



# Health Disparities, Food Insecurity and Environmental Injustice Among United States Black Adults

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# Presentation Outline

## Brief Overview of Doctoral Research

- Background
- Purpose

## Implications of Doctoral Research on Structural Racism in the Food System





# Background

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## Health Disparities

- “systematic, potentially avoidable differences in health or in the major socially determined influences on health, between groups of people who have different relative positions in social hierarchies according to wealth, power, or prestige” (Braveman, p. 180, 2006)

## Food Insecurity

- “the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways” (Anderson, p. 21, 1990)

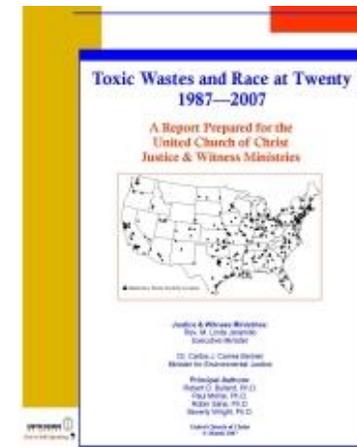
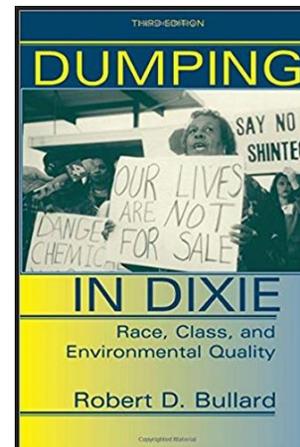
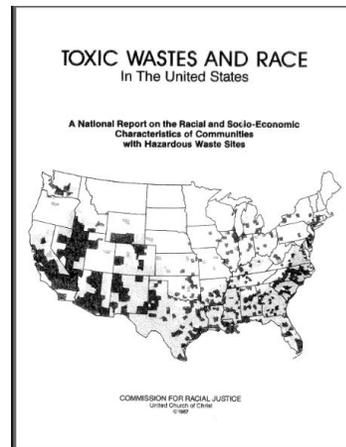
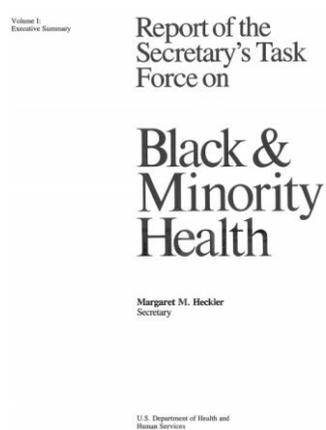
## Environment

- “all-encompassing where people live, work, play, go to school, as well as how things interact with the physical and natural world” (Bullard, pp. 155-156, 2001)



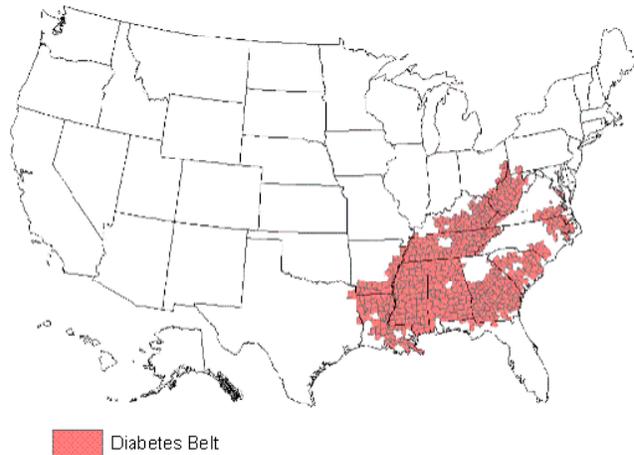
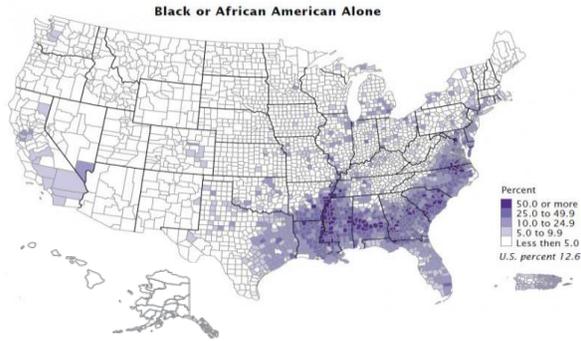
# Background

- Plausible association between environmental injustices, food insecurity, and health disparities.
- Health disparities such as diabetes are disproportionately higher in low-income and minority populations.
- Toxic chemical releases and other environmental justice issues are historically higher in communities of color and low-income populations.

