social sciences

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Promoting Food Systems Paradigm Shifts through Critical Reflexivity: Exploring Interviews as Intervention

Leah Joyner [1,*], Blanca Yagüe [2] and Adrienne Cachelin [3]

[1] Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration, California State University, Sacramento, CA 95819, USA
[2] Department of Anthropology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112, USA; blanca.yague@utah.edu
[3] Environmental & Sustainability Studies Program, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112, USA; adrienne.cachelin@health.utah.edu
* Correspondence: leah.joyner@csus.edu

Abstract: This article highlights the transformative power of community-engaged research for food sovereignty through an examination of reflexive interviewing and knowledge co-production with community partners. Initially, we connected with an urban Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm to explore farmers' concerns regarding their export of food from marginalized areas of the city to predominantly affluent neighborhoods. Our response to confirmatory data was to explore CSA members' interest in subsidizing shares for low-income residents. However, continued fieldwork revealed that similar charity-based approaches implemented by other food-access advocates were perhaps underutilized, given their basis in food security rather than more complex community-driven food sovereignty. Recognizing the need to understand the broader relationship between urban agriculture and food equity in SLC, we set out to research how university scholars can work with community partners and food advocates to advance food justice and sovereignty. Through dialogic methods, we explore how critical reflexivity can be embedded in research protocols such that researchers and interviewees reflect on their own biases, thus shifting the outcomes and research processes. Through a retrospective review of data collection, we highlight interactional strategies to promote critical reflexivity before proposing an interview framework that prompts paradigm shifts towards food sovereignty.

Keywords: food justice; community-engaged research; qualitative research; reflexivity

Citation: Joyner, Leah, Blanca Yagüe, and Adrienne Cachelin. 2023. Promoting Food Systems Paradigm Shifts through Critical Reflexivity: Exploring Interviews as Intervention. *Social Sciences* 12: 280. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci12050280

Academic Editors: Steven McKay, Claudia Lopez and Rebecca A. London

Received: 23 March 2023
Revised: 24 April 2023
Accepted: 26 April 2023
Published: 4 May 2023

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1. Introduction

This collaborative project originated in the fall of 2017 when our research team launched a partnership with a group of urban farmers in Salt Lake City (SLC) who voiced their concerns regarding issues of food injustice in their neighborhood and their desire to better connect with food-insecure neighbors. This farm, a small CSA operation that was created in 2010, uses a unique land-access model through which the farmers grow food in residential backyards and in exchange provide landowners with a weekly share of produce during the growing season. Hence the name, Backyard Urban Garden (B.U.G.) Farms. This land-access model allows the farmers to operate the CSA despite not owning the land, alleviating a significant barrier to localized urban agriculture. During our visit to the farm as a part of a food justice course, B.U.G. farmers expressed anecdotal concern that they might be exporting most of the food they grow in Glendale to more affluent areas of the city.

Glendale is one of several neighborhoods that make up SLC's Westside. The Westside is the most ethnically diverse area of SLC, home to much of the city's immigrant and refugee community, including 75% of SLC's Latinx population (University Neighborhood Partners 2019). The Westside is a thriving and growing community, home to extensive parks and trails, schools, community centers, and libraries. However, Westside residents

have disproportionately less access to resources such as food, transportation, and housing and are more frequently exposed to environmental hazards than residents elsewhere in the city (Carothers 2018; Joyner et al. 2022; McKellar 2015; Mullen et al. 2020; Salt Lake City Planning Commission 2014). Glendale is a USDA-designated "food desert," a label which denotes high clusters of food insecurity yet does not capture the myriad political and economic factors that undergird structural food inequity and can promote deficit-oriented and pathologizing views on communities (Holt-Giménez and Harper 2016; Lewis 2015; McClintock 2018; Shannon 2013; U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service 2021). Despite the "food desert" label, a great deal of food is grown in Westside small farms and gardens, several neighborhood food retailers exist, and many community members identify strong foodways and practices connected to traditional foods, cultural identity, and community building (Cachelin et al. 2019).

The dissonance between goals of a growing urban agricultural movement exporting food amidst widespread food insecurity was the locus for our partnership with B.U.G. Farms. Through preliminary research, we confirmed the farmers' suspicions that they were indeed exporting food from a so-called "food desert" to other more affluent and primarily white areas of the city where residents do not experience similar levels of food insecurity (Joyner et al. 2022). In response to these initial findings, we consulted the research literature, which indicates that when cost—one of the most well-documented barriers to local food—can be overcome through options such as subsidized shares, CSAs can increase food security, fruit and vegetable consumption, and overall well-being for low-income individuals (Cotter et al. 2017; Hanson et al. 2017; Izumi et al. 2018; Woods et al. 2017). Accordingly, we co-created a feasibility study with our partners at the farm to explore CSA members' willingness to support subsidized shares for low-income and marginalized community members in Glendale. Initially, this strategy seemed to offer an easy and promising food-access win. However, as we deepened our community-based research, we realized that this approach would not address the root issues at the heart of this disconnect between existing urban agriculture and food insecurity in Glendale (Joyner et al. 2022).

Through continued fieldwork, we learned that similar charity-based approaches to food security had been implemented by other local food-access advocates who, in retrospect, considered that the underutilization of their programs was more complex than they had initially thought as they were not founded on community input. Community leaders also pointed to histories of extractive research in the Westside that do not attend to the immediate impacts of the disconnect between urban agriculture and food insecurity. Recognizing the need to avoid replicating inequities that already exist in the food system, we employed a critical transformative paradigm of interviewing in order to explore and prompt transformation in researchers', farmers', farm stakeholders', and food-access advocates' perspectives on equitable access to local food through urban agriculture. What resulted was a collaborative, broad-scope approach to understanding the role of urban agriculture in promoting food equity, community resilience, and food sovereignty. In this paper, we discuss how this process took shape, and explore how the application of reflexivity as both theory and praxis can drive transformation for researchers, community partners, and the food systems of which we are a part.

