

# Agricultural and science education: a socio-analysis of their intersection and positions within the educational field

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**Abstract** It can be argued that agricultural science is one of the original forms of science education. However, over the past century, agricultural science education has habitually been perceived as an educational venue meant solely for production agriculturalists. When examining modern agricultural education we find it to be a minority within the broader field of science education, contradicting its historically stout scientific standing within the sciences. This educational shift leaves one to ponder the historic development of contemporary agricultural education. To gain deeper insight into these questions we reviewed the historical evolution of agricultural education within the United States. We then examined the professional habitus, or cultural nuances, associated with contemporary agricultural education. Next, we considered potential outcomes associated with the profession embracing post-modern perspectives within mainstream science and community-based education. Finally, we call for critical venues within agriculture education to question the status quo and challenge the acceptance of commonly held views.

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It can be argued that agricultural science is one of the original forms of science education (Zizumbo-Villarreal and Colunga 2010). Evidence suggests that for centuries humans used rudimentary scientific procedures to modify and adapt agrarian and food preservation practices (Kuijt 2009). In more modern times, the industry proclaimed “father of genetics”—Gregor Mendel—used plants and animals, meant for food and fiber production, to make great strides in furthering our understanding of genetic heredity and heterosis (Henig 2000). Within the United States, agricultural education was implemented as early as 1734 (Moore 1987). It was used as a means to sustain rural communities as they researched and applied best agrarian practices. However, over the past century, agricultural education has been routinely perceived as an educational venue solely for production agriculturalists (Fraze, Rutherford, Wingenbach and Wolfskill 2011). When examining contemporary agricultural education we find it to be a minority within the broader field of science education. This contradicts its historically stout scientific standing within the sciences, leaving one to ponder the historic development of contemporary agricultural education. It lends us to asking such questions as, “What is the contemporary status of agricultural education?” and “What is its relevance for twenty-first century rural and urban student populations?”

To gain deeper insight into these questions we review the historical development of agricultural education within the United States. We then utilize Pierre Bourdieu’s sociological field theory as a lens and his concepts as “thinking tools” to analyze the contemporary position of agricultural education in both the education field and the subfield of science education. Next, we consider potential outcomes associated with the profession embracing post-modern perspectives within mainstream science and community-based education. Finally, we call for critical venues within agriculture education to question the status quo and challenge the acceptance of commonly held views.

## **Agricultural science education: a history within the United States**

Throughout American history, agriculture and agricultural education have enjoyed a rich cultural, educational and scientific heritage (Hillison 1996). However, this legacy was not without its political and professional instability. Within the formal education system, agricultural education has endured several decades of diverging educational ideologies (McDermott and Knobloch 2005). In order to withstand such political turbulence, agricultural education had to bolster its professional and cultural strengths. It did so by stressing its ability to supply a prominent, entry-level, workforce for food and fiber industries within the United States (Slusher, Robinson and Edwards 2011). Additionally, agricultural education subsisted by becoming a prominent social pillar within rural communities (Martin and Henry 2012). However, it is arguable that the profession’s historical strengths have also become its weaknesses within a dominant metrocentric educational system. Due to its vocational or pragmatic focus and historically rural context, agricultural education has become marginalized within the broad field of science education. In fact, the relevancy of agricultural education in contemporary education has been broadly challenged (Balschweid, Thompson and Cole 1997).

The vocationally derived persona currently permeating formal agricultural education did not always exist. In fact, its history suggests a strong scientific foundation, leaving the authors puzzled regarding the philosophical and practical shifts associated with the profession today. Therefore, we probed deeper into the field’s history. It appears that in the

late 1800's there was an agricultural science revolution. According to John Hillison (1996), due to an increased population and food demand, multiple politically influential forces worked together to enhance scientific research associated with agricultural production. This collaborative thrust resulted in the passing of the Hatch Act of 1887. The Hatch Act provided funding, from the United States Department of Agriculture, for state based agricultural experiment stations. Results from these experiments were distributed informally to rural Americans by the local university representatives (Hillison 1996). This was an early example of rural agriscience education.

