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Introduction by Jennifer Clapp, University of Waterloo

Michelle Jurkovich's *Feeding the Hungry: Advocacy and Blame in the Global Fight against Hunger* explores a series of important questions around advocacy campaigns to fight global hunger. [1] Who is to blame for the persistence of hunger? What types of strategies do anti-hunger advocacy organizations employ? If the Right to Food is articulated in internationally agreed human rights documents including the UN Declaration on Human Rights, why is there no associated norm that makes clear who is responsible for upholding that right? The book's analysis employs a constructivist approach within the field of political science and makes the case that international anti-hunger advocacy organizations do not converge around a common target actor who they all agree is responsible for hunger. These campaigns differ from human rights advocacy campaigns that are focused on advancing civil and political rights, which zero in on states as key actors responsible for upholding those rights. Because advocacy organizations are not in agreement in laying blame squarely on states for the situation, despite the fact that they are considered duty-bearers with respect to internationally codified human rights, the book argues that there is no established norm that accompanies the Right to Food. At best, she argues, the anti-hunger sentiment expressed as the right to food is a moral principle, but not an international norm with a prescribed behavior for specific actors who are responsible to uphold that right.

The book seeks to explain why an anti-hunger norm failed to materialize and explores whether campaigns to end hunger have had a more difficult time reaching their goal because of they have multiple targets. Jurkovich suggests that economic and social rights such as the right to food generate different kinds of advocacy strategies – especially when there is no clear actor to blame. Other political science scholars in the constructivist vein have modelled advocacy campaigns for civil and political rights, demonstrating "boomerang" and "spiral" patterns of advocacy, which target the state where human rights abuses occur as the actor who needs to change its behavior.[2] But as Jurkovich points out, in the case of the right to food, advocacy campaigns typically follow what she terms a "buckshot" pattern, targeting multiple actors – including governments, corporations, financial speculators – as being responsible for both causing and addressing hunger. Such an approach, she suggests, is more diffuse and, as a result, is ultimately less effective.

The analysis also probes why it is so hard to generate an anti-hunger norm. Jurkovich contends that because the right to food sits at the nexus of development and human rights, it is difficult for advocacy groups to take the same kind of name/blame/shame approach towards national governments seen in the case of civil and political rights campaigns because those same advocacy groups are also often engaged in operational activities within the countries experiencing hunger. In other words, if international advocacy organizations take a harsh stance by blaming the governments of countries that have high levels of hunger, they may find themselves unable to carry out their on-the-ground activities to address hunger within those countries.

Jurkovich's analysis brings important insights on advocacy campaigns against hunger, and the reviewers in this roundtable, Nisha Bellinger, Garrett Graddy-Lovelace, Virginia Haufler, and Erin Lentz, find much to applaud about this book, as do I. Its argumentation and writing are exceptionally clear; it is carefully researched; it draws attention to the roles and efficacy of transnational advocacy campaigns on economic and social rights which typically receive much less attention in human rights literature; and it brings important insights about transnational advocacy strategies through its application of a constructivist political science lens and the articulation of the buckshot model of campaigning. The four reviewers also raise important questions and critiques and highlight areas for further analysis of the problem of hunger more widely as well as the challenges faced by advocacy campaigns specifically. Although the reviewers all engage with the book on different specific points, they

[1] In the interest of transparency, I served as an external advisory member for Michelle Jurkovich's Ph.D. committee, on which her book is based.

[2] See, for example, Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. *The Persistent Power of Human Rights: From Commitment to Compliance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

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largely converge in suggesting that a wider frame on the issue – empirically as well as conceptually – would yield important additional insights. I will reflect here on four key themes along these lines raised in the reviews.

First is the question about whether a unitary target – the state in particular – is a necessary condition for a norm to be established. Haufler notes the ways in which we might consider that there is in fact an anti-hunger norm, at least in a broader sense. After all, "zero hunger" is the second of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Right to Food is enshrined in the UN Declaration on Human Rights as well as other internationally agreed documents, as Jurkovich notes. One could argue that it is certainly considered normal behavior for states to *support the idea* of ending hunger, even if it is not clear whether everyone agrees on who is responsible to act and how. For Jurkovich, these declarations simply affirm a moral principle, but are not a norm. The difference hinges a definition of norms as requiring a single "target actor" who is responsible to uphold a certain pattern of expected behavior. While a focus on a unitary target actor may be the dominant approach to understanding norms in constructivist literature that is focused on human rights advocacy for civil and political rights, one could argue that there are many broader norms of behavior in society that target multiple actors. Graddy-Lovelace emphasizes this point in suggesting that there are indeed multiple actors and processes responsible for hunger, and she further stresses that there is in fact a growing convergence around the causes of the problem and that states can take important roles in addressing them. For her, the broad approach of advocacy campaigns to target multiple causes of hunger represents a kind of "dynamic responsiveness" to the problem rather than a failure to converge around a norm. Bellinger further suggests that an examination of the role of individual citizens at the domestic level in shaping norms around hunger, which can ultimately filter up to the transnational level, could be a fruitful avenue for additional analysis.

A second theme that the reviewers mention revolves around the types of advocacy organizations examined in the book. Lentz raises the point that most of the anti-hunger organizations that are the focus of analysis have strong connections in the United States, a country that is much more likely to frame hunger as a technical issue rather than a human rights issue. Lentz asks whether organizations and campaigns that are rooted in other countries might take more of a human rights perspective. Haufler and Graddy-Lovelace further note the study's exclusion of broader social movements advocating for food sovereignty, such as La Via Campesina, which explicitly stress the right to food. Graddy-Lovelace also raises the important transnational advocacy roles of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, and the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism of the UN Committee on World Food Security, both of which are explicit in their promotion of a rights-based framework for addressing hunger. Insights from these more rights-based actors and organizations would likely enrich analysis of these themes and could well show different advocacy patterns. Along similar lines, Haufler also suggests that a deeper look at inter-organizational differences might yield important insights into the complexity and challenges facing anti-hunger advocacy.

Third, the reviewers suggest that a widening of the disciplinary as well as empirical scope of inquiry around these themes could yield additional insights. In particular, analysis of the wider economic structures and interests in shaping the contours of hunger, which is the focus of much scholarly work in other disciplines such as geography, sociology, and political economy,[3] could inform our understanding of advocacy strategies not just with respect to the right to food, but also with respect to economic and social rights more broadly. This approach is especially relevant in the case of food, which is a traded commodity, the production of which provides a livelihood for a third of humanity and at the same time is a basic human need for everyone. Indeed, as Jurkovich notes, the dual roles of many transnational anti-hunger organizations in both advocacy and operational terms forces them to deal with not just ideas about hunger but also the broader questions of development. The reviewers stress, and I would agree, that the broader development context includes a range of interests and institutions that shape hunger, and thus are relevant to the analysis. Agriculture is extremely important in this context, especially given that small-scale farms (under 2 hectares) produce a significant proportion of the world's food, and small-

[3] See, for example, Nora McKeon, *Food Security Governance: Empowering Communities, Regulating Corporations* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Jennifer Clapp, *Food,* 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Polity, 2020); Timothy A. Wise, *Eating Tomorrow: Agribusiness, Family Farmers, and the Battle for the Future of Food* (New York: The New Press, 2019); Jahi Chappell, *Beginning to End Hunger: Food and the Environment in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018).

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scale food producers and workers also face high levels of hunger.[4] Graddy-Lovelace, for example, stresses the broader context of commodity crop capitalism and the inequities that this increasingly globalized food production model bring for both food producers and consumers, which is a focus of many anti-hunger advocacy organizations. Both Lentz and Haufler ask whether the buckshot approach to advocacy in this complex and multifaceted context is applicable to economic and social rights more broadly, and if so, what cases would be strong candidates for further analysis.

Finally, several of the reviewers reflect in different ways on the question of whether norms might shift with changing conditions – especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic where hunger has spiked sharply around the world. Bellinger asks whether people might reassess what they expect of governments for the provision of their core needs, such as food, in ways that signal an evolution of anti-hunger norms. Along similar lines, Graddy-Lovelace suggests that the food crisis unleashed by the pandemic demands broader changes to food systems that include a stronger role for governments, as the weaknesses of a neoliberal approach of the past 50 years, which prioritized private sector interests, have become apparent. Both reviewers suggest that further research into the dynamics around the current crisis might yield insights on the changing nature of norms regarding the right to food and the role of the state.

In responding to the various points raised in the reviews, Jurkovich provides a well-reasoned defense of her empirical and theoretical approach and shows openness to future work on the important questions raised by the reviewers as well the wider implications of her findings. She reminds readers that the absence of a norm for the right to food is not inevitable, and she recognizes that many factors come into play in questions of food justice.

Feeding the Hungry gives us much "food for thought" on which to reflect about hunger, advocacy, and human rights, as this rich exchange between author and reviewers illustrates. With a host of intervening variables introduced by the reviewers that contribute to the persistence of hunger, and I would add a few myself – changing international market conditions, inequities among states in their ability to shape global trade rules for food and agriculture, climate change, producers' weak bargaining power with transnational food corporations, and the list goes on and on – it is not always clear whose responsibility it is to address all of the potential forces that affect hunger. Yet states do continue to affirm that the right to food is an important human right in forums such as the UN Committee on World Food Security. Moreover, there are multiple perspectives on how best to tackle the many factors that influence hunger outcomes, which leads to the complex landscape that Jurkovich refers to, where international advocacy organizations pursue a range of strategies that are targeted at a number of actors. In the midst of this complexity, there is an ongoing failure to ensure the right to food for all, which gives rise to the larger questions raised by the reviewers and acknowledged by Jurkovich that remain ripe for future research on campaigns to advance the right to food.

Participants:

Michelle Jurkovich is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She is the author of *Feeding the Hungry: Advocacy and Blame in the Global Fight against Hunger* (Cornell University Press, 2020). Previously, she served as an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Fellow in USAID's Office of Food for Peace, a postdoctoral fellow at the Watson Institute at Brown University, and a visiting fellow at the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University. Her research focuses on hunger, ethics, and economic and social rights.

Jennifer Clapp is a Professor and Canada Research Chair in Global Food Security and Sustainability and Professor in the School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability at the University of Waterloo. She has published widely on the global governance of problems that arise at the intersection of the global economy, food security and food systems, and the natural

[4] See HLPE, *Food security and Nutrition: Building a Global Narrative Towards 2030* (Rome, 2020). A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, http://www.fao.org/3/ca9731en/ca9731en.pdf.

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environment. Her most recent books include *Food, 3rd Edition* (Polity, 2020), *Speculative Harvests: Financialization, Food, and Agriculture* (Fernwood, 2018), and *Hunger in the Balance: The New Politics of International Food Aid* (Cornell University Press, 2012). She is a member of the Steering Committee of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the UN Committee on World Food Security and a member of the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food).