2. Aligning Food System Paradigms with Research Praxis

Myriad political and economic policies and practices drive the production of food inequity in Salt Lake City (Joyner et al. 2022). The city boasts a growing urban agriculture and local food-advocacy movement, yet stark inequalities in food security persist. A multitude of local organizations promote urban agriculture and food systems advocacy, with a large concentration conducting work in SLC's Westside. Many of these organizations are intended to build community foodways through initiatives such as community gardening, farmers' markets, food banks, nutrition and cooking training, municipal initiatives for increased resident engagement in food equity advocacy, and more. Each organization aligns with varying food systems paradigms, which influence the shape of their programs,

missions, and goals. Holt-Giménez and Shattuck argue that food movement groups tend to fall into four general categories, which reflect varying levels of support for or resistance against the industrial, corporatized food system. The four categories include: (a) neoliberal and (b) reformist, which both prop up the corporate food system to varying extents, and (c) progressive and (d) radical, which both challenge the corporate food system to varying degrees (Holt-Giménez and Shattuck 2011; Trauger 2017). Figure 1 depicts each of these four categories as they correspond to food systems structures, denoting core commitments (first level) and examples of each (second level in green).

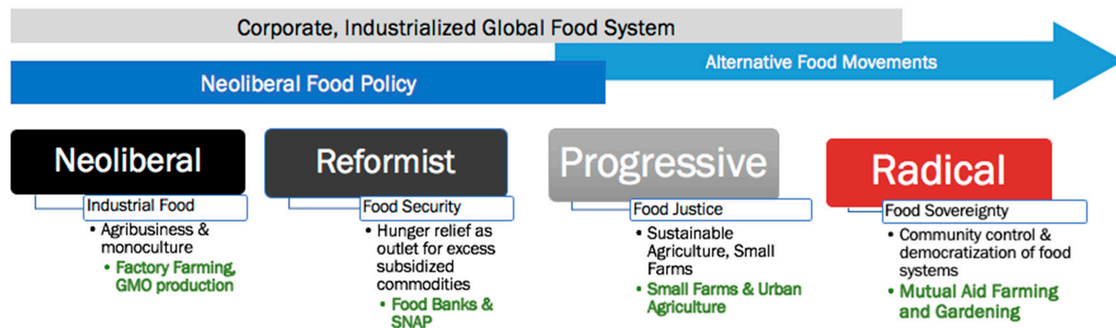

Figure 1. Food System Paradigms. Adapted from: (Holt-Giménez and Shattuck 2011, p. 118; Trauger 2017, p. 35).

In SLC, reformist, progressive, and radical organizations comprise the most active groups engaging in locally driven food-access initiatives. Reformist approaches, located within the food security paradigm, conceptualize individuals as economic components and necessary outlets for surplus commodities produced by the heavily subsidized industrial food system (Portman 2018). An example of a food security approach might include a food bank operating in a USDA-designated "food desert" as a hunger alleviation strategy while providing an outlet for a system that subsidizes excess production of placeless calories and provides a stable market for them. Through food redistribution to residents in USDA-designated "food deserts", a food bank would serve as an outlet for processed staples, nonperishables, and excess commodities, which would alleviate some of the immediate symptoms of hunger. Food banks and food security initiatives have become necessary yet insufficient programs to address hunger, in effect transitioning an emergency system into a staple of the status quo. These types of food security programs can promulgate short-term grant or charity-based solutions "in lieu of substantial financial support for and political commitment to the broad security needs of poor and struggling communities" (Lewis 2015, p. 418). This system can propel the idea that the industrial food system can be reformed, rather than fundamentally reshaped (Holt-Giménez and Shattuck 2011).

In a more progressive paradigm, food justice groups advocate for the "the right of communities everywhere to produce, process, distribute, access, and eat good food regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, ability, religion, or community" (Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy 2012). Examples of food justice programs might include fair-trade certification programs, urban agriculture entrepreneurship, and local food policies that seek to increase access to organic or culturally appropriate foods. Some critiques of food justice movements are that such initiatives are often based in the "economic and political frameworks of existing capitalist food systems" (Holt-Giménez and Shattuck 2011, p. 115). Food justice movements have also been critiqued for promoting an overrepresentation of whiteness in the sustainable agriculture movement, which often results in the insertion of white codified spaces in communities of color (Guthman 2008a, 2008b; Hoover 2013). For example, in some contexts, community gardens and urban agriculture can serve as important social capital and organizing catalysts, yet in other contexts they can exacerbate issues rooted in historic trauma and promote the erasure of marginalized and oppressed groups (Martin et al. 2016; Pride 2016).

In a more progressive paradigm, food sovereignty pushes the commitments of food justice further by specifically placing the right to democratic control of the food system from production to consumption within people, not corporations (Holt-Giménez 2009). Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011) identify food sovereignty as a radical approach, which is based on the active dismantling of the corporate control of the food system. The Nyéléni Declaration defines food sovereignty as "the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" (Nyéléni 2007, p. 7). The language of the food sovereignty movement seeks to make visible structures of oppression (Martínez-Torres and Rosset 2010). For example, rather than using the term "food desert" to describe the geographic clustering of food insecurity in certain communities, food sovereignty activists might use the term "food apartheid" to denote the systemic production of food inequity through intentional racial and economic policies and practices that produce racial and class-based inequalities in community food access (Kerry Washington, as cited in Brones 2018; Reese 2019). Radical food sovereignty activists engage in direct action to alleviate the oppressions of the present, while simultaneously seeking to dismantle structural injustice (Agyeman and McEntee 2014; Heynen 2009; Holt-Giménez and Wang 2011; Martínez-Torres and Rosset 2010). In order to spark paradigm shifts from food security towards food justice and sovereignty, community-engaged researchers are faced with the challenge of honoring and uplifting the work of community partners who attend to the immediate issue of food insecurity, while also moving the needle towards an increasingly radical approach to food sovereignty for all (Hammelman et al. 2020). We propose that critical reflexivity is one research strategy that can be used to spark these paradigm shifts.

3. Critical Reflexivity for Food Sovereignty Paradigm Shifts

Critical reflexivity, here conceptualized as a reflective practice that focuses on situating oneself within the context of power structures that encompass both the researcher and the researched (D'Arcangelis 2018; Pillow 2003, 2015), is one approach to transformative research. This dynamic method creates opportunities for praxis in which researchers must transform themselves along with their methodologies to respond to the recognition of power in every element of research. Academic research processes, especially qualitative research, can be time consuming and in some cases can take years to become publicly available. Additionally, the end products of research are also not always accessible to nonacademic audiences, which drives the call of many scholars to "embed social impact in the research process itself" (Nardon et al. 2021, p. 1). Transformative research praxis can generate social impact by influencing both the process and products as agents of social change more immediately (Nardon et al. 2021).

