/common-ground/) receives annual requests for plots on city-owned land that either cannot be built on or is otherwise unusable for other city purposes.

A farming couple from the New Farmers project who started their community-supported agriculture (CSA) business on Common Ground land, is now also offering partnerships for a seedling business, and a few other endeavors. Community gardens also operate on multiple sites of the Common Ground program, which also hosts a community orchard. Here a local government program enables a process of experimentation over time to develop a business strategy might successfully mature out of the usufruct relationship and stand on its own. Thus, the critique embedded in this system validates claims like those of Carolan (2017), that if food is different to most commodities, then we need to offer space for food ideas to incubate, like in this example.

Many of these examples are also involved in Slow Money relationships. Slow Money evolved in the wake of Slow Food, but for financial relationships. As one of the Slow Money principles states, “We must learn to invest as if food, farms and fertility mattered. We must connect investors to the places where they live, creating healthy relationships and new sources of capital for small food enterprises” (https://slowmoney.org/about/principles). In Kansas, the Slow Money (https://www.slowmoneynekansas.org/) group hosts entrepreneurial showcases where farmers or other farm-related entrepreneurs pitch their project or idea to potential investors in the community. If there is a project an investor likes, then the loans and terms are worked out in private. This has two effects: first, it keeps investment dollars regional; and second, it helps us reimagine the relationships around capital, banks, credit, and ownership. This international organization offers examples of local and regional investment with healthy soil at the root of healthy communities. Slow Money also demonstrates a mature care relationship as it fosters person-to-person relations that then cascade down to the local community, the soil, and other species.

All of these things simultaneously

In a recent article a student and I put the experiences of sustainable and organic farmers in Kansas in the context of Ploeg’s (2009) ideas of repeasantization with an emphasis on “autonomy, co-production, and diversification” illustrating “openness to agricultural practices intended to create income, livelihoods, food, fibre, and ecological and social well-being” (Nelson and Stock, 2018: 91-92). Again, food utopias tries to imagine different ways of thinking about food. Does imagining Kansas farmers as peasants solve anything? Maybe not, but it can open up some dialogue and conversations that might not have happened otherwise, about identifying common hurdles (like access to land and credit) as well as shared assets (like female leadership and practices to counter climate change).

An organization that began around 2013 as an idea committed to justice and equity around food access opened a physical space in 2016. On the property of what was a nursery/garden store in the middle of this town of 85,000 people, the Sunrise Project (https://sunriseprojectks.org/about/) aims to “envision a resilient community that provides for its own needs and offers opportunities for all people to grow and eat culturally appropriate foods, care for the land and one another. We are committed to creating an equitable system in which people of all ages and experiences live self-determined, healthy and meaningful lives.”

With an emphasis on food and gardening, the Sunrise Project endeavours to develop healthy food relationships across racial, ethnic and class divisions. Although they are a non-profit entity, they have partnered with a local soy/tofu company that will move its production facility to the property. Seeds of Italy, a distribution company, will also house their permanent facility on site. The large greenhouses provide space both for year-round

[3] There is also a program called Common Ground based in Wichita, KS. This program emphasizes access and food insecurity issues. More information here:
http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/news/stories/2018/11/Kansas-Profile-Common-Ground.html

community gardening, and for an entrepreneurial company growing trees and starters for sale. There is kitchen and classroom space, as well as a retail space that briefly operated as a coffee shop.

The Sunrise Project maintains partnerships with the city, the county, private entities, farmers, educators, and schools. They also leverage partnerships with local granting agencies, government, NGOs related to food and social justice, and educational institutions. This is a unique, real-time food utopian experiment that fosters food and farming as seeds to nurture justice, experimentation, and community.

