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Managing Family Food Consumption: Going Beyond Gender in the Kitchen

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Managing Family Food Consumption: Going Beyond Gender in the Kitchen

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Sociology
College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Florida

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to Mom, Dad, Paige, Jackson, and Ryan. With your support and love all things are possible.

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Abstract

How have food identities and practices in upper middle class homes responded to foodie culture? While the majority of the sociological literature focuses on gendered divisions of labor in the kitchen, food security, and healthy eating, my research focuses on how foodie culture discourse has entered the home and shaped food identities and practice. My sample consists of interviews with thirteen parents, both mothers and fathers, with at least one child in the “tween” age range. Using grounded theory, I analyzed and coded the data for recurring themes. I then divided the participants into two groups based on how they discussed their identity as it relates to food; Group 1 viewed food work as a hobby while Group 2 viewed food work as a chore. My findings include themes of the discussion of food identity, nutritional discourse knowledge, shopping practices, defensive moments, feeding strategies, and fathers who cook. My study demonstrates that race, ethnicity, gender, class, nutritional discourse knowledge, time, and parenting style all play an important role in the formation of food identity.

Chapter One: Introduction

With the advent of the Food Network, a television channel entirely dedicated to food, various reality cooking shows outside of the Food Network, constant booms and busts of fad diets, and a nationwide discussion of the obesity epidemic, there is a heightened sense of awareness from the general public about food issues. The First Lady has even contributed to this discussion with her “Let’s Move!” campaign and vegetable garden on the White House lawn. In his 1996 work, *Sociology of the Menu*, Beardsworth asserted that the social aspects of food and eating have long been ignored by sociologists. Fast forward to 2014 and the sociology of food is one of the hottest topics in the discipline. The food choices we make go beyond simple biology and nutrition; food is cultural, social, and familial. Even with the rise of the study of the sociology of food, some topics have been overlooked or glossed over. DeVault’s *Feeding the Family*, published in 1991, undertook the large project of the gendered division of labor in feeding the family. Though life was certainly complex in 1991, the complexity of feeding the family in 2014 is even greater. The rise of the internet, increased concern with climate change, food safety scares, and other events have changed the way society approaches food choice, particularly parents. While parents have always been responsible for feeding their families, a new foodie discourse has helped shaped the way food providers see themselves and their responsibilities. The numerous interrelated tasks involved in the daily work of feeding the family all contribute to the individual’s food identity.

Before I continue, it is necessary to define the term “food identity.” Past research has focused on the intersection of gender and foodie identities, examining how pleasure, care work,

and knowledge and expertise combine to form a gendered foodie identity (Cairns et al. 2010). Building on this understanding of how gender contributes to food identity, race, ethnicity, class, time, and parenting style must also be included in order to have a more complete understanding of food identity.

While only relatively few people self-define as a “foodie” the popularization of this term seems to be opening up new spaces for subjectivity in our culture, giving individuals license to regard and approach food differently from the way advertising tends to recommend. Instead of saving time and energy to enjoy the high sugar, fat, and sodium diet celebrated in fast food and processed food advertisements, the foodie mentality seems to borrow from the slow food ethic that gained a huge international following from its birth place in Italy. We are given license to slow down, enjoy the processes of food selection, preparation, serving, and most of all tasting. While on one hand this might seem elitist – who has time to slow down but the elite? On the other hand, it traces back to the agrarian roots of many American families, and to a time when speed was not the number one value in America. No one has yet asked how this oppositional discourse on food often characterized as “foodie culture” is entering into the social dynamics, including the gender dynamics, around food in the upper middle class home. This thesis will do that.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Feeding the Family

Food choice goes beyond simple biological needs; it is intensely cultural, as appropriate food choices are socially constructed. As Delormier et al. describes the “act of swallowing”, it is divided by two cultures, “the post swallowing world of biology, physiology, biochemistry, and pathology, and the pre-swallowing domain of behavior, culture, society, and experience.” (2009: 217). Families, as an agent of socialization, play a primary role in determining how children learn and make choices about food. Food providers make choices based on their own tastes as well as nutritional considerations, and therefore instill these taste and nutrition habits in their children. Consequently, food is an important component of the reproduction of family identity across generations (Bugge & Almas 2006). Food is a vehicle for passing down cultural traditions and unique family dishes and recipes. Food choice is part of the everyday routines and rituals that serve to enact the family; the negotiations and bargaining about food are essential to the active process of enacting family (Phillips 2008). Mothers, fathers, and children all play a role in enacting the family, especially through food negotiation. Children complicate these interactions, as food “situates the child as both subject and object – as a person or being with likes and dislikes, yet as a thing to be nourished.” (Cook 2009: 331).

The literature suggests that in today’s society, feeding the family is intensive work. DeVault’s work, *Feeding the Family*, argued that the work of feeding family members, from grocery shopping, to meal preparation, etc. is highly gendered and falls to women, even when women work outside of the home full time (1991:95). More recent studies have reaffirmed

DeVault's findings that food work is still highly gendered (Cairns et al. 2010; Cook 2009; Ristovski-Slijepcevic et al. 2010). However, not all food providers find food to be intensive work. Television programming, particularly programs on The Food Network, food work is framed as fun, often a hobby and therefore an outlet from work. There is a sub group of people from whom food is a hobby and a source of entertainment and pleasure. Many people in this sub group are also parents, and this group has not been addressed in the sociological literature.

Much of the work of feeding the family has fallen on women and this expectation is often described as the second shift (Hochschild 1989); in nuclear families with both parents working women are still doing the majority of household work. Much of this work that was outlined by Hochschild (1989) and DeVault (1991) has been devalued and seen as drudgery. However, there has been a redefinition and new set of expectations as echoed in the larger culture regarding these tasks. Mothers today are subject to intensive mothering, often referred to as the ideology of the "new momism." Intensive mothering is intensive in at least three ways: emotionally, physically, and financially (Pederson 2012). Douglas and Michaels (2004:619) define the new momism as the social construction that states that

No woman is truly complete or fulfilled unless she has kids, that women remain the best primary caretakers of children, and that to be a remotely decent mother, a woman has to devote her entire physical, psychological, emotional, and intellectual being, 24/7, to her children.

The media play an important role in the new momism. With motherhood being a focus in the media since the 1980's, there is a plethora of news stories, magazine articles, and self-help books regarding how to be the ideal mother. Food and nutrition are important components in the new momism. As Douglas and Michaels (2004) cheekily write, mothers are expected to "sculpt the carrots we put in our kids' lunches into the shape of peonies" (623). Not only are mothers

supposed to provide their children with the right foods, the foods must be prepared in interesting, fun, and creative ways.

Although mothers are still doing the majority of household work, including feeding the family, there has been a rise in the number of men who participate in these tasks traditionally valued as women's work. Men who do food work for their families on a daily basis often view these activities as work-leisure. However, the literature demonstrates that women are still performing the majority of the childcare work in families where men are doing the cooking, often resulting in more freedom and less negative emotions associated with food work for men (Szabo 2012). While the number of men participating in food work has certainly increased, the kitchen is not yet a "democratized" space as men still enter the kitchen "on their own terms." (Meah and Jackson 2012).

In their role as mothers and food providers, mothers connect food work with their identity (Bugge & Almas 2006; Cairns et al. 2010). Part of this identity construction is due to societal discourse on what constitutes a good mother. If we want to understand current practices around feeding the family, we first must know more about how motherhood encompasses the role of food provider. For many women the work of feeding the family can begin as early as pregnancy. Many pregnant women immediately attempt to meet society's standard of the good mother by changing their dietary habits in order to nurture the fetus. Similar to DeVault's findings, Copelton (2007) explains that foods are assigned moral judgments, being either "good" or "bad", and the consumption of those foods is closely tied to the construction of both the "good" and "bad" mother. This continues after childbirth. When raising children, mothers felt responsible for being attentive to their child's dietary needs. These perceived needs are influenced by advertisements, other mothers in their social circle, and expert knowledge (DeVault 1991).