We employed a critically reflexive practice modeled by Pillow's (2015) conceptualization of reflexivity as both interpretation and genealogy. Reflexivity as interpretation includes careful reads of embodied experiences and social and historical conditions, structures, and processes. As a mode of interpretation, reflexivity offers deep understandings of social conditions and ideas for alternatives to oppressive structures. As a research team, we realized the need to continuously challenge and analyze our own assumptions, recognize our positionalities, and interrogate the power structures which house them. Reflexivity of genealogy (Pillow 2015) describes textual strategies of investigation, scrutinization of all claims, new forms of subjectivities, and discomfort with and unsettling all forms of knowledge. We implemented these components of a reflexivity of genealogy by using textual analysis to scrutinize data (interviews, memory, and fieldwork notes), and to unsettle the idea that there is any singular "correct" solution when it comes to the complexity of the intersections between food apartheid, food sovereignty, and urban agriculture. Reflexivity of genealogy is "interruptive of everything" (Pillow 2015, p. 247), just as the methods and locus of this project have been "interrupted" and consequently changed course with each step of the inquiry. We operationalized our genealogical approach via an evolving process of qualitative inquiry and through our continued embrace of discomfort with our own

interpretation of the issues, how we ourselves fit into them, and how community members themselves identified desires for new ways of knowing. Put more simply, we practiced genealogical reflexivity through our evolving collection of methods (e.g., transitioning from surveys, to interviews, to participant observation according to what each stage uncovered), while we employed reflexivity as an interpretation of the ways we constructed meaning from multiple sources of data and interpreted our evolving sense of self through the reflexive process.

Through the iterative process of this research, reflexivity has emerged as our guiding interpretive framework as we adapted our praxis according to our own journey of (un)learning.

The reflexivity embedded in this research has informed a course shift in the genealogy of a project which included an exploration of the ability to offer subsidized local food shares and has since grown into an interrogation of how best to interrupt the production of food apartheid. Consequently, we set out to promote dialogue around food sovereignty by understanding and prompting transformation in urban farmers', food-access advocates', and researchers' positionalities within and understandings of the food system.

4. Dialogic Methods for Critical Reflexivity

In order to explore the production of food apartheid and uncover opportunities for food sovereignty through urban agriculture in SLC, we employed dialogic methods to spark critical reflexivity with local food systems actors. Critical dialogic reflexivity is a distinct approach to reflexivity which emphasizes social justice praxis to uncover and disrupt structural inequities (Collier 2015). Critical dialogic reflexivity can also spark what Tracy and Rivera refer to as "flickers of transformation" (Tracy and Rivera 2010, p. 14), or moments wherein critical reflection occurs as a result of the research process. Tracy and Rivera found that dialogic methods can enable participants to reflect and transform their beliefs, often evidenced in interviews by moments of "self-questioning, talk repair, and transformation" (Tracy and Rivera 2010, p. 14). In the following sections, we examine how these flickers occurred in our interactions with people involved with B.U.G. Farms, the Westside community, and SLC local food-access advocates. Similar to Way et al. (2015), we did not approach initial interviews with a set framework in place. Rather, we retroactively reviewed interview data in which flickers of transformation occurred and explored the particular tactics which caused participants to engage in self-reflexivity. Using interview data from two initial rounds of interviews, we explored which dialogic strategies prompt transformation, and organized prompts and questions as they align with the Way et al. (2015) typology of dialogic interview strategies, using probing questions, member reflections, and counterfactual prompting.

Using this typology as a guide, we propose a series of interactional strategies for food sovereignty through critical reflexivity in praxis. Our adaptation of this typology is also informed by the framework proposed by Nardon et al. (2021) for conducting interview-based research that promotes participant reflection, which includes three types of interviewing: (a) therapeutic interviewing, as a meaning-making process provides interviewees with an emotional release that enables them to better understand their own positions, (b) emancipatory interviewing, wherein social change is enabled by prompting participants to question their assumptions and beliefs and challenge their previously articulated views, and (c) dialogic interviewing, which generates co-constructed knowledge via dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee.

Along the way, we examined researcher fieldwork notes to demonstrate how reflexivity in community-engaged research occurs not only during interviews, but also through community partnerships and experiences that influence the genealogy of research praxis. We conclude with a final series of interviews that were designed to spark transformation in interviewers and interviewees wherein prompts were guided by insights gleaned via earlier phases of research. Ultimately, we propose that critical reflexivity can occur multimodally

in community-engaged research and spark ongoing transformation that can prompt participants to move past food security thinking towards justice and sovereignty paradigms.

5. Flickers of Transformation: Reflexivity in Practice

5.1. Farm Interviews

Following our initial meetings with B.U.G. farmers, we conducted preliminary semi-structured interviews with farm owners, workers and landowners to explore their thoughts on how the farm could respond to the issue of food inequity in the Glendale neighborhood. Table 1 provides participant details.

Table 1. Initial Farm Stakeholder Interviews: Participants.

Participant Group	Number of Participants	Description
Farm Owners	2	Owner operators of the B.U.G. Farm business
Farm Workers	2	Hourly-wage workers at B.U.G. Farms
Landowners	4	Owners of land cultivated by B.U.G. Farms

The B.U.G farmers provided the names of all landowners and farm workers and facilitated scheduling. Interviews were held in person at the locations where the farm operates and in landowners' homes. Table 2 presents our retroactive organization of the interactional strategies used in initial interviews as they align with our proposed adaptation of Way and colleagues' typology of dialogic interview strategies (Way et al. 2015, p. 729). Our framework is also informed by Nardon and colleagues' conceptualization of therapeutic, emancipatory, and dialogic interview strategies (Nardon et al. 2021). Since our goal, similar to Collier (2015, p. 209), is to "showcase particular kinds of reflexive moments", we present selected, in-depth examples of participant responses to these interactional strategies.

Table 2. Interactional Strategies for Critical Reflexivity: Farm Stakeholders.

Strategies and Tactics	Examples
Member reflections: ► **Reassurance**	**Establishing familiarity:** ► Referencing shared experiences (ex. as a neighbor, or a farmer, or food-access advocate).
Probing questions: ► **Opinions** ► **Beliefs**	**Probing transformative memories and visions:** ► What are the main reasons you chose to be involved with B.U.G. Farms? ► How would you describe B.U.G. farms relationship to the following communities? [Glendale Neighborhood, Salt Lake City, The Food Movement] ► What are your thoughts on a potential voluntary option for B.U.G. Farm CSA members to support subsidized shares' (paying a percentage of a share for low-income families)?
Emancipatory questions: ► **Empathetic consideration**	**Seeking advice/gently introducing food sovereignty ideas:** ► "How could B.U.G. farms best serve the community?" ► "For a small farm seeking to provide food to low-income neighbors, what ideas might you have?" ► "Who else do you think we should talk to? Organizations or community members. What are ways that you would suggest connecting with community members?"

