

sensible objects

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Cooking Skill, the Senses, and Memory: The Fate of Practical Knowledge

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How, after all, did my grandmother acquire her culinary magic? It required an elder not just willing but determined to share her powers with a neophyte. And it required an upstart who craved to follow the path treaded by forebears. Is it possible that as much as my grandmother's eighteen progeny revered her, that none of them wanted to be her?

Stephen Steinberg, "Bubbe's Challah"

How might we think of ordinary food preparation as a site that brings together skilled practice, the senses, and memory? In reflecting on his grandmother's *challah* bread, Steinberg suggests some of the larger identity issues embedded in the relationship between people and their socio-material environment, in this case a set of relatives and a set of kitchen tools, flavors, and ingredients. He evokes an image of "traditional" cooking, without recipes, cookbooks, cuisinarts, or bread machines, but with the implied hierarchy of gerontocratic authority passed in a female line. He further suggests that loss of tradition, which is, in fact, a loss of particular skills, is a necessary part of becoming the modern, individualistic Americans that his family members aspired to be. Is this image, then, a relic of grandmothers past? How do people face the task of everyday cooking under conditions of "modernity," and what might this mean for issues of skill, memory, and embodied sensory knowledge, particularly given modernity's uncomfortable relationship to the "lower senses" and devaluation of

"practical knowledge," "tradition," and social embeddedness. How have recent times – modernization – changed people's relationship to the various kinds of cooking tools, ranging from their sense organs (the nose, the tongue) to pots and pans, knives, even bread machines, with which they structure their kitchen environment?

Recent debates within anthropology and the social sciences more broadly have taken opposing views on the question of cultural homogenization and de-skilling. While some support the "McDonaldization" thesis implicit in changing relations of production and distribution that have allowed Western hegemony to extend consumer capitalism to the far reaches of the globe, others argue for an endless proliferation of individual creativity and cultural meanings and reinterpretations of Western processes and products. In a sense, however, the two sides may be talking past each other, one focusing on production and distribution, the other tending to put more emphasis on the endless diversity of consumption practices. Cooking provides an interesting, transgressive object in this regard in that its products are in some sense both produced and consumed in the home and nearly simultaneously;¹ indeed consumption itself (through tasting) is part of the process of skilled food production. Yet there has been relatively little research on consumption as not simply a creative, but a *skilled* process, involving judgment and the reasoned use of the senses. Memory is also a key concept to be considered, as it connects the senses to skilled, embodied practices through the habits that Steinberg suggests require apprenticeship and repetition, and through the comparisons necessary to judge the successful dish.

In what follows, then, I will consider approaches to *skill* in the context of production and consumption under conditions of modernity. I will begin with a theoretical consideration of the way skill and practical knowledge can be harnessed to recent approaches to the senses and memory. I then develop these ideas in relation to my own research on everyday cooking in Greece and in Southern Illinois.

Habit Memory and the Social Nature of the Senses

The senses are once again matters of theoretical and ethnographic concern, after what David Howes (2003:xii) refers to as "a long, dry period in which the senses and sensuality were bypassed by most academics as antithetical to intellectual investigation." But what does this mean in the case of "taste," perhaps the most ethnographically neglected of the senses? Taste, of course, has a double meaning in English, and in one of its senses, it has been explored by a number of

authors, most extensively Bourdieu, who examines the ways that "good taste" is turned into cultural capital in the pursuit of class distinction. While Bourdieu is dealing with taste in the "social" sense, with people's "taste" in home furnishings, clothing, and recreation, he does in this context touch on actual practices of eating. "Taste" he says "is class culture ... embodied" (1982:19). With echoes of Lévi-Strauss in the background, and perhaps because he focused on a thoroughly "modern Western" society, Bourdieu argues that the middle class perform their freedom from need, necessity, and nature by consuming small portions of light, less-filling food, chewed carefully. While working-class (men here) shun such eating practices "the whole body schema ... governs the selection of certain foods ... in the working classes fish tends to be regarded as an unsuitable food for men, not only because it is a light food, insufficiently 'filling', ... but above all, it is because fish has to be eaten in a way which totally contradicts the masculine way of eating, that is, with restraint, in small mouthfuls, chewed gently, with the front of the mouth..." (1982:190). Which is another way of saying that apparently real French men don't eat quiche either! Connerton develops Bourdieu's argument in elaborating a notion of skill as fluid performance. For the European nobility (here in contradistinction to the bourgeoisie), such performance is evidenced in skills which *take time* to acquire (in a sense, like Steinberg's grandmother's *challah*), and cannot be simply reproduced or copied:

To own a chateau or manor house is not primarily to display disposal over money; one must appropriate also the skill of bottling and tasting fine wines, the secrets of fishing ... the knowledge of the hunt. All these competencies are ancient, they can be learned only slowly, they can be enjoyed only by those who take their time, they ... require that one occupy one's time not economically but ceremonially.

For Connerton, the key point about such practices is that they are not simply signs which everyone can recognize, but skills, which few can incorporate into their bodies (1989:87, 90). Thus Connerton makes the dimension of memory more explicit than Bourdieu, referring to these skills as habit memories, "acquired in such a way as not to require explicit reflection on their performance" (1989:102). In the case of a fluid piano performance, Connerton refers to such skills as "a remembrance in the hands" (1989:93). Thus Connerton directs us to questions of enculturation and enskilment, the process by which taste is learned, mobilized, and repeatedly practiced, so that it gains

the aura of naturalization which makes it such a critical marker of class distinction.²

But there is the other meaning of taste, that of a sensory experience, which is neglected, or at least not ethnographically explored in the studies above. How are we to approach that? I think a consensus (no pun intended) has begun to develop in studies of the senses that we are not dealing with radical cultural difference, but with shifting emphases, with cultural elaborations on a continuum of experience. How and in what ways are sensory registers elaborated in different societies? The study of taste or smell might lead one to look at the realm of myth and the afterlife in one society (Bubant 1998), in another to issues of healing (Rasmussen 1999) and to the domain of advertising in a third (Classen et al. 1994). In some cases a specific sensory domain may be elaborated to the detriment of other domains, and in other cases the study of one domain may by necessity lead into others, the phenomenon of synesthesia that characterizes many aspects of nonhierarchized sensory perception that has not undergone the discipline of modernity. I have also argued (Sutton 2001) that this focus on intersensory connection is a potential facilitator of memory, that the cultural elaboration of taste and smell, and their interconnections, can lead food, for example, to be more memorable. These parameters form a set of ethnographic questions for exploration. In studying taste and other senses in the context of Greece I have been led to focus on Orthodox ritual on the one hand and cooking on the other. In looking at Greek sense-scapes one must be attentive to both linguistic and nonlinguistic elaborations. Nonlinguistic include such multisensory practices as the Orthodox liturgy. "An Orthodox Church service is a synesthetic experience: every sense is conveying the same message" (Kenna n.d.:5; see Sutton 2001).