The job of family grocery shopper and family cook has become even more complicated as women must figure out which items to buy pre-made and which to make themselves. Cooking “from scratch” takes on a symbolism that links mothers to their own mothers and grandmothers, and thereby connecting them with some idealized image of motherhood (Halkier 2010). The negotiations around food that take place in the family often include a mother who is trying to uphold some personal ideal of what it means to be a mother.

Beyond their own ideals of motherhood, women encounter idealized representations of household practices such as meal preparation that bear little resemblance to every day practices of real families (DeVault 1991). DeVault refers to the text and images of meal preparation in cookbooks, magazines, etc. as “cooking discourse” (1991:215). “Women of the dominant classes”, or women of privilege, treat the claims made by the experts in cooking discourse with reverence (DeVault 1991:219). Using cooking discourse, women use particular ingredients, meals, and styles of cooking to indicate their prestige to both themselves and others (Bugge & Almas 2006). Women are up against very high expectations of perfection; not all women care or believe they can meet the expectations of the new momism and thus react in many different ways. DeVault was writing in 1991 and cooking discourse has come a long way since then. The science of feeding the family, expert advice, and the ever expanding knowledge base of what is or is not healthy has grown exponentially. In this age of information and accessibility cooking discourse is more pervasive than ever.

In the years since DeVault (1991) studied food, we have seen an explosion of popular interest in food which is most clearly represented by the growth in reality television programming around food from instructional cooking programs to competition shows like *Top Chef*, *Hell's Kitchen*, and *Iron Chef America*. Cook (2009) considers how these multiple sources

of food and cooking advice and knowledge have emerged alongside the more obvious and longstanding trend toward the commercialization of processed food and the monoculture-based agricultural industry that provides the corn, soy, and other staples that support it. Cook (2009) found that the mothers he studied engaged in semantic provisioning, defined as “the ways in which caretakers attend to, create, negotiate and act upon the social meaning of goods.” (Cook 2009:323). The primary concern of these mothers was to provide healthy foods to their children. This primary concern was often in direct conflict with commercialization, with children wanting certain brands and items viewed as treats. Mothers and their families exhibit a variety of responses to this rising tide of processed and fast food in our society. Some may embrace it as time and energy saving; some may reject it entirely, preferring to make most foods from scratch; others are combining convenience foods with more traditional cuisine in a compromise.

Until recently, the approaches consumers take toward food existed beneath the radar of popular culture; the assumption was that we all tried to stay up with the times and buy the latest products. Contrary to this consumer imperative, a new identity position has been born that challenges the assumption of consumerism and agribusiness: the foodie. Just what is a foodie? That is contested by many. Cairns et al. defined the foodie as “someone who gets as much pleasure out of eating food, cooking food, eating with friends, serving food and finding new things, as much as they do anything, any other hobby in their life.” (2010: 598). However, this definition leaves out considerations of class, gender, time availability, and many other concerns.

Food and Status Characteristics

Families are a key site for the diffusion of cultural capital and families of different class backgrounds pass on different beliefs about food (Wills et al. 2011). There is a consistent theme

in the literature that discusses food and social class in terms of food security. Food security, whether or not one consistently gets enough food to remain active and healthy (Philips 2008: 95), is an essential component of familial feeding styles; middle class families are more likely to be food secure. Families who are not food insecure can focus on other aspects of food provisioning beyond where their next meal is coming from. While some would claim that it takes a certain amount of resources to enjoy food as a hobby, food and cooking as a hobby can transcend social class to a certain extent. The right food and the right products are not necessarily the expensive ones, but they can be the traditional products used for generations or found in their country of origin.

Class goes beyond simple attitudes about feeding children. Class is also tied to the division of labor in feeding work. While the cultural ideal of motherhood has centered on the home, for poor and working class women, being solely a homemaker has never been an option. Yet in working class married couple households with both partners working outside the home, women still perform the majority of the feeding work, including both cooking and shopping (DeVault 1991; Brown and Miller 2002). The literature tells us nothing about how fathers' roles might expand into feeding the family, especially under financial constraints, but also without those constraints. (got to get the fathers in if you're going with that title)

Though not always directly tied to class, poor households are often headed by single mothers. While single mothers have almost total responsibility for the household, including feeding work, they are more likely to enlist their children to help them with various elements of housework (DeVault 1991:105). In poor families headed by single mothers, children are taught independence as a means of understanding the struggle of their parents, as well as a necessity for survival (DeVault 1991; Wills et al. 2011). Loth et al. (2013) found that differences in parenting

practices as related to food vary by socio-demographic factors. While the literature suggests that families of color and families that make less than \$50,000 a year tend to be more restrictive, one wonders about the kinds of practices that are defined as restrictive.

The transmission of culture is also important in many families, especially families from a non-dominant cultural background. While white families are often engaged with the dominant cooking discourse, families from other racial or ethnic backgrounds may have conflicting cooking discourses; these families hear the dominant discourse on nutrition while they also try to maintain the traditional cooking discourse of their original culture (Ristovski-Slijepcevic et al. 2010). Questions about which traditional cooking practices are maintained or discarded remain unanswered in the literature.

Feeding Children

While it is important to understand the perspectives and practices of parents who have the responsibilities to feed their children, one thing most parents face across socio-demographic characteristics, is that their children are constantly bombarded with numerous food advertisements. One study found that during typical children's television viewing hours roughly fifteen percent of advertisements were for food products; of that fifteen percent, sixty percent were for "non-core" foods such as sugary cereals, snack foods, and fast food (Boyland et al. 2011). Research has found that exposure to these advertisements also increases brand awareness and brand preference in children (Boyland and Halford 2013). Cook found that "integral to mother-child negotiations about good or bad, healthy or unhealthy, proper or improper foods are the ever-present commercial definitions of foodstuffs, some of which might appear relatively benign, like a particular brand of hotdog." (2009: 331). Even with the inundation of

advertisements for processed and unhealthy foods, children can also be concerned with making healthy choices. A study of children in the fourth and fifth grades found that taste was influenced by the perceived healthfulness of the product (Soldavini, et al. 2012).

Pugh found that parents belonging to the middle or upper middle class frequently employ what she termed “symbolic deprivation”; affluent parents point “...to particularly meaningful goods or experiences that their child did not have as evidence of their own moral restraint and worthiness as parents.” (2009:9). Parents who engage in symbolic deprivation walk a fine line in allowing their children to maintain their dignity within their social circles. The regulation of children’s consumption habits directly involves the way “...children claim, contest, and exchange among themselves the terms of their social belonging...” which Pugh calls the economy of dignity (2009:6). Children can participate in multiple economies of dignity, ranging from school, aftercare programs, and neighborhood groups. Children also create systems and cultures of food economy “through which they negotiated various ties with others while marking, maintaining, strengthening, and muting social differences.” (Nukaga 2008: 371).

Chapter Three: Methods

This thesis is part of a larger project, “Managing Family Food Consumption”, led by Drs. Jennifer Friedman and Laurel Graham. Upon receiving IRB approval, participants were recruited from a local community recreation center. I, along with six advanced undergraduate students, conducted a total of thirteen interviews. We sought participants that considered themselves to be the primary person in the household responsible for food preparation. Participants also had to have at least one child in the “tween” age range, between the ages of eight and fifteen years. This age range of children was chosen because tweens and their parents are in an age of negotiation. Parents are still preparing the food and setting guidelines but tweens have some resources to get their way outside of the home.