Member reflections: Establishing familiarity.

For these initial interviews, familiarity was established in two ways: First, one member of the research team was already acquainted with many of the farms' owners and workers, as she was living at one of the houses where B.U.G. Farms operated at the time of initial interviews. Second, the farmers personally introduced the researchers to any interviewee

that we had not already met, which contributed to a sense of familiarity. We suggest that, in lieu of personal connections, researchers may establish this type of familiarity via ethnographic fieldwork. For example, the first and second author volunteered to work with B.U.G. farmers on several occasions throughout this research partnership.

Probing questions: Eliciting transformative memories and visions. In the example responses below, we demonstrate how probing strategies in this category prompted participants to reflect on their reasons for becoming involved with B.U.G. farms, which elicited transformative memories that drove their visions for how the farm could better contribute to the community. For example, participant responses demonstrated varying levels of self-awareness or concern about how urban agriculture, and participants themselves, might be generating negative impacts to the Westside community:

Farmer 1: "It [urban farming] drew me down there, and then once I was there and things were happening, I saw other people looking at buying houses in the neighborhood. So, in some ways B.U.G. farms has acted as a bit of a gentrifying force. Which is tough to justify as a good thing. But we also do our best to not change the neighborhood. We stay low profile, aside from walking up and down the street with carts and food."

In this interview, the interviewer responded by affirming this concern about gentrification within the Glendale neighborhood, based on her shared experiences as a resident of one of the homes where B.U.G. Farms was operating. This familiarity enabled interviewees to have open conversations about gentrification, which they may not have been so inclined to do with a complete outsider. Because these interviews were semi structured, we also engaged in additional probing questions that prompted member reflections that were unique to each interviewee. For several participants, these strategies prompted reflection on broader structural food issues. For example, one farmer situated their concerns about the export of food from Glendale as related to systemic issues in the food system. During the interviews, participants reflected on the ways that they potentially could (or are not) doing more to address this issue:

Farmer 1: "I do wish that we weren't simply serving a middle to upper class, from what I can tell largely white to privileged group of people. But I wish it were easier to get our vegetables to a more diverse group of people. The system works against people who already don't have a lot of money to access good clean food. So, I think the way our economy, and our social society works is a detriment to that goal."

Farmer 2: "As a whole, I don't feel like we have much of a relationship [with the community]. I think that [in our neighborhood] we have a decent relationship and people around there see us and recognize and have some sort of idea of what we're doing, but there's not really a connection."

Meanwhile, farmworkers and landowners demonstrated a similar awareness of the export issue within a greater concern about equity across SLC as a whole:

Landowner 1: "Glendale, as you know is a food desert, and [food] it's being exported out of Glendale for the most part, aside from those of us who are having our land being used to help them grow the food. I think that's kind of a tragedy you know. I don't think that's B.U.G. Farms fault that they have to sell food at the cost that they do to make a decent living, but it's unaffordable for people in Glendale to just buy a share, I think... Most of that stuff ends up going to more affluent families."

Farmworker 1: "We strive to be a part of the community as much as we can. I would imagine that some of the long-term residents of the neighborhood may see us as sort of a gentrification threat to the neighborhood. So, [farm owner 1] thinks about how to participate in the neighborhood without totally changing the neighborhood. So, I'd say trying to be involved but remaining aware. Looking for ways to minimize any negative impacts to the neighborhood."

These quotes demonstrate farm owners, workers, and landowners shared concerns about the farm's operations within Glendale as well as their recognition of the systemic barriers to food justice that underly the export of food to areas where residents do not face food insecurity at similar rates.

Emancipatory questions: Seeking advice. Emancipatory questions promote social change by prompting participants to question their assumptions and beliefs and challenge their previously articulated views (Nardon et al. 2021). We implemented this tactic by requesting advice on how our research team might approach issues which the farm was already considering, which contributed to a sense of empathetic consideration:

Farmworker 1: "The idea of subsidized shares could be cool. The volunteering in exchange for veggies options is way more complicated than it seems because there's often not enough work available on a regular schedule to be done outside of the people who already work there. We had all the help we needed. So, we'd have to figure out a way to make it so you're not just 'giving away' vegetables. Which would be fine too. Maybe that's how it works with subsidizing if that's what you're talking about. I think it would be exciting to figure out a way to have people actually participating in the farm as a way to get veggies. But just handing them out feels a lot more like charity than a genuine engagement."

This quote demonstrates how emancipatory questions elicited conversation about moving from food security towards the deeper engagement required in food sovereignty paradigms. In preliminary phases of our research, this prompted the transformation of the research genealogy as we began to consider how our initial suggestion of subsidized shares reflected a food security paradigm. Throughout these initial conversations, interviewees also referenced the shortcomings of local food-access programs designed to address the gap between local food and food security:

Landowner 3: "Just that question that you asked me earlier, about like, I feel like they are conscious people trying to address issues with low-income people having access to organic locally produced food and I think that that's an important question to ask and to tackle. I think that yeah, food movements are really important and like slow food movements and organic food and organic farming but if it's only accessible by affluent society then there's a problem."

These emergent themes from our interviews with the farmers and landowners shaped our understanding of how structural issues interact with and underly the concerns of the farmers and farmworkers. This information influenced the genealogy of the project by shifting our course from centering on the farm itself to taking a broader view on the issues behind food inequity and the potential for urban agriculture to contribute to food sovereignty. Thus, reflexivity on the part of the farm owners, workers, and landowners informed our decision to undertake further inquiry with several organizations that were conducting food-access work in the community.

5.2. Local Food-Access Advocate Interviews

In order to learn more about what types of food-access and urban agriculture programs had been offered in the Westside, and to understand the varying degrees of success of different programs, we conducted a second round of semi-structured interviews with local food-access advocates. To identify participants, we first worked with our partners at B.U.G. Farms to identify a list of list of prominent organizations conducting food-related work in the Westside with whom the farmers had either previously partnered or were otherwise aware of due to their community connections. To recruit these participants, we contacted individuals either via cold-calls, emails, or outreach through mutual acquaintances. During each interview we also utilized snowball sampling (Sedgwick 2013) by asking for suggestions on additional contacts, and an introduction if applicable. Table 3 includes a description of interviewees in this phase.

