

'Recommended by Duncan Hines':
Automobility, Authority, and American Gastronomy

by

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ABSTRACT
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How did Duncan Hines become an authority on roadside dining? What role did he have in the consumption of food and the use of automobiles? What were the messages he pronounced to his audiences?

In "Recommended by Duncan Hines," I examine the formation of Duncan Hines as the premier American restaurant critic occurred in national journals and self-published guidebooks of the 1930s to 1950s. Analyzed as a function of the discursive production of power/knowledge within the historical contexts of cultures of automobility, consumption, and authority, I frame Hines as a mediator between producers and consumers, a position gaining in significance in the early 20th century. Narrating the exchange of commodities, Hines' gastronomy acted as a fount of nationalism and American "taste" based in perceptions of geography, history, and authenticity. Furthermore, my thesis presents a model for comprehending the origins, role, and effects of critics and other cultural authorities.

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Introduction

"Duncan Hines may have invented and commingled the role of travel guide and restaurant critic to aid the motoring public in sorting the healthy and wholesome eateries from among the choices at roadside."¹

- Karl Raitz

"Rather than being a restaurant guide, [this] tells the far more complicated story of how such guides - and a public gastronomic sensibility, more broadly defined - came to be among the distinctive features of modern life. What is truly odd about the world we inhabit today is not that one restaurant should earn two stars and another none, but that someone should think to assign such rankings in the first place. To understand how the restaurant's logic of personal choice and specialist evaluation became generalized models... we need to see where those models came from and what was dropped or cut from them along the way."²

- Rebecca Spang

Before he became synonymous with packaged cake mixes and frosting, Duncan Hines was the premier restaurant critic in the United States. He attempted to expertly speak about the entire nation's network of roads and restaurants by organizing these in a guidebook of recommendations for motorists under a principled gastronomy of American food. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s he drove approximately 50,000 miles a year as a traveling salesman, and then drove an additional 50,000 miles a year through his weekend hobby of discovering foods far from home. Decades before cars and consumption created the transnational, multi-billion dollar industry of fast food, Hines became a critic that led the developing popular culture of eating out. He sold hundreds of thousands of copies of his guidebooks and was thought of in his era as *the* authority on American food, even

¹ Karl Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America," *The Geographical Review* 88. 3 (1998): 382.

² Rebecca Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 7.

beyond the roads and roadside where, due to white privilege, his social and material power and cultural knowledge originated.

Yet, historian Harvey Levenstein has argued that in the early 20th century "the sorry state of American gastronomy was best typified by Duncan Hines."³ While Hines' best-selling restaurant guidebook for motorists of the 1930s to 1950s, *Adventures in Good Eating*, was not adventurous by contemporary culinary standards, it nevertheless articulated the tastes of a distinct community. With Hines as their guide, this "freemasonry of motorists" enacted a gastronomic geography of America in an era when cars and consumption developed roadside dining into a foodway of tremendous social and economic power. A cultural study of Duncan Hines as a food critic thus illuminates a decisive figure and time period in the modern history of American foodways.⁴ Yet, as Paula Fass argues, "without lots of other kinds of evidence... that has been developed by social historians who examine large swaths of data, the individual culturally resonant case cannot be made historically meaningful."⁵ Likewise, this retrospective partakes of Michaela di Leonardo's "programmatic claim... that cultural studies is fundamentally *about* investigating the making of

³ Harvey A. Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America*, Revised ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 46.

⁴ Hines also published guidebooks for motorists on lodging and vacation destinations, as well as compiled cookbooks. These texts will be considered though the focus will center predominantly on his writings about restaurants and foodways. All of the above were published before his transformation into a brand name of packaged foods, a process that occurred only in the last few years of his life. That phenomenon, and its persistence in the media, grocery stores, and pantries of America, is by itself an enormous and fascinating topic of research. In the least, my work helps to explain how and why Duncan Hines gained the authority later transmuted into a corporate brand.

⁵ Paula S. Fass, "Cultural History/Social History: Some Reflections on a Continuing Dialogue," *Journal of Social History* 37. 1 (2003): 45.

meanings, and we cannot understand such cultural processes in the absence of accounting of their particular historical political-economic contexts."⁶

In tracing the patterns around Hines, my goal is to discern the significance of American food consumption at a time when the automobile was radically reshaping the United States. I argue that the figure of and activity surrounding Hines stem from the material and social shifts caused by the conjuncture of automobility and consumerism. Furthermore, Duncan Hines' cultural authority on roadside goods and services illustrates the growing role of critics and other tastemakers in the 20th century American market for goods. As a whole, my study also presents a model for analyzing how authorities of consumer goods and cultural commodities attain, maintain, and use their power. The relationship between the critic, his community, and the larger contexts of consumption are thus integral to understanding, rather than dismissing, the spatial and aesthetic history of American taste. As such, my work contributes to the growing literature on culinary tastemakers who continue to shape modern American discourse and practices pertaining to foods and foodways.⁷

My objects of study are representations of Duncan Hines in national magazines that aided his initial rise to fame as the preeminent restaurant critic of the 1930s to 1950s (e.g., *The Saturday Evening Post*, *This Week Magazine*, *Better Homes & Gardens*), as well as Hines' own nationally circulating publications. My intent is to

⁶ Michaela di Leonardo, "Mixed and Rigorous Methodology," in *Questions of Method in Cultural Studies*, ed. Mimi White and James Schwoch (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 218. Author's italics.

⁷ See David Kamp, *The United States of Arugula* (New York: Broadway Books, 2006).; Leslie Brenner, *American Appetite: The Coming of Age of a Cuisine* (New York: Avon, 1999).; Elin McCoy, *The Emperor of Wine: The Rise of Robert M. Parker, Jr. And the Reign of American Taste* (New York: Ecco, 2005).

focus on his work as a restaurant critic and to critically analyze media sources as sites for the discursive creation of Duncan Hines' subject position. The articles under review are those – most often written by others, though sometimes by himself about his own work – that presented Duncan Hines as, purportedly, *the* national restaurant critic of his time period. Such an archive is constructed because it is precisely through these publications that Hines' authority and knowledge was presented and disseminated to Americans. Through these documents I wish to locate what discourses and power relationships elevated Hines to the pedestal of respect, renown, and expertise in the field of American food culture and subsequently enabled him to maintain this status. In addition, I seek to identify what discourses were invoked and what knowledge was produced in his restaurant writing upon attaining such cultural authority. This approach is justified by his power within his era: like Zagat's ratings for the heartland, his "Recommended by Duncan Hines" signs helped shape the criticism and consumption patterns of Americans "eating out" in the early 20th century. As one commentator of American food culture and criticism states about these decades, "it wasn't as if there was a coherent food world."⁸ Duncan Hines stepped in to systematize that world, organizing the information most relevant to consuming the "best" of restaurants and their cuisines. These seminal opinions took the form of specific recommendations for restaurants in exact locales as well as a broad gastronomic philosophy of the entire nation.

⁸ Kamp, *The United States of Arugula*, 7.

Informed by the ideas of the historian Joan W. Scott, my approach to method involves reading the Duncan Hines archive to *not* "take as self-evident the identities of those whose experience is being documented" since "[e]xperience is always already an interpretation *and* something that needs to be interpreted."⁹ I will look at the evidence to see, as Hines becomes a critic, "the emergence of a new identity as a discursive event" in the archive, wherein "[l]anguage is the site of history's enactment."¹⁰ My decision to limit my analytic purview to articles about Hines appearing in magazines with a national circulation is based on a simple idea: if a mainstream food critic is made by national media exposure, then it is in these outlets that I should seek evidence of his formation and his criticism. To take the example of Duncan Hines, the first editions of *Adventures in Good Eating* were published and distributed by himself through word-of-mouth marketing. National magazines writing articles about Hines are thus documentation of his emergence from a regional and private to a national and popular stage. Yet, it is not enough to state this as a matter of fact. It is more important to ask of this evidence: why was Hines anointed as the premier critic? How did these articles present his image and construct his stature as an authority? Where did the power conferred by these national magazines originate and what knowledge was created in the making of this critic and his criticism? What subjects – whether Duncan Hines, the American restaurant customer, or American foodways – did this culture of authority and criticism create? How did these

⁹ Joan W. Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," *Critical Inquiry* 17. 4 (1991): 777, 797. Applying this perspective makes "historians take as their project *not* the reproduction and transmission of knowledge said to be arrived at through experience, but the analysis of the production of that knowledge itself." (797)

¹⁰ *Ibid.*: 792, 793.

publications articulate discourses such as hygiene, consumer value, gender, authenticity, geography, and nationalism?

The assumptions behind my cultural analysis involve the concept of "discourse" as shaped by the theories of Michel Foucault. His work on the creation of subjects sees "individuals as correlative elements of power and knowledge."¹¹ With regard to the discourses that constituted Hines and his criticism, I will employ Foucault's concept of the "conditions of possibility" that allow discourses to operate in order to uncover the power/knowledge "grid that order manifests"¹² in the subjects it produces through discourse. Furthermore, these discourses use social categories "strategically necessary for the functioning of power" and thus involve "a fluid set of overlapping discourses"¹³ that present the subject of Hines. This grid of categories of identification is made available to historical analysis when the depiction of Hines as a white man in print media is contextualized. In this context, his race acts as what Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham has called a "'metalanguage,' since it speaks about and lends meaning to a host of terms and expressions" used to establish and maintain his authority.¹⁴ It is the intersection of these discourses that constitute him as a powerful subject relative to the historical moment, and it is their analysis that will aid in understanding his elevation to and continuance on the critic's pedestal.

¹¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1991), 194.

¹² Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: The Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1991), xxii, xx.

¹³ Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs* 17. 2 (1992): 253, 255.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 255.