* * *

Taken individually these people, projects, farms, and relationships might indicate one-off experiments fraught with failure (like the Sunrise Project's brief coffee shop business or the couple that attempted to raise crickets for human consumption). However, given the overlapping interests, relationships, investments (like Slow Money investors offering financial support to New Roots for Refugees participants), this constellation of efforts in Kansas exhibit the diversity and difference that indicate caring examples of possibilities for agri-food futures. It is clear that no single one of these efforts will revolutionize the agri-food system; however in conjunction with the development of food policy councils, a state-level task force, foundations supporting healthy food initiatives, and the development of a regional food hub featuring many of the same actors, Kansas may just become known as an agri-food hub and not just along the lines of productivist and commodity production. As agri-food observers we know that these physical spaces of caring activity are unequally distributed, so we will need to continue to examine factors such as education, access to land and credit, attention to issues of justice and equity, government infrastructure, transportation, water, and all the other things that contribute to these positive developments in agri-food systems.

* * *

I have highlighted examples close to me for a reason. Critique as a mode is at its easiest when it is vague and distanced. Care is intimate. Just as farmers are embedded in places, so are we as researchers and teachers and community members. My intention was therefore to look at experiments working in an unfolding process of making the not-yet become – as Ernst Bloch would describe this utopian way of thinking (Levitas, 1990: 102).

Granted, each and every example highlighted here will not feed the world, but they are all experiments in how to grow food for specific people in specific places and, often, in support of and in relationship with each another. As George Washington Carver (1914: 5) wrote in "Being Kind to the Soil":

> *Unkindness to anything means an injustice done to that thing. I am unkind to you I do you an injustice, or wrong you in some way. On the other hand, if I try to assist you in every way that I can to make a better citizen and in every way to do my very best for you. I am kind to you.*
>
> *The above principles apply with equal force to the soil.*

Conclusion

There are plenty of stories to fill our journals and conferences about unkindness to the soil and to each other. Just as feminist care theory argues that just not doing harm (e.g., like using less cancer-causing pesticides) is not caring, Carver outlines an agriculture of care as central to the future of raising and distributing good food.

In order to work towards a more just and kind world of food and community, we need to seek out the stories of kindness and care, of food that is healthy, environmentally benign, fair, and affordable, and all of these things

simultaneously.

This will take a collective effort of mature care that cannot solely rely on the state, geared towards raising incomes, increasing autonomy, not relenting to corporations, heart to heart talks, humility, and love – love of the land and each other. It requires that we use our imagination by thinking with utopias. Much of food studies stops at the celebratory and misses the structural elements hidden by the many complex relationships. Highlighting these food utopias and examples of care in practice is a start. We have a responsibility in our research and teaching, to highlight what we can actually do to work towards the food utopias we imagine.

References

Alario MV and Freudenburg WR (2007) Atoms for peace, atoms for war: probing the paradoxes of modernity. Sociological inquiry 77(2): 219–240.

Almås R and Campbell H (eds) (2012) Rethinking Agricultural Policy Regimes: Food Security, Climate Change and the Future Resilience of Global Agriculture. Research in Rural Sociology and Development. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing.

Anderson M (2009) Charting Growth to Good Food: Developing Indicators and Measures of Good Food. Arlington, VA: Wallace Center Winrock International.

Ashwood L (2018) Rural Conservatism or Anarchism? The Pro-state, Stateless, and Anti-state Positions. Rural Sociology 83(4). DOI: 10.1111/ruso.12226.

Beacham J (2018) Organising food differently: Towards a more-than-human ethics of care for the Anthropocene. Organization 25: 533–549. DOI: 10.1177/1350508418777893.

Bell MM (1994) Childerly: Nature and Morality in a Country Village. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bell MM (2018) City of the Good: Nature, Religion, and the Ancient Search for What Is Right. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.

Born B and Purcell M (2006) Avoiding the Local Trap: Scale and Food Systems in Planning Research. Journal of Planning Education and Research 26: 195–207.

Brandth B and Bolsø A (1994) Men, women and biotechnology: A feminist care ethic in agricultural science? In: Whatmore S, Marsden T, and Lowe P (eds) Gender and Rurality. London, UK: David Fulton Publishers, pp. 136–149.