Table 3. Participants: Initial Local Food-Access Advocate Interviews.

Participant Group	Number of Participants	Description
Food-Access Advocates	3	Organizations dedicated to increasing food access and security
Educational Advocates	2	Individuals conducting academic and educational food-related work
Community Garden Programs	2	Community Garden organizations with gardens in the Westside
City Employees	2	Representatives of municipal programs for education and food
Westside Community Advocates	4	Representatives of organizations located and working on a variety of social justice issues in the Westside

Due to the small "food advocate" community and a need to maintain anonymity, we use the label "local food advocates" in all example excerpts in this section. Table 4 presents our interactional strategies for critical reflexivity in semi-structured interviews with local food-access advocates.

Table 4. Interactional Strategies for Critical Reflexivity: Local Food-Access Advocates.

Strategies and Tactics	Examples
Member reflections: ► **Mirroring** ► **Reassurance**	**Establishing familiarity** ► Referencing shared experiences (ex. as a neighbor, or a farmer, or food-access advocate). ► Sharing lessons learned as a preface to the interview
Probing questions: ► **Opinions** ► **Beliefs** ► **Resisting problematic formulations**	**Probing transformative memories and visions:** ► "In terms of organizational food access work happening in Glendale, have you noticed any themes or patterns? (prompt: what are some characteristics of potential solutions that you envision?)" ► "What successes have you/other programs encountered?" ► "What about barriers? (prompt: What types of food have been well-received? What about distribution models?)"
Emancipatory questions: ► **Imagining opposite** ► **Empathetic consideration**	**Seeking advice/gently introducing food sovereignty ideas:** ► "How could B.U.G. farms best serve the community?" ► "How could other organizations best serve the community?" ► "What advice would you give researchers [us] based on what you learned?" ► "For a small farm seeking to provide food to low-income neighbors, what ideas might you have?" ► "Who else do you think we should talk to? Organizations or community members. What are ways that you would suggest connecting with community members?"

Member reflections: Establishing familiarity. We began this round of interviews with a description of our partnership with B.U.G. Farms and our intent to explore how the farm could better attend to food equity in the Glendale neighborhood. We also described how we initially interpreted data to indicate that subsidized shares would be a good option, but later realized that this might not align with community members' visions. This transparency gently introduced ideas of food sovereignty by outlining our progression from a food security paradigm to more food justice- and sovereignty-oriented perspectives. In retrospect, we considered that this strategy encouraged interviewees to share similar transformative experiences.

Probing questions: Transformative memories. Prompting strategies that encouraged participants to consider success and barriers in their work caused many interviewees to reflect on transformative memories wherein they questioned the efficacy of local food-advocacy programs. In the following excerpt, an interviewee reflects on an effort to establish a community garden that resulted in very little community participation:

Local Food-Access Advocate 2: "We tried [a community garden]. We couldn't get anyone from here to there . . . everyone was so excited about it. [Saying] "I have all these

foods I want to grow from my country and my land." But yet we couldn't get anyone to do it! So, it's like even that, right, like there's actual land access. And I know it's not from lack of desire. I know they want it, but what are the other barriers . . . ? Transportation was one thing for some people. Time. For sure. Right, it takes a lot of time and people are trying to survive. And who has the luxury of growing food? You know, it's time consuming. And so, these were just some of the things that we were hearing. The passion was there, the interest was there . . . it was all there. But we couldn't get the wheels going. So, I ended up taking over the garden. Which is awful . . . from a community organizer perspective we failed. I ended up doing the work. So, we stopped that."

This excerpt provides insight into a therapeutic process as this interviewee considers potential reasons for a lack of community participation. Similarly, probing questions about how participants viewed themes or patterns in local food advocacy evoked therapeutic reflections about the disconnect between food-access programs and local food promotion, such as in the following excerpt:

Local Food-Access Advocate 1: "Most of our funding was based on this idea of making local produce available. And maybe trying to solve both of those problems [hunger and local food access] at the same time was a really big mistake . . . What we realized too, was that most of the consumption that was happening of the produce was coming from staff at those centers. They weren't people who didn't have access to produce [so], weren't serving anyone, we were serving mostly people doing food access work . . . Who wanted to see better, and I think that is one of the problems right, is there is a group of people who feel like yes, we need better food access in this neighborhood, and I often wonder if those people who we feel like need better food access in that neighborhood actually feel like they need better food access."

Here, the interviewee shares a transformative memory, revisiting misalignment with community needs and lessons learned from previous food-access initiatives. As in other interviews, they also recognize and question food-access advocates' roles in how food security paradigms may function to reinscribe food insecurity.

Emancipatory questions. Emancipatory interview strategies enable a dialogue in which interviewers and interviewees inform and encourage each other to articulate and question assumptions and beliefs (Nardon et al. 2021). One strategy to elicit these outcomes is to prompt interviewees to imagine new or different scenarios. We enacted this strategy by seeking advice on how researchers might proceed with future food-access inquiry. Given the opportunity to reimagine past approaches and provide advice, several interviewees drew on transformative memories that were elicited throughout the interview to inform their suggestion on how researchers or others might rewrite food advocacy work:

Local Food-Access Advocate 1: "I think you have to step the whole conversation back and remove a bunch of the assumptions that we are often entering these conversations with . . . . the longer I've done this, the more I've realized how complex of a problem it really is . . . one of the things we find out when we're doing food access or food consumption or health equity type work, is that you can't solve these problems because they're not like health equity problems they're equity problems. And like, how do you solve the problem that people shouldn't have to work two jobs to be able to survive?...

It seems like people are like oh we should host cooking classes, or we should tell people that eating fruits and vegetables is healthy. But I don't know that those folks don't know that eating fruits and vegetables is healthy . . . I have a hard time also thinking that most of those [nonwhite] cultures don't know how to cook. It just seems like a little bit of a ridiculous assumption. Nobody comes to my neighborhood and teaches cooking classes. And I'm guessing that there's less people that know how to cook in my neighborhood than in those neighborhoods."

This excerpt represents a particularly honest conversation around the failures that drove an underutilized food-access program in Glendale and points to a larger pattern in food security initiatives that are not based in systemic change. Contextually, this interview also revealed some persistent language patterns that manifested throughout this project.