Nisha Bellinger is an Assistant Professor of Political Science in the School of Public Service at Boise State University. Her research focuses on political economic themes. In particular, her research explores the causes and consequences of human well-being outcomes with a focus on developing countries. She is the author of *Governing Human Well-Being: Domestic and International Determinants* (Palgrave Macmillan 2018) and her research has appeared in peer-reviewed journals such as the *European Political Science Review*, *International Political Science Review* and *Journal of Politics*, among others.

Garrett Graddy-Lovelace researches and teaches agricultural, environmental, and food policy as American University's School of International Service Associate Professor. She co-edited three 2020 special issues: "US Farm Bill: Policy & Potential" in *Renewable Agriculture & Food Systems* journal; "Monica White's *Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance & the Black Freedom Movement* – Collected Commentaries" in *Journal of Food, Community Agriculture & Sustainable Development*; and "Authoritarian Populism and Emancipatory Politics in Rural US" in *Journal of Rural Studies*. She co-leads two community-based research collaborations: "Disparity to Parity: Fair Prices and Agricultural Supply Management for Farm Justice, Racial Equity & Food System Resilience" (disparitytoparity.org) and "Agricultural Biodiversity Nourishes/*Agrobiodiversidad Nutre*: Research & Policy Guidance" which builds off of a NSF-SESYNC Pursuit (coPI). She has a Ph.D. in Geography from University of Kentucky, a Masters of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, and a BA from Yale.

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Erin Lentz is an associate professor at the Lyndon B Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin and a visiting fellow of Tufts University's Feinstein International Center. Her research explores three areas related to food security. With her collaborators, she has developed the Women's Empowerment in Nutrition Index (https://immana.lcirah.ac.uk/node/364). Lentz studies U.S. food aid and food assistance policies, informing her 2018 congressional testimony (https://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA00/20180214/106858/HHRG-115-FA00-Wstate-LentzE-20180214.pdf). She also researches innovative approaches to improving early warning for food insecurity crises. Lentz received a Fulbright fellowship to Bangladesh in 2006-7 and has worked with numerous NGOs. Lentz holds a Ph.D. in sociology, and an M.S. in applied economics and management from Cornell University.

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Review by Nisha Bellinger, Boise State University

Few things are more fundamental to human survival than food security. Michelle Jurkovich's *Feeding the Hungry* analyzes the advocacy role of international anti-hunger organizations in promoting the right to food. Why is there food insecurity today? What are the challenges that international anti-hunger organizations encounter in promoting the right to food? Who is responsible for addressing food insecurity? These are some of the primary questions that Jurkovich addresses in the book.

Global development trends, in the pre-COVID-19 era, looked promising. Poverty and child mortality rates had been declining and primary school enrollments had been increasing over the last several decades.[1] And yet despite these notable global advancements, hunger was still prevalent in the pre-pandemic world. As Jurkovich notes "Hunger remains a problem in all countries, not only in those with the most struggling economies or those emerging from decades of civil war" (4). Today, at a time when the pandemic is raging, existing grievances, including hunger, are further exacerbated. The World Bank notes that due to COVID-19, extreme poverty is expected to rise for the first time in 20 years.[2] According to the World Food Programme (WFP), world hunger may almost double by the end of 2020.[3] *Feeding the Hungry* could not be timelier.

Overview

The book begins with a brief historical overview of the emergence of organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme. It also highlights the continual resistance of powerful countries such as the United States to ascribe primary responsibility for the right to food to national governments. Even though the right to food is recognized in international agreements, international anti-hunger organizations face challenges in their advocacy to combat world hunger.

There are two broad challenges. The first concerns the notion of norms. Chapter 3 is one of the foundational chapters of the book as it helps readers understand the difference between norms and morals. Jurkovich identifies the absence of a shared norm of who is primarily responsible for ensuring food security as one of the core challenges that organizations encounter. She provides evidence of this by surveying several international organizations. The responses indicate that the organizations perceive multiple actors as being responsible for food insecurity and identify various policy solutions to address the issue. In other words, there is no consensus on the target or a set list of policy solutions.

The absence of shared norms on who bears primary responsibility to ensure the right to food is not the only barrier that international organizations face. The second challenge relates to their advocacy strategy. Anti-hunger organizations have come to adopt a hybrid approach that combines human rights as well as development-based strategies. This further complicates advocacy by such organizations. Development strategies include on-the-ground field operations within countries. The 'naming' and 'shaming' human rights strategies that are commonly used by human rights organizations to

[1] World Bank, "Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2020: Reversals of Fortune," *World Bank Group* (2020): https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-and-shared-prosperity; Max Roser, "Global Education," *Our World In Data* (2016): https://ourworldindata.org/global-education#citation; Max Roser, Hannah Ritchie, and Bernadeta Dadanaita, "Child and Infant Mortality," *Our World In Data* (2013): https://ourworldindata.org/child-mortality#citation.

[2] The World Bank, "COVID-19 to Add as Many as 150 Million Extreme Poor by 2021," (2020): https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/10/07/covid-19-to-add-as-many-as-150-million-extreme-poor-by-2021.

[3] Paul Anthem, "Risk of Hunger Pandemic as Coronavirus Set to almost Double Acute Hunger by End of 2020," *World Food Programme* (16 April 2020): https://insight.wfp.org/covid-19-will-almost-double-people-in-acute-hunger-by-end-of-2020-59df0c4a8072.

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promote civil and political rights could jeopardize on-the-ground operations. Human rights advocacy strategies that include criticizing national governments may make it difficult for organizations to get access to countries with active operations to meet core societal needs such as ensuring food security. As a result, a hybrid approach provides a compromise that entails multiple tactics and avoids targeting any one actor, especially national governments.

Given the nature of both challenges, Jurkovich identifies the shortcomings of the current human rights advocacy models such as the 'boomerang' and the 'spiral' models (40) in explaining activism around food security. The boomerang model highlights the ways domestic actors, international organizations, and outside states pressurize national governments to observe human rights norms (43). The spiral model explains the socialization of human rights norms as a result of interactions between national governments, domestic actors, and international organizations (43). In both these models, local actors are able to identify a clear target, generally the national government, and play a proactive role in reaching out to other countries and organizations for assistance. This looks like a bottom-up model of activism. In contrast, she proposes the buckshot model (40), where there could be multiple targets responsible for existing food insecurity. It also includes elements of a top-down approach with international organizations playing a proactive role in advocating for food security. Figure 2.3 (50) captures the complexity of the buckshot model.

The discourse around food insecurity is usually not couched in terms of the right to food. Even when it is, it is generally discussed in moral rather than legal terms despite the fact that the right to food is recognized in international agreements. This is partially the result of the absence of shared norms on who is primarily responsible as well as the advocacy strategies of international organizations.

Linking Domestic and International Advocacy: The Role of Accountability

The book has important implications for other strands of research as well, particularly domestic dynamics of societal well-being, broadly speaking. A large body of research in political science highlights the role of domestic accountability in motivating national governments to perform well and improve living conditions of their citizens. Regular, free and fair elections, for instance, are one way to ensure accountability of government officials in meeting the core societal needs in democracies.[4] Citizens play a proactive role in ensuring government responsiveness in such regimes. Other mechanisms such as a free press and a longer experience with democratic institutions are some of the many ways democratic governments can be held accountable.[5]

Non-democratic regimes may also provide opportunities, albeit limited ones, to hold governments accountable. For instance, in non-democracies, countries with parties or elections can play an important role in ensuring some degree of accountability and improve governmental performance in meeting needs of the populace.[6]

[4] For an excellent overview of the relationship between political regimes and human well-being outcomes more generally, see James McGuire, *Democracy and Population Health* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

[5] Wigley Simon and Arzu Akkoyunlu-Wigley, "The Impact of Regime Type on Health: Does Redistribution Explain Everything?," *World Politics* 63:4 (2011): 647-677; John Gerring, Strom C. Thacker, and Rodrigo Alfaro, "Democracy and Human Development," *Journal of Politics* 148:3-4 (2012): 1-17.

[6] For an overview of the variation in performance among non-democratic regimes see Nicholas Charron and Victor Lapuente, "Which Dictators Produce Quality of Government?," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 46 (2011): 397-423; Michael Miller, "Electoral Authoritarianism and Human Development," *Comparative Political Studies* 48:12 (2015): 1,526-1,562; Andrea Cassani, "Do All Bad Things Go Together? Electoral Authoritarianism and the Consequences of Political Change Short of Democratization," *Poitikon: South African Journal of Political Science* 44:3 (2017): 351-369.

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Accountability is important in domestic politics, regardless of the nature of political regimes. The lack of consensus among international organizations about who is the primary target responsible for ensuring food security also results in an accountability problem in transnational politics. Its absence exacerbates the challenges of advocacy organizations when it comes to transnational issues such as world hunger. Thus, the role of accountability is critical for both national as well as transnational advocacy. Jurkovich focuses on the latter in the book.

Although tangential to the primary focus of the book, Jurkovich's insight on the following three clusters of questions could help identify the similarities and/or differences between domestic advocacy as pursued by citizens of their governments as compared to transnational advocacy as pursued by international organizations. These questions can help readers understand the linkages in existing research on how accountability works domestically and internationally.

The first cluster of questions relates to individual perceptions of who is responsible for food security. Who do citizens hold responsible for basic needs such as food? Can one say that there is a norm on who is primarily responsible for ensuring food security from a citizen's perspective? If so, does the barrier to the presence of a shared norm primarily apply to international advocacy?

My second cluster of questions relates to developing or strengthening international norms that could hold national governments responsible to ensure food security from an international organization's perspective. Jurkovich acknowledges in the concluding chapter that this is challenging. I concur with this conclusion. However, given the role that citizens can play in holding national governments domestically accountable, what is the role of citizens in developing an international norm around the right to food? What is the role of domestic civil society actors or political parties? Or, is there another way for international advocacy organizations to facilitate the development of such a norm?

The third cluster of questions relates to potential challenges that remain for future advocacy of international organizations. Even if there were a shared norm among international organizations that identified national governments as the primary actors who are responsible for ensuring food security, wouldn't the notion of national sovereignty still pose a problem for international organizations? In other words, what is a bigger challenge for such organizations: the absence of shared norms or national governments who are unlikely to subject themselves to transnational accountability in any form?

Developing Shared Norms at a time of Global Crisis:

I share Jurkovich's skepticism regarding the development of an international shared norm. However, we are also in the midst of a global pandemic. This seems like an opportune time for us to reassess the role of national governments in meeting the core needs of their citizens. Do we think national governments are doing enough to meet the global crisis? Can they do more to expand social safety nets? A recent survey of American citizens indicates that people hold the national government responsible to address the COVID-19 crisis.[7] It is reasonable to assume that people in other countries hold similar views and are looking at their respective governments to pull them out of the crisis. This might be an opportunity for international anti-hunger organizations to help inculcate and strengthen shared norms around the issue of the right to food.