Linguistic elaboration of the senses takes numerous forms. One particularly striking one is the expression "listen to that smell" which is used approvingly to refer to the odor of food cooking, and is often accompanied by a noisy intake of breath through the nose. The opposite, to indicate the failure to taste a dish, is "it is not hearable," a seemingly direct appreciation of the process of synesthesia, even if coded in everyday metaphor. Other metaphors tie one taste to another: A man tells his friend that he ate prickly pears the other day and they were tasteless, but today "they were honey!" A woman refers to fresh-caught tuna as "souvlaki!" and a man describes a batch of sweet oranges as "banana." In these cases we have some sense of the basis for the Proustian phenomenon of remembering through evocation of a powerful sensory image. The sweetness of a banana hardly seems similar

to that of an orange, and yet, as an image of a food with a strikingly sweet flavor, "banana" does have a certain evocative power. In these cases and others the sensory *intensity* of the experience is stressed, and used as a sort of aid in the storage and retrieval of memory.

Against this background of everyday practices, we can begin to understand the role of sensory experiences and sensory images in more extended social memories of the type mentioned above. But implicit in these sensory distinctions is our other meaning of taste as well: taste as the ability to judge and compare. Just as wine tasting involves the cultivation of certain practices, as well as an elaborated metaphorical vocabulary, the sensory practices of food consumption on Kalymnos mean that Kalymnians have elaborated schemata by which they can compare foods present with meals past.

On Practical Knowledge or Skill

Connerton and Bourdieu pose the question of taste as embodied knowledge or incorporated skill. Thinking about it in these terms leads to a series of questions about *how* such skill is transmitted, deployed in daily practice and in our relationship to material objects in our environment. To think about these issues I suggest we develop the notion of skill or practical knowledge through looking at recent work by Ingold in anthropology and by others working in the field of "activity theory." Ingold's work fits well with that of Bourdieu and Connerton, in that all three take as their starting point a critique of lingering structuralist assumptions that practice can be seen as the execution of a preexistent code. But Ingold is useful in situating his critique within an attack on modernity as a key source of the notion of abstract knowledge and the devaluation of bodily practice which has gone with it.

For Ingold, as for Connerton, skilled practice involves not the mind telling the body what to do according to a preconceived plan, but rather a mobilization of the mind/body within an environment of "objects" which "afford" different possibilities for human use.³ Skill, then, involves much more than the application of a sort of mechanical force to objects (which he sees as the model of technology), but an extension of the mind/body, often through the use of tools, requiring constant and shifting use of judgment and dexterity within a changing environment.⁴ The environment is not objectified as a "problem" that humans must "adapt" to; it itself is part of the total field of activity, as in the example of a woodsman who in chopping wood, consults the world with his senses for guidance, not a picture in his head. "The world is its

own best model" (Ingold 2001:12; see also Lave 1988). It is through such skilled practices, then, that forms are generated, rather than through the execution of a mental plan, though mental plans may provide guideposts for practices, i.e., they can allow you to assess your work at various moments. This approach has implications for the transmission of skill as well, which, as with Connerton, is seen as impossible to objectify into a set of rules. Skill must be learned through the sensuous and sensory engagement of a novice with the environment and/or with a skilled practitioner. What we tend to refer to as "enculturation" is seen by Ingold as an "education of attention," or, as he puts it, speaking of his father, "His manner of teaching was to show me things, literally to point them out. If I would but notice the things to which he directed my attention, and recognize the sights, smells and tastes that he wanted me to experience... then I would discover for myself much of what he already knew" (Ingold 2000:20). I would call this not only an education of *attention*, but of *memory*, a training of the total person into practices that make certain things and events in the environment memorable, just as Kalymnians are trained to attend to the specific sensory qualities of certain foods. Learning from others involves copying, but it is the copying of Connerton's "incorporation" rather than a transcription of knowledge from one head to another, of "guided rediscovery" (2001:11) in a sensuously rich environment.⁵ One can see here why Ingold's view of skilled practice might be compatible with an anthropology of the senses. As with recent studies in material culture, Ingold does not view objects or the "environment" as passive ciphers to which humans simply add symbolic meaning (see for example Myers 2001; Miller 2002). Rather objects, because of their sensual properties, "afford" certain possibilities for human use, the semiotic and the material constantly cross-cut and convert into each other (and this is not a neo- or paleo-functionalism, as here once again there is no distinction made between "practical" or "functional" and "symbolic" use). Hiking boots, for example, by their material nature "afford" certain possibilities in relation to nature by "expanding the range of possible actions available to the body" (Michael 2000:112).⁶ This in no way limits the meaning or uses of hiking boots, any more than recognizing distinctions between the proximate senses (taste, smell, touch) and the distance senses (vision, hearing) limits the cultural elaborations of these different domains, as discussed above. Someone somewhere no doubt uses hiking boots as candleholders or wine-decanter. But hiking boots also make possible certain new relationships with the environment, and it is these materio-semiotic possibilities that such authors suggest need exploration.⁷

Ingold's approach has certain strong implications for his view of "modernity," which puts him on one side of a more general debate within anthropology. Ingold argues that the abstraction of knowledge and the senses characteristic of modernity is counter to our social natures, insofar as it subordinates skill and the senses to the rational paradigm of plans and mental operations. Similarly, modern technology is seen as very different from tool use. A traditional tool is "not a mere mechanical adjunction to the body, serving to deliver a set of commands issued to it by the mind, rather it extends the whole person [into the environment]" (Ingold 1993:440). Modern technology, by contrast, disembeds the tool from a social context and a context of skilled practice, and treats the workman as a mere operator. If the tool draws its power from and extends the human body, the logic of technology's operation lies outside human bodies (1993:434–5).

Technology involves an "objectification of productive forces" (Ingold 2000:319), a disembodying and disembedding. In the same way modern society disembeds time from the task (in the Evans-Pritchard sense) objectifying it both in technology (the clock, the punch card) and in social practices (division of time into labor time and leisure time). This is part of the general process of "abstraction" of production, consumption, and exchange characteristic of modernity that has been well described by Carrier (1990; 1996; 1998). Ingold suggests that this new type of abstract knowledge and disembedded practice does not fully replace traditional skill, which exists both at the margins of modern society (housewives) and in what Scott would call the "hidden transcripts" of working practices, as people learn to "cope with" machines by refusing to follow explicitly codified procedures and directives laid down from above, but adapting technology to their own "rules of thumb" (Ingold 2000:332), a process he illustrates for railroad conductors. Ingold seems to be hedging here to avoid accusations of an evolutionary perspective from tradition to modernity.⁸ It is clear that the overall thrust of his argument suggests the loss of something inherently human, i.e. skill, and a struggle against this loss.