That he was repeatedly portrayed as white, male, wealthy, southern, and avuncular is crucial. If positioned otherwise, then his rise as a critic would likely not have happened. Given the social climate of early-20th century America, he probably would not have been admitted entrance into the range of establishments if not for his appearance. Beyond his image in the media and in daily travels as a normative "American," it is in fact his profession, the wealth it affords him, and lifestyle choices that enable his travels. On a practical level it is not only his identity and privileges that create his candidacy as a critic, but his relation to the social and material bases of automobility and foodways in the era of America as a burgeoning consumer's republic. In this context, Hines' knowledge comes from the power that has been socially granted to him, and his knowledge is made culturally operative by the power structures undergirding automobility as a practice and discourse of mostly white and relatively affluent Americans. Because Hines is a member of this group benefiting from automobility, his knowledge is and by for these consumers traveling through space. To analyze the sources and uses of this knowledge is "to understand historical and spatial variations in knowledges, their textual constructions, and their operation within fields of power."¹⁵ Understanding how and why authority was granted to Hines will be made possible by Paul Starr's framework of "cultural authority," as different from Max Weber's concept of *herrschaft*.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ian Cook, and Philip Crang, "The World on a Plate: Culinary Culture, Displacement, and Geographical Knowledges," *Journal of Material Culture* 1. 2 (1996): 141.

¹⁶ Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* (New York: Basic Books, 1982).

Foucauldian theory helps explain not only how a person like Duncan Hines could be made into a critic by certain discourses of race, class, age, and gender, but how he could be a further fount of other discourses and practices as well. Moreover, consumption studies frames my investigation of the discourses and materials and foods as encountered in early 20th century restaurants. Consumption is conceived “as a multifarious concept, a highly diverse and frequently contradictory set of practices and ideologies.”¹⁷ In terms of historiography, I place Hines within what Lizabeth Cohen has called the "consumer's republic," a period extending from the 1930s to 1960s in which Americans roles as citizens and consumers were mixed, with the latter becoming a defining aspect of the former.¹⁸ At times, Americans sought "to safeguard the rights of individual consumers and the larger 'general good'" as citizen consumers, while at other times they "championed pursuit of self-interest in the marketplace" as purchaser consumers.¹⁹ I argue that the position and content of Hines criticism comes from this larger context that enables it and legitimizes it. The analysis of the role and work of critics is a means to understanding the terms of this culture of consumption. Thus, I assume that the "meanings we attach" to the objects of culture - foods, songs,

¹⁷ Susan Strasser, "Making Consumption Conspicuous: Transgressive Topics Go Mainstream," *Technology and Culture* 43. 4 (2002): 756.

¹⁸ Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage, 2003). As Cohen frames them, "rather than isolated ideal types, citizen and consumer were ever-shifting categories that sometimes overlapped, often were in tension, but always reflected the permeability of the political and economic spheres." (8)

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

clothing - "are very deeply influenced by the filters that stand between us" and the things themselves, mediators such as critics, experts, and other authorities.²⁰

To focus on the articulation and dissemination of the ideals of consumption is "to discover how consumption became a cultural ideal, a hegemonic 'way of seeing' in 20th century America, requires looking at powerful individuals and institutions who conceived, formulated, and preached that ideal."²¹ Richard Wightman Fox and Jackson Lears' argument that "the study of dominant elites - white, male, educated, affluent - is a critically important part of social history," is not an effort to legitimize the position or influence of elites but an attempt to understand their power and its consequences, especially in defining and propagating the forms of dominant culture. Instead, investigating a figure like Duncan Hines sheds light on the guiding of consumption in America, wherein consumers engage tastemakers in both the making of cultural signs and material decisions about food as well as the learning process of how to perceive the commodities around them. It also attempts to comprehend how at certain times for specific reasons a few voices can be more influential than others to profound cultural and economic degrees. Furthermore, investigating critics allows us to see how they become commodities themselves, as their authority and knowledge function as things of value, employed and exchanged to inform not just consumers' decision-making process but all actors involved in the commodity exchange process.

²⁰ John Gennari, *Blowin' Hot and Cool: Jazz and Its Critics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 4. Though Gennari is a scholar of jazz, his history of jazz critics and its analysis of the discourse they construct around music and musicians is an instructive example: his work is not only a history of the criticisms of a form of culture but criticism's role in shaping the audience's reaction to it.

²¹ Richard Wightman and T.J. Jackson Lears Fox, "Introduction," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980*, ed. Richard Wightman Fox and T.J. Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon, 1983), x.

In terms of theorizing consumption, Daniel Miller argues that consumption is neither 'good' nor 'bad'; instead it "is simply a process of objectification - that is, a use of goods and services in which the object or activity becomes simultaneously a practice in the world and a form in which we construct our understandings of ourselves in the world."²² As such, "it is a relatively autonomous and plural process of cultural self-construction" the essentials of which "may be as varied as the cultural contexts from which consumers act."²³ As a historian, Peter N. Stearns concurs "that consumer behaviors and rules are historically constructed.... they emerge in specific times and places according to measurable new causes."²⁴ In my study, these assumptions will combine with the historical literatures on consumption and cars in the first half of the 20th century. These narratives afford a view of the ideology of liberty that becomes embedded in American automobility and supports the consumption community that is an outcome of the car culture that Hines served and of which he was a member. The goal is to show how, "in the context of consumerism, liberty is not an abstract right to participate in public discourse or free speech. It means expressing oneself and realizing personal pleasure in and through goods."²⁵ In exercising this liberty bonds are formed amongst individual consumers when "sharing

²² Daniel Miller, "Consumption as the Vanguard of History," in *Acknowledging Consumption: A Review of New Studies*, ed. Daniel Miller (New York: Routledge, 1995), 30.

²³ *Ibid.*, 41.

²⁴ Peter N. Stearns, "Stages of Consumerism: Recent Work on the Issues of Periodization," *The Journal of Modern History* 69. 1 (1997): 117.

²⁵ Gary Cross, *An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 3.

with others in personal ownership and use of particular commodities" to create what Daniel Boorstin has called a "consumption community."²⁶

Jean-Christophe Agnew presents a theoretical underpinning for this proliferation and intertwining of cultural meanings and commercial activity in the 20th century. First, as "products become products for exchange," in the sense of ever-widening distribution in physical and semiotic forms, geographic, "then markets grow both more intensive and extensive."²⁷ Products then become "'disentangled, disenanced, disencumbered' from the specific and immediate needs of material life," and turn into symbols used to express any number of discourses because, as Agnew argues, "cultural symbols are always polyvalent, but commodified symbols are infinitely so."²⁸ Since the commodities are now circulating as much in wide-ranging social and textual networks as they are in their physical environment we increasingly "consume by proxy," and thus have "the cognitive appetite as the model engine" of the consumptive process.²⁹ The powerful that Fox and Lears argue as important then step in to organize and then manipulate this field of commodities and signs. However, these symbols are always connected to actual material items (e.g. cars, restaurants, guidebooks). To approach their physical aspect requires "understanding material

²⁶ Ibid. Daniel Boorstin, "Welcome to the Consumption Community," in *The Decline of Radicalism: Reflections on America Today* (New York: Random House, 1969). A commodity is defined as "any thing intended for exchange." Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 9.

²⁷ Jean-Christophe Agnew, "The Consuming Vision of Henry James," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980*, ed. Richard Wightman Fox and T.J. Jackson Lears. (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 71.

²⁸ Ibid., 71-72, 72.

²⁹ Ibid., 73.

culture as involving processes in which cultural life is objectified... and hence in which cultural artefacts have to be understood in relationship to their social and material contexts."³⁰

The most obvious social and material context for Hines as a guide for motorists is the popular advent of the car in the early 20th century. Thanks to the geographic mobility it enabled, Americans could encounter a range of foreign experiences far beyond what previous modes of transportation afforded. A discursive dynamic is assumed to arise from this material situation, namely that as Americans ventured into new areas in which their knowledge was potentially limited the foreign landscape of roads and roadsides provided an opportunity for knowledge to be produced to fill in gaps. To connect producers and consumers in this new form of traveling eaters required forging connections, organizing phenomena, and making hierarchies, tasks that called for an authoritative or otherwise powerful figure to make intelligible the unknown and the complex. Between the disparate restaurateurs and their potential customers was the mediation of information necessary in facilitating the process of exchange. Conceptually speaking, this was the role of a critic like Duncan Hines, an authority guiding the traffic and developing the criteria of commodities, as found in the framework of Arjun Appadurai's theory of commodity exchange. From this perspective, analysis points out not only how Hines' aided the exchange of commodities as a mediator between producers and consumers, but how

³⁰ Cook, "The World on a Plate," 132.

"in complex capitalistic societies... knowledge *about* commodities is itself increasingly commoditized"³¹ as well.

One of the avenues of mediation analyzed is the (mis)information regarding American regional foodways.³² Theorization of this problem is found in Ian Cook and Philip Crang's seminal article on "the character of material cultural geographies and their spaces in identity practice."³³ Their work theorizes the creation and usage of knowledge surrounding material culture linked to geography in order see how "constructed meaningful knowledges about (food) commodities and their geographies, and technologies for the material embodiment of these knowledges... become a crucial means of adding value to those commodities."³⁴ As a type of mythology surrounding a commodity, discourses envelop a food to create "geographical knowledges" that make a place/product intelligible, distinct, and valuable for exchange. A critic of regional foodways, Hines built narratives that perceived them in modes of authenticity and exoticism, separating and valuating them as wholly different and, as a consequence of difference, better. Connected to the network of cars, roads, and consumption, Hines' regional food narratives prove that "any placed cuisine depends upon those connections, not simply historical accretion or stasis within that place."³⁵ Thus, "regional cuisines are invented traditions" because

³¹ Appadurai, "Commodities and the Politics of Value," 54.

³² Foodways are defined as "a whole interrelated system of food conceptualization and evaluation, procurement, distribution, preservation, preparation, consumption, and nutrition shared by all members of a particular society." Jay A. Anderson, "Scholarship on Contemporary American Folk Foodways," *Ethnologia Europaea* 5. (1971): 57.

³³ Cook, "The World on a Plate," 131.

