

This presentation explores the tensions between multiracial liberalism's notions of care and a black feminist ethics of care. While the normative canon of care theory has been critiqued by leftist-structuralists for its "ahistoricism, cultural bias, and obliviousness to systemic power relations" (Thompson, 1998), I wonder about how practices and ideas of care that arise from acknowledging systemic injustice work to reproduce that very system. Liberal notions of care have centered on emotional labor with individuals in the quasi-private sphere (such as schools). This over-emphasis on the individual and the emotional sits in contrast with black feminist ethics of care which stress "not only emotional labor, but also political labor, physical labor, and intellectual labor" in community (Thompson, 1998). I seek to investigate how the emotional labor involved in identifying systemic injustice serves as an alibi for multiracial liberalism's practices of care in a resistant and progressive youth-centered urban farm program.

In conversation with abolitionist anthropology as a practice of "reparative caring" (Shange, 2021) that seeks to be responsible for what is overlooked in social change projects, this presentation works to recognize a River City farm, its young urban farmers, and gardeners, within the "progressive dystopia" (Shange, 2021) of urban greening projects. Through interviews and participant observations with young black/latine urban farmers and gardeners, I make sense of how multiracial liberal notions of care are put to work in social justice coalitions. My fieldwork reveals how these practices of care enable antiblack racism and sexism even as they pursue social justice. By attuning to the schemes of care and learning between/within/beyond the young black/latine farmers/gardeners, I seek to understand a black feminist ethics of care and pedagogy that concerns itself with detecting the anti-black-girl structure of the Anthropocene and (re)orients black children, in pragmatic and strategic ways, toward survival and social change.

I invite attendees to (re)story this North-eastern River city as an "embodied self-in-relation" (Styres, Haig-Brown, and Blimkie 2013) to colonization, slavery, and indigenous and black onto-epistemologies (Nxumalo, 2019, Cairns, 2021). We will work to *sense* the animating force of (urban) Land through its sounds, vibrant colors, textured pavement, metal, and greenery, in pursuit of the political dimensions of care that are needed rather than possible. By looking at and sensing the ordinary flooding and decay of foodways in this River City, we will contend with what care needs to, rather than can, be for urban youth within an expansive learning eco-system. We will ask, how do outdoor-encounters in the bustling streets, towering buildings, and diverse cultural spaces of the city stimulate our senses and trigger our emotions and responses thus shaping our perception of (urban) Land. We will consider how a self-assured and shy black girl's insistence that the River City community "learn how to plant food" runs counterintuitively to the social reform project of the urban farm which limits the realm of care to the individual and the emotional consequently foreclosing care practices that labor politically, physically, and intellectually for communal survival and transformation.