In this regard, his view fits with other writers on technology, such as Baudrillard and Borgman, and of course Marx's work is the acknowledged Ur-Text here. Baudrillard writes of modernity's disenchantment of objects even more pessimistically than Ingold, because he sees this disenchantment as taking place in the home just as much as the workplace, in household appliances which work "with the touch of a button" (Baudrillard 1993:68).⁹

An alternate perspective sees less of a great divide between tradition and modernity. Or as Latour (1993) famously puts it "we have never been modern," or perhaps better "we have always been modern, except, that is, when we're not." Such a view emphasizes the way that human-environment interactions have always already been technologically mediated, and draws a less sharp distinction between "tools" and "technology" in terms of embodied practice and sensory input. Indeed, a recent collection on the anthropology of technology (Schiffer 2001) does not include "tools" in the index, as the authors in the collection make no distinction akin to Ingold's between tools and technology. Ihde, for example, in his philosophical meditation *Technology and the Lifeworld* (1990), eschews what he calls the "Edenic" approach to technology. The oven, for example is a kind of externalized stomach, a disembodying and disembedding technology that few cooks would have any desire to abandon (but see my comments on microwave on p. 96). Ihde notes that technologies often lead to an increased embodiment of the environment:

The modern high-technology boat, precisely in its capacity to allow one-self to be embodied through it, places one more closely in tune with wind and water than was so through the insulated and dampened result in the resistance-to-maneuvering of the older wooden vessel. (1990:164)

One can, no doubt, multiply such examples. Writing, itself, as we know from a long tradition of orality/literacy studies, is less embodied than speech, but opens up all sorts of new possibilities of embodiment which come to the fore when writing is "threatened" by word processing, and itself becomes the more embodied, sensory technology.¹⁰ "Digital writing supplants the framework of the book: it replaces the craftsman's care for resistant materials with automated manipulation" (Heim 1987). But as Ihde points out, writing does not disappear, and computerization affords possibilities that writing, in a sense, superseded: "Computer graphics are concocted imagery, a clearly designed *hermeneutic* imagery. They are the analogues of returning writing back towards a kind of pictorial representationalism, a reverse evolution" (Ihde 1990:186).¹¹ One could argue with Ihde that most of his examples come from the realm of consumption rather than production, particularly that of his fiberglass boat. Similarly, recent technological developments in the field of stereophonics has allowed many to develop new skills of auditory discrimination that might be similar to that of Kalymnians distinguishing the taste of different olive oils. But once again, this is a

matter of consumption, and the kind of cultural capital and distinction that Bourdieu has analyzed, rather than the skill connected to productive labor, the process of making rather than consuming.

Suchman, a leading proponent of "activity theory," provides an important example, then, because focused on productive relations. She explores these relations ethnographically in her study of civil engineering practices. She expected to see a replacement of paper drawings with Computer-Aided Design (CAD) workstations in which an engineering application is layered on top of a graphics application among younger engineers. Each certainly involved different embodiments: the CAD was used with "elbows close to the sides of [one's] body, hands constrained within the narrow terrain of the keyboard, eyes glued to the screen ... [as opposed to] standing over a large sheet of paper, arms outstretched or hands and arms engaged in a variety of actions of drawing, measuring, turning the paper to get another angle" (Suchman 2000:12). She found, however, no such evolution but more of a hybrid situation in which CAD was used at some points in the process and paper drawings at other points. The CAD station allowed for easy access to an array of different parts of the project, thus it was better for getting a synoptic view. While paper allows a larger "meatier" view of the design, which allows better access for collective work, as well as better "memory" as different calculations may be left on the paper copy which would be deleted on the screen version. Suchman concludes that "rather than a simple progression from paper to CAD, the maturing of electronically based engineering practice may emerge as the informed, selective use of both ... based on a deepening understanding of their particularities [read: sensory, embodied aspects] and of their effective interrelations" (2000:14).¹²

The reader perhaps can see in this contrast of approaches another iteration of the "McDonaldization" debate, which has been taking place in different guises throughout the social sciences. Does one see a basic, detrimental shift, or endlessly new creative possibilities in the processes of change that mark our current global condition? How much weight does one give to issues of production, exchange, or consumption? And what are the political implications of these different approaches? Certainly Ingold's work allows for a more large-scale political critique which seems to be blunted by the more "hybrid" approach of these latter authors, who focus their political interventions on the small scale (the "projects" of actor-network theory), and do not take into account the kind of "structural power" that Eric Wolf (1990) has been so eloquent in drawing our attention to.¹³

In the Kitchen

How do these issues and oppositions apply to food and cooking processes? As argued above, cooking is interesting in part because it seems to blur the line between production and consumption, allowing for no hard-and-fast distinction, and implicating the processes discussed both by Ingold and Baudrillard, and by Ihde and Suchman. I believe these issues have been too long mired in stereotypes, and a bombardment of newspaper articles about the "end of cooking" or the "end of the family meal."¹⁴ The only way to advance these issues is through sustained ethnographic treatment, an ethnography of everyday cooking. A number of areas of investigation seem to be indicated.

Cooking Tools

Clearly the above debate can be and has been applied to the tools of the kitchen, the contrast between Ingold's knife, extending the body and requiring considerable manual dexterity, as contrasted with the bread machine, requiring assembly of ingredients and a touch of a few buttons. The measuring cup and spoon is a different sort of technological innovation which does not disembody as much as it standardizes, another specter of modernity that I will take up later. The microwave is another such device that seems to de-skill the cook in relation to the traditional oven. But as with all these cases, the other side comes from studies of the "use" of these technologies, the way the microwave, bread machine, etc., in fact, require many reasoned judgments, new skills to manipulate (think VCR remotes here). The microwave and the bread machine could also be found ethnographically to be supplemental, as Suchman argues, good for some things, but not replacing older skills.¹⁵ Finally, one has to consider the potential social implications, including the freedoms afforded by such cooking technologies to the intensive labors that traditionally have fallen on women (see Sutton 2001; Adams 1994; but see Cowan 1983 for an extended critique of this view). As material possessions, kitchen tools themselves may carry family histories and multiple, layered stories, is this also the case for kitchen technologies? These are some of the questions that my research hopes to address (see Hernandez and Sutton 2003a, b).