I am writing this review at a time when the World Food Programme was recently awarded the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize for addressing global hunger amidst a pandemic. This accolade brings attention to the important role that international organizations can play in meeting the core needs of citizens worldwide at a time of global crisis. The need for such activism cannot be overstated.

[7] Pew Research Center, "Most Americans Say Federal Government Has Primary Responsibility for COVID-19 Testing," *Pew Research Center U.S. Politics & Policy* (12 May 2020): https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/05/12/most-americans-say-federal-government-has-primary-responsibility-for-covid-19-testing/.

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How do we facilitate the creation of a conducive environment to enable international anti-hunger organizations to address global hunger? *Feeding the Hungry* provides a guidebook by outlining the challenges that international organizations currently encounter to help us understand the ways in which international activism around this issue can be made more effective.

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Review by Garrett Graddy-Lovelace, American University

"Seeking (Food) Sovereignty beyond the State? Limits of Liberalism & Neoliberalism in International Anti-hunger Advocacy"

Injustices Afoot

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, rates of chronic hunger around the world were staggering, with over 135 million people suffering acute food insecurity and associated childhood stunting, severe anemia, and other manifestations of preventable, deadly malnutrition. By next month, that number will double, according to the World Food Program—which won the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize for its alarm bells and food aid. Women, children, mothers with young children, migrants, and those who are already facing racism, classism, ableism, and gender-based violence will suffer disproportionately, as they long have. Even in the United States, one of the wealthiest countries, for instance, around 20% of Black residents (17% Latinx, 12% total population) were already suffering food insecurity, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).[1] Again, these dire numbers are currently *doubling* amidst the pandemic, unemployment, and lockdowns.[2]

The juxtaposition—of miles-long lines for free food boxes (across every region of the US) and the mountains of surplus commodity crops, which remained unsold due to tariff battles and then COVID-19 disruptions—demands rebuke. And this paradoxical bounty-amidst-want spans the globe and its globalized supply chains. Something is amiss. Someone is to blame.

So begins and ends Michelle Jurkovich's new book, *Feeding the Hungry: Advocacy & Blame in the Global Fight Against Hunger*, with an admirable urgency concerning the plight of the hungry among us. Indeed, the stark statistics beg for action: "more people die from hunger and related causes globally than in all wars, civil and international, combined" (3). The book is also right that a) the problem of hunger is not, and has rarely ever been, about overall lack of food, b) injustices are thus afoot (though the book does not use this language), and c) political interventions to halt these injustices require the strategy and coordination of multi-stakeholder analysis and action at international levels. The "hunger problem has never escaped the twin causal claims that hunger is caused by population growth and insufficient food supply, even when academic research has seriously challenged such claims" (29); here, the footnote cites the work of Amartya Sen and Jahi Chappell, which represents just the tip of the iceberg of robust scholarship on this important point.[3]

Stuck at State-Centric

The book moves from its powerful central premise to a focused inquiry into why international

[1] Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Matthew P. Rabbitt, Christian A. Gregory, and Anita Singh, *Household Food Security in the United States in 2019* (ERR-275, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 2020).

[2] Diane Schanzenbach and Abigail Pitts, *How Much has Food Insecurity Risen? Evidence from the Census Household Pulse Survey* (Institute for Policy Research Rapid Research Report, 2020): https://www.ipr.northwestern.edu/documents/reports/ipr-rapid-research-reports-pulse-hh-data-10-june-2020.pdf.

[3] Jahi Chappell, *Beginning to End Hunger: Food and the Environment in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018).

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anti-hunger civil society organizations do not deploy the legal demand for the Right to Food, and concurrently, why they do not decide on one target at which to deploy this legal demand for the Right to Food. The final line of the book confirms the otherwise implied question: why don't advocacy groups just focus on blaming states for global hunger injustices?

Indeed, writing from a country which is in the throes of an administration rife with graft, racism, and callousness toward the poor and hungry, and writing amidst a rise of authoritarian regimes worldwide, I agree that many heads-of-state deserve censure. But the problem of chronic hunger far surpasses governmental realms, particularly after generations of gutted public sector services. Moreover, in an era of patronizing 'strongman' authoritarianism, myopically blaming a head of state can end up further concentrating power by endowing ruling parties as the sole providers and 'duty bearers' for the wellbeing or even survival of billions of people.

The book makes important interventions into dominant understandings in political science and international relations, even as it risks being constrained by their fixation on the 'realism' of discrete modern nation-states. Civil and political rights advocacy targets non-compliant state leaders, and follows norms-based pressure backed by specific invocations of international law. This has been effective, at times. But economic and social rights, in particular, the right to food, do not follow suit, as Jurkovich astutely demonstrates. This useful political science investigation asks why, and to what effect. But a multi-disciplinary perspective helps answer the question. This book notes that political science surprisingly examines "the role of international advocacy" against chronic hunger (4), much less its root causes, only rarely. That said, Nora McKeon's *Food Security Governance: Empowering Communities, Regulating Corporations*, provides a comprehensive policy analysis and political economy contextualization.[4] Yet, meanwhile, a robust set of agri-food scholarship has emerged across social sciences to track the complexity and the culpability in globalized food systems, the injustices therein, and why civil society organizations grapple for systems-wide analysis and injunction. From agrarian change to rural sociology, critical development studies to geography, agri-food policy scholars trace the *longue durée* of colonialism and racial capitalism.[5]

Modern nation-states result from and entrench the postcolonial contradictions of extreme disparity. A state-centric political analysis risks equating states, as if they were comparable units in terms of power, aspirations of power, infrastructure, or conceptions of governance. Blaming 'the state' risks ahistorical analysis; it can erase the reality of indigenous erasure, the legacies of slavery and of revolution. It can further disenfranchise the growing numbers of migrants, and undocumented and stateless people.

Moreover, narrowing the focus to states give the nation-state scale of reference undue power, particularly as indigenous groups seek territorial sovereignties—increasingly via food and seed sovereignty mobilizations. For instance, blaming Guatemala (39) would need to entail also reckoning with the history of United Fruit Company 'banana republic' enclosures, displacements, and exploitations in the region—as well as the U.S. CIA-backed coup of democratically elected Arbenz and resulting state-violence against indigenous and *campesinos*.[6] The more recent internationally financed palm oil plantations in

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[4] Nora McKeon, *Food Security Governance: Empowering Communities, Regulating Corporations* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

[5] See *Journal of Peasant Studies* and *Journal of Agrarian Change* for such scholarship, as well as Eric Holt-Giménez and Justine Williams, eds., *Land Justice: Re-Imagining Land, Food & Commons* (Oakland: Food First, 2017). See Haroon Akram-Lodhi and Cristobal Kay "Surveying the Agrarian Question (Parts 1 and 2)" *Journal of Peasant* Studies (2010) 37; Carmen D Deere "What Difference Does Gender Make? Rethinking Peasant Studies" *Feminist Economics* 1:1 (2010) 53–72; Jan Van der Ploeg *The New Peasantries: Struggles for Autonomy and Sustainability in an Era of Empire and Globalization* (London and Sterling, VA:Earthscan, 2008); among many others.

[6] Paul Dosal. *Doing Business with the Dictators: A Political History of United Fruit in Guatemala, 1899-1944* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1993); Stephen Kinzer and Stephen Schlesinger. *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

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the Guatemalan highlands draw directly on historic, violent legacies of criminalizing Mayan resistance.[7] Positing a "unitary target actor" risks erasing history, geography, the complexity of food systems and the breadth of culpability. Why would there be "expected consensus across actors on a common unitary target" (46)? Guatemalan rulers and elites need ongoing pressure, but not a simplistic analysis. Likewise, Nigerian leaders and elites deserve pressure for the well-being of Nigerian food systems, but the forced currency devaluation in the 1980s followed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) coercion in 1990 to "open our doors to importation" (as quoted on page 55) certainly bear scrutiny and culpability, in particular because these dominant paradigms of neoliberal agriculture still reign, and still wreak havoc for farmers and rural people, and thus food systems and those out-migrating from rural areas (migrants, urban communities, stateless people).

In the most literal and searing example of 'kneel or starve' deployment of food as weapon, the Assad regime has imposed a violent siege on Syria for over a decade, deliberately starving its population in a literal war crime, based on the 1977 Geneva Convention definitions. Jurkovich's argument would sharpen to a fine point when applied to this cruel coercion from on high. In general, however, most of the places in the world that are facing hunger have complicated layers of governance at work. Indeed, many dictators have solidified their power precisely by providing cheap food to the masses.[8] Jurkovich analyzes the "*construction of state (in)capacity*" (94) in terms of "who *ought to do the providing*" (96, italics in original). Going further, though, and phrasing provision as inherently passive, risks emboldening subservience to the patronizing *patria* (homeland) of the nation-state overseer.

Jurkovich strives to rally civil society and scholars to leverage law and the Right to Food so as to target unjust rulers. This is indeed key. Yet, the complexity of commodity crop capitalism helps drive these injustices. "Even as the world urbanizes at unprecedented rates and food supplies have outpaces population growth such that there is a surplus of food supply globally, the hunger problem is still frequently framed as an agricultural problem with agricultural solutions" (31), Jurkovich writes. But it is an agricultural problem: of commodity crop overproduction, dumping, undermining of local and regional foodways, destruction of waterways, erosion of soil, pollinator die-offs, farm-labor human trafficking, methane emissions, mass displacement. And so this certainly needs agricultural solutions, from land tenure and supply management to farmers rights to save seeds, from labor and ecological protections, to anti-trust legislation that will transform world trade rules to prevent race-to-the-bottom deregulations and farmgate prices.

The book touches in passing on the crisis of overproduction. Jurkovich conducted research in the historical archives of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to find internal U.S. documents affirming that post-World War II food aid sought new markets for commodity crop surpluses. the United Kingdom's response to the precursor of the FAO (at the 1943 Hot Springs Conference in Virginia) warned of the "fundamental cleavage between…the interests of the exporting countries and the farmers of the importing countries" (16). This is an illustrative archival material, as is the United States' deployment of self-described "psychological warfare" (page citation) to command victory over the Axis enemy in WWII. A crucial footnote 16 includes the foundational driver of post-war "overproduction" (16). Jurkovich chronicles the U.S. desire for FAO to focus on agricultural trade openings in order to "coordinate the disposal of surplus food aid" (20), a telling archival snippet from the shift between the 'first' to the 'second' food regime.[9] "For the vast majority of the world's

[7] Alberto Alonso-Fradejas, "Anything but a Story Foretold: Multiple Politics of Resistance to the Agrarian Extractivist Project in Guatemala," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* (2005) 42:3-4, 489-515; Victor Montejo. *Maya Intellectual Renaissance: Critical Essays on Identity, Representation, and Leadership* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).

[8] Raj Patel and Jason Moore, *The History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017).

[9] Harriet Friedmann and Phil McMichael, "Agriculture and the State System: The Rise and Decline of National Agricultures, 1870 to the Present," *Sociologia Ruralis* 29:2 (1989): 93-117.