³⁴ Ibid.: 134.

³⁵ Ibid.: 139.

"foods do not simply come from places, organically growing out of them, but also make places as symbolic constructs, being deployed in the discursive construction of various imaginative geographies."³⁶ Assuming this, the goal is then to explain the culinary nationalism expressed in Hines' gastronomy.³⁷

With regard to food, I assume that the habits of food consumption are products of daily life rhythms, the mundane social and material patterns shaped by the built environment, the political economy, the popular culture, and the social mores of a locale.³⁸ The historical context considered is one where Americans began eating outside of the home at an increasing rate. Narrating this history requires considering the many reasons and avenues why Americans were eating out, from changes in labor and leisure practices to the impact of technology and media on consumption habits. Hines' primary area of expertise, roadside dining, is thus better understood as a developing popular culture of "eating out" or "dining out," terms for the modern practice of taking meals beyond the home by choice in a public and commercial

³⁶ Ibid.: 139-140.

³⁷ Gastronomy is defined as the intertwining of its two common usages: the general art and science of good eating; a specific style of cooking from a particular region. Theoretically, it is thus "a holistic enterprise" that "allows us to escape from the limitations of conventional academic disciplines, which for the sake of analysis and specialization are narrowly conceived, and simultaneously it also allows us to draw freely from them all. Gastronomy obliges us to pursue all aspects of food.... It is not a passive or 'objective' study which simply leaves things as they are, for the understanding it imparts is practical in its implications." Anthony Coronos, "Multiculturalism and the Emergence of Gastronomy," in *Proceedings of the Third Symposium of Australian Gastronomy*, ed. Barbara Santich and Michael Symons (Melbourne: 1988), 23.

³⁸ Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin, 1986). For example, I follow the scholarship of Harvey Levenstein, who narrates that "the transformation of the American middle-class diet.... would have been inconceivable without the post-1870 changes in 'material' areas such as the production, transportation, processing, financing, and marketing of food. Yet non-material... considerations such as conspicuous consumption, class emulation, a love affair with science and technology, health fads, patriotism and fashion were also of great importance." Harvey A. Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 173-174. See also his preceding volume, Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*.

venue.³⁹ Broadly considered, this practice includes phenomena as varied as the pushcarts, deli counters, lunch trucks, corner stands, and myriad other innovative vernacular responses to the demand for food prepared and sold outside of the home. For the community of motorists that Hines guided, the most predominant setting for eating out was a "restaurant," a word that acts as a category covering a number of establishments that may go by other more colloquial names. Though what we would now call restaurants existed as far back as houses catering to travelers in the Song dynasty in China, the word restaurant originates in post-Revolutionary France. The restaurant, as business and social phenomenon, developed into the prototypical operation that haunts the contemporary usage of the term and informs the expectations of modern Americans when visiting a restaurant: seated service at a relatively relaxed pace, a staff of professional waiters and kitchen workers, a listed menu of choices, and foods specialized by a certain cuisine.⁴⁰ These expectations were also greatly shaped by the role of automobiles and the popular culture developing around it starting in the 1920s.

My assumptions about how to define and describe the operations of culture come from Stuart Hall. His definition of popular culture "looks, in any particular period, at those forms and activities which have their roots in the social and material conditions of particular classes; which have been embodied in popular traditions and

³⁹ Alan Warde, and Lydia Martens, *Eating Out: Social Differentiation, Consumption and Pleasure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 42-47.

⁴⁰ Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant*, 1-11.

practices."⁴¹ As such, I suggest that visiting that "eating out" was an emerging form of American popular culture in the early 20th century, and one most often taken the form of "roadside dining." In accordance with Hall's theory, I see this cultural phenomenon to have primarily arisen from the visiting of restaurants by white Americans of the middle and upper classes. This popular culture of eating out aided by Hines was the outcome of a car culture and its consumption community.

Like the one in which Hines operated, car cultures are a type of popular culture. They exist as cultural expressions made through the consumption of cars, in cars, and because of cars particular to the social and material contexts of such activity.⁴² This framing of automobile activity is a response to the fact that "within social history there tends to be an emphasis on the consequences of the car rather than an empathetic account of car consumption in particular cultural contexts."⁴³ The problematic outcome of "a social history of the car that does not include the driver" and the larger social circumstances impacting the driver "is a fetishized history."⁴⁴ This view fits into the recent call for scholars to apply the "cultural turn" to the study of automobiles in order to better understand the non-mechanical factors that are undeniably central to the ideas and uses of automobiles.⁴⁵ This greater complex of cars as products of both steel and society is called automobility, a term first employed

⁴¹ Stuart Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, ed. John Storey (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 449.

⁴² Daniel Miller, "Driven Societies," in *Car Cultures*, ed. Daniel Miller (New York: Berg, 2001).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁵ Colin Divall, and George Revill, "Cultures of Transport: Representation, Practice, and Technology," *The Journal of Transport History* 26. 1 (2005).; Jorg Beckmann, "Automobility: A Social Problem and Theoretical Concept," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19. 5 (2001).

by John C. Burnham.⁴⁶ My definition will follow from its use by the historian of the automobile, James J. Flink, as "the combined impact of the motor vehicle, the automobile industry, and the highway plus the emotional connotations of this impact for Americans."⁴⁷ I will employ the term similarly: automobility is made up of practice and discourse, both the physical use of automobiles and the social and semiotic activity surrounding them. The culture of roadside dining is thus shaped by the technology that makes travel possible as well as the meanings constructed around such movement.⁴⁸ Furthermore, as Divall and Revill contend, "taken as a whole, the customs, habits and values of automobilisation are a practical resource for the ordering of everyday life; they are a cultural regime."⁴⁹ Conceiving automobility in this way allows us to examine "the cluster of beliefs, attitudes, symbols, values, behavior, and institutions which have grown up around the manufacture and use of automobiles," and that in turn impact the automobile when utilized in the material environment.⁵⁰ Automobility thus allows us to see the culture surrounding the process

⁴⁶ John C. Burnham, "The Gasoline Tax and the Automobile Revolution," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 48. 3 (1961).

⁴⁷ James J. Flink, "Three Stages of American Automobile Consciousness," *American Quarterly* 24. 4 (1972): 451.

⁴⁸ As John Urry frames the concept: "'Auto' mobility thus involves autonomous humans combined with machines with capacity for autonomous movement.... What is key is not the 'car' as such but the system of these fluid interconnections." John Urry, "The 'System' of Automobility," *Theory, Culture & Society* 21. 4/5 (2004): 26.

⁴⁹ Divall, "Cultures of Transport," 102.

⁵⁰ Charles L. Sanford, "'Woman's Place' in American Car Culture," in *The Automobile and American Culture*, ed. David L. Lewis and Laurence Goldstein (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 138.

of how "the road-and-country corridor was radically remade into a road-roadside-country corridor during the first four decades of the 20th century."⁵¹

In Chapter 1, I present the wide background of cars and food consumption in the early 20th century, narrating the larger context from which Duncan Hines criticism would emerge. In Chapter 2, I investigate the creation of Hines as an authority and its representation in magazines of the 1930s to 1950s. In Chapter 3, I analyze Hines' perspective on American food and place as critical and nationalist utterances from his position of authority. In sum, I argue that as a powerful subject represented as media image and as a fount of geographic and gastronomic knowledge, Duncan Hines was the product of the confluence of automobility, consumerism, and discourses of American food.

⁵¹ Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America," 368. These four decades are narrated as constituting two epochs of automobility in Flink, "Three Stages of American Automobile Consciousness." and David Gartmann, "Three Ages of the Automobile: The Cultural Logics of the Car," *Theory, Culture & Society* 21. 4/5 (2004). Both emphasize the role of consumption and individualism in the history of American car culture.

Chapter 1 – Automobility

"Restaurants are symptomatic of our times and lessons can be learned from them about who we are as a people.... they not only reflect changing society but, as places inviting to and supportive of categories of normative behavior, they sustain change and may even precipitate it."⁵²

– John Jakle

This chapter will focus on the relationship of American car culture to patterns of roadside dining, the cultural activity on which Duncan Hines was deemed the preeminent authority from 1936 to the late 1950s. The context for this type of food consumption covers travel for leisure and work since both influenced the trend of Americans eating outside of the home. The increase in eating along side the road is in part a consequence of the increase in automobile use in general as well as larger historical trends in consumption patterns. Of this emerging "car culture," the historical record shows that the social and material context slanted car use toward leisure at first, a legacy that despite decreasing within the overall patterns of automobile traffic nevertheless left a strong influence on how Americans employ their cars toward symbolic and physical ends. Observing restaurants as manifestations of social and material changes stemming from this context of automobility creates a field of consumption patterns in which to situate Duncan Hines' emergence as foremost a cultural authority on roadside dining, as well as an expert on lodging, vacationing, and the culture of American food.

⁵² John A. Jakle, and Keith A. Sculle, *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurant in the Automobile Age* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 2.

To achieve a wide view of the many trends relating to cars and consumption, the time period considered in this chapter is from the late 1900s to 1950s.⁵³ It was an era when Americans were exploring the nascent network of roads created by local, state, and federal initiatives under the influence of a number of social and economic groups, a system that geographer John Jakle calls "the most significant environmental change to occur in the United States and Canada in this century."⁵⁴ The dates considered are before the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, otherwise known as the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act. The central argument for this legislation was that this infrastructure was necessary for more efficient military activity. Inadequate roads during World War I spurred the Federal Highway Act of 1921, though this legislation can also be seen as the continuance of the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916, which was halted by the war.⁵⁵ Though aid to the military was the primary public reason for national road building in both instances, many other groups lobbied for improved quality and quantity of highways with farming groups like the National Grange, motorist clubs banded together under the American Automobile Association, and industrial and mechanical companies whose products were related to cars the most prominent.⁵⁶

Road construction was the second biggest item of government spending through out the 1920s, for in the Federal Highway Act of 1921 a "200,000 mile

⁵³ My discussion of restaurants later in this chapter will begin a few decades before in the 19th century.