Plans and Recipes (and Their Transmission)

Ingold himself contrasts his view and that of Sperber in relation to the question of recipes. Sperber's view of a recipe for mornay sauce is that it

is a prototypical cultural representation or meme that can be transmitted to others containing all the information one needs to produce the sauce by simply converting the instructions into bodily behavior. But as Ingold (2001:10) argues, such conversion is not generally such a simple matter, unless the recipe speaks to skills already acquired from melting, stirring, handling different substances, to finding the relevant ingredients and utensils within the layout of the kitchen (no mean feat, those of you with children untrained in kitchen skills no doubt know). Thus cooking from a recipe assumes a certain amount of embodied memory and "taste," in Connerton's sense discussed earlier. This goes along with the sensory components, from the kinesthetics of various cooking procedures, chopping, mixing, etc. to the use of the tongue and nose as "tools" to mark the progress of the dish and make the constant judgments and adjustments that are part and parcel of skillful cooking. The recipe may provide certain "critical junctures" in the process, but "between these points ... the cook is expected to be able to find her way around, attentively and responsively, but without further recourse to explicit rules of procedure – or in a word, skillfully" (Ingold 2001:11; see also Schlanger 1990). Planning itself is a type of "situated action" and plans are simply one among a number of resources for actions, which still take place *in situ* (Leudar and Costall 1996). It will be of small surprise to those who cook that cooking is best learned through embodied experience, or even apprenticeship (as it is in most societies, a fully social apprenticeship of a younger generation to a set of female relatives, in which one learns much more than how to get dinner on). But what this "experience" consists of has had minimal ethnographic elaboration. In other words, how do people learn to cook in different societies, who teaches them, under what circumstances, and with how much stress on observation, participation, positive or negative reinforcement, "play-frames," challenges to elders (see for example Herzfeld 1995:137)? There is a substantial literature on apprenticeship in anthropology and archaeology which has developed concepts such as scaffolding, distributive competencies, etc. (see Lave and Wenger 1991; Lemmonier 1993). Surprisingly, none of this has been applied to the homely craft of cooking. Another set of questions is raised by the *lack* of cooking apprenticeship that seems to characterize modern, or even more postmodern society, where transmission of knowledge from experienced elders to juniors is explicitly and in practice often eschewed. Once again, cooking seems to be increasingly socially disembedded if not disembodied, though we mustn't neglect new sources of cooking apprenticeship such as the ubiquitous cooking

shows, socially disembedded and commodified, but at least engaging the sense of sight in transmitting cooking knowledge, and perhaps evoking other senses as well. What kind of implications does all this have for an Ingold-type approach?

To conclude this section I once again want to pose the question of whether there are new narratives to tell this story, which avoid the opposition between loss of traditional knowledge or recuperation and invention, especially when these narratives seem to have salience to my ethnographic subjects. One of the goals of my research is to find such new narratives, or at least new metaphors that would push us beyond the stale antinomies of the past (as Fernandez (1973) put it). Before turning to my ethnographic research it will be helpful to present a short history of cooking's relationship to modernity and postmodernity in the United States, in order to give a sense of how we have come to some of the current predicaments in our thinking about cooking, and, one hopes, how we might emerge from them.

Cooking 101: The Not Very Tasty Culture of Scientific Feeding

An offshoot of first-wave feminism, though going in a direction which seems to lead more toward Martha Stewart than it does girl power, the development of the "domestic science" movement at the turn of the twentieth century is richly chronicled in Laura Shapiro's book *Perfection Salad* (1986). Here I attempt to present some of the highlights of this history to suggest some of the tensions that led to the present. Shapiro chronicles the rise of the domestic science movement at a time when "science and technology were gaining the aura of divinity: such forces could do no wrong, and their very presence lent dignity to otherwise humble lives" (1986:4, following page-number references are to this source), while "the nation's eating habits underwent their most definitive turn toward modernity" (1986:48). The women reformers who founded this movement were committed to claiming the prestige of heretofore "male" science for housework and cooking, to move cooking, nutrition, and hygiene into the public sphere in its importance for a nation. Thus the interest of the domestic science movement in food was "because it offered the easiest and most immediate access to the homes of the nation" (5). And through this scientific cookery, women would be able to alleviate not just malnutrition, but the key social problems of the day: poverty, worker discontent, alcoholism, and criminality were

all put down to improper diet and improper knowledge of scientific householding principles.

In order to making cooking scientific, the women in the movement, initially associated with the Boston Cooking School, attacked "tradition," which included all kinds of things from the kind of transmission from grandmother to mother to daughter discussed above, to ethnic differences in food habits, to the home as a center for productive activity (see Carrier 1998). All of these past practices were stamped as backwards: women who hewed to tradition were labeled as "drudges," "stuck in the past." While the cooking schools they established, some to train servants and aspiring working-class women, some for the middle classes, did not ignore issues of skill and manual dexterity, they held the occupations of the mind and "theory" as crucial to their goal,¹⁶ not just how to make a cream sauce "but the abiding reasons why heat acts upon starch in such a way as to produce cream sauce" (Shapiro 1986:68). Thus cooking was a science of the transformation of food substances to create the optimal nutrition, digestion, and hygiene. Standardization and measurement were key components of such a project. Indeed, Fannie Farmer, a leading figure in this movement, was known as "the mother of level measurements." "Exact measurement was the foundation of everything else that happened in the scientific kitchen" (Shapiro 1986:115). In this she was aided by the development of measuring cups and spoons in the late nineteenth century, which added a new precision to previous vague recipes for "a teacupful of flour."¹⁷ Farmer added more precision by calling for "level" measurements, and dispensing with imagery in her recipes and cookbooks, such as "butter the size of an egg." She encouraged cooks to use a knife to level the surface of their measured ingredients for additional precision. There should be no "margin for error" (or imagination for that matter) in recipes, and she was known to specify that strips of pimento be cut "three quarters of an inch long and half an inch wide" and to measure out spices by the grain (Shapiro 1986:116). In all this she was guided as much by a business model of standardization as by the scientific model, as will be discussed shortly.

What was left out of this course in scientific cookery, of course, was taste, or any of the lower senses for that matter. The food itself was uninteresting except as a route to nutrition and to a better society. While this movement was hardly the first to see good-tasting food as problematic in American society, this had a much longer history tied to Christianity and notions of sin (see for example Mintz 1996 on the threat of ice cream to public morals), they were certainly influenced by

this tradition, as well as one that saw middle-class women as a key force in taming the "natural" and "primitive" instincts of middle-class men and the lower classes in general (Shapiro 1986:73, 139).¹⁸ Appetite was too low a sense to fit with the "nobler purposes" to which these women aspired (71). Cooking schools saw eating as problematic, and rarely allowed their students to consume their finished products; these were sometimes disposed of, or sold to the poor at cost. Food itself, was, in pure Lévi-Straussian fashion, brought under control by science and careful hygiene. Appeal to the sense of sight was permitted, and considerable imagination was allowed in decorating and arranging the food: shaping it into various objects, color-coordinating it, miniaturizing it (102).¹⁹ The key was to contain and *disguise* food, to control its "volatility," and thus to make highly nutritious food *visually* palatable, to wean Americans away from their unhealthy reliance on fried foods, cakes, and pies. Even touch was seen as problematic, partly for hygiene reasons, hence the popularity of the innovation at this time the chafing dish, which allowed meals to be prepared by women "who hardly seemed to be cooking, so distant [were they] from the intimation of raw food" (103).