Indirectly, the agricultural science movement greatly influenced primary and secondary education (Hillison 1998). The growing field of agricultural education was viewed as encompassing concepts associated with multiple scientific disciplines, resulting in its own identity:

Agricultural education, as at present understood, is a comprehensive term, including instruction in chemistry, geology, botany, zoology, mechanics—embracing, in short the science as well as the practice of agriculture. (Chambers' Encyclopedia 1889, p. 61)

As a result agricultural educators were highly sought after, but minimally trained. In order to assist in meeting the educational demand, several agricultural experiment stations began developing educational training materials for pre-service science and agricultural teachers within the established normal schools (Herren and Hillison 1996). This multi-science perspective continued during the turn of the twentieth century. In fact, in 1913 it was suggested that secondary agriculture and science courses be combined so that students could conduct experiments that solved local agricultural issues (Hillison 1996). The idea being that research conducted by high school students, community members, cooperative extension agents and university researchers be shared to further our rural scientific knowledge.

### **Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, a shift in professional philosophy and practice**

In 1914, the agricultural science revolution gained further momentum with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. This Act established funding to develop the Cooperative Extension Service. As a result, county extension agents, associated with the land-grant college system, were charged with relaying best research practices obtained by the agricultural experiment stations to rural agriculturalists (Camp 1987). It was also during the passing of the Smith-Lever Act that Charles Prosser, lobbyist for the National Society for Promotion of Industrial Education, reached a compromise with policy makers (Camp 1987). As part of the agreement, Prosser negotiated support for the Smith-Lever Act but only if legislators would ensure that a commission would be created to evaluate the national need for vocational education in the secondary education system. Once the bill was passed, President Woodrow Wilson requested the United States Congress establish a Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education (1914) (Robin 2012). The responsibility of this commission was to determine if there was a need for legislation supporting vocational education in the public school systems. It is important to note that none of the stakeholders represented by this commission were directly associated with secondary education and several had little to no agricultural background. Most of the committee included congressmen and labor interest groups (Robin 2012). Upon reviewing the committee's

recommendation, it was evident that political stakeholders were more interested in establishing a sustainable American labor force than promoting agricultural scientists.

The commission's report would later become the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, often misunderstood as the birthplace of agricultural education (Bowen 1987). While it may not have been the profession's birthplace, it did have a direct influence on the professional philosophy and practice of agricultural education. In fact, the Act proposed a distinctly vocational, rather than scientifically reinforced, definition for agricultural education as cited by Hillison (1996):

the purposes of [agricultural education] shall be to fit for useful employment; that such education shall be of less than college grade and be designed to meet the needs of persons over fourteen years of age who have entered upon or who are preparing to enter upon the work of the farm or of the farm home. (p. 10)

This dichotomous shift de-emphasized the multi-scientific nature of rural agricultural science education established by the Hatch Act of 1887, and transferred the focus to vocational skill development. Additionally, agricultural education became the educational venue for secondary students preparing to or already working on a farm. This shift limited its contextualization to mostly rural agrarian students and further separated agricultural education from science education. Finally, by focusing on vocational training rather than scientific inquiry, agricultural education found itself as an elective discipline in secondary education, furthering its educational isolation.

Within the academy, Agricultural education, as a field, has also been isolated when it comes to scholarship and research. This is vividly illustrated by the fact that the field's premier journal, *Journal of Agricultural Education*, is not included in the Web of Science which results in the work of many prominent members of the field being largely invisible to much of education's scholarly community.

## **Bourdieu's field theory and agricultural education**

One of the most influential sociologists of the twentieth century, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, is known for his broad theory of fields. The relevance of his approach to cultural studies is widely recognized as evidenced by the 2003 special issue of the flagship journal *Cultural Studies* devoted specifically to Bourdieu (Pileggi and Patton 2003). Moreover, Bourdieu himself applied his field theory toward educational practice, beginning with his seminal work *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). An important strength of Bourdieu's theory is that it is applicable to a wide variety of social entities and allows one to analyze the often invisible and, therefore, rarely studied forms of social practice that lie behind the obvious or taken for granted. Bourdieu sees modernity as a process of differentiation into increasingly specialized, semi-autonomous "fields" or spheres of action such as economics, politics, culture, and education. He perceives human action as being fundamentally structured both within and among these fields by relations of power. A field such as agricultural education can be thought of as a network or configuration of objective relations between positions and, according to Bourdieu, what is real is relational and to exist socially is to mark one's difference vis-à-vis others in a largely unconscious, ongoing process (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Field theory is more an analytical tool or research strategy than a prepackaged set of hypotheses about the social world (Shultz 2007). Many have utilized his approach to study the broad

field of education. However few, if any, have explicitly applied his theoretical perspective to agricultural education.