⁵⁴ John A. Jakle, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), xii.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁵⁶ John B. Rae, *The Road and the Car in American Life* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1971), 33-39.

system of two-lane, numbered interstate highways was designated to connect every city larger than fifty thousand population" while "the 1934 Highway Act extended federal aid to secondary roads outside the interstate highway system."⁵⁷ Because of such projects the number of paved miles of highways doubled within the decade of the 1920s, and did so again in the 1930s as the federal government, as part of Depression relief, spent \$4 billion on roads.⁵⁸ John Jakle describes the form of these roads as geared toward day-to-day commerce:

Despite the promise of multi-purpose planning, most highways in the United States and Canada were developed as single-purpose projects.... They were built primarily for commercial purposes.... they focused on lane separation, grade separation, limited accessibility, and the other devices seen as speeding up travel. Increasing traffic flow, rather than improving travel experience, became an overwhelming primary goal.... The interplay of better cars and better roads set up an endless clamor for utilitarian roadscapes.⁵⁹

With roads eventually funded by taxes on gasoline, road usage encouraged road creation, a circular process that furthered the reach and regularity of the car and the road.⁶⁰

Understanding the role of the car in American culture requires first investigating who owned cars, how they used them, and how their use was expressed to the rest of America. The cost of an automobile in the 1900s and 1910s restricted it in ordinary practice, media spectacle, and organized advocacy to the upper classes. They saw it as an object of luxury imbued with a discourse of mobility, defined as the

⁵⁷ James J. Flink, *The Car Culture* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1975), 141.; Quote from Jakle, *The Tourist*, 126.

⁵⁸ Jakle, *The Tourist*, 126.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 139, 143.

⁶⁰ Burnham, "The Gasoline Tax and the Automobile Revolution."

ability to overcome spatial as well as social restraints.⁶¹ These Americans cast the automobile, at least in the first decade or two, as a technology for leisure so that "car use was primarily recreational before World War II."⁶² This sense was supported by a print media working in close contact with the automobile industry to further the car as commodity. The role of the car as both object of and instrument for consumption thus leads from these social and textual patterns established at the beginning of the 20th century.

James Flink, like the majority of automobile historians after him, argues the importance of the 1920s for creating a car culture, insisting that it is then that "automobility became the backbone of a new consumer-goods-oriented society and economy," a situation intensified by the Depression of the 1930s.⁶³ The automobile's presentation to the larger mass of American consumers occurred during these decades, though, this mass audience was decidedly middle to upper-class and predominantly white. This automobile consumption trend, starting before World War I and mushrooming afterwards, leaned heavily on the emerging field of professionalized advertising and its increasing importance in setting the terms for a culture of consumption and its consequent social activity.⁶⁴ In fact, automobile advertising nearly tripled from \$3.5 million in 1921 to \$9.3 million in 1927 as the

⁶¹ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 28-32.

⁶² Warren J. Belasco, *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1979), viii.

⁶³ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 140.

⁶⁴ For how this process happened, see T.J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).; Stephen R. Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Morrow, 1984).; Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of the Consumer Culture*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977).; and Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

industry attempted to ignite wider demand in middle and lower classes of consumers.⁶⁵ The success of these efforts are confirmed in a national comparison of the number of registered automobiles to the population: the ratio of cars to people jumped from 1:201 in 1910 to 1:13 in 1920, and then to 1:5 by 1930.⁶⁶ In discrete numbers, this was an increase from 9.3 million passenger cars in the United States in 1921 to 23.0 million in 1930.⁶⁷ In contrast, this decade saw much more explosive growth in automobile ownership than the preceding decade, as the number passenger cars increased from 23.0 million in 1930 to only 27.4 million in 1940.⁶⁸

Public depictions of automobiles first occurred in newspapers and magazines at the turn of the 20th century. The two most typical representations were of races as tests of endurance and narratives of touring trips led by the upper class.⁶⁹ The relationship between automobility and print media began early as close cooperation with the press, replete with well-paid junkets and substantial press interviews, "gave the motorcar generous and extensive coverage" in print media.⁷⁰ In James Flink's estimation, "it was the long-distance reliability run that most excited the average

⁶⁵ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 145.

⁶⁶ Rae, *The Road and the Car in American Life*, 50.

⁶⁷ "Facts and Figures of the Automobile Industry," (New York City: National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, 1922).; "Facts and Figures of the Automobile Industry," (New York City: National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, 1931).

⁶⁸ "Automobile Facts and Figures," (Detroit: Automobile Manufacturers Association, 1941).

⁶⁹ Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 7-11.; Flink, *The Car Culture*, 20-25.

⁷⁰ James J. Flink, *The Automobile Age* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1988), 29. See also Blaine A. Brownell, "A Symbol of Modernity: Attitudes toward the Automobile in Southern Cities in the 1920s," *American Quarterly* 24. 1 (1972): 26.

person's imagination about the romance of motoring" since such feats were a better indication of the "imminent personal automobility" afforded by the automobile.⁷¹

Practical advantages of the automobile fed their popularity as well, a fact attested by both primary and secondary sources on automobiles. Compared to horse-driven vehicles and trains, this new mode of transportation allowed for greater flexibility in and self-determination of the details of travel. Unlike the railroad, automobiles allow the schedules, destinations, and companions of driving to be controlled by the traveler. Socially, this created an escape from the crowded masses and dictated itinerary of the set rails as well as the hard labor and unreliability of horse-drawn transport. Thus, despite a much cheaper price, traffic on the rails decreased by nearly twenty-five percent from 1921 to 1941 while traffic in private automobiles increased six times over.⁷² How the car was initially employed by the consuming public, however, was not for commercial or other practical purposes. Instead, Warren Belasco cites leisure touring and "autocamping" – a simple mix of camping and driving – as the first private but large-scale use of the automobile by the vanguards of automobility, the upper middle and upper classes. Furthermore, he argues that this social practice possessed an ideology tied intimately to issues of

⁷¹ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 21, 22.

⁷² Jakle, *The Tourist*, 169.

escape and control.⁷³ Relieving themselves of the pressures of the increasing pace and complexity of urban life was an overtly expressed intention.⁷⁴

On a patchwork of unpaved and crudely paved roads, drivers found the experience of vacationing "slow, arduous, and close to nature" with only close companions to be a romantic evocation of "the leisurely pace, personal independence, simplicity, and family solidarity of pre-industrial times."⁷⁵ In turn, the literature on touring and camping, "written by and for" the upper and upper middle classes, stressed the terms of "*will* and *anywhere*," marking independence, freedom, self-determination, and satisfaction as the dominant discursive themes.⁷⁶ Drawing these ideals together, the automobile was viewed as an aid to liberty and an instrument to evoke the agrarian American past of innocence and natural bounty, "a nostalgic return to a simpler age of benignly individualistic operators" creaking across the range to their righteous claim of a homestead.⁷⁷ The discourses of liberty, mobility, and bounty found in the earliest representations of automobility were, in part, communicated to society by media, though once disseminated these ideals were accepted and rearticulated by the American public.

With the practical advantages of the automobile over other types of transportation well-established by the 1920s, advertising then represented the car as a

⁷³ The speed and endurance adventures of turn-of-the-century automobile accounts were events of spectacle and not regularity within popular culture. They did not get Americans "on the road," in both literal and imaginative senses, in the same quantitative and qualitative ways as autocamping and touring.

⁷⁴ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 39.; Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 13-16.

⁷⁵ Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 3.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

sign of cultural values not strictly related to mechanical performance but nevertheless supportive of them. When "the utilitarian virtues of the product came to be taken for granted by the consumer," advertising increasingly leaned on psycho-social symbols to attract buyers, with the most "potent and pervasive themes... the fusing of rural and urban advantages and family togetherness."⁷⁸ As the automobile entered popular culture in the 1920s and 30s, this symbolism attached a number of ideologies to its material role. Facing a mostly white market of consumers expanding from the upper-reaches of the lower class through to the wealthy in search of their third or fourth vehicle, advertisers catered toward "middle-class" values. In practice, as well, "the car had become an extension of the home" as it entered the social and material lives of middle-to-lower class Americans, becoming what historian Michael Berger calls the "new mobile, personal 'parlor on wheels.'"⁷⁹ By this he means the replication of the genteel space of Victorian comfort and culture of the domestic parlor into the automobile, making it a new social space in which the family could develop and display their cultivated sensibilities.⁸⁰

This new space for the family coincided with a new conception of the family. Originating in a monograph of 1925, the "companionate family" was a growing consensus amongst judges, social scientists, medical professionals, and progressive reformers. As the phrase implies, this was a more companion-like relationship

⁷⁸ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 145.

⁷⁹ Michael L. Berger, "The Car's Impact on the American Family," in *The Car and the City: The Automobile, the Built Environment, and Daily Urban Life*, ed. Martin Wachs and Margaret Crawford (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 59.

⁸⁰ Katherine C. Grier, *Culture and Comfort: People, Parlors, and Upholstery, 1850-1930* (Rochester: Strong Museum, 1988).

between parents and children, a structure that deemphasized Victorian patterns of patriarchy, hierarchy, and repression in favor of mutual satisfaction between husband and wife, more affection given in public and private, and shared decision-making.⁸¹ The companionate model "constituted 'a couple' who participated jointly" in more areas of domestic life and reinforced this type of connection through "increased emphasis on leisure activities."⁸² Material articulation of these ideals was found in new leisure forms enabled by the automobile. Confined and controlled by the inner physical space of the car-as-parlor, the "value of the motor car" in group trips was that it "provided the opportunity whereby families could encounter new experiences together, thus allowing for parental judgment in terms of what was seen and when," and, in turn, for children's desires and reactions to achieve equal standing in the shared experience of the family at leisure.⁸³ Combined with the nostalgic view of motoring developed in the initial years of American automobility, the family "hoped to relive the adventurous trials of the supposedly well-knit pioneer family."⁸⁴ These representations and the reality of automobility during this era seemed to coincide for certain communities within American society, though others had different visions.