Fannie Farmer was an important transition figure in this movement, as her reliance on business imperatives – standardization and novelty – was much stronger than that of other women in the movement. The fact that she published so many cookbooks through her constant search for diversity, new combinations of ingredients and preparations, of course within the bounds of scientific principles (although she did tend to pay somewhat more attention to taste than many of her colleagues), perhaps accounts for her enduring popularity. The rise of the food industry in the early twentieth century, however, found a strong ally in rhetoric and in practice, in the domestic science movement. Novelty itself, of course, always has had the ring of "progress," as many of us remember from childhood bombardments of products promising to be "new and improved." Processed foods seemed to offer possibilities for sterility unavailable in individual kitchens. They also promised standardization in the sense of invariability, each bottle of catsup the same as the previous one, which was later one of the key aspects of the rise of the fast-food industry. Indeed, machinery promised to remove human hands and, once again, the senses or simply messiness from the process of cooking. One innovator of the time, in a prelude to the modern-day bread machine, introduced a series of devices that would produce bread "which no human hand has touched from the time the wheat was planted until it was taken from the pan in which the loaf was baked" (Shapiro 1986:151), leading some movement women to hope

that "home cooking as we now know it' would soon be a thing of the past, at least for city dwellers" (210). While these predictions have not all been borne out, Shapiro suggests that they were successful insofar as the home cook came to measure her culinary success "in conviction, not skill" (215). Indeed, well into the 1970s the popularity of the notion of "the meal in a pill" as the promise of the future (see Belasco 2000) argues for the long-term appeal of these ideals. However, the food industry and the domestic science movement parted company in the 1950s, when increasingly cooking was portrayed popularly as drudgery to be combated with TV dinners and "convenience" foods, involving not only a bodily de-skilling in Ingold's sense, but a loss of even the kind of theoretical knowledge of nutrition and ingredients which the movement valued. The homemaker of the 1950s was told that femininity and coy sexuality were the key to their husband's faithfulness; in the kitchen, she became an assembler, not a cook: "Scientific cooks had anticipated the era of culinary regimentation but not the intellectual collapse that would accompany it" (Shapiro 1986:229).

But in another sense capitalism's need for innovation also no doubt led us away from these ideals and to a present where flavor, in ever diverse combinations and "authentic origins," is once again on the menu. Shapiro does not document this shift, but suggests that the liberation movements of the 1960s also liberated our appetites to appreciate the sensory again (and to distrust the food industry). The ethnic revival and the rise of multiculturalism have also no doubt played a role, and many have written on the politics of "tasting the other." Much less has been written about this period in American food history, though the recent growth of "Martha" studies suggests that this is soon to be rectified.²⁰ Zygmunt Baumann sees the shift in terms of a larger-scale societal shift from concern for the "producer body," the soldier, the worker, to the "consuming body," the seeker of new experiences or "sensations-gatherer" (Baumann 1996:115) so amicable to a flexible capitalism. Whether this shift in taste practices was a result of the demands of capitalism or simply a "happy" coincidence is an open question. But Baumann suggests that the postmodern politics of the "Other" has some advantages over the modern. No longer is the "Other" (in this case other foodways) something to be brought under control, ordered, and normalized, changed beyond recognition, as the domestic science movement hoped to do for all "traditional" and immigrant foodways. The sensations-gatherer demands that the other be preserved in its otherness. The sensations-gatherer would have to be skilled at consumption, to have "taste" as well as "taste," as I have

been arguing throughout this chapter. But has the sensations-gatherer irrevocably undone the link between food production and consumption, transferring production, as in the rest of flexible capitalism, to the "third world" and to immigrants, who labor to create the objects of our skilled consumption?

It is important to note that this characterization of our postmodern food condition is meant to be in broad strokes, and that we need to be attentive to the many historical strands of experience that go into making the present moment, the domestic science movement, the food industry, and the multicultural/pleasure nexus being three prominent ones. In the final section I consider some of these issues ethnographically through a beginning ethnography of everyday cooking that I have been pursuing in Greece and Southern Illinois.²¹

Toward an Ethnography of Everyday Cooking

One way that we have been approaching such an ethnography is through intensive filming of a small number of subjects as they go about cooking "ordinary" and "special" dishes. This allows us to develop a profile and also a sort of culinary biography of some of the key experiences and values that have led people to their current cooking practices. Such biographies, we hope, will help avoid the problem of dichotomies discussed earlier, although given that "tradition" and "modernity" are very much part of our informants' discourse, we inevitably have to confront these categories. In this section I present some preliminary findings based on two of our subjects, one a Greek woman, Georgia Voumeli from the city of Thessaloniki, a middle-class housewife born and raised in a village in Northern Greece, whom we filmed while she was visiting her son in Southern Illinois; the other, Jane Adams, a Professor of Anthropology, native of Southern Illinois and longtime political activist. As this research is in its beginning stages, I choose Georgia and Jane because they are two of the most complete cases at this time (each was filmed and interviewed on three separate occasions, preparing different dishes). They also provide interesting comparisons and contrasts, as Georgia and Jane share similar gender and relative income levels, but very different cultural contexts and educational levels, Georgia having grown up in a village in northern Greece but living most of her adult life in urban Thessaloniki, while Jane has lived most of her life in semi-rural Southern Illinois. For reasons of space I will limit my discussion to a few of the issues raised in earlier sections of the chapter, specifically those of tool use and measurement,

as well as judgment and taste. Other issues that I have examined in relation to these subjects include: shopping, structuring of the kitchen environment, recipe and cookbook use, and teaching and learning.

Georgia's relationship to Greek tradition is, like her relationship to Greek modernity, a hybrid one. She works out at a private gym twice a day, owns her own car (which for her is a potent symbol of personal independence), and has western-European-based sense of fashion and style, including permed, dyed-blond hair. According to her son Leo Voumelis, she has a large collection of "modern" kitchen utensils and appliances. Even though her kitchen is filled with shiny utensils and machines, when it comes to matters of food and food preparation, Georgia seems to spurn this technology. She embraces nativistic values of the superiority of things "Greek," in both tools and food, as well as the techniques of cooking she was taught by her mother and her grandmother.

Georgia prepared the dish leek pie (Prasopita). During the time the leeks were cooking and reducing, Georgia began the process of making the Philo for the Prasopita. She began by pouring a large amount of bleached flour into a large bowl. At first we believed that Georgia was measuring the flour by sight, but rather she folded the bag and measured the amount of flour by the size and weight of the flour remaining in the bag. After the desired amount of flour was placed in the bowl, Georgia used the back of her hand to create a hole for future ingredients. She made several passes through the center to create the right depth, so that the liquid ingredients could be contained.