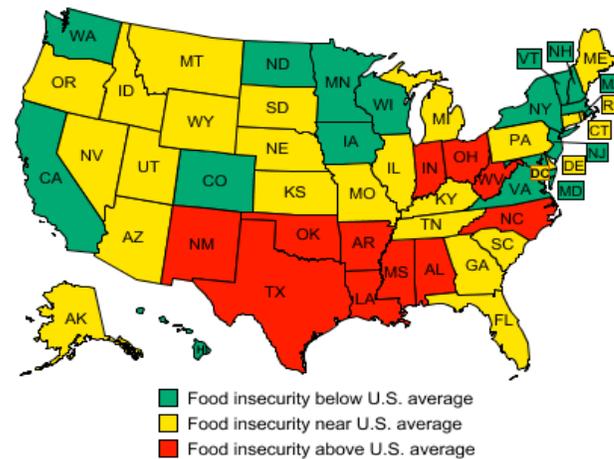




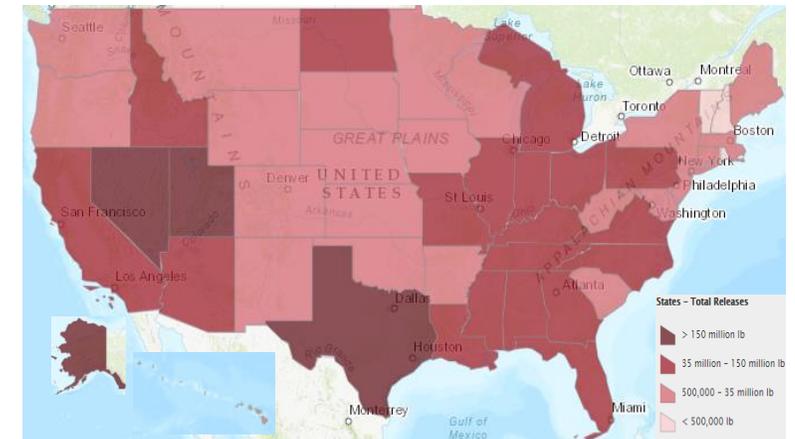
# Non-Hispanic Black Population in the United States



Prevalence of food insecurity, average 2015-17



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service, using data from the December 2015, 2016, and 2017 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.



Environmental Protection Agency, Toxic Release Inventory, National Analysis, 2016

**Non-Hispanic Blacks have the second highest rate of diabetes, highest rate of food insecurity, and historically, disproportionate chemical exposure compared to other racial/ethnic groups in the United States.**



# Purpose

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Examine the association between health disparities, food insecurity and environmental injustice among non-Hispanic Black adults in the United States



# Implications of Doctoral Research on Structural Racism in the Food System



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- Alleviating food insecurity using a deficit model vs. asset model approach
  - Role of community-asset mapping



# Alleviating Food Insecurity: Deficit Model

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- Focuses on identification of problems and needs of a community, neighborhood, or population
  - “What is the problem?” or “What is missing?” or “What is lacking?” → “What is **wrong** with them?” or “Why can’t they get it **right**?”
    - E.g. needs assessment, environmental scan
- Policy implications



# Alleviating Food Insecurity: Asset Model

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Focuses on positive, protective factors or “assets” of a community, neighborhood, or population

- “What factors enable a community to be resilient against food insecurity?”
- “How will these factors reduce food insecurity?”
- “How will this community or neighborhood achieve food sovereignty?”

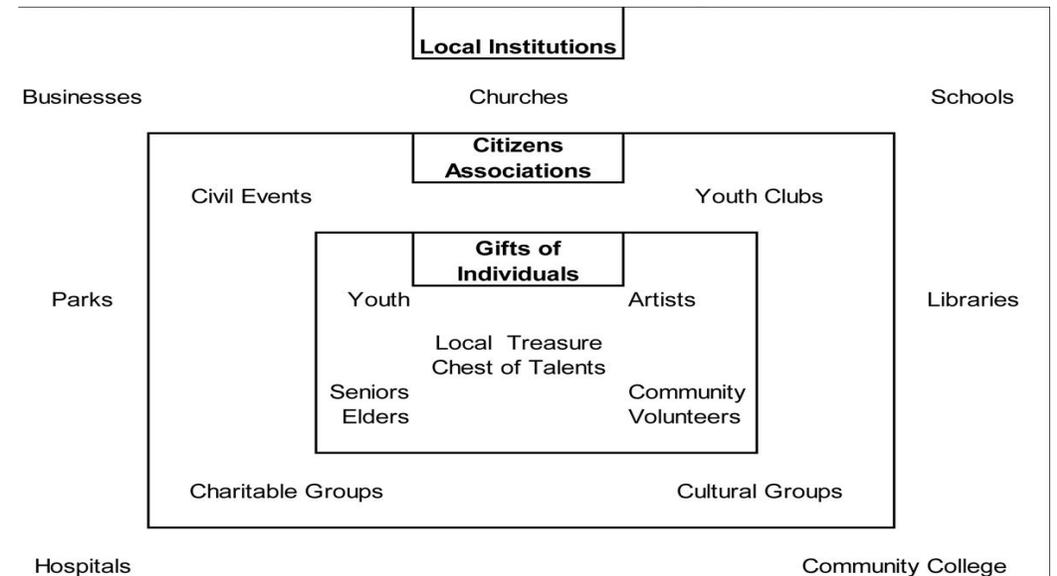
Health assets refer to “any factor (or resource) which enhances the ability of individuals, communities...to maintain and sustain health and well-being” (Morgan and Ziglio, p. 18, 2007)

- E.g. community garden, intergenerational resilience, social capital, empowerment, “food forests”, “food oasis”



# Role of Community-Asset Mapping

- Brainstorming
- Identification of local resources, community partnerships and/or collaborations
- Recognize the culture, value, talents, and/or gifts of a community, neighborhood, tribe etc.
- Seeks to build sustainable relationships and connections among and between residents, institutions, schools, organizations etc.



Source: Human Services Commission, Santa Barbara County, California, 2013

- Availability
- Accessibility
- ✓ Acceptability



# Thank You!

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# Insight:

"What should food systems scholars and practitioners from outside the HBCU system be aware of, and/or actions to take, with respect to Structural Racism in the Food System?"

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- ✓ Utilize “Asset” Model approach and community-asset mapping
- ✓ Understand your mission and/or purpose in food systems work. Is it charity or social justice?
  - Charity is refers to helping those in need
  - Social justice is defined as “full participation in society and the balancing of benefits and burdens of all citizens, resulting in equitable living and a just ordering of society” (Buettner-Schmidt and Lobo, p. 955, 2011)
- ✓ Understand that Historically Black Colleges/Universities (HBCUs) are grounded in an environment where structural racism manifests not only in the food system!