The automobile operated in this era, as much as in other decades, as an empty signifier imbued with meanings as variable as the persons employing it:

⁸¹ Steven Mintz, and Susan Kellogg, *Domestic Revolutions: A Social History of American Family Life* (New York: Free Press, 1988), 113-115. On these changing ideals as seen in the new public culture of couples, see Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988).

⁸² Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 164.

⁸³ Berger, "The Car's Impact on the American Family," 61-62. See also Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 57.

⁸⁴ Warren Belasco, "Toward a Culinary Common Demoninator: The Rise of Howard Johnson's, 1925-1940," *Journal of American Culture* 2. (1979): 507.

It was clear to almost all observers in the 1920s that technology was a highly significant factor in altering the past and shaping the future.... and the automobile as probably the most significant of the technological innovations appearing in the period. The motor vehicle was a more impressive piece of machinery than a radio, more personal in its impact than a skyscraper or a dynamo, and certainly more tangible than electricity. Thus it was generally more legible as a symbol and more apparent in its consequences.⁸⁵

An example of other rhetorical uses of automobility was its supposed encouragement to vice, in that the freedom of movement and social seclusion created by cars would advance the sexual promiscuity thought to be promulgated by the flappers, jazz, and gin of the roaring twenties. Whether allowing families to ignore provisos regarding the Sabbath, young adults to fraternize without parental supervision, or generally making the streets that much more dangerous, amongst many other concerns, the car was often seen a symbol and tool of modern sin.⁸⁶ Sociologist Francis E. Merrill sees further intersection between values and perception of social patterns in that "Depression mobility was viewed by the general public and the authorities alike as an unfortunate manifestation of an economically and socially stagnant society," and yet "similar movements, during the defense and war years, on the other hand, were considered an indication of a dynamic and virile social organization."⁸⁷ This elasticity of the automobile as symbol acts as both an indicator of its wide significance and a

⁸⁵ Brownell, "A Symbol of Modernity," 42-43.

⁸⁶ Berger, "The Car's Impact on the American Family," 60.; Brownell, "A Symbol of Modernity," 28-41.; Ronald and Trevor Pinch Kline, "Users as Agents of Technological Change: The Social Construction of the Automobile in the Rural United States," *Technology and Culture* 37. 4 (1996): 768-773.; Glen Jeansonne, "The Automobile and American Morality," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 8. 1 (1974). For a concentrated history of the connection between sex and cars, see David L. Lewis, "Sex and the Automobile: From Rumble Seats to Rockin' Vans," in *The Automobile and American Culture*, ed. David L. Lewis and Laurence Goldstein (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983).

⁸⁷ Francis E. Merrill, "Highways and Social Problems," in *Highways in Our National Life: A Symposium*, ed. Jean Labatut and W.J. Lane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), 138.

reminder of its materiality, a thing open for manipulation as a tool to both symbolic and physical ends.

The cultural responses to the initial scene of automobility "were immediate, intense, and sustained" as "advertisers, cartoonists, songwriters, artists, comedians, and dramatists imagined a thousand and one roles for the car" in everyday life, with the wide popularity stemming from the perceptions of cars as objects of self-directed utility.⁸⁸ Attached to the class connotations of their initial consumption, the automobile "symbolized wealth and psychic liberation" that only wealth could then afford, connotations that waned but never fully receded as the perception of the automobile shifted from seeing it as a luxury to a necessity.⁸⁹ These images presented an impressive array of roles and related ideologies though the most common and central ones were the nexus of individual liberty and mobility. Clay McShane's archival analysis of automobile advertisements before World War I shows that visually they "reeked of status" while they "focused their written claims on comfort, speed, and reliability."⁹⁰ The occasional emphasis on touring and racing activities "implied reliability" while underlying the possibilities of "the sense of adventure" attached to driving fast to foreign places, underlining the car as a tool and symbol of autonomy.⁹¹ James Flink thus encapsulates the emergent ideology:

Individualism – defined in terms of privatism, freedom of choice, and the opportunity to extend one's control over his physical and social

⁸⁸ David Blanke, *Hell on Wheels: The Promise and Peril of America's Car Culture, 1900-1940* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 40.

⁸⁹ Clay McShane, *Down the Asphalt Path: The Automobile and the American City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 125.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 138.

environment – was one of the most important American core values that automobility promised to preserve and enhance in a changing urban-industrial society. Mobility was another. The automobile tremendously increased the individual's geographic mobility, which was closely associated with social mobility.⁹²

Layered on top of this ideology were the industrial practices of Fordism and Taylorism that, by the 1930s, combined to form "an extended narrative structure and discourse system, one that extend[ed] far beyond the factory floor."⁹³ In practice, these two systems were the application of scientific approaches to production management that systematized mechanical efficiency in manufacturing processes. They sought to increase the flow and output of production, with Taylorism, in particular, judging efficiency as a measure against time while Fordism stressing control and reproducibility.⁹⁴ These principles were applied not just to produce automobiles but, as shown later in this chapter, also by the restaurant industry. They became prevailing discourses *and* practices of American culture, guiding the material manifestations of social habits.

It should be stressed that the connection between the values of individualism, mobility, efficiency, and automobiles is not a natural or essential product of material reality. The fact of their connection speaks to a larger discursive framing of the advances of modernity as necessarily positive and applicable to every American's daily experience. The automobile fits within long running patterns of connoting

⁹² Flink, *The Car Culture*, 3.

⁹³ Martha Banta, *Taylored Lives: Narrative Productions in the Age of Taylor, Veblen, and Ford* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 4.

⁹⁴ Thomas P. Hughes, *American Genesis: A Century of Invention and Technological Enthusiasm, 1870-1970* (New York: Viking, 1989), 184-220.

physical mobility with individual liberty and social agency, and their combined power to raise an American's socio-economic standing and virtuous autonomy as consumer and citizen, an ideological legacy extending from the frontier thesis to Jack Kerouac and beyond.⁹⁵ The automobile, as Mike Featherstone points out, has consistently been culturally interpreted in terms of "powerful dreams of adventure and freedom: the capacity to go anywhere, to move and dwell without asking permission, the self-directed life."⁹⁶ From this perspective it is not overstatement to assert that "more than any other consumer good the motor car provided fantasies of status, freedom, and escape from the constraints of a highly disciplined urban, industrial order,"⁹⁷ and these fantasies squared with larger discourses of liberty, freedom, and the American dream. Furthermore, the role model of the wealthy motorists imparted an element of class into the desires and demands for the automobile.⁹⁸

In its discursive form in the first half of the 20th century, automobility thus presented the car as a tool for the individual to move without hindrance, consume as desired, and therein both contribute to and take advantage of the geographic and material bounty of the nation. In addition, a government-professed ideology coalesced the popular discourse of automobility, promoting the infrastructure that supported automobiles as an unmitigated boon for both the economic and social well being of the country. This outlook stated that automobility was always "promoting economic

⁹⁵ To trace of such a discursive history of American mobilities in intellectual and popular contexts, see Cotten Seiler, "Anxiety and Automobility: Cold War Individualism and the Interstate Highway System" (Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas, 2002) 93-115.

⁹⁶ Mike Featherstone, "Automobilites: An Introduction," *Theory, Culture & Society* 21. 4/5 (2004): 2.

⁹⁷ McShane, *Down the Asphalt Path*, 148.

⁹⁸ Gartmann, "Three Ages of the Automobile: The Cultural Logics of the Car," 171-176.

growth, raising standards of living and creating a good society" by encouraging individual freedom and developing new forms of commerce.⁹⁹ In this era of the advent of the automobile in American society, put forth "was a new ideal of the mobile citizen in which the rights of citizenship were defined... in terms of geographical mobility and commercial access."¹⁰⁰ This ideal "proceeds from value assumptions that have [since] come to be as critically questioned as automobility: virtuous materialism, unlimited economic growth, unbounded faith in technological progress, and the sanctity of consumer needs and consumer democracy."¹⁰¹ That automobility was articulated as the rights of the individual to access and utilize the material and social manifestations of these values is a major cultural framework for understanding the early 20th century context of cars, commodities, and space. Yet, we must recognize the crucial historical fact that even until the late 20th century, "the space of the American road, like the contours of citizenship, was established under specific regimes of racialized inequality and limited access whose codes it reproduces."¹⁰² It is within this context of discourse and power that we can begin to understand the origins and role of Duncan Hines, his knowledge, and, in return, his impact on such a context.

The greater material access and social import to automobiles meant "the beginning of a major transformation in recreational habits," because while "pleasure

⁹⁹ Rae, *The Road and the Car in American Life*, 373.

¹⁰⁰ Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 219.

¹⁰¹ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 212.

¹⁰² Cotten Seiler, "'So That We as a Race Might Have Something Authentic to Travel by': African American Automobility and Cold-War Liberalism," *American Quarterly* 58. 4 (2006): 1093.

travel had previously been a rarity for most people, represented if at all by a brief annual vacation, but that such travel had become frequent and normal, whether the trip was a journey of some length or a brief ride on impulse."¹⁰³ The perspective that automobility "made leisure a customary aspect of everyday experience"¹⁰⁴ recurs through out the literature on the social uses of cars. As John Jakle argues, "the automobile popularized travel, spreading the advantages of tourism from society's elite to the masses," allowing more Americans to leave "the bounds of city and town and roam the countryside in search of nature, region, and history."¹⁰⁵ Touring by automobile opened up the West in particular, allowing Americans to see places there at their own pace and on their own terms rather than through the tourism industry's system of railroads, mass-market accommodations, and a limited menu of packaged attractions.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, the car's much-hailed freedom of mobility fostered senses of nationalism amongst Americans as they encountered the historical sites, natural landscapes, and regional cultures perceived as symbolic of the diversity and distinction of America, a practice and accompanying discourse later employed by Duncan Hines.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Rae, *The Road and the Car in American Life*, 138.