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hungry, hunger is not caused by the active withholding of food but through poor and neglectful government policy" (120), by international agricultural policy, in the globalized aggregate, as a neoliberal paradigm.

Limits to (Neo)Liberalism

Beyond blame lies obligation: "if no single actor is seen as *to blame* for hunger (or right to food violations), can there at least be an agreement around *responsibility* for the problem?" (74). This crucial central inquiry advances the book's analysis, but here lurks the limits to the ideology of liberalism and the culpability of neoliberalism.

Temporally, a modern-state centric perspective, coupled with liberal internationalist orientation, began with the twentieth-century world wars, and the book begins here with an excellent and useful archival analysis of the origin of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization. Yet, this is prefaced with a vast generalization: "For much of human history, hunger was understood as an inevitable feature of the natural landscape" (13) akin to Malthusian claims of overpopulation leading to unavoidable hunger. Empires, enslavement, colonialism, and imperialism have long used food as coercive weapon of control, so people have long known the political abuses of food. Whole religious, cosmological, and revolutionary lineages sought to feed the hungry by fighting these injustices. The Qur'an, for instance, urges people to counter inequity by feeding the hungry. Over-emphasizing the twentieth-century liberal ('Western') internationalism of the Right to Food discourse may lead us to forget how people have fought the oppression of hunger for centuries. Jurkovich argues that "hunger evolved into a problem only when its existence could no longer be seen as natural and inevitable—and, as such, unsolvable" (13), which is an overstatement.

Spatially, modernist international liberalism limits (add a noun here – what does it limit?) as well. Most people are officially citizens of a country, and everyone is located in a place that is claimed by a country (or two). For many, however, the primary scale of reference is not the nation-state, but rather indigenous customary governance or the pan-African diaspora, their religion, their neighborhood, their extended household, their village, their refugee camp, the borderlands, the waterways. If people feel alienated from the officials 'governing' (policing) them, it would seem unreasonable for them to expect reliable nourishment from these forces. In her book *Naming a Transnational Black Feminism: Writing in Darkness,* Melchor Hall foregrounds diasporic lineages of liberation as transgressing and transcending borders.[10] These alternate scales of reference relate directly to who feeds whom, who expects nourishment from whom, who is accountable for the injustices of hunger.

Liberalism locates accountability in the states insofar as they defer to the international market and private property; neoliberalism defers even more to the reign of the allegedly free market, with 'rights' referring chiefly to individualized property and intellectual property protections. The question of rights has long had this central tension: and food sovereignty scholars have long grappled with it.[11] Raj Patel dives into this exact tension of food sovereignty by quoting with Hannah Arendt's political theory on the "right to have rights": "In blowing apart the notion that the state has a paramount authority, by pointing to the multivalent hierarchies of power and control that exist within the world food system, food sovereignty paradoxically displaces one sovereign [the state] but remains silent about others. To talk of a right to anything, after all, summons up a number of preconditions that food sovereignty, because of its radical character, undermines."[12]

Jurkovich's concludes that there is a lack of consensus among the largest international anti-hunger civil society organizations, but her research findings disclose a telling convergence of analysis on the liability of neoliberal agricultural

[10] K. Melchor Hall, *Naming a Transnational Black Feminism: Writing in Darkness* (New York: Routledge, 2020).

[11] Amy Trauger, *We Want Land to Live: Making Political Space for Food Sovereignty* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2017).

[12] Raj Patel, "What Does Food Sovereignty Look Like?," in Hannah Wittman, Annette Aurélie Desmaraiss, and Nettie Wiebe, eds., *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature & Community* (Oakland: Food First Books, 2010): 192.

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trade and political economy. Oxfam's GROW Beyond the Brands campaign literally blamed, named, and shamed ten major transnational food and beverage agro-industrial corporations. In so doing, it called out the broader political economy that enabled such unprecedented vertical and horizontal consolidation. Oxfam investigates how these behemoths rose to vast success on the backs of cheap labor, land, farming, and fishing, which was "supplied by poor communities around the world" (99). Another Oxfam America Senior Official confides: "you hold them all responsible…You launch Behind the Brands to hold corporations accountable. You launch national campaigns to hold governments accountable. You call out foundations like the Gates Foundation even though they give you money" (125). This echoes Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who argued that "the actors involved in addressing hunger and access to food are not only states but also multinational corporations" (126).

That Oxfam, ActionAid, Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN), and others are working to untangle the chronic hunger mess reveals dynamic responsiveness and honesty, not a failure to focus. Even amidst the complexity of the situation, analyses, and interventions, agreement grows around the causes of the problem. Survey responses and key informant interviews, all of which are chronicled in the book, provide a glimpse of how major organizations are grasping the complexity at hand: that solutions would need to entail gender equity, social safety nets, farmwork wage increases, and increases in small farmer income (fn 37, 76). Importantly, 63% of respondents (with a certainly score of 6+) to the survey question "How do you Solve the Problem of Chronic Hunger?" responded "Agricultural development (focus on small farmer and farm worker wages)." (78). A nuanced analysis emerges in the answers to the survey, though a key questions remains: are farmers considered wage earners? The book mentions in passing that "history reminds us that there has always been, and likely always will be, a gap between the lowest price that producers are willing to sell a commodity at to turn an acceptable profit and the highest price the poorest in society can afford to pay for a given commodity. The market alone has never been able to solve the hunger problem" (5). This is a crucial final point, even though it is prefaced by a vague overstatement. Food producers rarely sell directly to eaters. Studying the price gap requires tracing the massive layers of agri-food industry, from processing, distribution, aggregation, grocery stores, financial speculation.

Indeed, quotations throughout the book hint at the actual growing consensus on the nexus of problems that result in chronic hunger: from international financial institutions to transnational agri-food corporations, to trade regimes, to rich-country policies of dumping, and to poor country policies of succumbing to corporate pressures to sell off land (134). "Who is buying up all the land?" (100) another Oxfam official asks; a crucial question demanding more scholarship, investigative journalism, and regulation. Anti-hunger advocates identify multiple causes to hunger because there are multiple causes, including land tenure, dumping, racism, sexism, the WTO and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), authoritarian regimes, and intellectual property regimes. It is becoming mainstream to acknowledge, in anti-hunger advocacy, that many people still live in toxic legacies of transatlantic chattel slavery and settler colonialism. This echoes the expanding body of work on the topic that is emerging from the United Nations itself—particularly from the Right to Food offices.

Seeking (Food) Sovereignty

A key mechanism and marker of this growing consensus on food-system complexity and culpability has been the UN Special Rapporteurs on the Right to Food. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food was originally established by the Commission on Human Rights in 2000, and was endorsed and extended in 2007. Jean Ziegler served as first Special Rapporteur (2000-2008), establishing a firebrand archive that focused on food sovereignty. Olivier DeSchutter (2008-2014) followed, with his robust and extensive archive of reports critiquing layers of agri-food political economy; Hilal Elver (2014-2020) then stepped into the role, providing her own strident international archive and final report (2020).[13] This

[13] Olivier DeSchutter, "International Trade in Agriculture and the Right to Food," *Dialogue on Globalization* 46 (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2009): https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/genf/06819.pdf; Olivier DeSchutter, "Final Report: the transformative potential of the right to food," A/HRC/25/57 (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2014), https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/766914/files/A_HRC_25_57-EN.pdf ; Hilal Elver, "Final Report: Critical Perspectives on food systems, food crises, and the future of the right to food," A/HRC/43/44 (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2020), https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/43/44.

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year, Michael Fakhri took the post, immediately issuing a bold first report that squarely blamed global trade-rule regimes for hunger and calling for a "winding down of the WTO" as such.[14] These are all far-reaching, sprawling but coherent, critical analyses of root and proximate causes of chronic food insecurity. And they have had wide and deep impact, in realms of scholarship, civil society, frontline grassroots organizations, and even policy making, though more at local and municipal levels.[15]

Also, on the United Nations level, the rallying cry of food sovereignty animates the (add year_ Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People and drives the recent Declaration on Rights of Peasants and Rural People. Meanwhile, under the joint leadership of the FAO, World Health Organization, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and others, the 2008 International Assessment of Agricultural Science, Knowledge, Development, and Technology compiled four years' worth of vast datasets, and interdisciplinary, multi-stakeholder, and international expertise; it concluded that "business as usual is not an option" and called for major trade reforms, and more support for food sovereignty, agroecology, and decentralized, adaptive supply chains.[16] The UN Committee on World Food Security, which was originally established in the 1970s food price crisis, established the High Level Panel of Experts on food security and nutrition after the 2011 food price crisis, when it re-oriented itself to represent frontline, grassroots agrarian justice civil society concerns regarding the right to food and the politics of knowledge therein.[17] In 2015, the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems followed suit, in order to set out to transform agri-food systems toward health, ecology, and justice.[18] Indeed, the COVID-19-induced food crisis demands transformational changes to global food systems and "shows the fragility of the neoliberal food security order" at large.[19]

The concept of food sovereignty remains complex, expansive, and for some, elusive. Yet, the grassroots, global movement continues to grow bigger and more diverse. La Via Campesina, the transnational agrarian justice alliance, serves as a coalition of some 200 million people, across 82 countries, as of 2020. It introduced 'food sovereignty' to the FAO's 1996 World Food Summit, "a term that was specifically intended as a foil to the prevailing notions of food security, which, almost studiously, avoided discussing the social control of the food system".[20] In 2007, grassroots 'peasant' coalitions from around the world converged in Sélingué, Mali for the pivotal Food Sovereignty Forum, which culminated in landmark Nyéléni

[14] Michael Fakhri, "The Right to Food in the Context of International Trade Law and Policy," A/HRC/75/150 (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2020), https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3879225/files/A_75_219-EN.pdf.

[15] Sage, Colin "Food security, Food Sovereignty, and the Special Rapporteur: Shaping Food Policy Discourse through Realizing the Right to Food" *Dialogues in Human Geography*. 4:2 (2014): 195-199.

[16] IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science, and Technology for Development) (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2009.

[17] Philip McMichael, "The Right to Food and Politics of Knowledge" *Canadian Food Studies/La revue canadiennee des études sur l'alimentation* 2:2 (2015): 52-59.

[18] IPES-Food, *Unravelling the Food–Health Nexus: Addressing Practices, Political Economy, and Power Relations to Build Healthier Food Systems* (Brussels: The Global Alliance for the Future of Food and IPES-Food, 2017).

[19] Jennifer Clapp and William Mosely, "This food crisis is different: COVID-19 and the fragility of the neoliberal food security order." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 47:7 (2020): 1393-1417. https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2020.1823838.

[20] Patel 2010, 188.

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Declaration on Food Sovereignty.[21] Since then, the sheer scale and diversity of the global food-sovereignty movement has expanded, and now influences international policy.[22] Accordingly, this merits attention in any discussion of international anti-hunger and right-to-food advocacy, which is why it is surprising that the book's only mention of food sovereignty lies in an interview with an ActionAid USA Senior Official: "we take a food sovereignty approach" (107).