The recreation center serves a diverse community. Driving to the recreation center took me through primarily, though not exclusively, middle class neighborhoods. While the recreation center is located in a middle class neighborhood, the recreation center itself serves families from a variety of class backgrounds. The community in which the recreation center is located is also racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse. The recreation center is less than a half mile away from both a middle and elementary school. A community library, baseball fields, and soccer fields are also close by.

Research team members generally recruited research subjects (parents of youths) at the recreation center during after-school hours, usually between five o’clock and eight o’clock in the evening. This is a very busy time for the recreation center; children and parents are constantly rushing in and out. Some children are being picked up from the recreation center after school

program while others are being dropped off for their evening extracurricular activities, such as gymnastics. Many parents bring books, work, or other activities to occupy themselves while their children are at practice. Sometimes parents had other children with them which sometimes made it difficult to recruit or interview the parents immediately. This led to members of the research team seeking out the help of staff members to identify potential subjects.

With the help of the community center staff, potential participants were given a recruitment letter that described the research project and what would be asked of the participants. Individuals that expressed interest in participating gave their contact information to a member of the research team. Research team members then followed up with individuals who expressed interest in participating and scheduled meeting times that were convenient for both parties to meet. Most interviews were conducted at the recreation center and recreation center affiliated sites, though some were conducted at other locations deemed appropriate and convenient by both the participant and the interviewer. Each participant was given an informed consent form and the form was explained by the interviewer. The signed consent forms were kept in a locked office in order to protect confidentiality.

The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended and lasted between twenty and sixty minutes, with an average of about forty five minutes. The interviews were semi-structured because interviewers asked participants questions about shopping, food preparation, and adapting practices, as well as basic demographic information. The interviews were open-ended because in addition to a set of questions, interviewers sought to gather a story from participants about how they manage food for their family. The interviews were transcribed by members of the research team; two interviews were transcribed by a transcription service. Each participant was given a pseudonym in order to protect confidentiality.

Using a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967), meaning that I did not have a hypothesis but let recurring codes and themes emerge in the data, I analyzed and coded the data for recurring parallel themes. I then divided the participants into two groups based on how they discussed their identity as it relates to food. Participants in Group 1 identified with food work as a creative outlet or a hobby while participants in Group 2 identified food work as a more of an obligation or a chore.

Table 1: Group 1 – Food as a Hobby

Name	Age	Marital Status	Race	Gender	Class	# of Children
Rachel	53	Married	Caucasian	Female	Upper Middle	2 girls, age 9 and age 12, adopted, Hispanic
Charlie	39	Married	Caucasian	Male	Upper Middle	2 girls, age 7 and age 11
Sarah	51	Married	Caucasian	Female	Upper Middle	12 year old daughter, 3 children over 20
Joseph	49	Married	African American	Male	Upper Middle	1 boy and 1 girl 13
Caleb	44	Divorced	Caucasian	Male	Upper Middle	2 girls

Table 2: Group 2 – Food as a Chore

Name	Age	Marital Status	Race	Gender	Class	# of Children
Robert	34	Married, living separately	Caucasian	Male	Working Class	Boy, age 8 and girl, age 11
Marcela	51	Married	Hispanic	Female	Upper Middle	11 kids, ages 6-24
Patricia	41	Divorced	Hispanic	Female	Lower Middle	1 girl and 1 boy
Piper	42	Married	Caucasian	Female	Middle	1 boy, age 6, 1 girl

Table 2: Group 2 – Food as a Chore, continued

Daphne		Single	Hispanic	Female	Middle	1 girl, age 12
Morgan	43	Married	Caucasian	Female	Middle	2 girls, age 11 and age 13
Christine	Late 40's	Married	Caucasian	Female	Lower Middle	3 kids, girl age 9, 21 and 23
Lydia	40	Married	Caucasian	Female	Upper Middle	3 kids, 2 boys and 1 girl, 16, 11, 9 (younger 2 are grandchildren)

While I have divided the participants into these two groups, it is important to state that these groups reflect the subject's relationship to food at this particular point in time. Food providers' identification with food can shift from having heightened importance and enjoyment to diminished importance and enjoyment depending on numerous factors in their daily lives. It is also important to note that these classifications are determined based upon the participants' presentation of self. How food providers presented themselves during their interviews may or may not be consistent with the lived reality of their daily lives.

Before continuing to my findings, there are some important similarities and differences to note in the two groups. Three of the four fathers in the sample are in Group 1. Additionally, all but one participant in Group 1 identify as upper middle class. Both mothers in Group 1 identified as homemakers. I will emphasize these points again later, but it is not altogether surprising that those with more time and resources identify with food work as a hobby. Additionally, social class was more varied among Group 2 participants. Mothers in Group 2, with one exception, were also all working mothers. Marcela, who is the exception as a homemaker, is not surprisingly placed in Group 2; because Marcela has eleven children, it is understandable that she identifies food work as yet another chore.

Chapter Four: Findings

As the previous literature demonstrates, gender roles have a large impact on the division of food work in the home. With the advent of the societal discourses of intensive mothering and the “new momism,” women feel an added pressure of attending to details about health and nutrition by providing the “right” foods for their children. Mother’s identities are tied to their success as food providers. This pressure often leads to fatigue, as several mothers in the sample expressed. The pressure on mothers to take full responsibility for food work impacted women across both groups. Among respondents in Group 1, Rachel and Sarah both expressed fatigue at certain times. Sarah stated:

On the weekend I tend to get real lazy, I really do. I’m just like, I’m over it. I have had enough of this, and, you know, make yourself dinner, eat some leftovers, have a sandwich, I’m hanging up the apron. No...I can’t cook a full meal for dinner, you know, seven days a week.

Rachel expressed a similar sentiment as Sarah, stating that over the course of the week she become “increasingly lazy” and often orders a pizza by Friday night. Fatigue and frustration were not expressed by participants in the sample that were fathers, possibly due to societal notions that fathers that participate in any of the food work are already going above and beyond their traditional gender roles.

While these quotes are consistent with the literature this study will demonstrate the food identities are not determined completely by gender; food identities are shaped by more than just gender. The research subjects in this project revealed that their relationship to food was related to multiple factors, including family size, family type, ethnicity, class, cultural capital, and time

availability. Dividing research subjects according to how they regarded food provisioning is one way to begin to bring to light the diversity of elements that contribute to their food identities and their food work.

Enthusiasm Levels Regarding Food Provisioning

The ways participants talked about food were significant and varied. Common themes in their descriptions such as pride, competition, knowledge, caring, and fatigue were all demonstrative of the participants' relationship with food and their food identity. Particularly important was when and how participants expressed enthusiasm for food work and food consumption. Group 1 participants expressed a consistent level of enthusiasm for food work. In addition to this enthusiasm, Group 1 participants talked about food as part of their identity.

Charlie was the only participant to call himself a "foodie" and stated "I enjoy cooking, like a hobby." Charlie, a university professor, spoke of his relationship with food as something that began in childhood and continued into his adult life.

I don't know why but I've always liked cooking. I learned from my mom and it's something I've always been interested in. So I spent part of my sabbatical in cooking school. And I learned a lot of basic things in cooking school. This was last year. And so I just come up with things, I experiment all the time.

Charlie clearly presents his strong interest in food; not only is food work something he enjoys, he goes out of his way to learn more about it, particularly cooking techniques.