Most notable is the respondents' separation between "us" and "them" that is reflected within the conversation. Even though the interviewee was very insightful about some of the missteps within the work they had been involved in, the language itself illustrates problematic power dynamics. In several interviews, there seemed to be an ingrained recognition of difference that perhaps did not apply to the researchers, or people who were assumed to not live in the Westside.

Following the interview, when we turned off the recorder, the interviewee engaged in further dialogue about transformative memories by discussing the role of stigma and shame in food-access programs. This had manifested in feedback their organization had received regarding how many Glendale residents had been reluctant to utilize their programs, because they were unclear whether the food offered was free, low-cost, or full price. In sharing this memory, the interviewee realized that they had not adequately accounted for the impact of the stigma around "free food", which was likely why many people had not turned up to utilize programs. Along with insights derived in this phase of interviews, this directed a shift in the genealogy of our project once again, illuminating a need to align the project more deeply with community members' visions for food equity.

5.3. Interviews as Intervention

Insights gleaned from the first and second round of interviews with food advocates and fieldwork uncovered a need to divest from assumptions about community needs and/or deficit-oriented research approaches that can lead to simplistic solutions (Patel 2015). The first semi-structured phase of interviews uncovered some common barriers faced by local food advocates, many of which were rooted in food security paradigms. This preliminary data enabled us to craft follow-up interviews that might better introduce ideas about food justice and sovereignty in situ. Thus, in the spirit of transformation sparked by our community field work, we designed a second interview for food advocates to further explore interactional strategies for food sovereignty. Interviewees were recruited again through snowball sampling (Sedgwick 2013), which enabled researchers to contact nearly the total population of small farmers that were growing within Salt Lake City boundaries at the time, and the majority of food-access advocates and organizations that those farms worked with or suggested we interview (see Table 5). We tried to reinterview participants of several of the same organizations that were included in our initial interviews. However, due to significant organizational turnover in the two-year period between initial and follow-up interviews, we reinterviewed only five of the original thirteen individuals from our initial interviews (some of which were in new roles with different organizations). Notably, this change in leadership also occurred at B.U.G. Farms, as a new owner, who continued a working partnership with our research team, took over the operation in late 2019.

Table 5. Participants: Farmers and Food-Access Advocates.

Participant Group	Number of Participants	Description
Urban Farmers	10	Farms located in SLC City limits
Farmers Market Organizations	2	Representatives of Farmers Markets and communities of practice
Food Waste Organizations	3	Groups dedicating to reducing and redistributing food waste
Community Garden(s) and Orgs	5	Community Garden organizations with gardens in the Westside
Other Community Advocacy Groups	2	Representatives of organizations located and working on a variety of social justice issues in the Westside
Hunger Alleviation Organizations	3	Organizations dedicated to increasing food access and security

While we designed the final round of interviews with intervention in mind, we again retroactively drew on the Way et al. (2015) typology of dialogic interview strategies

(p. 729) to organize our prompts and propose a framework of interactional strategies for food sovereignty. In this third and final phase, we prompted participants to share transformative memories by asking about how the first round of interviews impacted their thinking. We also expanded the scope in this second round of interviews, as we were simultaneously studying the impacts of COVID-19 on the local food system. Table 6 presents the interactional strategies we used in this phase to prompt transformation through the exploration of how the COVID-19 pandemic sparked change in interviewees' visions for increased food equity through urban agriculture in the future.

Table 6. Interactional Strategies for Food Sovereignty: Farmers and Food-Access Advocates.

Member reflections: ► **Mirroring** ► **Reassurance**	**Establishing familiarity** ► Referencing shared experiences (ex. as a neighbor, or a farmer, or food-access advocate). ► Sharing lessons learned as a preface to the interview ► "How did you get started in food advocacy or farming?"
Probing questions: ► **Therapeutic** ► **Changed self** ► **Opinions** ► **Beliefs** ► **Resisting problematic formulations**	**Probing transformative memories and visions** ► "What are your motivations for the work you do?" ► "Who are you doing this work for?" ► "Can you tell us a story about when you felt fulfilled or affirmed by your work?" ► "How do you 'decide' or 'know' when your work is 'successful'?" ► How would you describe the connections between food equity and urban agriculture in Salt Lake City? ► In what ways do you think that your work could support increased food equity? **Changed self:** ► What do you recall about our conversation when we last interviewed you? ► Do you feel like any aspects of that conversation and/or your participation with our project have had an influence on your approach?
Emancipatory questions: ► **Magic wand** ► **Imagining opposite** ► **Empathetic Consideration**	**Seeking advice/gently introducing food sovereignty ideas:** ► How has COVID-19 prompted any changes in your vision for an ideal food system in Salt Lake City? ► Are there any policies that could be in place to sustain your vision for these changes? ► What would you like to see happen as a result of research that addresses these issues of food equity and urban agriculture? ► What role would you envision that the following should take in shaping supporting that vision? [Researchers, Local farmers, Residents, Your organization, You personally] ► If you had access to a small microgrant, how would you use that funding towards addressing food access and equity in our community?

Member reflections. Opening with a personal question about how participants initially became engaged in food-related work prompted a reflection of interviewees' core commitments and encouraged connection between the interviewees and their personal lives. For example, this interviewee connected their personal experiences with food to their current work:

Interviewer: "What are the motivations that you have for the work you do... the reasons that are more personal, not necessarily professional?"

Local Food Advocate 3: "Several little tidbits in my life. One is as a child, there were seasons that my family was food insecure. How we handled that, a lot of that was we were able to create a garden. We always had a fresh vegetable garden . . . Also I have close friends and family members who had physical illnesses that couldn't be resolved without access to fresh food . . . So, I have a real passion . . . that everyone should have access to . . . highly dense and nutritious food. So, I just, I've seen it firsthand. I've lived it."

The following excerpt represents a similar member reflection:

Interviewer: "What are the motivations that you have for the work you do... the reasons that are more personal, not necessarily professional?"

Local Food-Access Advocate 4: "Personally, I think that food just has like a major role in my family because growing up like, we didn't really have a lot of access to food because we just like immigrated here and my parents like didn't really have steady source of income so they always tried to make do with whatever we could find. So, I understand a lot of the time people are also having these struggles of like balancing between finances like work, kids, family and things like that. So that's part of the reason why I'm so passionate about food."