Striving for more agency, equity, dignity for food providers and land/water stewards does not preclude concurrently holding governments accountable to their promises and for their negligence—particularly in a country with such twentieth-century geopolitical impact, the United States. Molly Anderson, a lead scholar in the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food), has long analyzed and advocated for Right to Food framework in the United States: "The only reasons why the USA is not working actively for the right to food are first that citizens do not demand this, and second that other nations are not imposing sanctions on the USA for its failure to meet obligations to its own population."[23] As of 2018, each of the 169 ratifying parties of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had also ratified the Convention on Rights of Children, with the U.S. as the lone exception all around. In a response to Anderson, Syracuse Professor of Food Studies Anne Bellows widens Anderson's point to include a system's-based human rights approach to a National Food Plan; in addition to the U.S. federal government's culpability, she blames the U.S. education system, which "disregards teaching critical and practical aspects of international affairs, especially those concerning governance, law and democracy, being therefore much to blame for the blind eye we have turned to the potential of human rights as a powerful tool and agent of change."[24] Co-editor to the 2014 book *First World Hunger Revisited: Food Charity of the Right to Food?*, Professor Graham Riches further expands this call to action: "For too long the values and national choices informing food and social policy have benefitted the rich and corporate elite at the expense of the collective health and social well-being of society, particularly the vulnerable, who lead precarious and often desperate lives. It needs restating that domestic hunger is at root a symptom of income poverty and a broken social safety net.[25] Here, a political-economic critical analysis of hunger injustices encompasses holding federal policy failures accountable.

More recent scholarship excavates and lifts up the long-obscured history of Black and indigenous agri-food sovereignty—with its concurrent indictment of and independence from the State. Monica White's book chronicles Fannie Lou Hamer's Freedom Farms in the Civil Rights movement, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund for Black farmers, and the National Black Food Justice Alliance for urban agriculture, while geographers recall the Black Panther Party's Free Breakfast and Survival Pending Revolution Program and Soul Fire Farm and others food and land justice initiatives work toward food sovereignty for Black-led liberation.[26] Meanwhile, indigenous food sovereignty alliances and

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[21] "Declaration of Nyéléni," Forum for Food Sovereignty (Sélingué, Mali: February 2007): https://nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290.

[22] Hannah Wittman, Annette Aurélie Desmarais, and Nettie Wiebe, eds., *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature & Community* (Oakland: Food First Books, 2010); Priscilla Claeys and Jessica Duncan, "Food Sovereignty and Convergence Spaces" *Political Geography* 75 (2019).

[23] Molly Anderson, "Make Federal Food Assistance Rights-Based," *Renewable Agriculture & Food Systems* 35:4 (2019): 439-441.

[24] A.C. Bellows "A Systems-Based Human Rights Approach to a National Food Plan in the USA," *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems* 35:4 (2020): 443.

[25] Graham Riches, "The Right to Food: Why US ratification matters." *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems* 35:4 (2020): 450.

[26] Monica White, *Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance & the Black Freedom Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018).

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mobilizations deepen and expand.[27] In general, this burgeoning realm of action and scholarship speaks to the role of antiracism and decoloniality in food sovereignty and thus food security, as well as the urgency of countering white supremacism in dominant agri-food systems and policies and even in antihunger advocacy.

In conclusion, *Feeding the Hungry: Advocacy and Blame in International Anti-hunger Advocacy* should be read and circulated so as to help sharpen and coordinate research and advocacy moving forward. Jurkovich has written a timely, important, and carefully crafted intervention on a burning question. In a world of overproduction, over a billion people suffer hunger; who is responsible? This book's call to action proves even more impressive and pressing amidst the ravages of COVID-19 and the "biblical famines" that lurk on the horizon, the current food insecurity crisis-in-the-making.[28] But what if the question is not who, but *what* is responsible for chronic hunger? And what if the answer is all around us?

[27] Mihesuah, Devon and Elizabeth Hoover, *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments, and Regaining Health* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2019).

[28] FAO and WFP, *FAO-WFP Early Warning Analysis of Acute Food Insecurity Hotspots: July 2020* (Rome, 2020): https://doi.org/10.4060/cb0258en.

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Review by Virginia Haufler, University of Maryland

Who is to blame for widespread hunger? This is the central question driving Michelle Jurkovich's excellent book, *Feeding the Hungry: Advocacy and Blame in the Global Fight Against Hunge*r. She explores advocacy, rights and norms in the debate over how best to fight hunger. It seems to me that all people should be able to agree on the need to stamp out hunger. Beyond that, however, there is widespread disagreement about who is responsible or how to hold them accountable. Jurkovich explains the disarray and conflicting approaches within the anti-hunger activist community by arguing persuasively that this is a result of the lack of a global norm regarding hunger.

My first instinct was to think 'Surely there is an anti-hunger norm!' After all, eliminating hunger was included as one of the Millennium Development Goals and, subsequent to them, "Zero Hunger" was listed as the second Sustainable Development Goal.[1] An entire United Nations agency, the Food and Agriculture Organization, is dedicated to leading international efforts to defeat hunger. Donor governments such as the U.S. have programs like Feed the Future that are directed explicitly at fighting hunger abroad, and major philanthropic organizations such as the Gates Foundation support anti-hunger programs. Given all this policy action, at first glance Jurkovich's starting point appears misdirected. But her argument and evidence provide insight into how the absence of a norms shapes the politics of hunger.

Jurkovich presents an extended argument about norms and activism that counters some of the prominent models in political science. The author lays out her argument in five relatively short chapters, plus an introduction and conclusion. She starts with an overview of the anti-hunger agenda, and then devotes chapters to advocacy, norms, rights, and law. Each of these chapters effectively weaves together both theory and evidence to show how the commitment to fighting hunger does not quite fit our categories and models. In doing so, she contributes new insights into the relationship between norms and action.

Her characterization of norms centers on their role in identifying whom we should hold responsible when norms are violated. She delves into the debates over hunger to demonstrate that there is no common understanding of hunger as a problem and thus no common target of action. There is a global commitment to fighting hunger, but this concern does not translate into a shared framework for identifying who is to blame. The fault for hunger could lie with unproductive farmers, monopolistic corporations, venal investors, misguided or indifferent policymakers, or any of a range of other potential bad actors—including the hungry themselves. As a result, the activist organizations that work against hunger are not united. They identify different targets for action and often put pressure on multiple actors at once. Jurkovich labels this the "buckshot" (50) model of activism, contrasting it with the boomerang[2] and spiral[3] models that are prominent in the literature on transnational activism. In the buckshot model, activist organizations use a variety of frames to mobilize action and hold actors to account. If norms are about appropriate behavior, as many scholars argue, then exactly which actor do we expect to behave appropriately when it comes to hunger?

The lack of a norm is tied in part to how hunger intersects with other issues. Some activists view hunger through a rights-orientation that holds governments responsible. But not all anti-hunger organizations view this as a human rights issue, and human rights organizations primarily focus their attention on civil and political rights instead of economic and social ones. Development organizations are also active in fighting against hunger, but the development frame does not provide a clear

[1] See The UN Sustainable Development Goals at: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/.

[2] Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca Cornell University Press, 1998).

[3] Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. *The Persistent Power of Human Rights: From Commitment to Compliance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

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target actor to hold responsible. In some cases, the way such groups campaign around hunger is shaped by their need to maintain development projects in the countries in which they operate. The interviews that Jurkovich conducted with representatives from Oxfam show that its campaign against corporations was influenced by its need to preserve the organization's work with governments on development issues. The mix of development and human rights frames on hunger makes it challenging for activists to unite on a common frame and collectively campaign against any one target. She sums up the problem by pointing out that "…development and rights approaches are based on different analytic frameworks, rely on different advocacy strategies, have historically taken different trajectories, rely on different understandings of blame and responsibility, and have very different practical considerations regarding programming" (88).

Feeding the Hungry contrasts with other recent books on global hunger by focusing on anti-hunger activism and not the broader debate over the food system itself. Books such as Timothy Wise's *Eating Tomorrow*, Tim Lang and Michael Heasman's *Food Wars*, and William Schanbacher's *The Politics of Food* all address the contention over conflicting paradigms of how to organize the world food system to better support food security while preserving 'food sovereignty.'[4] Jennifer Clapp, in her excellent books on food and food aid,[5] brings an international political economy lens to bear on issues of trade, finance and corporate monopoly in the food sector. The doyenne of food politics, Marion Nestle, aims her critique at the corporations that shape our food system and prevent effective policy action.[6] All of these works provide compelling analyses of the problem of food security broadly defined and the interests of major players, such as agri-business and food corporations, in maintaining the *status quo*. Jurkovich takes a more focused approach to analyze international anti-hunger organizations and their campaigns. Her goal in this book is to explore advocacy and not agriculture. She wants to understand the puzzle of how global advocacy around hunger works and why it has been ineffective. In doing so, she focuses less on the interests of governments and corporations and more on the normative underpinnings of, as she puts it in the sub-title, advocacy and blame.

This book presents an innovative argument that provides us with new insights on global activism. In thinking about her focus, however, I was struck by the fact that Jurkovich does not discuss in any detail the broader global food movement. Anti-hunger organizations constitute a sub-set of a larger movement around food and agriculture issues in general. She analyzes the activism of major international organizations such as Oxfam International and ActionAid but does not examine how they may or may not intersect and connect with organizations such as Slow Food International or La Via Campesina. These organizations include anti-hunger activism within a larger critique of the global food system itself. While the food movement is incredibly diverse, it is increasingly converging around ideas (norms?) of food sovereignty and agroecology. I understand that Jurkovich set out to explain anti-hunger activism and therefore limited her analysis to organizations that have campaigned against hunger. But I would have liked to understand better how the different organizations relate to one another, and how her analysis on norms and activism might apply to this wider array of food movement organizations.

Jurkovich comes back repeatedly to a critique of what she considers the standard models of transnational activism—the boomerang and spiral models associated with Margaret Keck, Katherine Sikkink and others.[7] These models, she argues, have

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[4] Timothy Wise, *Eating Tomorrow: Agribusiness, Family Farmers, and the Battle for the Future of Food* (New York and London: The New Press, 2019); Tim Lang and Michael Heasman, *Food Wars: The Global Battle for Mouths, Minds and Markets* 2nd edition (Abingdon and New York: Routledge/Earthscan, 2015); and William Schanbacher, *The Politics of Food: The Global Conflict between Food Security and Food Sovereignty* (Santa Barbara: Praeger Security International, 2010).

[5] Jennifer Clapp, *Food* 3rd edition. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020; and *Hunger in the Balance: The New Politics of International Food Aid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).

[6] Marion Nestle, *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

[7] Keck and Sikkink; Risse, Ropp and Sikkink.