Using Bourdieu's field theory as an analytical frame, we can view agricultural education, given its marginal position within the educational field, as a subfield or microcosm with its own rules, which is constituted semi-autonomously and which cannot be understood from external factors alone. The agricultural education profession is where the game of agricultural education is played. It is impossible to understand agricultural education by solely examining the number of agriculture teachers, where they are located, the content of courses, instructional practice, etc. To understand agricultural education requires understanding the effects people engaged in the field have on each other, and the ongoing struggle of defining what best practices are or what good agricultural education is. To understand what an agricultural educator does using this perspective requires knowing what his or her position is in the agricultural education field as well as the power and prestige of agricultural education in the larger field of general education. That power can be economic or it can be symbolic in nature. A sector of education (e.g., agricultural education, science education) or an individual organization (e.g., American Association of Agricultural Education, Association for Science Teacher Education) is in a dominant position in the field when it can distort the space around itself and impose its own views on the field.

The concept of "capital" and the different forms of it are the key to understanding the distribution and relative positions of agents (organizations and individuals) in a field. The two most dominant forms of capital, according to Bourdieu (1998), are economic capital and cultural capital. In its most basic form, economic capital is money and assets that can be turned into money. Cultural capital, on the other hand, encompasses harder to measure things such as technical expertise, educational and other credentials, verbal abilities, etc. The specific forms of economic and cultural capital vary from field to field. Agricultural education capital is the specific cultural capital of the agricultural education field and represents the resources an agent has to put into the agricultural education game that are recognized in the field and by other agents in it. For example, agriculture education students could gain cultural capital by winning local, state or national competitions in field specific areas, by becoming a state or national FFA officer, or by obtaining a Greenhand, State, or American Degree also within the FFA student organization. Professionals often gain cultural capital through the type and length of their professional experience, formal organizational position or service (e.g., officer in professional organization), and through the success of their students in the National FFA organization.

Within the agricultural education field, economic capital is expressed through the size of and financial support for programs, physical facilities, and/or salaries. Of particular distinctiveness is the concept of extended teaching contract days in secondary agricultural education. While financially rewarding, this concept is historically based in that it is tied to student supervision associated with agricultural production and/or placement in the summer months, often coinciding with county fairs, leadership camps and other integral rural activities. It is the prominence of these cultural and economic capitals that add to the distinction of agricultural education from other educational disciplines.

Fields are characterized by their specific "doxa" or common experience that seems self-evident or self-explaining. According to Bourdieu (1998), the doxa of a field is the taken for granted and seemingly natural aspects of social practice which are rarely made explicit and seldom questioned. It is a particular point of view, the point of view of the dominant within a field, which presents and imposes itself as a universal point of view. Bourdieu uses the related concept of "symbolic violence" to refer to the ways dominant classes or class

fractions impose ruling ideology upon dominated groups. It draws attention to “the recognition by the dominated of the legitimacy of domination” (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977).

Within the agricultural education field, the doxa includes the tacit presuppositions teachers and teacher educators take for granted on things such as what constitutes a good agricultural education program. For instance, the Venn diagram, which incorporates the interconnectedness of classroom-based instruction, supervised agricultural experience projects—individually based and meant for students to apply agricultural concepts outside of formal instruction, and the FFA student organization (Croom 2008) has been viewed an industry standard for decades. However, its origin, organizational importance and contemporary relevance are rarely challenged or questioned. Additionally, intense student competition within the FFA organization is often viewed as a standard for successful programming and instruction, both by members of the profession as well as the supporting rural community.

The notion of “habitus” is central to Bourdieu’s understanding of the way society shapes individual actions. According to Bourdieu (2003), habitus is defined as: “a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices...” Habitus is a socialized subjectivity which suggests individuals’ predispositions, assumptions, judgments, and behaviors are the result of a long-term socialization process. While an individual’s family is the primary incubator of this process, it also takes place in educational and other institutions. Habitus is not unchangeable and is, in fact, constantly changing. Early experiences and practices do, however, shape those that follow. Habitus is important to an individual’s performance in a field because, when it is in sync with the doxa of that field, he or she is predisposed to behave in ways consistent with the rules of the game and is likely to perform well. When the doxa of the field and an individual’s habitus are out of sync, there is a lack of fit and he or she performs like “a fish out of water” and is likely to flounder.