¹⁰⁴ Joseph Interrante, "You Can't Go to Town in a Bathtub: Automobile Movement and the Reorganization of Rural American Space, 1900-1950," *Radical History Review* 21. (1979): 89. For accounts of the simultaneous surge in automobile ownership and leisure activities, in particular vacationing, see Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929), 255-263.; Robert S. and Helen M. Lynd Lynd, *Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1937), 245-246, 265-269.

¹⁰⁵ Jakle, *The Tourist*, xi.

¹⁰⁶ Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 143-167.

¹⁰⁷ Shaffer, *See America First*, 130-220.

As Cindy Aron points out, the popular advent of the vacation in early 20th century meant a wider diversity of Americans by class, race, and ethnicity, though the commercial response was to erect segregated services and sites for different groups.¹⁰⁸ The Depression curtailed the activity somewhat, though "considerable numbers continued to vacation – even during the most severe economic times;" in fact, by 1935 aggregate spending on vacations had been virtually restored to pre-Depression levels.¹⁰⁹ In that same year, Americans "spent almost five percent of their total income on vacation expenses... a sum greater than all moving-picture admissions, greater than the cost of any other form of recreation whatsoever."¹¹⁰ Furthermore, 85% of the travel for these vacations was by car, which, in sum, represented more than half of all recreational expenditures, including non-vacation leisure activities.¹¹¹ Duncan Hines' word-of-mouth popularity began in this same year, 1935, as he began circulating *en masse* his roadside recommendations. By the following year, his first guidebook to "Good Eating Places Along the Highways of America" was published, *Adventures in Good Eating*; by 1938, it had sold well over 100,000 copies and Hines had released what would become a companion guidebook, *Lodging for a Night*, that would sell just as well as his restaurant guide.¹¹² Only a year later, Hines extended his authority to food served in private with his *Adventures in*

¹⁰⁸ Cindy S. Aron, *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 183-236.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 239, 241.

¹¹⁰ Foster Rhea Dulles, *America Learns to Play: A History of Popular Recreation, 1607-1940* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1940), 317.

¹¹¹ Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 143.

¹¹² Louis Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2001), 101. The quoted phrase is the sub-title of his restaurant guidebook.

Good Cooking and the Art of Carving in the Home, a cookbook that continued his publishing success.¹¹³ Altogether, Hines was riding the crest of an ever-expanding social wave of Americans in automobiles looking for "adventures" in never seen before places and "good eating" along the burgeoning commercial space of the roadside.

Arguably the most frequent activity connected to automobiles, though not necessarily described as leisurely in all instances, has been eating outside of the home. One way to connect the histories of automobility and food in the early 20th century is to trace the services then responding to the conjuncture of these activities, wherein businesses cater to the demands of consumers with a variety of personal preferences and daily schedules for eating outside of the home. The anthropologist Sidney Mintz, in surveying large-scale changes in Western food consumption over centuries, offers a useful perspective on charting the development of such patterns: "Diet is remade because the entire productive character of societies is recast and, with it, the very nature of time, of work, and of leisure."¹¹⁴ Applied to the late 19th and the entire 20th century, the shift to eating more often outside the home is then understood as a product of changes in the placing and scheduling of work and leisure more often away from the home, with automobiles increasingly the most dominant form of transportation to these areas. It is within this context that John Mariani can state that,

¹¹³ From 1936 to 1956, the span of Hines' career before age and poor health slowed him down, his restaurant guide would go through 49 printings, his lodging guide 39 printings, and his cookbook would see 26 printings. *Ibid.*, 254.

¹¹⁴ Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 213.

"the history of restaurants in the United States is tied up intimately and completely with our vaunted mobility, both geographically and sociologically."¹¹⁵

To comprehend the interrelation of increased mobility and increased food consumption out of the home, it is instructive to consider the late 19th and early 20th century history of restaurants. Most important for present analysis are traditional taverns and the Fred Harvey chain. The former was the prevailing 18th and 19th century American model for feeding travelers and locals alike, and the latter was an innovating response to taverns shaped greatly by travel technology. Eating in a tavern was generally considered "rude affairs by any standard, and their travel-weary patrons in rural areas were a captive audience with little choice as to their accommodation."¹¹⁶ Even though travelers of many types could frequent them, for the most part these "establishments were little more than places where men would gather to drink and to drink heavily."¹¹⁷ Usually spare and unpredictable, boarding and food service usually consisted of a singular mealtime, a singular menu option, and often a singular table for all customers. More congenial, consistent, and palatable types of dining were restricted to expensive and socially restrictive inns. But as America moved toward the 20th century options eating out expanded, led in many ways by an expanding sense of overcoming space made possible by changes in technology and the economy, as well as by an expanding diversity of customers by age and gender.

¹¹⁵ John Mariani, *America Eats Out: An Illustrated History of Restaurants, Taverns, Coffee Shops, Speakeasies, and Other Establishments That Have Fed Us for 350 Years* (New York: William and Morrow, 1991), 13.

¹¹⁶ Richard Pillsbury, *From Boarding House to Bistro: The American Restaurant Then and Now* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 15.

¹¹⁷ Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 16.

In the food service business, "If it may be said that every social group caters to itself," and each purveyor "has grasped the idea of food service as an opportunity to make a mark, and the need to invent and be innovative," then Fred Harvey may be the first to enact both impulses in feeding Americans travelers.¹¹⁸ A mail clerk on railroads of Kansas and Missouri, Harvey saw an untapped market for feeding weary middle and higher-class travelers in their sojourns to the West. His goal was to serve a multiple course meal without interrupting train schedules or underperforming to his intended clientele's elite standards of quality food, service, cleanliness, and atmosphere. Customer expectations, once raised above frontier saloon standards, were for hotel dining: tightly timed food preparation of fresh and local foods, finely orchestrated parlor-like table manners, all-female waitresses in strict uniform and conduct (hospitable to mostly male visitors in respectable attire), and a radical notion of pleasing customers regardless of consequence.¹¹⁹ Harvey showed that eating out in a foreign place need not be as uneasy an experience as visiting the taverns of earlier times. His negotiation of the railroad's disciplines of time and space while maintaining product uniformity and consistency was a landmark for public food service. As such, he was "the first restaurateur to understand and capitalize on the restless mobility of Americans."¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Jan Whitaker, "Catering to Romantic Hunger: Roadside Tearooms, 1900-1930," *Journal of American Culture* 15. 4 (1992): 19.; Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 9. For a thorough history of Harvey, his workers, and his environment, see Lesley Poling-Kempes, *The Harvey Girls: Women Who Opened the West* (New York: Paragon House, 1989).

¹¹⁹ Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 44-46.; Barbara Haber, *From Hardtack to Home Fries: An Uncommon History of American Cooks and Meals* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 87-106.

¹²⁰ Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 42.

Another part of the history of eating out at the turn of the 20th century were vendors, then lunch wagons, and eventually diners, each a development on the preceding. While Fred Harvey fed wealthy railroad travelers, these related forms catered to the laboring classes – office and manual alike – of urban areas that traveled by foot. Coming out of European traditions of street peddling, and before grocery stores and 24-hour restaurants, "the food vendors provided a service to the residents of the city that a public market, which was only open at certain hours and usually only once or twice a week, could not match."¹²¹ These entrepreneurs were tightly connected to the rhythms of the city since they depended on timing their service to its needs. Though their quantity and cultural import is hard to estimate, nevertheless they were, and still are, a common phenomenon in the United States. Their informality and ubiquity, varying by setting, was an important early form of eating outside of the home and an inspiration to the many inventive and entrepreneurial early responses to the increasing amounts of Americans eating their meals outside of the home.¹²²

The wagon concept originated in 1872 when Walter Scott of Providence, Rhode Island sold plain sandwiches, boiled eggs, and coffee to manufacturing laborers working night shifts. A small but important progression from the meager operations of peddlers, these carts were still make-shift in design, an informal response to new and shifting demands for food service beyond American homes. These designs kept the food simple, quickly prepared (or often pre-made), and

¹²¹ Padraic Burke, "Rolling Carts and Songs of Plenty: The Urban Food Vendor," *Journal of American Culture* 2. (1979): 482.

¹²² David Gerard Hogan, *Selling 'Em by the Sack: White Castle and the Creation of American Food* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 15-16.

inexpensive. Scott, and soon his many competitors, filled the gap between approximately 8 p.m and 8 a.m when no public houses served food.¹²³ With industrialism changing the timing of work to such late hours, and thus when and where people ate, the lunch wagon responded to these changes. Despite serving an increasing amount of city dwellers, they were stigmatized by the itinerant "eye sore" image of their vendor forebears and their working class origins. To counteract these impressions and attract a wider base of customers, in the 1890s the wagons developed into complex serving stations that customers could enter, sit, and watch much of the menu made from scratch with the latest in food service mechanization. In doing so, owners used modern technology to attract more clientele and to more efficiently handle the resulting increase in volume of business. By "making the image classier lunch cars became dining cars, an allusion to the fine dining experience of the railway;"¹²⁴ moreover, two disparate models for restaurants and their customer bases converged.

The transition from wagon to restaurant occurred when, after pressure for these roving kitchens to stop clogging the streets, many of the wagons had their wheels removed or covered by building foundations. These first diners remained close to their established clientele in the industrial bustle of Northern and Eastern cities from the Gilded Age to the Immigration Act of 1924. This time period also saw a small but steady increase in women working outside of the home, a trend to which

¹²³ Richard J.S. Gutman, *American Diner: Then and Now* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 12-17.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

the early diners responded. At first, "small touches began to appear, designed to attract women who were entering the work force with increasing regularity. Even more lasting were changes in the menu for a greater variety and more healthful choices, as well as shifting seating from mostly stools, noted as uncomfortable and unseemly to women, to more tables and booths."¹²⁵ The adaptability to place and populace has been a hallmark of the vender-wagon-diner lineage of restaurants. This characteristic persisted in their responses to pressures of mass consumption and automobility in later decades.