At no point in the process does she employ measuring spoons or cups. In this case the ingredients themselves become "tools" and perform the role of "measuring" other ingredients. In a sense the use of ingredients as tool can be seen as part of the structuring of the cooking environment itself as a mnemonic, or memory-jog, which we have documented in other cooking practices (cf. De Leon 2003; Kirsch 1996). For example, cooking implements in much of Greece are hung on the wall, in plain sight, rather than in a cupboard or under a counter, reminding the cook of their potential for use. This would fit well with Ingold's view of using the environment as a form of memory storage – "the world is its own best model" (see also Norman 1998).

Georgia placed the following ingredients within the hole in the flour: olive oil, vinegar, salt, egg yolk, and water. In this recipe all but two ingredients were measured by sight. The two excluded from this were vinegar and an egg. Drawing her fingers together and pulling up slightly to create a cup of her right hand with her thumb forming the outer edge of the bowl by being crooked against her first finger, she poured the vinegar into her left hand to measure



Figure 3.1 Georgia Vourneli

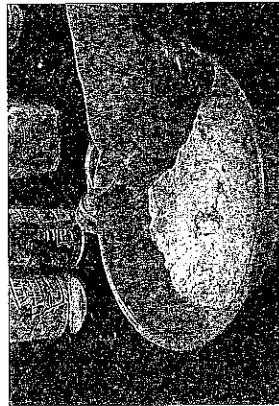


Figure 3.2 Pouring oil into the flour hole



Figure 3.3 "Measuring" the vinegar



Figure 3.4 Rolling the Philo

the correct amount. She allowed the vinegar to drizzle over the ingredient holding area as well as the rest of the bowl. When it came to adding the egg yolk, Georgia used her left hand, formed as a shallow bowl, as a strainer separating the white from the yolk. The egg white was strained into another bowl and discarded. The yolk remaining in her hand was then added to the hole in the center of the bowl of flour.

In this case it is not the environment, but the body that becomes a measuring tool, much more directly than in the metaphoric gauge "three fingers." It is interesting that Georgia's embrace of middle-class values (health club, Walgreens) does not extend to this embodied aspect of the cooking she had learned from her grandmother. As she puts it when asked about her preference for hand kneading of the dough: "The tools are not good. The traditional way is the right way ... before tools." She complains about the limited tools at her son's house. In response to the question "where do you get your tools," she doesn't mention the fancy store-purchased machines, but instead "I got my tools from my mother's home place. In the village where she had a carpenter make for her a rolling pin and table that was low. Mother would sit with her legs under the table and roll Philo."

Georgia complains that she does not have her own rolling pin. And yet the rolling pin she uses is the same "traditional" type as the one she has at home. A conventional, "modern" rolling pin (i.e., the ultra-smooth model with low-friction ball bearings, and a larger, heavier dowel) is eschewed in this case for a smooth stick, which allows one to feel every nuance of the rolling action and its effect on the elasticity of the dough. In contrast the "modern" rolling pin construction disconnects the cook from the dough by being designed to produce uniform strokes and dimensionality to the dough. The standard Greek rolling pin is also different from its American "tapered" equivalent, designed for rolling out pie crust, and thus for creating an unevenness in the dough (thinner toward the middle). The Greek rolling pin is both thinner, and all the same width, creating an even dough, and allowing for "closer" contact with the dough than the American thicker equivalent. The Greek type of rolling pin allows Georgia to "feel" when the dough is right (without being able to verbalize the process), since this type of roller is once again a simple extension of the hands, not a tool meant to achieve the rolling process with minimal human effort. At one point she cast her eyes around her son's apartment, and her gaze fell on his wooden-handled broom. Deciding that this was the right width for the task, she asked her son to cut up the broom to create for her a proper rolling pin. Once again improvisation, the importance of responding to the problem of

the moment rather than executing a preestablished plan, seems to be a thread running through Georgia's cooking practices and her explicit philosophy where "tradition" isn't static, but is infinitely adaptable.²² Clearly Georgia illustrates many aspects of the relationship to tool use body and the senses into the environment. Georgia's case also shows that such practices can exist alongside a self-conscious "modernity" that characterizes Georgia's relationship to other aspects of her life, such as home decoration and female body image. In part this may reflect the



Figure 3.5 Jane Adams

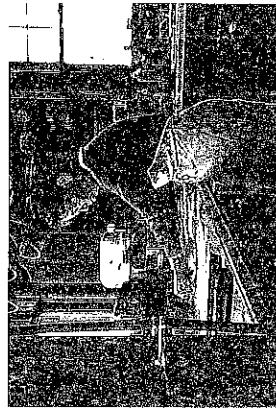


Figure 3.6 Kneading the dough

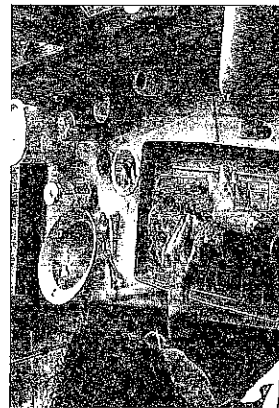


Figure 3.7 Applying the rub to the port loin

fact that contemporary Greek discourse on food, reflecting perhaps global trends, places a high value on the "authentic" (see, for example Gefou-Madianou 1999; Sutton 2001).

Jane Adams also learned to cook from her mother. But, unlike Georgia, who did not encounter any of the modernizing discourses discussed above, Jane's mother encouraged her to use recipes and standard measurements. Jane also learned to cook in 4-H club, where they would learn to follow recipes and create menus. Jane notes: "My mother was very modern and I learned from her the use of measurements. She would convert recipes she did by 'feel' into measurements: 1/4 tsp. thyme, 1/2 tsp. oregano, etc. And she was a stickler about using level measurements for cakes and other similar baked goods." Jane also notes that since her mother was working outside of the home, she would often leave written instructions for Jane to follow, giving her early on a textualized mediation of cooking. "I used cookbooks from the time I could read. Mother got me one for children and I made things from it." Jane's mother also taught Jane to can vegetables, an embodied apprenticeship. "I was a pair of hands," Jane notes. Canning is a practice that Jane continues to this day, producing a hot pepper sauce from ingredients bought at the local farmers' market. Jane defines "authentic" food as having a connection to the ingredients or to the place where the dish came from. But she also believes in eating globally, suggesting that the environmental movement is mistaken to limit their eating to what is available locally, indeed that the availability of foods from around the world is one of the benefits of globalization that we should appreciate. Georgia is, of course, also a global consumer, as reflected in her idolization of Walmart. Her embrace of global commodities, however, does not by and large extend to food items, but rather to those items oriented toward display; thus the global is not "internalized" in the same way for Georgia as it is for Jane.