Agricultural education habitus would refer to a player or educator’s predispositions towards a specific way of playing both the agricultural education and larger general education games. Due to its rural and agrarian roots, agricultural education’s habitus is often influenced by rural America’s norms and ethics, often conveying religious and conservative undertones. These cultural structures often influence professional dispositions. These dispositions influence how the player positions himself or herself in the game and his or her embodied “feel for the game” or “aged gut feelings.” When one is not in sync with the professional doxa, it can lead to professional dissonance, which has the potential to further isolate one professionally, solely to agricultural education, or lead to minimal acceptance from both educational fields. The distinction of professional habitus from other disciplines is often highlighted by tensions associated with delegated multi-disciplinary structures (academic departments, research teams, professional councils).

A final important concept which also influences individual actions within a field is “*illusio*”. This refers to an individual agent’s “investment,” both cognitive and emotional, in the stakes involved in any particular field or, put another way, belief that the game is worth playing. For those who ascribe to the professional doxa of agricultural education, it is easy to invest in the established structure. This is often simpler for those who were “raised” in secondary agricultural education and who ascribed to the cultural norms while acquiring cultural capital. Often times those who heavily invest in the field’s *illusio* become agricultural teachers themselves, and in return, further proliferate agricultural education doxa and habitus. However, those with less “*illusio*” may find the doxa daunting

leading to professional attrition or apathy, diminishing the field's philosophical and social diversity.

As the above description suggests, field theory posits a great deal of inherent dynamism and conflict within fields. Despite their dynamic nature, most of the activity within a field tends, to a large extent, to reproduce and perpetuate the structure of the field. An exception to this is when the field is also subject to pressures from neighboring fields such as the establishment of new political orders, scientific and technological innovations, dramatic changes in the legal and economic policy environment, cultural and social movements, and economic crises (Benson and Neveu 2005). Another factor Bourdieu posits to be important to the conservation or transformation of a field is the influx of new members. There is little doubt that both conditions are currently impacting agricultural education. Just as is the case for education in general, agricultural education is confronted with increasing demands for assessment and to demonstrate both its effectiveness and continuing relevance. At the same time, a new awareness of and support for locally grown foods, urban agriculture, and sustainability has focused public awareness on agriculture and is bringing new players into the game and creating new clientele with new expectations for agricultural education.

Having briefly outlined some of the key tenets and concepts of Bourdieu's field theory and how they can be applied to agricultural education, we are now ready to use them to frame our discussion as we consider the opportunities and threats facing agricultural education and the potential outcomes associated with the profession embracing a Bourdieuan perspective within mainstream science education, education and community-based education in the current post-modern context.

## Using Bourdieu to examine agricultural education within a postmodern context

Bourdieu's theoretical perspective can be examined within a postmodernist context. It can be argued that consciously or unknowingly we are living in a postmodern era, of which agriculture education can play a substantial part. Postmodernism is a broad historical movement just like the Renaissance or the Enlightenment (Lyotard 1992). As a historical movement, it takes on many nuances; it is pervasive in art, architecture, literature, social sciences and even agriculture. While it is difficult to characterize postmodernism, there are two consistent themes. First, there is a blurring of boundaries within and among disciplines and institutions. For example, Italian furniture designers mix inexpensive plastics with expensive wood while architects weave historic designs into contemporary building. Postmodernism can even be found among orthodox Christians who integrate certain aspects of yoga (from Hinduism) and meditation (from Buddhism) into their spiritual practices while still maintaining their core identity. In essence, boundaries aren't always clear in a postmodern world where there is a cross pollination of genres, cultures and disciplines.

Second, postmodernists tend to question an objective scientific reality, thus challenging the doxa associated with the educational fields of agricultural education, science education and other educational disciplines. They question universal knowledge associated with particular fields. They do so by evaluating power structures within institutional and organizational structures.

What does this mean for agriculture education? Let's examine the blurring of boundaries in the broader field of agriculture. It is estimated that 15 % of the world's food is

produced in urban areas (Hoorweg and Munro-Faure 2008). Many are rural migrants who bring their agriculture knowledge into the cities. According to the United Nations, it is estimated that 800 million people are engaged in urban and peripheral-urban agriculture worldwide. Of these, 200 million are considered to be market producers who employ 150 million people full-time. (Hoorweg and Munro-Faure 2008). In the U.S. and Canada, there are similar patterns. Urban and peripheral-urban farms are emerging in large cities such as Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee and Cleveland. They include roof top farms on convention centers, vertical farms in former warehouses and newly emerging school and community gardens. Increasingly, there are more visible urban “guerilla” gardeners and farmers that plant and harvest from vacant lots.