Joseph also discusses food in terms of his childhood, but he constructs this relationship to food as cultural. Joseph, an upper-middle class Afro-Caribbean man who grew up in the Bahamas, discusses the importance of food in this culture:

For us growing up that was the main focal point, that's where you conversated at while they were preparing dinner and while you were eating dinner and the conversations all

started from there. If you look at some of the structures on how they make home it's set up where the kitchen is a focal point.

Throughout his interview, Joseph constantly linked food with culture and cultural awareness. He expressed a desire for teaching his children the importance of food and how cultural diversity is expressed in food.

While participants like Charlie and Joseph connected their food identity to their childhood, most participants spoke of their food interest in relation to the present. A recurring theme expressed by Group 1 participants was the element of competition and pride present in the kitchen. Sarah described her passion for creating challenging meals:

I like making things that are a little bit challenging or different even though that can be hard because I guess I get a feeling of accomplishment when I make something that's, you know, more than just boil noodles...And it's a lot of work to do it but I mean it's fantastic. So I feel really proud, I feel really good about it when I make something that's a little bit, you know, over and above.

While Sarah also stated that she feels accomplished when her family praises her for her cooking, she also expressed having pride in herself because of her cooking ability. Because food is a hobby, Sarah pushes herself to excel, often just for the fun and sense of accomplishment. The idea of going "over and above" also ties into her role as a mother and societal expectations for that role. While mothers are responsible for providing nutritious food, Sarah goes "over and above" by creating different and challenging dishes.

Joseph, who was also competitive in describing his cooking skills, talked about a time when he was perfecting a pancake recipe.

I'm making sourdough pancakes from scratch. I may mess around and make seven cakes trying to perfect it but after I get there, and get the one I'm really happy with I may not make cakes for a year.

For Joseph, it was important to perfect his craft. But once he reached perfection he was ready to move on to a new challenge. This constant search for knowledge was consistent among

participants in Group 1. Charlie is an excellent example of this; he spent part of his sabbatical in cooking school learning new cooking techniques.

And the cooking school helped me to make vegetables better. I know how to blanch things and broach things. I know how to make bechamels and rouxs and things like that. It's helped me create other kinds of dishes that I wouldn't have known how to do.

Throughout his interview Charlie speaks of these techniques. He also consistently used this technical language, such as blanching, broaching, and béchamel sauce. It was not enough for Charlie to have this knowledge and implement it in his daily food work routine, but it also seemed important to Charlie that he convey his level of knowledge of the culinary arts during his interview, something that few other subjects did.

Caleb also expressed a competitive edge to his cooking. When asked how he introduces new foods to his family he replied “sometimes it's eating out and saying ‘I can do that.’ Very often it's me deciding I can make something better than I've had in a restaurant.” Caleb spoke at length about this process. He begins by eating out at a restaurant, sometimes with his daughters but usually by himself. He is then inspired by what he ate and he will go to the grocery store, sometimes specialty or ethnic grocery stores, to pick up the new ingredients. He combines the new ingredients, particularly different spices, with ingredients that are familiar to his children such as ground beef. This process is a unique way in which Caleb expressed his identity in terms of food preparation; he is competitive and creative when it comes to food preparation. Caleb was also focused on providing a wide range of cultural food items to his children.

I've spent a lot of time trying to introduce other cultures' foods to my family. I make curries, I make south Asian foods and I make Far East Asian foods. I've tried to start working in Mediterranean foods.

For Caleb, his enthusiasm for food provisioning is partly derived from introducing different cultural food items to his children

The idea of food work as a form of caring was also evident among Group 1 participants. Sarah explained that providing food for her family was important to her food identity; “I mean I think that’s part of my passion for cooking and I feel like it just makes everybody feel so good, it brings everybody together.” The emphasis of food work as a form of caring was found among mothers in both participant groups, and fathers to a lesser extent. So while food work can be a hobby for women, it may be that food work as a form of caring is indicative of gender identity and societal expectations for mothers. It is also important to note that both mothers who described food as a hobby, Rachel and Sarah, are homemakers and identify as upper-middle class, which provides them with the time and resources to participate in food as a hobby instead of regarding it as a daily chore.

We move now to Group 2: these were individuals for whom feeding the family was a responsibility or chore more than it was a creative outlet. The majority of Group 2 is made up of mothers; Robert is the only father in this group. While some Group 2 participants stated that they did enjoy cooking somewhat, they also described various obstacles to their enjoyment of food work. For example, Marcela, a mother of eleven children, stated “Yes, I enjoy it. But I don’t have enough time. I wish I had more time.” Her busy schedule as a homemaker and mother of eleven children does not allow her to spend as much time as perhaps she would like to spend in the kitchen. However, other Group 2 participants clearly stated that food preparation was not something they had a high level of interest in. It is a telling contrast that while Charlie expressed having an interest in cooking since childhood, Patricia expressed that being responsible for cooking since childhood diminished her enjoyment of food preparation in her adult life.

Really I have been cooking since I was 10 years...my mom taught me how to cook. So now when you say you want to cook, and I'm like uh, okay I'll do it because I have to eat and I have to feed my kids. But it's not one that oh, I would love to cook. No.

While Patricia did express pride and enthusiasm when talking about cooking traditional Peruvian meals for her family, she made it clear that food work did not hold much interest for her and was instead something she did in order to feed her family.

Even though Robert expressed a high level of interest in food, particularly the cultural dishes from his childhood, he was unique among the participants in Group 1 and Group 2 in important ways; Robert seems to have a place in both groups and he ultimately defies categorization. Group 1 has so far been described as those with a high level of interest in food preparation; although he is the primary grocery shopper, Robert does not prepare food for his family, which is why he ultimately was not placed in Group 1. Robert was adopted as a child, and his adoptive parents have a Greek heritage that Robert identifies with. Robert spoke at length with his interviewer about traditional Greek dishes. Although he does not prepare these dishes, Robert described all of the ingredients in traditional Greek dishes such as spanakopita and pastitsio. The knowledge about these ingredients and the enthusiasm he had when describing these dishes demonstrated how important food is to his identity. Robert had many of the same emotions and energy levels as other participants who situated food work as a hobby, but possibly Robert's family life limited his ability to engage in food work in the same way as other Group 1 participants. Robert's family receives food stamps, and he and his children currently reside with his parents while his wife works in another state. His own mother cooks for all of them quite often, and the family also eats fast food and convenience foods more often than other families in Group 1 tend to do. Robert has limited time and resources compared to other participants for whom food is a hobby, which most likely affects the ways in which he regards

food in his daily life. For him, eating well-made, great tasting food is a passion, but cooking it is not a hobby, or even an activity he participates in at all.

With the advent of the societal discourses of intensive mothering and the “new momism,” women feel an added pressure of attending to details about health and nutrition by providing the “right” foods for their children. Mother’s identities are tied to their success as food providers. This pressure often leads to fatigue, as Patricia expressed previously. Several Group 2 participants were very blunt about their lack of interest in food work. When asked to describe her interest in food preparation Morgan stated “I really don’t have a lot of interest in it.”

Daphne, a single mother of one tween daughter, often tried to share the task of food work with her daughter. From meal planning to creating grocery lists to the actual process of cooking, Daphne spoke of how she tried, often unsuccessfully, to involve her daughter to share the task of food work. While Daphne stated that she felt it was important to teach her daughter these skills, as cooking is “just a basic survival skill,” she also suggested that she was partially motivated to involve her daughter in order to lighten her own load in the kitchen.