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"directionality" (46) in that the target of activism is the state. While it is true that much of the action in these models is about holding governments responsible, the models are limited in this way. The boomerang model of activism has been applied to anti-corporate activism, and the spiral model makes room for multiple targets of activist campaigns. Jurkovich's buckshot model highlights the multiple frames and targets in hunger activism but is more descriptive than analytical.

Throughout my reading of the book I constantly thought about how her argument might apply to other issue areas. Is hunger as an issue unique in how it draws on more than one advocacy frame? I doubt it—and would have liked to learn what other global issues Jurkovich sees as ripe for a similar analysis. The politics of natural resources, for instance, draws on competing frames regarding development, sovereignty, security and human rights. Or, given recent events, we might look at the Black Lives Matter movement and global advocacy around anti-racism. I think it is to Jurkovich's credit that her book inspires an impulse to apply her approach to other issues and other international campaigns.

I have to say this book was truly a joy to read. Jurkovich has a clear and approachable writing style, presenting even the most esoteric academic discussions in a way that is accessible to all. She incorporates the relevant literature on norms, rights, law, and activism but threads it throughout the book instead of lumping it together in a section labelled 'literature review.' (Although she does in fact review the literature!). Throughout, she makes effective use of evidence drawn primarily from her extensive interviews with leaders of anti-hunger advocacy organizations. I particularly liked that she included entire conversations that reflected her own role in the interviews, making me smile at times at her interactions with interview subjects. She includes a useful appendix on her interview methods that reflects on interpretation and positionality, citing Lee Ann Fuji's work, among others.[8] I definitely plan to include *Feeding the Hungry* as a required book for my upper-level undergraduate seminar on global food politics. And I will recommend it to graduate students as a model of scholarly writing.

[8] Lee Ann Fujii, *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2017); Layna Mosley, ed., *Interview Research in Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

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Review by Erin Lentz, University of Texas, Austin

Michelle Jurkovich's *Feeding the Hungry* offers a careful study of how anti-hunger advocacy efforts lack a norm regarding who bears the duty to ensure the right food. While international law dictates that national governments are duty bearers, Jurkovich shows that anti-hunger agencies are often reluctant to blame national governments for chronic hunger. This reluctance is in contrast to rights-based campaigns that focus on political and civil rights. She argues that because the literature on human rights has focused overmuch on political and civil rights, we know less about how advocacy unfolds with respect to economic and social rights. She shows that agencies that are involved in anti-hunger advocacy do not share a norm regarding who is to blame for chronic hunger, and that this lack of a common norm may hinder their efforts. Understanding the nature of anti-hunger advocacy is an important area for research, not only for rights-based scholars but also for anyone who is interested in seemingly intractable humanitarian problems.

In Chapter 1, Jurkovich shows how hunger came to be understood as a rights violation. In Chapter 2, she proposes that two models of human rights-based advocacy, the "boomerang model" (34) and the "spiral model," (34) do not reflect advocacy in the anti-hunger space. Briefly, these models describe how domestic, international, and transnational agencies can apply pressure on norm-violating states to change behaviors. She proposes the "buckshot" (34) model, which describes the scattering of blame for hunger on multiple actors rather than naming and shaming a state. This buckshot model reflects anti-hunger campaigns because there is no agreement (and therefore no norm) that national governments are the duty bearers and therefore are to blame. In chapter 3, she argues that not all human rights have norms; without a norm that identifies a common target actor, rights-based advocacy that relies on shaming may be limited. In Chapter 4, she asks why there is not a norm for anti-hunger work. She argues that because hunger is at the nexus of rights and development, different actors bring different analytical frameworks to the problem. This limits the emergence of a common norm. In Chapter 5, she argues that laws and norms are distinct and that the existence of one does not ensure the existence of the other. Ultimately, she concludes that without a norm of who is to blame, the efficacy of rights-based anti-hunger advocacy will remain limited.

Jurkovich situates her work in the political science literature on transnational rights-based campaigns and advocacy efforts.[1] Using chronic hunger has her case, she interviewed a mixture of development, humanitarian, and rights-based organizations (10), including donors and nongovernmental organizations (NGOS). Most are based in the U.S., and some pursue multiple aspects of anti-hunger work, for example providing humanitarian and development assistance. In Chapter 3, Jurkovich reports that 65% of her respondents (13 out of 21), strongly identified national governments as being responsible for chronic hunger. Her respondents could identify all the responsible parties, and an overlapping 60% said that outside governments were to blame for chronic hunger. An employee of the Gates Foundation argued for the language of responsibility rather than of blame. A respondent from Save the Children US argued that chronic hunger reflects a "lack of political will" but would not identify a primary actor as responsible. In Chapter 5, Jurkovich notes that "the relative lack of use of international human rights law in international anti-hunger advocacy reflects … the lack of an anti-hunger norm. There is no consensus on a single actor as responsible for this problem" (126). Because Jurkovich's sample is predominantly drawn from the U.S., it would be valuable to know how much of the lack of consensus carries over to agencies in other countries.

Jurkovich concludes that shaming and blaming may not work when blame is diffuse. Her findings open up many questions about the nature of anti-hunger advocacy organizations for those who work to end hunger. How do the studied institutions differ from institutions that generally pursue a "boomerang" approach to advocacy where a specific duty bearer is held responsible? Is the buckshot model applicable to economic and social rights broadly, as Jurkovich suggests at the end of

[1] See: Margaret Kekk and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), Thomas Risse, Stephen Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds., *The Persistent Power of Human Rights: From Commitment to* Compliance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013

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Chapter 5? Is the buckshot model common among anti-hunger organizations globally, or is it unique to organizations based in the United States?

In terms of why the sample agencies unwilling to assign blame, in Chapter 4 Jurkovich's offers an intriguing explanation that hunger is at the nexus of development and rights, and therefore that different organizations have different understandings of the causes the hunger. Several of the agencies included in Jurkovich's sample do not necessarily identify as rights-based organizations, as she describes in Chapter 4. In addition to speaking with employees of United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and donor organizations, she also interviewed employees from NGOS with varying perspectives, including U.S. employees of "Dunantist" organizations, which prioritize neutrality and impartiality, such as Oxfam, MSF, and Save the Children; faith-based organizations such as Bread for the World, and practical "Wilsonian" NGOs such as CARE. [2] Agencies without explicit rights-based mandates may not recognize or value the role of blame in their work and may instead perceive chronic hunger to be the result of a lack of capacity. Even if agencies recognize the government as the responsibility party, there may be an unwillingness to engage in "political" issues.[3]

Another reason for an unwillingness to blame and shame could reflect the viewpoints of agencies that operate within the U.S. context. In the conclusion Jurkovich points out that it is common for U.S. policymakers to frame hunger as a technical problem rather than a rights problem. The U.S. government's unwillingness to frame hunger as a rights issue (in contrast to other issues) may reflect Cold War politics, where the U.S. embraced political and civil rights but was reluctant to engage in social and economic rights. The technical approach of U.S. policymakers may in turn influence agencies' reluctance to assign blame. Abby Stoddard, in a 2003 briefing paper on humanitarian NGOs, writes "US NGOs are fundamentally pragmatic … The European agencies that engage in advocacy tend to be deliberately confrontational, while their US counterparts typically prefer behind-the-scenes policy advice" (2).[4] A comparative perspective that asks whether U.S. NGOs are more pragmatic than agencies elsewhere, and if so, why, would be a useful extension of this research.

Further, agencies also often have multiple (and perhaps competing) mandates. Several sampled U.S. anti-hunger organizations (e.g., Action Against Hunger, CARE, and Save the Children) are involved in both advocacy and implementing programming. The unwillingness of U.S. agencies to publicly blame a single duty bearer (i.e., local government) might well reflect efforts to balance these mandates. If they were to take the stance that the local host government is the sole actor responsible for hunger, they run the real risk of being asked to leave the country or risk the safety of their in-country employees. NGOs do at times publicly confront local host governments, but this is rare. Being too confrontational in their advocacy may put their programming at risk. For example, in 2014, CARE and other groups condemned attacks on civilians in South Sudan.[5] A few years later, after escalating tension between the government and aid agencies, the government expelled foreign workers.[6] Leadership in agencies with multiple mandates may decide not to assign

[2] See Abby Stoddard "Humanitarian NGOs: Challenges and Trends," Humanitarian Practice Group Briefing No. 12 (July 2003): https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/349.pdf.

[3] Of course, development itself is a political act. See James Ferguson, *The Antipolitics Machine: 'Development,' Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

[4] Stoddard "Humanitarian NGOs: Challenges and Trends," Humanitarian Practice Group Briefing No. 12 (July 2003): https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/349.pdf.

[5] Acted Lutheran Foundation et al., "NGOs Condemn Attacks on Civilians in South Sudan and Emphasize a Need for Urgent Humanitarian Assistance" (2014): https://care.org/news-and-stories/press-releases/ngos-condemn-attacks-on-civilians-in-south-sudan-and-emphasize-a-need-for-urgent-humanitarian-assistance/, accessed November 20, 2020.

[6] Jason Beaubien, "Amid Growing Unrest, South Sudan Kicks out Aid Workers," *National Public Radio* (16 December 16 2016): https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/12/16/505612575/amid-growing-unrest-south-sudan-kicks-out-aid-workers, accessed November 20, 2020; Rick Noack, "South Sudan Wants to Kick out Foreign Aid Workers, even as a Devastating Famine Looms,"

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blame to a local government. Understanding the reasons for this, which could include prioritizing the agency's desire to maintain access to those most in need, beliefs that working behind the scenes is more effective, as Stoppard suggests, or a desire to maintain a large presence by pursuing advocacy work and programming work would be a valuable next step. To a certain extent, this is a debate that is familiar within the literature on humanitarianism. The call to the humanitarian imperative reflects some agencies while the more overtly political interventions of blaming states are adopted by other organizations.[7]

Jurkovich "encourages policymakers, activities and academics to reconsider the primary importance of constructing social understandings of responsibility for ensuring the right to food as a key part of any anti-hunger efforts" (137). After reading this important book, I now understand how the reluctance of contemporary anti-hunger advocacy efforts in the U.S. to assign blame for chronic hunger limits the effectiveness of rights-based approaches. Yet rights-based work related to hunger is not a self-evident starting point for many NGOs. I am left wishing for insights on a series of questions. Why do anti-hunger organizations approach advocacy in the ways they do? What would persuade anti-hunger agencies that the right to food is key to addressing hunger? Would anti-hunger efforts be better served if advocacy was separated from programming? Jurkovich has opened a rich line of enquiry; further research could help us learn about the perceived limits of and opportunities for rights-based approaches in the fight against hunger.

Washington Post (17 September 2014): https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/09/17/south-sudan-wants-to-kick-out-foreign-aid-workers-even-as-a-devastating-famine-looms/, accessed November 20, 2020.

[7] Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca Cornell University Press, 2013).