These excerpts reflect a general pattern through which interviewees, when prompted, reflected on the reasons that they became activated in food advocacy, which set a personal or vulnerable tone for the conversation. These prompts helped to establish a sense of familiarity between the interviewee and interviewer(s), as people reflected on transformative life experiences as an entryway into their conversations about food access. This primed interviewees to engage in critical reflexivity before taking up more challenging questions.

Probing questions: Changed self. Probing questions can promote therapeutic dialogue and prompt participants to recraft narratives, better understand their situations, and result in a sense of changed self (Nardon et al. 2021). Dialogic markers of therapeutic and change-based processes can include participant "talk repair" and disfluencies that occur in conversation (Way et al. 2015). This type of narrative recrafting occurred when we asked interviewees how they could contribute to increased food equity or to realizing their own visions for an ideal food system in SLC. For example, one farmer who felt that increased education was the pathway towards a more equitable food system considered what it might look like for her farm to support this vision further:

Interviewer: "What do you think that your farm or you personally could do to support that vision?"

Farmer 5: "I think we're doing everything we can right now to support that vision. But I think—What I think the farm does. I think what we, I can do personally is be a dog with a bone on this and just really keep pushing it. That we need to get legislation, we need to get policy in place and educate people . . . we need to get that information out to the general public. Because a lot of people think "farming? I don't have any interest in it . . . But they have interest in eating. And so, they don't understand the connection."

In this excerpt, a farmer exhibits talk repair and disfluencies while forming new or changed thoughts via the interview process. This type of dynamic reflection was also elicited in our exploration of how gender roles interact with participants' work. It is worth noting that this question was added in response to a participant request, which we found prompted critical reflexivity for many participants in situ, as they had not previously been prompted to consider gender roles in their work. For example, one participant engaged in reflexivity about how gender roles impact emergency food distribution at resource centers:

Local Food-Access Advocate 5: "I'm nonbinary and donating [garden produce] for the Women's Resource Center . . . just makes me keep on thinking about how these systems of gender [have] kind of been devised to keep the white man in power and then there's like everybody else. And there's so much diversity of gender experience . . . I'm glad you're asking this question in this research too because it's like, this is the story that gets erased . . . why are we growing this food to be accessed, like who gets to access it? What kind of hoops do you have to jump through... how do you have to like, victimize yourself as a woman or something? I don't know . . . and that actually makes me think about the policies that are getting talked about and like identifying trans and outing trans people in shelters and stuff like that where it's just like, the gendering is so violent feeling sometimes. Yeah, and [at my workplace] there's been a lot of discussion about supporting trans people and trans homeless people... as a part of that [coworker] and I have been able to talk to people about our goals with the garden [at our workplace] being part of that conversation... we've been kind of doing this all along but not intentionally. So, we have to actually make it even more like a support system and not just a passive like only conditionally supporting people just because we're there but like actively, you know, stepping behind that."

In this case, the participant considers how gender roles impact their work, and through critically reflexive dialogue, arrives at a commitment to encourage their workplace to bolster support for food access amongst gender diverse populations. Probing questions can also be used to provoke transformative memories. For example, when asked how being previously interviewed and or otherwise involved with this project impacted participants, people reflected on this in various ways:

Interviewer: "What do you remember from our first interview?"

Farmer 1: "I remember feeling like you guys were asking questions that we had thought about before, and feeling like excited that like something, someone was looking into that other than like me spiraling about it in my brain all the time and having, you know, general white guilt about it or a general like feelings about like that. I should be doing more. And other people were thinking about it in the community . . . I mean, I remember even thinking about it at [my off-farm job] and [thinking] why, why am I growing all of this. How can we help other people access it? And it sort of . . . stayed in my mind."

Interviewer: "How has your involvement with this project impacted your work?"

Local Food-Access Advocate 6: "[It has] helped me kind of shape the thought process of growing a certain type of food and hearing how some people like to eat different things . . . Like we started growing tons and tons of hot peppers although none of us can tolerate them. We realize that other people really like peppers, so we have to grow them. So, that, again, cemented the idea of how we have to grow a wide variety of things, and we have to keep an open mind of what can be grown.

Interviewer: "How has your involvement with this project impacted your work?"

Farmer 3: "All of the conversations we have had get your mind thinking about things. I think you guys are right on track with the questions about this . . . asking our customers more questions [like] in the survey and then we had customers email us and talk to us about those questions and that was interesting to see that spurred thoughts and conversations in them. It also, sort of, shifted ways we were thinking of being involved with customers . . . I wouldn't have heard from those people or other people had you guys not asked those questions . . . [there were] so many unexpected answers to the questions asked, and it was helpful for us and helped put us in a different direction."

These excerpts point to the rippling effect that critically reflexive research can offer, providing a particularly poignant look at how interactional strategies in the research process can result in changes throughout the community.

Emancipatory questions: Visions for an ideal food system. Here, we implement frameworks of desire (Tuck 2009) by prompting interviewees to envision an ideal food system future that they would like to see and to consider how they might personally contribute to it. This type of "magic wand" question enables participants to imagine what they might do if they had a magic wand that could change anything, a technique which "allows participants to ignore real or imagined constraints and think outside immediate considerations" (Way et al. 2015, p. 728) and envision scenarios which they currently do not believe to be possible:

Local Food Advocate 8: "Distribution of food, I think, is a problem because it's based on the whole capitalist model where everybody who has anything to do with getting food from the plants that they grow into the bellies of the organisms that consume the food is expecting to get a percentage to make money from every step along the chain. And so, I think an ideal food system . . . couldn't exist in the purely cutthroat capitalist society we live in now."

Another participant envisions an entirely different world as well:

Local Food Advocate 5: "I'm thinking about all the seeds from the seed library bursting throughout the valley. I want to see those burst everywhere, not just on the east side or in wealthier neighborhoods but everywhere . . . my dream is for everyone to have enough . . . for there to be true equity. [And] I dream of defunding the police and funding everything else. There's not a lot of precedence for actually giving money to public health resources and so we might as well try. Doesn't seem like it would hurt. I just trust that there's a lot of

people that could really be entrusted with resources to grow food and grow community and make art [and] foster life and all the things that help us stay inspired to live with each other in compassionate ways."

We also utilize emancipatory questioning by asking participants to "imagine an opposite" and describe how they feel that other groups of people could contribute to more equitable food systems. As the excerpts below demonstrate, this strategy can prompt participants to reconnect their suggestions for a hypothetical other with potential individual actions for themselves. For example, when asked how small farmers could contribute to participants' visions for a more equitable food system, one interviewee considered a series of food systems disconnects, and via talk repair, questions how they might use food as connective remedy.