Awareness of Nutritional Discourse

After listening to food providers talk about provisioning food for their families, it became clear that most were well aware about the larger public health discourses about food. Most food providers had similar ideas about food and health, particularly concerns about sugar consumption and a desire to consume more organic (as opposed to conventionally grown) products. However, not all participants spoke of these health concerns in the same way. Some participants, particularly those in Group 1, were not only aware of this food discourse but were also actively attempting to incorporate it into their daily lives. For instance, Charlie, a father of two, stated

that his parenting and food work style is "...the Michelle Obama approach. Eat anything, just in moderation." Here Charlie is citing a public discourse about food, specifically the First Lady and her nutrition initiatives. However, although Charlie stated that he believes in moderation, he did express more specific guidelines and restrictions when asked if there are any products that he refuses to buy or give his children.

Anything with high fructose corn syrup. Which includes a lot of stuff. I was surprised when I started looking. I decided no hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil and no high fructose corn syrup.

The restriction of hydrogenated oils and high fructose corn syrup were common, though not universal, concerns among food providers in Group 1. In addition to concerns about sugars and other processed ingredients, many participants in Group 1 expressed knowledge about organics, specifically which products to buy organic and which products are acceptable to purchase conventional. Rachel, a married homemaker and mother of two, had guidelines for which products to purchase organic, although she also expressed doubt about why she purchased products in this way.

Dairy, meat products, eggs I tend to do organic. Because of the hormones and antibiotics. And I'm not saying this makes sense, it's just my thought process. Certain things, just based on what I've read. Apples I do organic. Strawberries I do organic. Spinach...but then there's the rest of the produce I don't really worry about.

Rachel, Sarah, and Charlie all stated that meat, dairy, and egg products were important to purchase organic because of concerns about hormones and antibiotics. However, there was less consistency about which produce should be purchased only if it was available organically grown.

Sarah stated

Based on my flawed memory of articles I've read about, you know, the dirty dozens and things that you're supposed to buy that are organic because they're more heavily dosed up with pesticides. And so I keep that in mind and things that I remember like apples, strawberries are on that list, grapes are on the list. I've read that potatoes are really bad too so I always buy organic potatoes.

Food providers make strategic, practical decisions about which produce they will only buy in organic form and which produce they feel comfortable purchasing in either organic or conventional form.

Robert also expressed knowledge of nutritional discourse, but in a somewhat different way. Robert did not discuss the importance of organic products, although he did cite sugar intake as being a main nutritional concern. Instead, Robert, who himself was overweight and was perhaps more attuned to concerns about his children becoming overweight, focused on providing pre-portioned and calorie controlled snacks to his children.

While knowledge about food and nutritional discourse is an important component of Rachel, Sarah, and Charlie's relationships with food, other participants in Group 1 expressed different ideas and concerns about food that nonetheless demonstrated an enthusiastic relationship with food. For example, Joseph, a married father of two, did not express any clear nutritional concerns but did convey a concern for quality of ingredients when asked if ingredients or price is a bigger concern for him at the grocery store.

Ingredients, because you cannot substitute quality. I honestly believe that and I still stand behind that... You know, something simple like cheese. You got the store brand and you have the name brand...there is a difference. So you know, Great Value, I'm not knocking Great Value from Wal-Mart but there is some things they make that are not great value, you know what I'm saying?

While Joseph's concerns are not necessarily related to nutrition or organics, he still has ideas and guidelines about proper food products to purchase for his family. This emphasis on quality may also be cultural. In American consumer culture, cheaper is usually viewed as better. But for Joseph, the emphasis is on the quality rather than the price of the ingredients, which perhaps comes from his Bahamian upbringing. Not only does Joseph value quality over price, he clearly corresponds quality, or lack of, with certain brand names.

Concerns about nutrition, food quality, and organics were not unique to participants in Group 1. Participants in Group 2 also expressed knowledge in these areas; however they did not always enact this knowledge for a variety of reasons. Daphne, a single mother of one daughter, when asked about nutrition stated

Just kind of, after years of learning about nutrition. I mean, way back in like middle-school they start teaching you about nutrition and going way back to the food pyramid...these things have kind of just instilled in me what you're supposed to be doing.

Daphne later stated that “My ideal shopping cart would definitely include a lot more organic produce and fruits and vegetables. Less processed stuff.” While Daphne knows what she’s “supposed to be doing,” there are a variety of factors that make it difficult for her to actively engage in this nutrition discourse.

Other members of Group 2 expressed similar ideas; they are aware of nutrition discourse but choose to or are not able to participate. Patricia, a mother of two who was going through a divorce at the time of the interview, when describing a typical family meal stated

Usually we eat like one meat, rice or potato or sweet potato, things like that. And salads. We eat kind of a lot of rice. Yeah, but white rice, you know it's...I know it's not healthy but we like that...

Patricia indicated that she is aware of the discourse about white rice, alluding to the idea that there are healthier options, so her family acknowledges this discourse but continues to eat their preferred white rice. Perhaps because food is a chore to Patricia, she continues to serve the food items she prefers, even if they are not considered to be as healthy, in order to increase her enjoyment of her daily food work. There are really numerous possible reasons Patricia continues to serve white rice, even though she acknowledges this might not be the healthiest choice; perhaps she and her children are more likely to turn to junk food if they can't have white rice, so

that maybe cooking white rice is the lesser of two evils in her perspective. Compromises such as this often seemed to stem from interactional dynamics in the family

Where They Shop

Participants from Group 1 reported going grocery shopping at least three to four times a week. Sarah, a homemaker, when asked how frequently she goes grocery shopping stated: “I’m laughing because...so far this week I think I’ve gone every day. Today I went twice.” However, the participants expressed different reasons for shopping so frequently. Sarah stated that she shops so frequently because she enjoys fresh produce as well as having to feed six people every day. Charlie shops every day to pick up ingredients that inspired his dinner plans. Caleb shops frequently at different stores depending on what’s on sale. He also shops at different ethnic markets to pick up specialty ingredients. The reasons given by participants for shopping multiple times a week were not centered around convenience, but rather on improving the quality of food in their family. When food is a hobby it is not an inconvenience to shop at multiple stores or make multiple shopping trips in order to find the best ingredients.

These participants also frequent the same grocery store as their primary shopping location, a local Publix. Though there are several Publix stores in the area, several participants expressed having specific reasons for shopping at their particular Publix. Charlie specifically called another local Publix store an “awful place.” When asked why he felt this way Charlie answered:

It has a different clientele. And so the Publix’s are really interesting because they stock things based on what their shoppers want. So that one doesn’t have organic stuff. It’s got a really tiny wine selection. It just doesn’t have anything I’m used to seeing.

Charlie has figured out the best Publix, why it is the best Publix for him, and what the other Publix stores are lacking. Charlie is displaying a high level of attention to detail and commitment to seeking the best products. Because food is a hobby for Charlie, he is willing to go out of his way to shop at the best store rather than at the most conveniently located store. Charlie's language was guarded in the above quote, using the word clientele instead of explicitly discussing class differences. His discussion of organic products and wine are also possible indicators of his meaning of class differences in addition to his concern for finding the best products. Sarah expressed a similar sentiment when discussing her staples of raw almond butter and Ezekiel bread that she buys either at her Publix or a local, organic market; "not all the other Publix stock them...you know, I don't even know if Winn Dixie has heard of these things."

Several Group 1 participants also did some of their shopping at a specialty Publix, the Publix Greenwise Market, which specializes in all-natural and organic grocery products. In tandem with a host of natural foods specialty chains that are growing in visibility, Greenwise presents the consumer not only with a service but also with a bit of fantasy and escape: the store is nicely decorated, produce is displayed creatively with small signs announcing price, freshness, and whether the product is conventional or organic, place of origin, and other details of interest to those who see food as a hobby. The pleasurable nature of shopping at Greenwise makes it an entertainment destination, a fun place to go whether or not the consumer actually buys something. Although the Greenwise store is a good thirty minute drive away from the community where the participants live, several participants shop there occasionally, some as often as once a week, for fun and to pick up specialty products. For these participants, grocery shopping is sometimes a leisure activity in addition to being a necessity.