Breines W (1980) Community and Organization: The New Left and Michels' 'Iron Law'. Social Problems 27(4): 419–429. DOI: 10.2307/800170.

Bronson K and Knezevic I (2019) The Digital Divide and How it Matters for Canadian Food System Equity. Canadian Journal of Communication 44(2): 137–154.

Burch K, Legun K and Campbell H (2018) Not defined by the numbers: Distinction, dissent and democratic possibilities in debating the data. In: Forney J, Rosin, C, and Campbell H (eds) Agri-Environmental Governance as an Assemblage. London: Routledge, pp. 137–154.

Burton R, Forney J, Stock P, et al. (2021) The Good Farmer: Culture and Identity in Food and Agriculture. Earthscan food and agriculture series. London: Routledge.

Carolan M (2011) The Real Cost of Cheap Food. London: Routledge.

Carolan M (2017) Publicising Food: Big Data, Precision Agriculture, and Co-Experimental Techniques of Addition. Sociologia Ruralis 57(2): 135–154. DOI: 10.1111/soru.12120.

Carolan M (2018) Lands changing hands: Experiences of succession and farm (knowledge) acquisition among first-generation, multigenerational, and aspiring farmers. Land Use Policy 79: 179–189. DOI: 10.1016/j.landusepol.2018.08.011.

Carolan M (2018) The Food Sharing Revolution: How Start-Ups, Pop-Ups, and Co-Ops Are Changing the Way We Eat. New York: Island Press.

Carver GW (1914) Being Kind to the Soil. The Negro Farmer, 31 January.

Charbonneau B (2018) The green light: a self-criticism of the ecological movement (tran. C Roy). London: Bloomsbury.

Cox R (2010) Some problems and possibilities of caring. Ethics, Place & Environment 13(2): 113–130. DOI: 10.1080/13668791003778800.

Cox R, Kneafsey M, Holloway L, et al. (2013) Greater than the sum of the parts? unpacking ethics of care within a community supported agriculture scheme. In: Goodman M and Sage C (eds) Food Transgressions: Making Sense of Contemporary Food Politics. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, pp. 61–82.

Cullen A (2017) Burying Aldo Leopold. The Progressive Populist 23(12): 20.

Curry JM (2002) Care Theory and ”caring” systems of agriculture. Agriculture and Human Values 19(2): 119–131. DOI: 10.1023/A:1016074832696.

Darby DB, Hossler T and Stock P (2019) New Farmers 2014/2018. Lawrence, KS: P & T Committee.

Desmarais AA and Wittman H (2014) Farmers, foodies and First Nations: getting to food sovereignty in Canada. Journal of Peasant Studies 41(6): 1153–1173.

DeVault ML (1994) Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Dwiartama A and Rosin C (2014a) Exploring agency beyond humans: the compatibility of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and resilience thinking. Ecology and Society 19(3).

Dwiartama A and Rosin C (2014b) Exploring agency beyond humans: the compatibility of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and resilience thinking. Ecology and Society 19(3). The Resilience Alliance. DOI: 10.5751/ES-06805-190328.

Ellul J (1980) The power of technique and the ethics of non-power. In: Woodward K (ed.) The Myths of Information: Technology and Postindustrial Culture. Madison, WI: Coda Press, pp. 242–247.

Emery SB, Forney J and Wynne-Jones S (2017) The more-than-economic dimensions of cooperation in food production. Journal of Rural Studies 53(Supplement C): 229–235. DOI: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.05.017.

Farrell J (2015) Battle for Yellowstone: Morality and the Sacred Roots of Environmental Conflict.

Forney J and Stock PV (2014) Conversion of family farms and resilience in Southland, New Zealand. International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food 21(1): 7–29.

Garforth L (2018) Green Utopias: Environmental Hope before and after Nature. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Gibson-Graham JK (2008) Diverse economies: performative practices for other worlds. Progress in Human Geography 32(5): 613–632.

Gibson-Graham JK (2014) Rethinking the Economy with Thick Description and Weak Theory. Current Anthropology 55(S9): S147–S153. DOI: 10.1086/676646.

