



Tishman Environment
and Design Center



TISHMAN CENTER · NOVEMBER 13, 2016

What Will Change: Fabio Parasecoli on Food

The next four years will prove to be unprecedented in the roll-back and dismantling of environmental protections. In our new series, What Will Change, Tishman Center Affiliated Faculty reflect on the environmental and social justice impacts of the election results from the perspectives of their research, practice, and passion.

By: Fabio Parasecoli

My work focuses on food, which may come across as apolitical but is actually profoundly entangled with power dynamics, social structures, cultural identities, and environmental issues. Food is a field where sustainability assumes a very immediate, tangible meaning. However, despite its centrality in everybody's life and its impact in terms of justice, health, and economics, food did not appear at all among the concerns that were debated by the candidates. Because of that, it is not easy to gauge in what direction the new administration will move, but the promise of greater deregulation, less EPA control, and the overall skeptical attitude towards climate change makes me think that environmental issues connected to agriculture, fishing, and animal husbandry will be front and center. The new administration's favorable attitude towards the fossil fuel-based energy industry could also slow down the efforts to increase the use of renewable resources in the food systems and its shift towards more sustainable models. This issue will become crucial in the debate about the upcoming farm bill in Congress, where not only the future of US food production will be determined, but also the funding to support the most vulnerable sections of the population through school food, SNAP, WIC and

other programs. The call to reduce the role of government interventions could have a negative impact on the amount of resources dedicated to these initiatives. As a food studies scholar, a researcher, and a public intellectual, my first call is to help students and the community outside the university to understand the relevance of these issues, their dynamics, and their impact. It is important to focus not only on structural features, but also on the cultural and justice aspects that underlie them. Moreover, theory and applied practice cannot be separated any longer. It becomes crucial to pair the insights and the analysis that is central to food studies with hands-on projects and initiatives for change and social innovation. *[Fabio Parasecoli](#) is an Associate Professor and Director of Food Studies Initiatives at [The School for Public Engagement](#) at The New School.*



Comments (0)

Newest First