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Response by Michelle Jurkovich, University of Massachusetts Boston

I would like to begin my remarks with my deep gratitude to Nisha Bellinger, Jennifer Clapp, Garrett Graddy-Lovelace, Virginia Haufler, and Erin Lentz for their thoughtful engagement with my book and to Andrew Szarejko and Diane Labrosse for organizing the roundtable and editing the responses. In the midst of a global pandemic, when energy and time are especially scarce, I am all the more appreciative of these efforts. The interdisciplinary nature of the reviews, drawing on scholarship and connections across the fields of political science, sociology, and geography, has given me much to think about for future extensions of the work. To all the roundtable participants: thank you.

To summarize briefly, *Feeding the Hungry* is a study of international anti-hunger advocacy which draws on interviews and archival research in order to understand the nature and shape of international advocacy targeting chronic hunger. For human rights scholars, international anti-hunger advocacy is puzzling for several reasons, relating both to law and norms. As with other human rights, the right to food is codified in international law, which ascribes responsibility to national governments for ensuring the right to food to their population. While law is often used by activists in the case of other human rights to apply pressure to the national government to fulfill its obligations under law, existing law is rarely referenced by most of the international anti-hunger organizations studied in the book, and national governments are often not the target actor in international anti-hunger advocacy efforts. Moreover, we often assume that human rights advocacy will focus on a unitary target actor (frequently the national government), and we model campaign trajectories based on this assumption. Existing models of advocacy behavior such as the "boomerang" model, for example, assume a unitary target.[55] And yet, unlike advocacy around many other human rights which does target a unitary actor and fit the expectation of dominant models, advocacy around hunger and the right to food instead targets multiple actors (transnational corporations, outside states, financial institutions, among others) often simultaneously, and blame for the problem of chronic hunger is diffuse. I provide a new model of advocacy that is better suited to making sense of advocacy in this issue area (called the "buckshot model") and I examine how it is possible that advocacy behaves differently around the right to food from so many other human rights.

I argue that there is much to be learned from studying international anti-hunger advocacy. For one, the human rights literature is severely lopsided, with advocacy surrounding economic and social rights left understudied relative to their civil and political rights counterparts. Focusing on the right to food, an essential economic and social right, helps us to reexamine existing assumptions that all human rights have norms (I argue they do not),[56] that human rights law necessarily leads activists to target the actor assuming primary responsibility in law (I argue that in the case of the right to food it does not), and that human rights activists necessarily think of rights in legal terms (I argue the right to food is more frequently framed in moral and not legal terms, despite the availability of existing law). I will elaborate on these points further as I engage with the helpful comments and questions of reviewers below.

The Nature and Shape of International Anti-Hunger Advocacy

In reflecting on the behavior of international anti-hunger organizations, Lentz wonders if international organizations headquartered in the U.S. might behave differently from those headquartered in other countries. Indeed, the book does rely heavily on organizations with offices in the U.S., with some notable exceptions. I conducted interviews with senior officials at both the UK and US affiliate offices of ActionAid, Save the Children, and Oxfam, for instance. In terms of International Secretariats of the organizations, FIAN and Amnesty International's Secretariat offices are headquartered in Germany and

[55] Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[56] For a conceptual discussion on this point not tied to the hunger case, see: Michelle Jurkovich, "What Isn't a Norm? Redefining the Conceptual Boundaries of 'Norms' in the Human Rights Literature," *International Studies Review* 22:3 (2020): 693-711.

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the UK respectively, and ActionAid International's headquarters are in South Africa. More recently, Oxfam International relocated its headquarters to Kenya.

As international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) consider relocating their headquarters to countries in the Global South, Lentz's question becomes even more pressing. Will such relocations make any difference in the way the organization approaches its advocacy work? Proponents of the move out of Europe and North America hope that it will lend additional legitimacy to the work of the INGO, increase local participation and buy-in, and allow it to better support local programming. Whether and how the culture of an INGO with deep history in North America or Europe will change if it relocates elsewhere remains an open question.[57]

Lentz further wonders if the institutional design of the organizations included in the study might explain why their advocacy follows a "buckshot" instead of "boomerang" pattern. On this, I think the lack of a norm around hunger within the organization and advocacy community is more influential in explaining how it is possible that advocacy follows a "buckshot" and not "boomerang" pattern. Within the same organization (and thus, organizational structure) we can see different approaches to advocacy work around different types of human rights. Organizations like Amnesty International, for example, may follow "boomerang" models of advocacy in their work for some human rights (torture and enforced disappearances come immediately to mind) but target multiple actors (especially corporations and states) for other rights.[58] Chapter Two highlights how another organization (Oxfam America) can hold different understandings of state responsibility across the rights to education, health, and food (53-54). Holding constant the organizational structure, then, you can still see variation on this point. Norms establishing a consensus on "who should do what?" to respond to a rights violation do a tremendous amount of background work within these organizations to shape advocacy behavior. Within the same organization, a norm may well exist for some rights but not others, affecting whether or not the organization chooses to centralize blame on one unitary target in its advocacy work. And, as norms develop and change over time, we should expect advocacy behavior to change as well. "Boomerang" and "spiral" patterns of advocacy, I argue in the book, are enabled by norms already existing for the given human right in question to assist in concentrating pressure on a common target actor. For human rights which currently lack norms (such as the right to food), should a norm develop I would expect "boomerang" advocacy to be more likely.

This certainly does not mean that organizational structure is irrelevant in shaping the nature of advocacy. In particular, if organizations run active food assistance programming (which relies on the consent of national governments where the programming is based), there are indeed considerable risks to targeting national governments in advocacy work, as outlined in Chapter Four. Here I think especially of a conversation in 2013 with one Oxfam America senior staff member, who explained this tension in the following way: "We're willing to name names, to launch national campaigns. Yet to launch a campaign in a country against people . . . who are the corrupt, with private interests, then we have to be convinced that the good we will do with that national campaign will exceed the risk we will draw our programs into, which some of which are very traditional, because we do campaigning but we also do some basic stuff. That is my battle. . . . [Amnesty International], they don't have operations. They don't have to balance that." (99-100). Targeting corporations as to blame for hunger is certainly not without its risks (mostly in terms of possible litigation), but as the Oxfam America staff member noted,

[57] On the relocation of headquarters to increase INGO legitimacy see: Maryam Zarnegar Deloffre and Hans Peter Schmitz, "INGO Legitimacy: Challenges and Responses," in T. Davies, ed., *Routledge Handbook of NGOs and International Relations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019). On causes and effects of INGO headquarter relocations see: Kirsten Williams, "INGOs Relocating to the Global South," (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, 2018). DOI: https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/14058. On potential impacts of cultural and regulatory environments on U.S. headquartered INGOs, see George Mitchell and Sarah S. Stroup, "Domestic Constraints on the Global Impact of US Development Transnational NGOs," *Development in Practice* 30:6 (2020): 774-783.

[58] On the complex understanding of responsibility for economic and social rights within Amnesty International, see their organization's primer: Amnesty International, *Human Rights for Human Dignity: A Primer on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (Oxford: Alden Press, 2005): 43. Or see their second edition of the text (2014).

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corporations cannot deny visas which are so essential to continued Oxfam in-country programming and by contrast, Oxfam's active programming "don't operate in the lobby of these [corporations]" (99).

Lentz raises an excellent question on this point: if programming were separated from advocacy and international anti-hunger advocacy organizations ran no programming, would they be more likely then to focus pressure on national governments for fulfilling their obligations to ensuring the right to food? I think such a separation would certainly remove some of the barriers to targeting national governments, but at least two problems would remain: in the continued absence of an anti-hunger norm that good governments really *ought* to ensure the right to food of their people removing this risk will be insufficient. Additionally, as noted in discussions with various INGOs (notably World Vision, Oxfam, and ActionAid) there also remains a concern that as "outsider" organizations, often based (at least initially) in the Global North, these organizations lack the legitimacy to tell national governments in the Global South in particular how to spend limited budgets and financial resources, for instance on ensuring adequate food to their populations. I reflect on the puzzle of how foreign-based INGOs may feel legitimate in advocating for a national government to ensure some human rights but not others in Chapter Two (see especially 52-54).

As Haufler and Graddy-Lovelace correctly note, this book is not a study of agriculture or agrarian studies nor does it develop a theory of just food systems. Moreover, its international focus means it does not engage with important domestic food movements in the United States.

In deciding which organizations to include in the study (ultimately twelve INGOs and foundations were included, as well as the FAO), I selected influential organizations with a central focus on combatting hunger and promoting human rights. There were some difficult calls here, which I discuss in the introduction chapter. This meant omitting movements which do not take this work as their primary focus, but instead a focus on a number of related (and important!) topics like genetically modified organisms (GMOs), organic and fair-trade movements, organizations focusing on "buy-local" campaigns, movements primarily focusing on improving rural livelihoods and income, and improving soil and environmental sustainability in agricultural practices.

I absolutely agree with both Haufler and Graddy-Lovelace that Via Campesina and the broader food sovereignty movement are doing extremely important work on promoting peasants' rights and sustainable small-scale farming with an eye to not only improving livelihoods for peasant farmers but also farming methods that promote environmental sustainability. My original thinking in not including Via Campesina in the study was that as a social movement its primary objective was not to promote reductions in hunger but to fight for peasants' rights more broadly and the living conditions and dignity of small-scale farmers in particular. This said, it would be absolutely incorrect to say that Via Campesina and the food sovereignty movement make no efforts to combat hunger or promote the right to food. Indeed, many of the core tenets of the food sovereignty movement are adopted by other organizations that are included in the study. ActionAid, as Graddy-Lovelace notes, explicitly embraces a food sovereignty approach. FIAN's work, especially in promoting land tenure reforms, land protections for small scale farmers, and opposing corporate exploitation in agriculture also adopts key tenets of the food sovereignty movement. As a quick definitional aside, for readers unfamiliar with term "food sovereignty," it is a movement that seeks a more just and equitable food system where citizens have greater voice in determining how and where their food will be produced. The movement often encourages the promotion of locally grown agriculture and farming methods that are more environmentally and socially sustainable and may advocate for increased national food self-sufficiency.[59] Readers who

[59] For a helpful overview of the food sovereignty movement, including tensions within the movement over the acceptability of international trade, see: Burnett, Kim, and Sophia Murphy. "What place for international trade in food sovereignty?" *Journal of Peasant Studies* 41:6 (2014): 1065-1084.

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are interested in exploring points of tension between food sovereignty and rights approaches need look no further than Priscilla Claey's *Human Rights and the Food Sovereignty Movement: Reclaiming Control*.[60]

Culpability and State Responsibility

A core question brought up by Graddy-Lovelace concerns the appropriateness of centralizing pressure on national governments for ensuring the right to food. I will admit that as a political scientist I am rarely ever asked within my own field to justify a focus on governments (Graddy-Lovelace correctly notes the political science discipline tends to "fixate" on governments) and yet this is a great question! A few responses come to mind, though it is worth highlighting first that the primary actors under study in this book are not states, but international anti-hunger organizations themselves. However, as Graddy-Lovelace notes, the book probes why blame by these actors is not centralized on a common unitary target of the state to fulfill its human rights obligations (codified in law) when advocacy organizations often do centralize blame on the state when campaigning for the fulfillment and protection of other human rights. What makes advocacy around this human right different than advocacy around other human rights?