Retail farmers who sell directly to urban dwellers through community supported agriculture and farmers markets are also growing at an exponential rate, due in part to citizen interest in fresh and healthy foods with concerns about large-scale agriculture and food security. Urban citizens are part of a food democracy movement that is concerned about the concentration of food production in the hands of a handful of major corporations. They are also raising ethical concerns about how conventional agriculture harms the environment or animals (Ladner 2011). These new directions in urban agriculture, shifting consumer demands and food democracy point to at least two new opportunities within the field of agricultural education.

### **Opportunity #1: reexamining the values and beliefs of agricultural education**

We believe there is a need for agriculture education to evaluate itself from a third party perspective using Bordieu’s socio-analytic tools. This could lead to posing such critical questions as:

- Does the current professional doxa and habitus allow for the incorporation of contemporary post-modern opportunities to blur contextual and disciplinary boundaries and questioning professional beliefs?
- Does the traditionally accepted tenets of a successful agricultural program still hold true in a post-modern era characterized by social, economic, racial, religious and ethnic diversity inclusiveness and identity politics?
- Is the purpose of agricultural education to be a core academic or multi-collaborative science within formal and community-based education or to provide an entry-level workforce for the larger agricultural industry?
- Should the focus of agricultural education be limited to the formal education system or should it be broadened to include non-formal and community-based education?
- What are the field’s values and beliefs regarding the shifting concerns of consumers and food democracy?
- Should it align itself wholeheartedly with the dominant powers in agriculture? If so, what are the costs to the field?

Based on our 10-year review of professional conference proceedings and key agricultural science publications, these questions are seldom asked.

We recommend agriculture educators move beyond their disciplinary boundaries and work with social scientists, the humanities and other scientists to encourage and help students examine the shadow side of both unconventional and conventional agriculture



approaches that include bio-ethics, cultural and spiritual practices associated with agriculture and food, environmental stewardship, economics and community life. It is our assertion that the field will become more marginalized should it continue to take an uncritical perspective toward all agricultural advancements and practices.

Potential strategies to address this opportunity:

1. Key conferences and journals about agriculture education need to encourage plenary presentations, papers and workshops that address questions about the unquestioned assumptions or doxa and future of the field, focusing on the questions previously presented.
2. Teams comprised of internal, external and marginalized researchers should argue for funding opportunities from public and private sources to conduct research pertaining to the goals, values and assumptions within the cultural, political, economic contexts of the field.

## Opportunity #2: cross-disciplinary pedagogies in agricultural education

Contemporary agricultural educators should be commended on their long-standing application of experiential education. Within the field, educators often apply scientific concepts to rural and agrarian contexts, scaffolding the cognitive application for their students. This pedagogical practice has recently been adopted by the general sciences as exhibited by the Next Generation Science Standards (2013), allowing for a multi-disciplinary opportunity that could showcase the positive contributions of agricultural education. However, it can be argued that agricultural education is often constrained by its internal focus and academic isolation. It needs to free itself from its doxa and engage in cross-disciplinary pedagogy, as it is often educationally (vocationally typecast) and geographically isolated (both at the secondary and post-secondary levels) from mainstream education. This unrecognized and generally accepted professional and geographic isolation is a primary example of Bourdieu's concept of "symbolic violence".

Paulo Freire (1972) challenged traditional education and claimed that it ignored cultural contexts of poverty, racism or other forms of oppression. His pedagogy involved raising questions about difficult issues such as water scarcity, landlord dominance or market practices which hurt individual farmers. He provided a learning venue that influenced personal and collective agency. This process led to new ways of thinking and released community members from their habitus by challenging conventional, political and economic doxa. We assert that Freire's critical pedagogy could be used as a tool to complement Bourdieu's focus on uncovering unspoken assumptions. It can be argued that aspects of pedagogical doxa within agricultural education can stifle diverse thinking and limit student and collegial inclusion.

We assert that the growing interest in civic entrepreneurship can also be a venue that can integrate technical knowledge with emancipatory knowledge. It can stimulate creativity and passion among teachers, students, parents and community. Within this paradigm, students can conduct research about trends in food systems, food deserts, and food democracy by evaluating their scientific and social implications. At the post-secondary level agricultural educators can develop and implement civic entrepreneurial ventures that incorporate broad scientific and social fields to address global issues. In essence, there are significant options to integrate civic entrepreneurship into Freire's framework. Students

can learn to question assumptions about the status quo, tap into their creative potential and start new civic enterprises.