In one session Jane was preparing several loaves of French bread to accompany a meal of pork loin. She was assisted in cooking by her husband D. Gorton. Jane eschews bread makers, saying that they only used one when they lived far from a grocery store, but otherwise "if you're going to use a bread maker you might as well buy it from the store, the only advantage is that you get to eat it hot." For French bread she used a set of aluminum mold pans, which she had found when she moved into a house, as well as the recipe that accompanies the pans, suggesting a serendipitous approach to cooking that seemed to characterize a number of our American subjects. She noted that with other breads she experiments but with this one she follows the recipe

exactly, measuring out the ingredients using standard cups and spoons, though carelessly measuring the flour, since this, she said, is added till it feels right. As she prepared the dough she reminisced about women in the community who used to make their own yeast out of hops, noting that she always wanted to make a sourdough starter, but felt the climate would not be right for it in Southern Illinois. She kneaded the dough by pulling from the back and folding over in a motion that quickly became automatic. As she kneaded she noted that the recipe calls for using four pans but she only used three because she liked the loaves to be larger. She also noted that the recipe called for letting it rise on a towel and then sliding it into the pans, but she found that too cumbersome and didn't know the reason for it. Her husband interjected that the pans cooled the dough and thus would affect the yeast, but she shrugged and said that she hadn't seen any difference.

David: Can the dough be underkneaded or overkneaded?

Jane: Certainly underkneaded, but overkneaded? I don't think so.

D.: Overkneaded would get the glutens too worked up, make the bread stringy.

Jane: I don't know. The recipe says to knead for ten minutes, but I just use a trick: you put your hand on the dough and count to 10 and if it doesn't stick then the dough is done.

David: Where did you learn that?

Jane: I don't remember. I think in 4-H club.

Jane then prepared a rub for the pork loin, using a number of different spices. The rub was a family recipe that her uncle had taught her mother. First she chopped garlic, then mixed herbs and spices with it in a mortar. While she used a measuring spoon to put the paprika in the mortar, it was used more as a scoop than a measurer. She measured the herbs by hand, grinding them between her palms. Once ground, she added water and used her finger to mix it and to distribute it on the pork. She chopped the garlic rather than using a press, noting that she could never find a press that gets the garlic the way she wants it, that produces the right flavor. This leads D. to raise the question of why Jane won't use sage in her rub.

Jane: I'm not crazy about the taste of sage. I like growing it.

D.: To me sage and pork go together. But not to Jane. This is the way she grew up making it.

Jane: This is the way it's supposed to taste. This is the way it should taste. This is the moral way (laughing).

In the interview that accompanied this session, Jane and D. spoke of the relationship of food, morality, and politics, which they see as having been basically altered in the 1960s. They identify this period as marking a shift from the Boston Cooking School approach (of which they were knowledgeable) to a valorization of "pleasure" in cooking and eating, as well as in other spheres of life. While Jane clearly valued the sensory and pleasurable aspects of the food she prepared, in an interview session a year later Jane and D. had gone on a no-carb diet, and thus homemade bread was, at least for a time, off the menu.

Like Georgia, Jane is a hybrid of practices, judgments, and values in relation to cooking. Georgia's hybridity, as noted, seems to lie less in her cooking practices than in her outfitting of the kitchen with expensive, but unused, marks of distinction. Jane's hybridity lies more in a combination of influences in her learning to cook: her mother, 4-H club and cookbooks, as well as in the values she sees expressed in her practice: cosmopolitanism, local history, pleasure, and moderation. Standardized measurements and writing (recipes) play somewhat more of a role in Jane's cooking. Recipes and cookbooks form a backup reference for things that she can't remember (e.g., the correct temperature to cook the pork loin). But at the same time there are also many "rules of thumb" (Ingold 2000:332) (for judging the bread dough) and sensory memories – the automaticity of kneading as a kind of memory in the hands, the tastes of childhood which form the tastescape of the present, the set of unarticulated taste memories which allow for comparison and judgment, and which can determine the choice of tools (knife vs. garlic press), or of spices. Furthermore, cooking technologies like the bread machine are explicitly rejected.

The connection of all these small gestures to Jane's goals and values is encapsulated in her joking reference to "the moral way of preparing the dish," that is, by duplicating past tastes she is preserving something of her mother's commitment to good food (and social justice: her mother is a leading community social activist).²³ Thus both Georgia and Jane refer back to childhood as a key touchstone for their cooking. But while Georgia frames all her cooking in terms of being true to her mother, her grandmother, and to Greece, Jane's explicit discourse speaks of innovation as well, learning new tastes as part of her life course. (Time spent in Mexico began a long-term passion for Mexican food, for example.) In spite of this more "globalized" influence, certain dishes for Jane can be a source of stories about the local past, family, and community as well. Both express hybrid desires and feelings, as Georgia's "traditional" cooking sits side by side with her fancy, unused gadgets.

and Jane's "moral cooking" has room for a cosmopolitan tasting of what the world has to offer, as well as for dietary fads. Both preserve the gestures and judgments of the past, even if Jane in some cases defers to measuring spoons and recipes (at least as memory jogs), part, perhaps, of the legacy of 4-H and other normalizing discourses as described by Shapiro. Much of their similarities, no doubt, can be traced to the fact that both learned the basics of cooking largely in a social context, from their mothers and other relatives. But neither of them has passed on this tradition: Georgia because she had no daughters. Jane has a daughter, who has continued Jane's political activism, but rejected this type of embodied knowledge: "My greatest disappointment was not teaching my daughter how to cook, but she never took an interest and I never made her." Thus the fact that there are fewer milieus for cultural transmission of cooking knowledge through families raises questions which can only be answered by studying the next generation: Jane and Georgia's children.

This short ethnography is meant to be suggestive rather than conclusive. It provides a taste of how we might operationalize the different concepts discussed in this chapter. While it does not resolve the many issues raised, I hope it begins to suggest the fruitfulness of wedding a concern with "taste" to one with "taste." That is, in each case I have tried to suggest that such cooking "biographies" need to be attentive to both the "technical" skills and sensory aspects of cooking, and its more explicitly social dimensions. The latter is reflected in my discussion of Georgia and Jane's individual goals and values, as well as the ways in which these goals and values interact with the larger totalities (culturally inflected notions of authenticity, morality, globality, and locality) in which they are enmeshed. This chapter, then, is also meant as a critique of food studies that have focused on symbols rather than on processes ("food as a symbol of identity"), suggesting here that meaning, like cooking, is very much "in the making."²⁴