Gilligan C (2003) In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gillo C (2014) Ricado Salvador: Build a New Food System. Available at: http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/news-room/dodge_lecture/dodge-Ricardo-Salvador.html (accessed 26 May 2015).

Goodman D (2004) Rural Europe redux? Reflections on alternative agro□food networks and paradigm change. Sociologia ruralis 44(1): 3–16. DOI: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1467-9523.2004.00258.x.

Gosnell H, Grimm K and Goldstein BE (2020) A half century of Holistic Management: what does the evidence reveal? Agriculture and Human Values 37(3): 849–867. DOI: 10.1007/s10460-020-10016-w.

Grey S and Patel R (2015) Food sovereignty as decolonization: Some contributions from Indigenous movements to food system and development politics. Agriculture and Human Values 32(3): 431–444.

Guthman J (2004) Agrarian Dreams: The Paradox of Organic Farming in California. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hassink J, Moriggi A, Senni S, et al. (2020) Caring Agricultural and Food Practices. In: Duncan J, Carolan M, and Wiskerke JSC (eds) Routledge Handbook of Sustainable and Regnerative Food Systems. London:

Routledge, pp. 126–140.
Held V (2006) The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
Horsley L (2018) Tiny JoCo town is booming. That's not good for everyone. Kansas City Star, 26 April. Available at: https://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article208192079.html (accessed 9 November 2018).
Howorth M (1960) Atomic Gardening. Eastbourne, Sussex: New World Publications : Distributed in U.S.A. by Rogers Book Service.
Jackson T (2009) Prosperity without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet. Routledge.
Jarosz L (2011) Nourishing women: toward a feminist political ecology of community supported agriculture in the United States. Gender, Place & Culture 18(3). Taylor & Francis: 307–326.
Jarosz L (2014) Considering sovereignty, care ethics and policy in food politics. Dialogues in Human Geography 4(2): 229–232. DOI: 10.1177/2043820614537162.
Kessler A, Parkins JR and Huddart Kennedy E (2016) Environmental Harm and "the Good Farmer": Conceptualizing Discourses of Environmental Sustainability in the Beef Industry. Rural Sociology 81(2): 172–193. DOI: 10.1111/ruso.12091.
Kimmerer RW (2013) Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants. Minneapolis, MN.
Law J (2010) Care and Killing: Tensions in Verterinary Practice. In: Mol A, Moser I, and Pols J (eds) Care in Practice: On Tinkering in Clinics, Homes and Farms. Bielefeld, Netherlands: Transcript Verlag, pp. 57–69. Available at: http://www. heterogeneities. net/publications/Law200 8CareAndKilling .pdf.
Le Heron R, Campbell H, Lewis N, et al. (2016) Biological Economies: Experimentation and the Politics of Agri-Food Frontiers. London: Routledge.
Leighton P (2018) Mass Salmonella poisoning by the Peanut Corporation of America: Lessons in state-corporate food crime. A Handbook of Food Crime: Immoral and Illegal Practices in the Food Industry and What to Do About Them. Policy Press: 175.
Leslie IS, Wypler J and Bell MM (2019) Relational Agriculture: Gender, Sexuality, and Sustainability in U.S. Farming. Society & Natural Resources 32(8): 853–874. DOI: 10.1080/08941920.2019.1610626.
Levitas R (1990) The Concept of Utopia. Hempstead, UK: Syracuse University Press.
Levitas R (2013) Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society. New York: Palgrave macmillan.
Little J and Austin P (1996) Women and the rural idyll. Journal of rural studies 12(2): 101–111.
Lowe P, Clark J, Seymour S, et al. (1997) Moralizing the Environment: Countryside Change, Farming and Pollution. London: UCL Press Limited. Available at: https://www.dropbox.com/s/jbh17k9zv74dp6w/Lowe%20et%20al%20section%201997.pdf?dl=0.
Meadows D (1996) Envisioning a sustainable world. In: Costanza R, Segura O, and Olsen JMF (eds) Getting Down to Earth: Practical Applications of Ecological Economics. Washington, DC: Island Press, pp. 117–26.
Mol A, Moser I and Pols J (2010) Care in Practice: On Tinkering in Clinics, Homes and Farms. Bielefeld, Germany: Transcript Verlag.
Muirhead B and Campbell H (2012) The worlds of dairy: Comparing dairy frameworks in Canada and New Zealand in light of future shocks to food systems. In: Almås R and Campbell H (eds) Rethinking Agricultural Policy Regimes: Food Security, Climate Change and the Future Resilience of Global Agriculture. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 147–168.
Nelson J and Stock P (2018) Repeasantisation in The United States. Sociologia Ruralis 58(1): 83–103. DOI: 10.1111/soru.12132.
Noddings N (1984) Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education. Berkeley: University of California Press.
O'Brien KJ (2017) The Violence of Climate Change: Lessons of Resistance from Nonviolent Activists. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Patel R (2007) Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System. Brooklyn, NY: Melville House Publishing.