The first instances of automobility influencing public food consumption were in the autocamps described by Belasco as performances of agrarian nostalgia. As such, the cooking was fireside and the menu was "bacon and eggs, canned beans, and fried meat and potatoes, supplemented by fresh produce and milk purchased from farmers at cheap prices."¹²⁶ One of the alternatives for motorists was the tearoom, what has been called "the first restaurants of the automobile age."¹²⁷ Situating their development within the concurrent growth of consumer and car cultures, Whitaker sees the tearoom as a conscious response to the paucity of food options between campfire cooking, formal upper-class hotel dining, and "rough," male-dominated saloons and taverns. Influenced by the temperance movement and typically run by women, the tearoom was a middle-ground establishment with class-derived standards of hospitality:

¹²⁵ Ibid., 84-89.

¹²⁶ Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 56.

¹²⁷ Whitaker, "Catering to Romantic Hunger," 17.

If today we continue to associate colonial restaurant decor with cleanliness, palatable food and sober, well-behaved guests, it is largely because of the efforts of roadside tearoom operators to create these associations—paving the way for later appropriations such as the Howard Johnson chain in the late 1930s and 1940s.¹²⁸

While many tearooms were intentionally female-only, they served as havens not only for the solo female driver but for families in search of a more genteel environment. They attracted customers by using historic buildings for locations and emphasizing a nostalgic atmosphere through antiques and other "charming" signifiers of America derived from notions of Northern European tradition; employing a hostess and table service neither highly refined nor completely informal; offering mild tasting, healthy, and safe Anglo-German American food (by standards of the era); and high prices. It is in these ways "that tearooms captured a new dining public, the growing and affluent Anglo-American middle class, a group which had hitherto shunned the public restaurant," mostly because they perceived few options between rugged masculine saloons and expensive hotel dining rooms.¹²⁹ Prohibition, though, soon brought the death knell of the saloon since alcohol was the center point of their business, with food as an adjunct, and "opened the way for a great expansion in restaurants catering to the lunch-hour trade."¹³⁰ The results in the 1920s was a decade-long three-fold increase in restaurants in the United States, a trend made possible by the industry's

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.: 19. See also Hogan, *Selling 'Em by the Sack*, 12.

¹³⁰ Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 187. For other perspectives on the decline of saloons see Madelon Powers, "Decay from Within: The Inevitable Doom of the American Saloon," in *Drinking: Behavior and Belief in Modern History*, ed. Susanna Barrows and Robin Room (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

focus on the middle class, women, and children.¹³¹ This new field of competing restaurants warred over menu variety, speed of service, and other salient details that, while not necessarily food-related, helped to lure a growing legion of hungry laborers and motorists. The populations they were serving were for the most part white Americans with enough money to either afford prepared workday lunches or roadside dining.

The interwar period also saw the birth of two similar types of eateries that served both roadside customers and city laborers: the lunchroom and the cafeteria. In fact, these were more or less umbrella terms for a wide variety of businesses creating niches tied to their typically urban locale or by the rhetorical salesmanship found in the eras' neologisms: hot shoppe, café, automat, soda fountain, buffet, and more. Uniting form and function in identifiable ways, within these restaurants "function and economy were the driving forces. Indeed, the lunchroom was one of the common structures that attracted the admiration of architectural modernists" who saw a new order in the confluence of these two discourses as represented in the meeting of customer and eatery.¹³² Through their organization the intent was "to some extent regulate, through design, their customers' length of stay," paralleled by their operational schemes of efficiency of motion (for both employee and customer) and economies of scale.¹³³ These were embodied in innumerable detail: the placement, size, and comfort of stools; the use of standing wall-ledges in lieu of tables and

¹³¹ Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 185.

¹³² Philip Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches: The Architecture of American Chain Restaurants* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 20.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 14.

chairs; the central, U-shaped service counter; vending machines, buffet lines, and similar server-less designs; narrow walkways, signs, partitions, and other tightly patterned structures of controlling customer flow; pre-made or quickly-cooked food items made by constantly improving technologies of preparation; and easy-to-maintain surfaces of stainless steel, formica, and other slick, shiny, clean materials. Like the tearooms, "the cafeterias' cleanliness, convenience, speed, and respectable atmosphere helped attract a large share of the growing shop and office girl market," a recognition that eating outside of the home was no longer solely the activity of men looking for corner saloons and street vendors.¹³⁴

Thus the developing model for restaurants sought to capitalize on the concentration of traffic, whether by foot or other transport, and to cast a wide net for customers by presenting a modern, utilitarian, efficient, yet courteous operation. In particular, lunchrooms and cafeterias went well beyond local entrepreneurship, laying "the foundation for later chain-store development by demonstrating the importance of synergy and the interchangeability of consumer loyalty by developing multi-store units which appeared to be clones."¹³⁵ To attract high volumes of traffic they inhabited near-similar square interiors in storefronts near commerce. They handled such volumes by offering simple menus of food quickly served to best cater toward a

¹³⁴ Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 188.

¹³⁵ Pillsbury, *From Boarding House to Bistro*, 58.,

customer base with time constraints on eating and tastes that tended toward simple fare.¹³⁶

To return to Sidney Mintz's thesis, the "productive character" of the United States had shifted starting with the growth of industrialism in the 19th century. As the nature of work changed so did perceptions of time and its careful use as encapsulated in Taylorist and Fordist principles. Both prioritized the optimization of productivity through mechanical efficiency; work would be faster, higher in volume, and more reliant on science and technology for task performance. The application of these concepts in food service can be delineated in the internal and external designs of roadside and labor district eateries. Architectural historian Jim Heimann sees this discourse as decisive in the material culture of restaurants as a reflection of American social culture:

Modernism and streamlining represented the optimism of the future.... This belief in the advances of science, technology, and the machine had been apparent for several decades, with World War I marking the transition from old to new values. Paring the elements down and getting to the essentials was a theme consumers were becoming accustomed to. Speed was paramount, as was newness and cleanliness.¹³⁷

An example of these developments in the interwar era is found in a highly influential establishment in the history of American restaurants, White Castle.

While neither a cafeteria nor catering to motorists, this chain fully embodied the new models of food service and acted as a critical precursor to the proliferation of

¹³⁶ Hogan, *Selling 'Em by the Sack*, 19-21.; Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 110-119.; Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 185.; Richard Pillsbury, *No Foreign Food: The American Diet in Time and Place* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 172-175.

¹³⁷ Jim Heimann, *Car Hops and Curb Service: A History of American Drive-in Restaurants* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996), 32.

roadside establishments in the 1930s. Like the other restaurant forms discussed, location and traffic flow was crucial. Founder Walter Anderson surveyed his hometown of Wichita, Kansas and saw opportunity in the new patterns of industry:

The White Castle concept was the right restaurant for the right time. The restaurants were oriented to the factory workers traveling on public transportation to inner-city factories. The vast majority of the locations remained in the middle city and did well until the post-war suburban movement created a new dining perspective.¹³⁸

Like the urban vendors of the 19th century, Anderson was conscious of the pressures of his customers' work shift schedules and thus developed a number of operational efficiencies that made food consumption patterns, and White Castle production processes, mirror the assembly line work of its customer base.¹³⁹ In addition, Meg Jacobs notes that, "between 1880 and 1930, the number of salaried employees increased eightfold in response to the growing demands from new corporations and government bureaucracies."¹⁴⁰ The growing number of Americans unable to go home for meals were the customers sought by restaurateurs.

First, to ensure quick recognition by customers Anderson employed the now-legendary unique building shape and was "the first extensive restaurant organization to have a completely uniform architectural image."¹⁴¹ Gleaming white, clean, and strictly standardized, a passerby could spot these playful icons immediately on a busy thoroughfare, a strategy that would later dominate roadside landscapes and customers relation to them. If industry and labor were becoming highly mobile then so must

¹³⁸ Pillsbury, *From Boarding House to Bistro*, 71.

¹³⁹ Hogan, *Selling 'Em by the Sack*, 38.

¹⁴⁰ Meg Jacobs, *Pocketbook Politics: Economic Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 40.

¹⁴¹ Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 20.

food service; each of the castles' were modular in construction and could thus be moved overnight to a better locations.¹⁴² Inside, the floor area varied from 150 to 400 square feet, enough space for a spare counter and few stools, stripping the flow constrictions of the populist lunchrooms to an even more extreme minimalism. You enter, you order, you receive, possibly you stand and eat but not comfortably so, and you leave. It was arguably a triumph of applied Taylorism.

The menu at White Castle was short, simple, and brightly displayed above the busy counter. Customer turnover was high and systematic, and combined with the convenience fostered by the many food inventions of the age: stainless-steel cookware (1927), homogenized milk (1927), molded pounds of butter (1928), mass-produced and preservative-aided sliced bread (1928), the electric mixer (1931), as well as industrial-sized toasters, ovens, deep-fat fryers, and Anderson's own time and space saving innovations in cooking techniques.¹⁴³ These speed-enhancing devices were complemented by White Castle's reputation as "porcelain palaces," a nickname earned by their meticulous cleanliness and forward display of the new slick and shiny steel and synthetic surfaces. In sum, "Ingram was guaranteeing what Fred Harvey had promised in the 19th century and what every chain restaurant operator sought to provide ever afterward—no surprises, no variations, no deviations, no unfamiliar tastes."¹⁴⁴ The proceeding wave of restaurant operators saw how these guarantees were even more potent in translation from urban origins to suburban fruition,

¹⁴² Ibid., 33.

¹⁴³ Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 107.; Pillsbury, *From Boarding House to Bistro*, 175.

¹⁴⁴ Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 124.

stressing the cleanliness, server propriety, speed, customer value, and reliability demands of the growing legions of middle-class customers.¹⁴⁵ As the dominant trends of his era, Duncan Hines both encouraged and resisted these practices.