To accomplish this there are two key strategies that we recommend:

1. We believe there must be incentives for agricultural educators to explore the strengths and limitations of Freire's framework and then experiment with it within agricultural education. We believe that technical knowledge should not be abandoned but needs to be complemented by local and countercultural knowledge—supporting the concept of culturally relevant instruction. Agricultural educators can be freed from excessive emphasis on established habitus. We challenge the universities that train agricultural educators to foster research and curricula reflecting these approaches.
2. We believe that civic entrepreneurship can stimulate technical and emancipatory knowledge. It energizes teacher, student and parent creativity and opens up options other than “finding a job.” An entrepreneurial framework in teaching tends to question the status quo and that's why it should be integrated into all aspects of agriculture education. We believe that agricultural student teams can conduct scientific research, launch new ventures and glean insights and lessons from the field—ultimately supporting both rural and urban communities. We believe this approach will build a more invigorating habitus and doxa for the field.

## Conclusions

Throughout this manuscript we argue that formal agriculture education, from its inception, was viewed as encompassing the multi-sciences of chemistry, geology, botany, zoology and mechanics. However, the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 shifted the field's focus to a stronger emphasis on vocational skill development to benefit the agriculture industry. This political shift gradually led to increased academic and social isolation within the broader educational system and is expressed in forms of defensiveness and traditions which mark who is “in” and who is “out.”

We examined the current status and future of the field of agriculture education through the lens of Pierre Bourdieu's field theory. Fields are characterized by their “doxa” or common experiences of its members. It includes the things which teachers and teacher educators take for granted and how they should behave. “Habitus” is another Bourdieu concept. It is the underlying structure that shapes individual action and behavior; it involves unwritten rules for performing well. The field of agricultural education and its doxa and professional habitus are being confronted with dynamics and conflicts from within as well as from neighboring fields involving scientific and technical innovations including changes in the political, economic and cultural landscape. Bourdieu asks us to question the hidden assumptions, unwritten rules and group behavior in a field and in this case, we are applying it to agricultural education.

We also contextualized agriculture education within the postmodern era. This historical era is characterized by a cross-pollination and a blurring of boundaries among disciplines, philosophies and genres. Postmodernism also tends to question the objectivity of science with tough questions about whose financial and social status is being served by science and whose interests are not addressed. Agriculture educators are particularly vulnerable to postmodern critiques because of the field's isolation from mainstream education and its unquestioned doxa and professional habitus.

We provide two recommendations and four strategies for addressing this vulnerability. One is about exploring the internal beliefs, values, hidden rules and assumptions and other unquestioned aspects of the field. We suggest venues to build bridges with other disciplines to investigate these phenomena. While we value agricultural education's experiential approach to education, we raised questions about the culture associated with its comprehensive pedagogy—a culture that could stifle free thinking, ignoring the growing social, economic, racial, ethnic, and religious affiliation and new sexual and political identities that are highly visible in the land. Urban agriculture production, food deserts, food democracy and other issues can be addressed within a more critical and civically engaged pedagogy. We provide several recommendations for moving forward.

In essence, we argue that agriculture education will become more vulnerable and isolated if it does not face some nagging questions about its future that are raised by both a Bourdieuan critique and the current postmodern context. While there is a strong tendency for the agricultural education status quo, as with any field, to reproduce itself, we believe a Bourdieuan socio analysis illustrates why and how change may be possible at this particular historical period. As noted above, field theory posits a great deal of dynamism and conflict within fields with change most likely to occur when a field is subject to pressures from neighboring fields and when there is an influx of new members who may not share the common experience (doxa) of others in the field or be as invested in the field (illusio) or believe that the current game is worth playing. As outlined above, we believe these conditions exist today for agricultural education and could potentially result in greater dynamism and change within the field than at any time since its historic vocational turn a century ago. Change is at the heart of Bourdieu's sociology and his approach to change through first denaturalizing the status quo and getting people to understand the systems in which they are operating is powerful. Simply put, the time is ripe to turn the focus onto the common experience of agricultural education that seems self-evident to those currently within it. The time is ripe to start deconstructing the narratives that have dominated the field for the past 100 years and now contribute to its isolation and marginalization within both science education and the broader field of education.

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