Participants were aware of the upper class reputation of stores like Greenwise, and they sometimes attempted to distance themselves from the elitist reputation of such places. In those moments, we see participants recognizing that foodie culture is partly a marketing gimmick. For example, when Charlie described the Greenwise Publix, he said “it’s kind of a bourgeois [first pronounced Boo-zhee], bourgeois place.” Charlie distances himself from a lower socioeconomic group at one store but also specifically tries to disassociate his class status from a more elite group. While Charlie shops at the Greenwise Publix frequently and these trips are important to his foodie lifestyle, he is concerned with appearing elitist. Although Charlie jokes about appearing to be bourgeois, it is still a part of his identity that contributes to his food hobby.

Conversely, some Group 1 participants were reflexive about their class status and the advantages they had. Rachel discussed her ability to not be restricted by a budget while grocery shopping:

You know, if I see apples and they’re \$7.99 a pound [later she clarified that she meant “a bag”] I don’t think twice. I will buy them. But I know that that’s what keeps a lot of people from eating healthy. It’s a lot of money for apples.

Here Rachel recognizes that her socioeconomic status allows her to provide healthy foods for her family, which she calls a “luxury” that not all families have. Similar to Charlie, Rachel views some of her purchasing habits as appearing elitist and therefore qualifies and defends these habits for the interviewer. However, Rachel is able to continue her practice of purchasing more expensive products due her class advantage.

As mentioned previously, the concern with purchasing organic products was a big concern among Group 1 participants, and some participants from Group 2 as well. However, no participant purchased exclusively organic ingredients. Meat, dairy, and egg products were the products most frequently mentioned as important to purchase only in organic form. Rachel and

Charlie demonstrate that when consumers with financial means are knowledgeable about nutritional discourse, they are often willing to take extra steps to ensure that they and their families have access to the best possible food. Rachel raised her own backyard hens in order to have access to ultra-fresh eggs. Rachel also had a garden in her backyard as well as a family plot at a local community garden. Rachel and Charlie both used to participate in a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program at the same local farm, but both had recently discontinued their membership. While Rachel explained that she ended her CSA membership due to the availability of fresh produce at both their family and community gardens, Charlie focused his discussion on the food items that he received. In other portions of the interview Charlie prided himself on his culinary skills and creativity, but when discussing his CSA membership Charlie focused on the inability to come up with enough new and interesting ways to prepare certain vegetables that he thought they received too much of as part of their weekly allotment. For Charlie, the lack of control over what produce and the amount of produce he was receiving caused him to end his membership. Because Charlie is someone who shops every day and chooses ingredients for a recipe he is inspired by, he expressed frustration at the lack of control he had with the CSA membership. Charlie and Rachel's withdrawal from the CSA indicates that those who view food as a hobby are pulling away from standardization and rationalization in the food system, even when the food system is local and organic. While they both felt that the CSA offered good quality, the CSA also moves some of the decision making away from the consumer and into the hands of a cooperative. This violates the principle of free and unhindered consumer choice that may be an essential part of their food hobby.

Discussions of grocery shopping with Group 2 participants were briefer. While Group 1 participants shopped frequently, and sometimes at multiple stores, they had a food centered

approach to shopping; the quality of the products influenced where they shopped and how often. Group 2 participants shopped less often and framed their choice in stores and frequency as price and convenience centered. Daphne stated “I mean grocery shopping is not my favorite thing to do. I just kind of try to get all that I can get done in one trip to make it was efficient as possible.” For Daphne and other Group 2 participants, shopping is a chore, not a pleasurable escape to Greenwise fantasy land

Most Group 2 participants expressed a similar lack of enthusiasm as Daphne. An exception was Lydia, whose enthusiasm came from her expertise in couponing. Lydia called herself “the coupon queen” and described her process for getting the best deals.

I go through the ads every week, sometimes I use a website or blog online called IHeartPublix.com. It goes through the weekly ads for Publix along with all the coupon matchups that go with everything from the other side.

While Lydia did not express any particular enthusiasm for food preparation or shopping in general, she spoke at length about her couponing process. It was being a smart consumer that interested her most, as perhaps this was a way of doing paying work outside the realm of paid employment. For Lydia and other Group 2 participants, shopping is a chore to be accomplished quickly and efficiently.

Defensive Moments

While participants had different ways of articulating their relationship with food, each participant had defensive moments or expressed embarrassment at some point during their interview. What participants felt defensive about varied between Group 1 and Group 2. Group 1 participants were often somewhat defensive about where they shopped and the large amount of money they spent on groceries. Participants from both Group 1 and Group 2, though Group 2

participants in particular, were defensive or embarrassed about the nutritional quality of the food they provided to their children.

As mentioned previously, Charlie described one of the grocery stores he frequently shops at as “bourgeois.” Sarah was also self-conscious about the amount of money she spends on groceries, especially when buying new products for new recipes.

And sometimes I’ve hit up some really food recipes and sometimes I’m like, oh Jesus, you know, I just spent five dollars on mango chutney for one...and this recipe really wasn’t that great.

Although Sarah was proud of her creativity in the kitchen, she was also somewhat embarrassed about the amount of money she spent for new ingredients. When food is a hobby, participants were defensive and felt the need to justify or explain why they spent the amount of time and money they did. In a sense, they knew that they were out of the norm of most struggling families, and they worked to normalize themselves through these justifications.

However, the strongest defensive and embarrassed moments related to what parents reported they were feeding their children. Sometimes this embarrassment was recalled from the past. For example, Rachel described a moment she felt embarrassed in front of a family friend; “When her kids were here I was giving them yogurt and she said to her kids, ‘Now, this is sugar yogurt.’ Like she doesn’t give her kids the yogurt that I give to my kids.” Although Rachel was embarrassed by this story, she qualified it by commenting on what she thought “typical” American children were eating; “I can’t imagine what the normal American kids eat. You know, I don’t buy Cheetos...I have chips but they’re going to be whole grain something.” The latter part of this quote speaks to the new momism; when Rachel provides chips for her children they are the right chips, with whole grain. Every food that is given to her children must be of a certain nutritional quality. Rachel offset her embarrassment about feeding her children “sugar

yogurt” by comparing her children’s diet to what she views to be the American norm and explaining that what she provides is better than the norm, though it may not be better than what her friend feeds her children.

Group 2 participants usually made a reference or allusion to public nutrition discourse when they expressed embarrassment, as they were comparing their family’s habits to what they felt they should be doing or what was expected of parents. Breakfast was the meal that brought on the most embarrassment. When describing her daughter’s morning bagel with cream cheese Daphne said “Probably not the healthiest breakfast, but at least it’s something,” and later “I think I’m also not the best role-model; I am not really a breakfast person.” Daphne also alludes to the agency of her daughter; at some point Daphne is no longer in control of her daughter’s choices but at least her daughter is eating something. The new momism holds up higher standards for monitoring child nutrition than Daphne has time and interest to enforce. But she does maintain a more basic standard: the standard that holds mothers responsible for sending their kids to school with some kind of food in them. Although Daphne is speaking about breakfast specifically, this quote demonstrates a generally distanced, disinterested relationship with food. Daphne, a single, working mother, spoke of food as a chore had less time to spend regulating what her daughter ate, especially compared to mothers like Rachel who spend a good deal of time negotiating healthy choices with their children.