My answer in the book is that the absence of a norm within this advocacy community enables the "buckshot" behavior of targeting multiple actors as to blame for hunger. As noted in the book, instead of focusing blame on national governments to ensure the right to food of their people, as is their obligation under international law, international anti-hunger organizations rarely reference this existing law and instead target a wide array of actors (mostly transnational corporations, financial institutions, outside states, among others) for the problem of chronic hunger. This is not to say that targeting national governments never happens and human rights law is never referenced. FIAN, in particular, is more likely to do both, and yet overall, across these many organizations, national governments are targeted and existing human rights law is referenced far less often than our prior theories would have us expect. Human rights scholarship tends to assume that if states commit themselves to obligations in international law that activists will use those public commitments to compel actors to comply with their obligations under law. And these assumptions hold true for a great many human rights (often civil and political rights) though they do not in the case of the right to food. In this case, law has not translated into a norm across these influential international anti-hunger organizations that indeed national governments really are responsible for ensuring that those living within their borders have adequate nutritious food.

On the issue of blame, Graddy-Lovelace raises two central points. First, she argues that the diffusion of blame must result because the problem of hunger indeed is complicated and many actors are actually culpable. Second, Graddy-Lovelace presents a normative argument that diffusing responsibility and blame across many actors in international advocacy is the only appropriate and just response, arguing that "Blaming 'the state' risks ahistorical analysis; it can erase the reality of indigenous erasure, the legacies of slavery and of revolution. It can further disenfranchise the growing numbers of migrants, and undocumented and stateless people."

Beginning with the first point, I would argue for nearly all chronic social problems that both the cause of the problem and the identity of who acted in ways that caused or perpetuated the problem are extremely complex issues. When we think it is *obvious* that the state should be blamed for a given rights violation, it is usually less a feature of the simplicity of the violation of the right and more a feature of the hard work activists do to frame the violation as *obviously* the state's problem. This is true whether we are thinking of civil and political rights or economic and social rights. In Chapter Two I discuss the case of Amnesty International's boomerang-style advocacy against torture targeting then President George W. Bush as one example of how complex causal chains can be made to appear short, simple, and obvious. It was not Bush himself who was directly torturing individuals, but regardless of his individual role it was understood that blame should be focused on the president because it was his responsibility to ensure that this behavior did not take place under his leadership (43).

[60] Priscilla Claey, *Human Rights and the Food Sovereignty Movement: Reclaiming Control* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015).

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If we think, as I do, that human rights are social constructs, then it is up to the social community in constructing these rights to decide who is obliged to ensure they are protected and fulfilled. *What* a given social community decides to consider an entitlement, which is due to all based on the nature of being human, and *who* the community determines bears responsibility for ensuring that entitlement results through a process of social construction that can transform complex problems into concrete expectations of specific actors. In this way, two things can be true at once: A great many factors and actors can cause a violation of a human right, and a social community can still hold one actor primarily responsible for the violation even though the injustices that have led to that violation are far more complex than any single behavior of that one actor that the community determines to be ultimately responsible.

Economic and social rights may seem to be far more complicated and their violation to implicate far more actors than their civil and political counterparts, but I am convinced this is not true. Following the thinking of Henry Shue and David Beetham, I now see all human rights as complex, requiring both significant positive action and some degree of "negative" action (or abstention of action) in order to reach fulfillment.[61] As for why this action needs to be fulfilled by the state, as opposed to some other actor or actors, I would say part of that answer comes from states agreeing to take that responsibility up when they commit to doing so in various international conventions and agreements. In the case of some human rights, including some economic and social rights, there are also norms embedded in society that articulate this expectation. As I argue in the book, despite law ascribing responsibility to the state for ensuring the right to food, there is no corresponding norm, at least among the international anti-hunger community under study in the book. This lack of a norm is thus puzzling because there is law ascribing responsibility to the state but while corresponding norms have developed regarding state obligation for other (equally complicated) rights established in law, in the case of the right to food, there is no norm that any unitary actor is obliged to behave in any particular way to ensure everyone has access to adequate nutritious food.

It is not inevitable that there would be no norm around the right to food. Consider another complicated right to fulfill—the right to primary education. Let us imagine, for a moment, a seven-year old child who lives in a politically conservative town in the United States. Let's imagine that this child had no access to education, as his parents could not afford to put him in private school. Who might we imagine the community would think was to blame for the inability of that child to attend school? Many factors contribute to the inequalities that resulted in his parent's inability to send him to a private school, but ultimately, I think that even in the most politically conservative communities in the U.S., the state would be seen as to blame if this seven-year-old child did not have access to a free education. After all, access to primary education is a human right which society has determined (and reiterated in law) the state is obliged to provide to the children living within its borders. Should a child not have access to any primary education, despite the great many factors that are culpable historically and in the present moment in leading to its absence, there can still be a socially shared understanding that the state was ultimately to blame, as indeed, it was the state's job to ensure that education was made available to this child. I use this example not to deny the gross inequalities that exist in the public education system in the U.S. but rather to highlight that at least at some basic level even in politically conservative communities, there may still be a norm that the state is obliged to provide universal primary education. This is true despite the complexity and cost involved in ensuring the right and the many culpable actors that would have contributed to the inequality and injustices that led to the child not having access to affordable education.

The normative question Graddy-Lovelace raises—*shouldn't* we hold all actors culpable who have behaved in ways that have led to the rights violation? Isn't that the only just response?—is well taken. It is true that my book does not lay out a theory of justice as it relates to human rights advocacy, as my book is not an exercise in normative theory. Here I need to recognize my own limitations, as I am not trained as a political philosopher, in writing such a book. This, however, does not diminish the importance of the question.

[61] See Henry Shue, *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); David Beetham, "What Future for Economic and Social Rights?" *Political Studies* 43:1 (1995): 41–60.

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Broader engagement and generalizability

Both Haufler and Bellinger raise questions about how the argument of the book might travel to other issue areas and scholarly conversations. Haufler wonders if advocacy around natural resources or anti-racism might share similarities with the hunger case. As for which issue areas I would expect to be more likely to "buckshot" than follow "boomerang" or "spiral" models of advocacy, I argue that a core enabling condition to this type of advocacy is the absence of a norm. If a particular advocacy issue has the benefit of a norm attributing an expected appropriate behavior from a particular actor, I would expect "boomerang" or "spiral" advocacy to be more likely and "buckshot" advocacy to be less likely. Thinking back to the case of human rights in particular, if the human right (like food) lacked such a norm, the reverse would be true—"buckshot" would be more likely. The question to me, then, is what other issues lack norms but still have active advocacy efforts working towards their improvement?

Normative contexts, however, are not fixed things. They change over time, though some contexts change faster than others. An issue may lack a norm in a given social group today but develop one over the next decade. Similarly, I see little reason to assume that the reverse cannot also happen. Some issue areas may have norms today but those norms may erode to the point of collapse over time. Instead of thinking about certain issues as inherently prone to "buckshot" vs "boomerang" styles of advocacy, then, I would look to the normative context at play in a given moment of time. I would expect that styles of advocacy may also change over time as norms develop or erode. In the realm of economic and social rights, we can see important variation already on this point. Depending on the particular context, in many countries and advocacy communities, a norm already exists around the right to primary education with the national government as the actor expected to ensure access to this right for its citizens. Other economic and social rights, like housing and food, lack such a norm in many countries and advocacy communities. The right to health care in the U.S. context is in the middle of active efforts at constructing a norm of state obligation, and in other countries such a norm already exists. But again, as the normative context in which activists work changes, I would expect their advocacy patterns to change as well. I think future research on if and how advocacy patterns can change from "boomerang" to "buckshot " patterns over time may be especially fruitful.

Bellinger highlights how the implications of this book can travel outside of literatures on human rights and international advocacy and speak to scholarship on accountability, particularly as it relates to domestic political efforts at ensuring societal well-being. I think there are important connections between these conversations and I am appreciative of Bellinger highlighting these linkages. Additionally, she asks how we ought to think of individual perceptions about accountability for the right to food and its role in compelling states to uphold their responsibilities to ensure access to adequate food. Indeed, I think additional research on individual perceptions of responsibility and blame across different human rights is very important. Scholarship often assumes there is a norm within society to match existing state obligations in law when it comes to codified human rights. The case of the right to food urges caution on this front and highlights how laws and norms do not always walk hand-in-hand when it comes to human rights. The construction of norms attributing responsibility to any particular actor to behave in any particular way to ensure a given human right may result from very different processes than the construction of laws surrounding that same right. Whether a norm around a human right exists in a given advocacy community or broader domestic population should be an empirical question, not an assumed given.

In this vein, I think public opinion survey research could be especially illuminating on the extent to which a norm exists around a given human right in a particular population. I think, moreover, that we will likely find important variation across different rights in the extent to which any norm exists within a given population around state obligation. In another project currently in progress, co-authors Dina Bishara, Chantal Berman and I use a nationally representative survey to examine understandings of blame and state obligation around the right to food and right to health care in Tunisia.[62] We find important variation in the degree to which Tunisians blame the state when the rights to food and health care go unfulfilled,

[62] Dina Bishara, Michelle Jurkovich, and Chantal Berman, "Citizens' Understanding of the Social Contract: Lessons from Tunisia," *Working Paper.*

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with citizens more likely to strongly blame the state when an individual lacks adequate health care than when a citizen lacks adequate food, even though the state is responsible for both under international human rights law.

Bellinger further asks if the pandemic might create an opening to reconsider the obligation of national governments for ensuring their populations have access to adequate food. The issue of hunger in specific contexts (such as the U.S.) is certainly receiving increased attention by both the media and public officials during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, there have been meaningful changes, thinking here in the U.S. context again, in public food assistance measures during the pandemic. And yet, as I have written elsewhere, the U.S. has historically shown a high tolerance for hunger within its borders, at least for specific populations of individuals. Food insecurity rates among households with children headed by a single woman in the U.S. have consistently had food insecurity rates of between 28.7 percent and 35.3 percent every year since 2014. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that food insecurity rates among Black households has ranged from 19.1 percent to 26.1 percent, and among Hispanic households 15.6 percent to 22.4 percent every year since 2014.[63] This persisted due to the very limited public food assistance available in the US. The question for us now is whether increased attention and funding will be short term responses during the pandemic (and to hunger now reaching more Americans), or whether this signals a potential opening in reconsidering state obligation to the right to food in a post-pandemic world.

Again, I am deeply grateful for the questions, comments, and engagement (and time!) of all those participating in this roundtable.

[63] Michelle Jurkovich, "Who's Responsible for Feeding Hungry People?" *New Security Beat* (January 5, 2021). DOI: https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2021/01/whos-responsible-feeding-hungry-people/.

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