Interviewer: What about farmers, local farmers? What can they do?

Local Food Advocate 7: "I think overall, a lot of these issues are far too politicized, that the one thing that we should all be able to agree on is that people have access to food, regardless of what your political or affiliation or your political leanings are . . . Because I think people feel alienated . . . . And I mean, I think I myself am part of the problem with that. And I don't know how we change that dynamic . . . maybe that's the thing that we all share, is actually we all have powerful experiences that are connected to food . . . is there a way for food, the thing that can help us bridge these political and policy gaps? And how do we do that? And, you know, expecting a farmer who is growing apples in the middle of a rural community to, um, have a race equity or a food equity conversation... What do we need to do to bring them to that, you know, instead of expecting people to come to us all the time? I mean, I'm just thinking out loud. I've never said these words before in my life, so just forgive me if I'm way off . . . But how do we go to people instead of expecting them to come to us? Without compromising the values that we hold and the reasons why we're doing this work and the reasons why we're having this conversation; how do we entice them to join us in this conversation? And I don't know the answer to that. And it's a good question."

In this excerpt, therapeutic dialogue occurs, as the interviewee responds to probing questions by verbally organizing and subsequently reframing their beliefs. These types of outcomes demonstrate how interactional strategies for critical reflexivity can enable us to envision new worlds with ways of knowing that we do not yet possess and prompt consideration of the first steps we might take to get there. Therein is the work of radical food sovereignty, which calls for dreaming and fighting for new futures while participating in direct action to alleviate the suffering of the present (Agyeman and McEntee 2014; Heynen 2009; Holt-Giménez and Wang 2011; Martínez-Torres and Rosset 2010; Whyte 2017).

6. Discussion and Conclusions

This paper explored the transformative power of community-engaged research based in critically reflexive dialogue. Through analysis of interviews with urban food and farming organizations and the retelling of our progression through responses based in food security to more progressive food sovereignty paradigms, we embarked on a broader journey of positioning the research process as a form of intervention to spark similar flickers of transformation. Using the interview as an intervention, we explored how critical reflexivity can be embedded in research protocols to cause both researchers and interviewees to reflect on their own biases, which can change the genealogy of research processes. Finally, we synthesized a framework of interactional strategies to promote critical reflexivity and prompt paradigm shifts towards food sovereignty.

This paper points to several aspects of our dialogic methodologies, which may promote reflexivity in both interviewees and researchers. We used implicit and explicit interactional and discursive strategies to elicit information about local food, urban agriculture, and food equity, while at the same time encouraged interviewees to enter a process of critical reflexivity. This leaves us with a series of observations and recommendations for praxis through critical dialogic reflexivity as a strategy for food sovereignty. First, we suggest that

building flexibility into nonlinear research processes is paramount in critically reflexive endeavors. This is perhaps best evidenced by the fact that we did not originally set out to propose a framework of interactional strategies for critical reflexivity, but rather developed our approach through several phases of collaborative inquiry. Collaborative inquiry is a key component of critical community-engaged scholarship as it facilitates the co-production of effective knowledge to address public issues and promote justice (Gordon da Cruz 2017). Our partnership with B.U.G. Farms set the scope for our initial interviews, while each subsequent phase of the research took shape based on what we learned through community dialogue along the way. It is also worth noting that our interview participants represented a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds, educational attainments, racial, ethnic, and gender identities and that the results of using dialogic methods to promote reflexivity may vary according to participants' identities. The community-based origination of this inquiry also necessitated that we engage in fieldwork to root our interactional strategies in the realities of food systems issues in the Westside. Thus, this paper describes nearly 5 years of interviews and fieldwork. In the time that passed between each phase of interviews, we consistently attended community events to stay present and connected, and wherever possible tried to redistribute resources such as through the sharing of food, plants, and funding. This enabled us to establish familiarity and create authentic relationships with community partners. It also created opportunities amongst the research team to interrogate our own biases and assumptions, resulting in better alignment between research methods and community-based experiences. We used critical geographic methods to explore the impact of political and economic policies and practices on shaping food apartheid in SLC (Joyner et al. 2022), enabling our team to take a more structural view on how food security paradigms have long been entangled in the production of food apartheid.

Critically reflexive research can also promote food sovereignty by facilitating actionable outcomes. We encouraged actionable outcomes by prompting participants to discuss personal responsibilities they envisioned for themselves and other individuals, including the researchers, in taking action to increase food equity in SLC. It is also important to note that many of the excerpts presented here represent just that—flickers. Future research may explore how to circle back on these flickers of transformation, pinpoint them, return to people over time and encourage them to translate reflective transformation into action. We did not measure what actions people took as a result of these flickers. Further, while we did preface interviews with the history of racially inequitable food access that launched our partnership with B.U.G. farms, we did not explicitly introduce questions about race or ethnicity into our interactional strategies. In future research, we believe that explicitly prompting reflection about racial inequality in the food system might better position critically reflexive dialogic research to address food apartheid.

Ultimately, the many layers of this project have informed new initiatives such as the co-creation of a high-school university food justice program that creates pathways to higher education for marginalized high school students, including students from low-income, Latinx, immigrant, and refugee families who live in the Westside. This program responds to community visions for increased access to community gardening as well as food justice education for historically underserved students. We have also interpreted the findings from these interviews to generate a series of policy recommendations based on what we learned through these reflexive processes, which have been shared with the Utah State Local Food Advisory Council and SLC Food Policy Council, Overall, the many different moments in which flickers of transformation occur in this project, from interviews to field work, demonstrates that critical reflexivity can happen in so many different moments of food justice work. The potential for transformation occurs not just when engaging in research methods or writing up and reporting results, but also in the exchanges we have within our research teams, in our personal lives, and in our communities. The power of critical reflexivity offers opportunities at every turn and twist of research to shape and reshape the process of co-constructing knowledge for food justice and sovereignty over and over again.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, L.J., B.Y., A.C.; Methodology, L.J., B.Y., A.C.; Data Collection, L.J., B.Y.; Analysis, L.J., B.Y., A.C.; Writing, L.J., B.Y., A.C.; Review and editing, L.J., B.Y., A.C. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: Funding was provided internally by the University of Utah.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Institutional Review Board of University of Utah IRB_00133741 on 9/16/2020.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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