Strategies for Feeding the Tween and Teen

Although participants in both groups are very different in terms of their interest in food preparation, all participants are parents and are responsible in some way for feeding their families. Participants in both groups described different parenting styles (from authoritarian to

accommodating to permissive) and strategies for getting nutrition into their children. A variety of parenting styles were exhibited within and between the two groups.

Rachel and Sarah are good examples of an accommodating parenting style in Group 1; there are rules and guidelines for food consumption but these parents negotiate and work with their children to make sure these guidelines are met. Nutrition was very important to both of these mothers and they developed strategies to ensure their children were receiving proper nutrition. Rachel called her strategy of using “colors.”

In our house we call it colors. We've done that since they were little. You have to have colors...One kid loves tomatoes. She would eat a plate of raw tomatoes...the other one won't touch them, so I just have to make sure that I have the side things so that they will eat. So in a way I cater to it a little bit...But at least they have some things they'll eat. They both eat broccoli. One will eat green beans. One will eat black beans. You know, it's just a juggling thing.

For this strategy, Rachel is establishing a clear guideline for her children to follow; they must eat whole foods of an array of colors. However, instead of providing one choice and insisting that this is what her children will eat, which would be more of an authoritarian type of style, Rachel accommodates the individual preferences of children to ensure they are eating a variety of “colors” each day. In this way she avoids some arguments with her children. Rachel’s “colors” strategy is also consistent with the new momism; not only does Rachel provide numerous healthy choices to her children she also must make it fun and individualistic, providing different foods for each child. This strategy takes more energy and creativity than many of the strategies employed by fathers. For example, Robert’s strategy of purchasing a variety of single-serving packages of snacks takes less time and energy than customizing meals for each child’s preference.

The other members of Group 1, who are all fathers, engaged in a permissive style of parenting; they established rules and guidelines for their children but these were usually not

enforced by insisting that their children eat certain foods. Instead, forbidden foods were simply kept out of the home and healthy foods were made readily available. As Charlie explained, “I try to put vegetables in every meal, except breakfast. But I don’t insist that they eat...I insist that they drink their milk, but nothing else really.” Charlie also developed a permissive strategy for when he takes his children shopping. As mentioned previously, Charlie does not allow his children to have foods with high fructose corn syrup or hydrogenated oils. Charlie has taught his children to read labels for these ingredients so they know not to ask for certain food items while shopping. His children are allowed to pick out one item each that does not contain these ingredients whenever he takes them to the grocery store.

There were several participants in Group 2 who also had a permissive food parenting style, including Morgan, Piper, Daphne, and Christine; however, guidelines in this group were somewhat more loosely enforced than among the permissive parents found in Group 1. Daphne described her strategy of getting her daughter to eat more vegetables as “sneaky.”

If I cook spaghetti I always pick out a vegetable sauce or add some veggies when she is not looking. That’s another advantage of cooking without her being involved in the process, because she could certainly rebel against what I am doing with the food. So she’s in her other room doing homework, but I can kind of add in whatever without her knowing. I can kind of control her diet in that way...I can sneak something into the food and I am smiling and laughing because she likes it, going “hahaha” because I pulled one over on her.

While a more authoritarian parent would simply insist that their child eat vegetables with the meal, Daphne sneaks vegetables into the meal in order to provide nutrition without her daughter knowing. This approach is clever and takes much less energy than Rachel’s approach. Daphne’s strategy is nonconfrontational and allows her to quickly and efficiently complete her chore of getting dinner on the table.

Morgan perhaps was the most permissive parent in Group 2. When explaining how she evaluates ingredients in different food products, she remarked

I don't look at the ingredients on the packaging, as far as what's listed on the back. But on the front I read the ingredients, look at what it says; "it contains south west dressing, tortilla strips." I look at those ingredients, but I don't turn it over and go line by line the ingredients.

Of course like most parents, Morgan was concerned with good nutrition, but particular ingredients were not a large concern for her. Like Charlie, Morgan developed strategies to limit her children's consumption of certain foods. For example, Morgan would buy one 1-liter bottle of soda for each child for the week. It was up to each child how quickly they consumed the product, but it would not be replaced until the next scheduled grocery shopping trip. This strategy stands in stark contrast to the new momism strategies of the mothers in Group 1; Morgan is not especially creative and does not present herself as especially invested in her children's food choices. But she has limits to how many of her children's wants that she will accommodate, and these limits are laid out clearly for the children.

While Group 1 did not have any parents with an authoritarian style of parenting, Group 2 did. Marcela and Patricia could be described as having a more authoritarian style; they put guidelines in place and claimed to enforce these guidelines consistently. When asked about her children's snacking habits, Patricia stated:

I'll say, okay, did you eat today your fruit? Which color? I try to ask them which color and...so he says, "Okay mommy, I ate already a banana or an apple." Okay. So what do you want? Okay, I want one candy. And we restrict all of these things.

Like Rachel, Patricia also uses "colors" as a strategy to get her children to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables. However, instead of providing certain fruits and vegetables for each child, Patricia simply insists that they eat their colors before having a treat, and the treats are restricted as well. Marcela, the mother of eleven, was less descriptive with her strategies, stating simply "I

cook what I like and they're stuck with it.” Patricia and Marcela are both originally from South America and expressed that the way they were raised was consistent with their own authoritarian upbringings. Time could be another factor in the food parenting style; Patricia, who is recently divorced and has returned to the workforce, and Marcela, a mother of eleven children, perhaps do not have the time or energy necessary for the negotiations and creative strategies used by more accommodating parents. Marcela in particular insisted several times during her interview that her children know not to ask for certain items and that she has no problem saying no to certain requests, suggesting that she engages in symbolic deprivation, highlighting her authoritarian food parenting style.

Men Who Feed the Family

As mentioned previously, three of the four fathers in the sample identified with food work as a hobby. Robert, who was the only exception, still expressed great passion for the consumption of, but not the actual work in food preparation. However, all four fathers spoke about their food identity in different ways. Because of the limited sample size it is impossible to generalize from these four fathers to all American fathers, yet they bring to light how our culture has now opened up spaces of possibility for fathers to engage enthusiastically with food shopping and preparation, when this set of tasks has traditionally been viewed as women's work.

Caleb was the only divorced father in the sample and provides food for his two children about half of the time. Caleb's interview reveals one acceptable avenue for fathers who do food provisioning: fathers can participate in food work part-time out of necessity, due to the absence of a mother at home. Because Caleb is only preparing food for his children some of the time, he has more time and flexibility in grocery shopping and meal planning. Perhaps because his ex-

wife is providing meals the other half of the time, Caleb is under less pressure to focus on nutrition when planning and creating meals.

Charlie identifies as a foodie, which is another cultural narrative that allows men to participate in the kitchen. Previous literature shows that foodie culture is actually somewhat dominated by men. Charlie spoke of watching cooking shows on public television during his childhood and he only mentioned shows headed by male chefs such as Jeff Smith and Justin Wilson. For Charlie, his presentation of his food work is less about getting dinner on the table each night than it is about perfecting his craft and constantly seeking new knowledge.

For Joseph, it is the importance of teaching his children his own cultural upbringing that allows him to engage with food as a hobby. Joseph was raised in the Bahamas and frequently spoke with nostalgia about his food-centered childhood; it was important to Joseph to teach his children about the importance of cultural food practices. This justifies his intense interest in preparing delicious food for his family, a task traditionally assigned to women.