Pettersen T (2008) Comprehending Care: Problems and Possibilities in the Ethics of Care. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Phillipov M and Goodman MK (2017) The celebrification of farmers: celebrity and the new politics of farming. Celebrity Studies 8(2): 346–350.

Piatti C (2015) Slow Food Presidia: the nostalgic and the utopian. In: Stock P, Carolan M, and Rosin C (eds) Food Utopias. London: Routledge, pp. 88–106.

Ploeg JD van der (2009) The New Peasantries: Struggles for Autonomy and Sustainability in an Era of Empire and Globalization. London, UK: Earthscan.

Ricoeur P (1986) Lectures on Ideology and Utopia (ed. GH Taylor). New York: Columbia University Press.

Robinson KS (1990) Pacific Edge: Three Californias. New York: Ace.

Rosin C (2012) Food security and the justification of productivism in New Zealand. Journal of Rural Studies.

Rosin C (2014) Engaging the productivist ideology through utopian politics. Dialogues in Human Geography 4(2): 221–224. DOI: 10.1177/2043820614537165.

Rosin CJ, Campbell H and Stock PV (2011) Food Systems Failure: The Global Food Crisis and the Future of Agriculture. Earthscan.

Sanford AW (2017) Living Sustainably: What Intentional Communities Can Teach Us about Democracy, Simplicity, and Nonviolence. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.

Sargent LT (1994) The three faces of utopianism revisited. Utopian Studies 5(1): 1–37.

Sargisson L (2001) Green Utopias of Self and Other. In: Goodwin B (ed.) The Philosophy of Utopia. New York: Routledge, pp. 140–156.

Sbicca J (2017) Resetting the "Good Food" Table. The New Food Activism: Opposition, Cooperation, and Collective Action: 107.

Shay J (1994) Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character. New York: Atheneum.

Sherren K and Kent C (2017) Who's afraid of Allan Savory? Scientometric polarization on Holistic Management as competing understandings. Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems: 1–16. DOI: 10.1017/S1742170517000308.

Shisler RC and Sbicca J (2019) Agriculture as Carework: The Contradictions of Performing Femininity in a Male-Dominated Occupation. Society & Natural Resources 32(8): 875–892. DOI: 10.1080/08941920.2019.1597234.

Shucksmith M (2016) Re-imagining the rural: From rural idyll to Good Countryside. Journal of Rural Studies 59: 163–172.

Smith C (2010) What Is a Person?: Rethinking Humanity, Social Life, and the Moral Good from the Person Up. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Smith C (2015) To Flourish or Destruct: A Personalist Theory of Human Goods, Motivations, Failure, and Evil. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Steel C (2009) Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives. New York: Vintage.

Stock P, Carolan M and Rosin C (eds) (2015) Food Utopias: Reconsidering Citizenship, Ethics and Community. London: Routledge/Earthscan.