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Notes

1. Of course this is not true of food itself, nor of cooking tools and technologies, but only of the products of cooking, which makes things a bit more complicated.
2. Howes and Lalonde (1991) make a similar argument in showing the development of the concept of taste in eighteenth-century England. They trace the shift from the visual to taste as a class marker to a change from feudal times, when class distinction was stable and apparent from one's dress, to times of more fluid class relations, when the "proximate senses" became more important for judging people's supposed "true character."
3. Ingold draws here on the notion of "affordances" from the work of ecological psychologist James Gibson (1979).
4. As *New York Times* food writer Amanda Hesser puts it: "When I am cooking, a fork becomes an extension of my own hand, a set of fine claws to deftly manipulate things I cannot touch. And whatever the task, the bone handle stays cool" (2003:17-18).
5. Or as James Scott (1998:329) notes, "Any experienced practitioner of a skill or craft will develop a large repertoire of moves, visual judgments, a sense of touch, or a discriminating gestalt for assessing the work as well as a range of accurate intuitions born of experience that defy being communicated apart from practice." See also Keller and Dixon-Keller 1999; Keller 2001.
6. Michael suggests that we think of objects in terms of a "cascade of affordances," "for example, socks afford the easier wearing of boots which afford the attachment of crampons which afford the climbing of snow-covered slopes which themselves become 'affordable', that is to say, climbable" (2000:112).
7. The work of Latour, Law, Callon and others in "Actor Network Theory" is also relevant here in arguing for an approach that uses the same vocabulary to describe technical, natural, and social "actors" (see e.g., Callon 1986). Coming from a somewhat different angle, the *chaîne opératoire* approach to technology, Schlianger (1994:148) makes a similar point: "Techniques are indeed ... a dialogue: the lithic medium is, to all intents and purposes, an interlocutor whose physical reactions cannot be ignored, and the human 'partner' needs to monitor permanently, and critically, all undertaken or projected actions,

to consider the given results in view of the expected, to assess anew the possibility and desirability of the guiding design, to rectify plans according to imagined future eventualities, and to undertake new material actions in view of the above." While written with flint-knapping in view, what a wonderful description this is of processes of cooking as well!

8. Similarly Dobres sees all humans engaged with technology, but there is a clear moral judgment implied in the following: "It is on the basis of this sensuous and cultured engagement that producers and consumers create their bodies of technical know how and skill – whether through the cavalier act of flicking on a light switch (little knowing or caring about principles of electricity or the complex knowledge, labor, machinery, and economic network making this possible), or whether one executes on their own the entire sequence for making and firing a hand-thrown pot (in this case, being intimately familiar with the performance characteristics of each material encountered)" (2001:50).

9. Borgman (1992) describes the same phenomenon as a "receding of reality" from everyday experience, which he tracks in domain of politics, art, and scholarship, as well as labor processes, in which receding reality refers to the loss of sensory input when computer calculations replace trained judgments. He cites a pulp mill operator as follows: "With computerization I am further away from my job than I have ever been before. I used to listen to the sounds the boiler makes and know just how it was running. I could look at the fire in the furnace and tell by its color how it was burning. I knew what kinds of adjustments were needed by the shades of color I saw. A lot of the men also said that there were smells that told you different things about how it was running. I feel uncomfortable being away from these sights and smells. Now I only have numbers to go by" (cited in Borgman 1992:165).

10. The pencil, for example, becomes an extension of the finger as it is used for pointing and highlighting when explaining some process (Suchman 2000:12).

11. For a similar argument in relation to video cameras, see Ginsburg (1997), Turner (1997). For an opposing viewpoint see Weiner (1997).

12. Star, a proponent of science and technology studies (sts), seems more agnostic in suggesting that technology does hide certain kinds of social material relations, which the analyst must then rediscover and unpack: "Technology freezes inscriptions, knowledge, information, alliances, and actions inside black boxes, where they become invisible, transportable, and powerful in hitherto unknown ways as part of socio-technical networks" (Star 1991:32). She recounts the struggles of someone trying to eat at McDonald's, but allergic to onions. Thus Star is concerned with the effects of power and of the standardization associated with modernity, but suggests that we explore the

heterogeneity "which is permanently escaping, subverting, but nevertheless in relationship with the standardized" (39).

13. Wolf defines structural power as "power that operates not only within settings or domains but that also organizes and orchestrates the settings themselves, and that specifies the distribution and direction of energy flows... [It] is intended to emphasize power to deploy and allocate social labor. These governing relations do not come into view when you think of power primarily in interactional terms" (1990:586–7).

14. See, for example, Murcott's (1997) discussion of "golden age" nostalgia and the lack of actual data on food practices to sustain media pronouncements.

15. As Gottdiener notes, because of the microwave "members of the household are no longer dependent on one parent – traditionally, almost exclusively the mother – to make meals. Use of the microwave liberates individuals from this dependency and hyperdifferentiates both meal choices and meal eating times... Increased flexibility of meal preparation may aid and may be a concomitant effect of flexible or extended work schedules" (1995:50–1). But see also Ormrod 1994 on some of the ways that microwaves may reinscribe traditional gender roles in their manufacture and marketing, a general point made in feminist studies of domestic technology (see Cowan 1983; Wajcman 1991).

16. Indeed, as Shapiro documents, they established Domestic Science as part of many university curricula based on persuading universities that theirs was a theoretical discipline.

17. This development and spread of measuring cups and spoons seems ripe for a historical treatment written from the Actor-Network Theory approach.

18. Middle-class women were generally thought to have a minimal appetite for food, among other things.

19. It would be interesting to compare these aesthetic principles to those that guide Japanese cooking, as discussed by Allison (1991).

20. See the special issue of *American Studies* devoted to Martha Stewart (Mechling 2001). McFeely (2000) documents some of the shifts in the 1960s, in particular the influence of Betty Friedan and Julia Child, who in different ways set the tone for promoting "self-fulfillment," which for some took the form of seeing cooking as an art, rather than a science. McFeely further suggests that Child's influence made cooking seem like a challenging and complicated task requiring skill, rather than simply domestic drudgery. The role of travel and immigration in exposing "mainstream America" to new tastes is also discussed. Since the initial writing of this article, Laura Shapiro has published an important new book documenting changes in cooking in the 1950s, which I do not consider here (see Shapiro 2004).

21. I have been pursuing this project in conjunction with Michael Hernandez. See Hernandez and Sutton 2003a, b. Thus I use the first-person plural to discuss this research in the next section.
22. Note that this "trick" may be a rediscovery of a common technique used by Greek migrants in the United States, as described by Papanikolas (1987:7).
23. On reading a version of this chapter, Jane commented "I think the link between food and social justice is complicated: My mother was very much into good nutrition, and in that sense (and many others) fully in line with scientific housekeeping, but it was also inflected with an aesthetic sensibility that was more connected to the socialist movement, of arts and crafts (which has now moved to Martha Stewart – the ironies of history). So menus were in fact 'moral' – a 'balanced diet.' But appropriate herbs hearkened more to a sense of good eating which was probably Jewish – it certainly wasn't local. So there was a degree of snobbery, of 'taste' in Bourdieu's sense in there as well."
24. Quote from Dobres 2001. See also Pfaffenberger 2001.

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Part 2

Colonialism