Robert was the only father who did not actually engage in food preparation, although he did do most of the grocery shopping for his family. Robert's food hobby centered on cultural dishes, similar to Joseph's, but also on the act of eating out at restaurants. Robert is able to express enthusiasm for food because he is not actually doing the work. While Robert's current living situation may be temporary, he spoke with equal enthusiasm about the dishes his wife prepares when they are together and never stated that he shares the task of cooking at those points in time either. He is not in danger of doing women's work because he is not doing the work; he is simply doing the men's work of enjoying the food.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

Often foodie culture is talked about as a culture that is inclusive and brings together people of various backgrounds. However, previous literature suggests that foodie culture actually remains the domain of white, upper middle class men (Johnston and Baumann 2010; Cairns et al. 2010). As foodie culture has entered the upper middle class home and the discourse has spread to other socioeconomic groups, it is important to discuss how foodie culture has responded to inequalities in the home, especially along boundaries of race, class, and gender. It is important to note that four of the five participants who viewed food as a hobby were Caucasian; all were upper-middle class. Again, three were fathers and two were mothers; both mothers were homemakers, suggesting again that time and money are important factors in food identity and practice. With a sample that is primarily white and upper middle class, it is impossible to generalize or make sweeping statements about the effects of race, class, and/or gender on food identity and practices. Even with a limited sample, it is apparent that race, class, and gender play a role in how participants construct their food identity and enact their food practices.

Understanding how a participant's food identity, or how they discuss pleasure, care work, and knowledge and expertise surrounding food, is incomplete without including status characteristics other than gender. First, consider race and ethnicity. Again, although the majority of the participants in this study identify as Caucasian, those who identify as a different race often discussed their cultural upbringing as part of their food identity. Joseph, Marcela, and Patricia all discussed including traditional cultural dishes in the normal routine in order to teach

their children about their culture, despite Joseph being in Group 1 and Marcela and Patricia being in Group 2. While Joseph discusses his preparation of traditional Bahamian dishes as a matter of cultural transmission, Marcela and Patricia discuss their preparation of Argentinean and Peruvian dishes, respectively, as a matter of convenience in addition to cultural tradition. Marcela and Patricia both showed disdain for what they viewed as American styles of eating, stating that casseroles and hotdogs were not as convenient or healthy as their traditional cuisine. Joseph, Marcela, and Patricia demonstrate that ethnicity alone does not determine food identity and practice; rather, ethnicity is one of many characteristics that interact with food identity to yield particular habits and practices of food management in the home. Race, ethnicity, and class must be considered in addition to gender in order to better understand food identity and practices.

Clearly class contributes to the enjoyment of food work; a certain amount of money is a necessary when food is a hobby, in order to buy the best ingredients, equipment, and information. Often those from a lower socioeconomic background and those with less time are pressured to conform to dominant food patterns. While Patricia is an exception by stating that Peruvian food patterns are more convenient, several participants, such as Daphne and Morgan, discuss factors such as limited time and a limited budget that shapes their food patterns on more dominant media messages of eating. Class definitely shapes the level of leisure available to the family cook. Leisure time is also important, as one participant with eleven children, Marcela, expressed that perhaps she would find food work to be more enjoyable if she had more time to devote to it.

This research project reveals that food identity is an important variable to include in research on feeding the family. When we look at food work through this lens, we see fathers entering into the kitchen in surprising new ways. Their opportunities for engaging with food

provisioning enthusiastically seem to be expanding. This thesis shows some of the particular windows through which fathers can take on this set of tasks without threatening their own masculinity. These windows include foodie culture, the transmission of cultural identity through food, and being a part-time worker with time available for cooking. These were some of the narratives the fathers in the study constructed as the ways they are able to be involved in the kitchen while also leaving their masculinity and traditional gender roles unchallenged.

Care work is a key component of food identity and factored into many of the conversations held with participants. Mothers in both groups expressed the idea that care work was a major part of their role as food provider. However, fathers did not express the role of care work in their food identity often. The discussion of care work links back to previous literature on not only gender and foodie identity, but intensive mothering as well. As the role of family food provisioner has traditionally fallen to women, this role has become an important component of a mother's identity. Not only are mothers supposed to cook for their children, those meals must be healthy, and perhaps more importantly, interesting and fun. Intensive mothering encourages women to include their children in the cooking process, something few participants actually did though many expressed guilt that they did not include their children in the kitchen.

Care work through food is not tied to the identity of fathers. For fathers, food work is just about the food, and for many participants, food work was a creative outlet without the responsibility or pressures of intensive mothering that women are subjected to. While most fathers admitted to having some concern for the food preferences of their children, these preferences were secondary to their own food desires. The creation of the family meal was more of a creative process than a time to cater to the nutrition and individual needs of children and spouses. So while more men are entering the kitchen there is not a revolutionary change in the

division of labor in the household. The way fathers talk about their roles in the kitchen still falls along some traditional gender lines and other household tasks typically remain the job of mothers.

Clearly gender differences in food provisioning are evident throughout these data. Women were more likely to be the primary food provisioner and they were more likely to invest themselves in carrying out food work with many different variables in mind: nutrition, safety, cost, convenience, taste, quality, etc. But even among women, we see fundamental differences in how they approach the job of food provisioner. Their food identity seems to play into the way they carry out this set of interrelated tasks. In fact, the role of food identity, which has gotten little attention in the scholarly literature on feeding the family, seems to vary for both mothers and fathers in ways that call attention to class, ethnicity, parenting style, and nutritional knowledge (cultural capital) differences.

Those who view food as a hobby and those who view food as a chore differ in terms of their enthusiasm, their incorporation of nutritional information into their routine, their shopping practices, and their insecurities about their food practices. All of these show that the feeding of the family is not one type of activity; feeding the family varies immensely according to a wide range of variables beyond the classic explanation of the gendered division of labor. Men are getting involved in particular ways that do not especially challenge their masculinity. Women are carrying out the work of family food manager in quite different ways which may correlate with income, cultural capital, leisure time, nutritional knowledge, etc. What emerges is a complex understanding of the varieties of ways that food discourse crosses paths with real families trying to do the best they can with the tools they have.

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Appendix A: IRB Approval



RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799
(813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-7091

8/9/2013

Jennifer Friedman, Ph.D.
Sociology
4202 East Fowler Ave., CPR107
Tampa, FL 33620

RE: **Expedited Approval for Initial Review**
IRB#: Pro00013039
Title: Managing Family Food Consumption

Study Approval Period: 8/9/2013 to 8/9/2014

Dear Dr. Friedman:

On 8/9/2013, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and **APPROVED** the above application and all documents outlined below.

Approved Item(s):

Protocol Document(s):

[Managing Family Food Consumption IRB # 13039 V1 7.28.2013](#)

Consent/Assent Document(s)*:

[ADULT CONSENT IRB #13039 V1 7.28.13.pdf](#)

[CHILD ASSENT IRB# 13039 V1 7.28.13.pdf](#)

[PARENT CONSENT IRB #13039 V1 7.28.13.pdf](#)

Assent Script (children ages 8-11):

[Comments to Children regarding Assent IRB #13039 V1 7.28.13](#)

*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab. Please note, these consent/assent document(s) are only valid during the approval period indicated at the top of the form(s).

This study involves children; approved under 45CFR46.404: Research not involving greater than minimal risk.

It was the determination of the IRB that your study qualified for expedited review which includes activities that (1) present no more than minimal risk to human subjects, and (2) involve only procedures listed in one or more of the categories outlined below. The IRB may review research through the expedited review procedure authorized by 45CFR46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. The research proposed in this study is categorized under the following expedited review categories:

(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval by an amendment.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Schinka, Ph.D." The signature is written in a cursive style.

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board