Stock PV (2007) 'Good Farmers' as Reflexive Producers: an Examination of Family Organic Farmers in the US Midwest. Sociologia Ruralis 47(2): 83–102.

Stock PV (2010a) Catholic Worker Economics: Subsistence and Resistance Strategies of Householding. Bulletin for the Study of Religion 40(1): 16–25.

Stock PV (2010b) Sociology and the Mix Tape: A Metaphor of Creativity. The American Sociologist 41(3): 277–291.

Stock PV (2012) Consensus Social Movements and the Catholic Worker. Politics and Religion 5(01): 83–102.

Stock PV (2014) The Perennial Nature of the Catholic Worker Farms: A Reconsideration of Failure. Rural Sociology 79(2): 143–173. DOI: 10.1111/ruso.12029.

Stock PV (2015) Contradictions in hope and care. In: Stock P, Carolan MS, and Rosin C (eds) Food Utopias: Reimagining Citizenship, Ethics and Community. London, UK: Routledge/Earthscan, pp. 171–194.

Stock PV and Brickell C (2013) Nature's good for you: Sir Truby King, Seacliff Asylum and the greening of health care in New Zealand, 1889–1922. Health & Place 22: 107–114.

Stock PV and Forney J (2014) Farmer autonomy and the farming self. Journal of Rural Studies 36: 160–171.

Stock PV and Szrot L (2020) Justice. In: Routledge Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems. London, UK: Routledge, pp. 98–112.

Stock PV, Darby DB and Hossler T (2019) Experiments in the Field. Writing with the Light, Cultural Anthropology. Available at: https://culanth.org/fieldsights/experiments-in-the-field.

Todorov T (1996) Facing the Extreme: Moral Life in the Concentration Camps. New York: Metropolitan.

Tronto JC (1993) Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care. New York: Psychology Press.

Tucker C (2013) Using social network analysis and framing to assess collective identity in the genetic engineering resistance movement of Aotearoa New Zealand. Social Movement Studies 12(1): 81–95.

Wald N (2015) Towards Utopias of Prefigurative Politics and Food Sovereignty: Experiences of Politicised Peasant Food Production. In: Stock P, Carolan M, and Rosin C (eds) Food Utopias: Reconsidering Citizenship, Ethics and Community. Oxon, UK: Routledge/Earthscan, pp. 107–125.

Wald N and Hill D (2016) Anarchist Geographies in the Rural Global South. In: White RJ, Springer S, and Lopes de Souza M (eds) The Practice of Freedom: Anarchism, Geography, and the Spirit of Revolt. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, p. 23. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280841920_The_Practice_of_Freedom_Anarchism_Geography_and_the_Spirit_of_Revolt.

Wells BL and Gradwell S (2001) Gender and resource management: Community supported agriculture as caring-practice. Agriculture and Human Values 18(1): 107–119.

Whatmore S (2002) Hybrid Geographies: Natures Cultures Spaces. New York: Sage.

White MM (2018) Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement. Justice, power, and politics. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Whyte KP and Cuomo C (2016) Ethics of Caring in Environmental Ethics (eds SM Gardiner and A Thompson). Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199941339.013.22.

Wilmer H, Fernández-Giménez ME, Ghajar S, et al. (2019) Managing for the middle: rancher care ethics under uncertainty on Western Great Plains rangelands. Agriculture and Human Values. Springer: 1–20.

Winance M (2010) Care and Disability: Practices of Experimenting, Tinkering With, and Arranging People and Technical Aids. In: Mol A, Moser I, and Pols J (eds) Care in Practice: On Tinkering in Clinics, Homes and Farms. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, pp. 93–118.

Wolf SA and Bonanno A (eds) (2013) The Neoliberal Regime in the Agri-Food Sector: Crisis, Resilience, and Restructuring. London: Routledge.

Wright DW (2005) Fields of cultural contradictions: Lessons from the tobacco patch. Agriculture and Human Values 22(4): 465–477.

Wright EO (2011) Real Utopias. Contexts 10(2): 36–42.