These trends became dominant because restaurants after 1920 were responding to the ways that "automobility revolutionized the lifestyle of the typical American family" while "suburbanization reinforced the family orientation of postwar society," therein taking the connections between mobility and restaurants most often forged in urban, industrial contexts and applying them to new and different spaces and patterns of eating outside the home.¹⁴⁶ This revolution was in the distance of suburban homes from work and the independent ease of relying on a car for transportation. Automobiles extended the commute of breadwinners, reformed the daily duties of homemakers, and eventually gave new shape to children's avenues for socialization. The density of families in the suburbs and the isolation of mother and child throughout the day were so prevalent that the "suburban family was dominated to a great extent by the needs of children," needs that often required heavy use of a car. So, whether negotiating the wide spaces of the suburbs or embarking on the newly affordable leisure trip, the American family presented the next market for restaurant expansion.¹⁴⁷ The industry seized the opportunity by extending and updating the processes that had garnered success in attending to urban laborers eating out in the early 20th century.

¹⁴⁵ Hogan, *Selling 'Em by the Sack*, 27-35.

¹⁴⁶ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 158.; Mintz, *Domestic Revolutions*, 184.

¹⁴⁷ Mintz, *Domestic Revolutions*, 185.

Within the normative family structure that placed women in the role of housewife, cars allowed women to move "from producers of food and clothing into consumers of national-brand canned goods, prepared foods," and other efficiency-minded consumer expenditures.¹⁴⁸ These goods were increasingly cheap in price and thus increasingly popular to a wide range of Americans.¹⁴⁹ This trend familiarized adults to the convenience of consuming food prepared by others, extending the "revolution of declining expectations" of the time, effort, and organization of the dinner table within family life.¹⁵⁰ In this way, the "kitchen began to lose its status as the center of household activity as shopping and food preparation came to require far less time, and moreover as automobility encouraged families to eat out far more often."¹⁵¹ The automobile also meant fewer parents, still mostly fathers, coming home from work for lunch, a continuation of a trend caused by industrialism. No wonder that in 1929 over eighty percent of all new restaurants were lunch rooms, coffee and sandwich shops, cafeterias, and other forms of quick-service dining restaurants.¹⁵²

While White Castle began to lose business as consumers moved out of the city after each world war, entrepreneurs took similar concepts (small buildings, quick service, immaculately clean, modern in design, limited menu) to the new and hastily filling arteries of the suburbs. Historically, the first of this general class of restaurant was J.G. Kirby's Pig Stand in 1921, built specifically to capitalize on the newly built Dallas-Fort Worth highway. Kirby's classic, though cynical, quip about the impulse

¹⁴⁸ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 163.

¹⁴⁹ Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 151-152.; Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 25-27.

¹⁵⁰ Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 161-164.

¹⁵¹ Flink, *The Car Culture*, 166.

¹⁵² Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 189.

behind motorists eating out: "people with cars are so lazy that they don't want to get out of them to eat."¹⁵³ Supported by good weather if you were in the South, or for seasonal business elsewhere, this model brought the efficiency and informality of counter-top, on-the-go eateries to new concepts of specialization. Due to the generally diminutive size of the building and the low overhead of a limited menu (à la White Castle), a mix of both chain and independent stores arose wherever demand could be found and a sliver of land could accommodate them. Like the farmer's food stands of the early touring and auto-camping days, local specialties were common (like the Texas brisket and pork barbecue of Kirby's Stand) as were niche markets like ice cream, though generalists existed as well. All were conducive to brisk business since their connection to the social movements of family and consumption were direct:

A & W's, Pig & Whistles, and Dairy Queens were located not in the inner city to serve people at work, but in the residential neighborhoods where they were associated with pleasure.... These new stores targeted the discretionary food dollar, not the work dollar. They represented pleasure, not a necessary evil.¹⁵⁴

These changes in geography were apparent to restaurateurs of many types.

This shift was a process that Joseph Interrante calls "metropolitianism," a trend that began in the 1920s and led to "the geographic configuration of a consumer society based upon car travel."¹⁵⁵ Manufacturing increasingly decentralized, leaving urban areas for newly built suburban complexes; agricultural operations grew in size and intensified specialization, starting the long 20th century slide in the number of

¹⁵³ Heimann, *Car Hops and Curb Service*, 14.

¹⁵⁴ Pillsbury, *From Boarding House to Bistro*, 77.

¹⁵⁵ Joseph Interrante, "The Road to Autopia: The Automobile and the Spatial Transformation of American Culture," in *The Automobile and American Culture*, ed. David L. Lewis and Laurence Goldstein (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 91.

farms; and the formerly dispersed pattern of retail, with a shopping district for every urban neighborhood and a trading post at every rural crossroads, centralized into more concentrated spaces serving wider areas of the population.¹⁵⁶ New places were made; for example, in a 1931 survey of families moving to Evanston, Illinois, nearly half came from Chicago while the other half from farther in the countryside.¹⁵⁷ Thus automobility "became a prerequisite to survival" caused by "the reconstitution of transportation needs within the spatial context of metropolitan society," a context in which restaurants responded by changing their location and customer base.¹⁵⁸ The importance of the car was further underlined by the Depression of the 1930s. While the Depression hurt the lives of Americans in myriad ways, the automobile proved persistent. In fact, multiple scholars argue that economic hardship actually increased the practical and symbolic power of the automobile, making automobiles "astonishingly close to depression-proof."¹⁵⁹

The diner has proven to be a flexible concept, in that historically it has conformed service and products to physically mobile and socially shifting demand, responding to the metropolitanism outlined above. While its working-class roots stretched from 1872 through the 1920s, before World War II this type of restaurant

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 92-97.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 97.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 100.

¹⁵⁹ Rae, *The Road and the Car in American Life*, 35. For similar assessments, see Berger, "The Car's Impact on the American Family," 64.; Flink, *The Car Culture*, 159-160.; Mark S. Foster, "The Automobile and the City," in *The Automobile and American Culture*, ed. David L. Lewis and Laurence Goldstein (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 34.; Interrante, "You Can't Go to Town in a Bath tub: Automobile Movement and the Reorganization of Rural American Space, 1900-1950." For extensive period accounts of the importance of car culture as established in the 1920s and made integral to American life in the 1930s, see Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in American Culture.*; Lynd, *Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts.*

realigned itself to fit the location and preferences of new customers, the family. Just as their lunch/dining car predecessors learned to include women in their idea of a customer base, so too did the diner evolve to, in the words of historian Andrew Hurley, "capture the purse strings of what contemporary marketing experts termed 'the middle majority'," defined as white-collar or well-paid blue-collar, family-oriented, and increasingly diverse group of white-ethnic patrons.¹⁶⁰ Diners had always been manufactured as portable and tended to reside on leased land, with this emphasis on mobility of producers intended to mirror the mobility of consumers. With the number and location of families changing in the postwar era the diner followed this market, in geographic and social senses, but not without ignoring its perennial customer base of laborers. Their placement thus "gravitated to a zone of transition between inner-city neighborhoods and mass-produced suburbs: residential communities on the fringe of cities that were experiencing an influx of upwardly mobile, middle-income families."¹⁶¹ Furthermore, these diners were put near busy roads, most often commercially oriented ones, that straddled the shifting lines and increasing distances between work and home. Unlike their earlier iterations, diners built parking lots in response to their new clientele.

Within the diner, changes were many and aimed at cultivating a more domestic aura. Friendly waiter service was expanded and feminized, and the "greasy spoon" reputation amended by moving food preparation from open-view to an

¹⁶⁰ Andrew Hurley, "From Hash-House to Family Restaurant: The Transformation of the Diner and Post-War World II Consumer Culture," *Journal of American History* 83. 4 (1997): 1306.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*: 1291.

enclosed kitchen. Color schemes of the diner manufacturers switched from prime to pastel colors and added "homey" filigree to the traditional stainless steel interiors. Booths, on average, were enlarged and upholstered with more comfortable materials to better seat whole families. Menus became both more elaborate in options and less local in flavor, while advertisements (for some diners, a first in itself) emphasized the modest cost and mother-saving and family-bolstering fun of eating out at a diner.¹⁶² The balancing act was in not neglecting the longstanding modern, industrial character of diner architecture and operation, valuing speed, simplicity, and informality. Within this tradition some assert that, "in the diner business the atmosphere and service in which the food was wrapped was also an important part of the attraction."¹⁶³ The icons of the unique ordering lingo and the chatty short-order cook would now include the witty waitress and the cross-section of clientele provided by the interstitial geographies of business and culture characterizing the diner's new "zone of transition" locations. Diners thus merged the two great trends in the development of restaurants in American in the initial eras of automobility and mass consumption: the feeding of hungry laborers working away from home, and the luring of families out of the home for food and leisure. This balancing act reverberated through out the many forms that restaurants took in the first half of the 20th century.

The Howard Johnson chain embodies a similar innovative response to modern trends in dining out. First, Howard Johnson caught the eye of passing motorists with

¹⁶² Ibid.: 1293-1299.

¹⁶³ Joseph T. Manzo, "From Pushcart to Modular Restaurant: The Diner on the Landscape," *Journal of American Culture* 13. 3 (1990): 19.

his signature bright orange roofs, made of reflective porcelain tile and floodlit for more enhancement, and his imperiously large road signs. Yet, in choosing an overall Georgian architectural style he consciously attempted to balance these "loud" commercial designs with a more calm and stately appearance.¹⁶⁴ On roadsides becoming ever more cluttered with food and other attractions, Johnson understood that branding, luster, and size, tempered by allusions to domesticity and respectability, were crucial to stand out against the landscape. Second, through the pioneering use of traffic surveys he placed his branches on roads frequented by families and workers alike to guarantee a wide customer base. Furthermore, he favored hills and other advantageous topographies that could help create direct sight-lines above the din of the roadside, to better catch the motorists eyes.¹⁶⁵

Inside, colonial style interiors, quaint country paintings, and soft music signaled a space geared toward families. This calm was balanced by Johnson's interpretation automobility's prime motives, speed and convenience. Through painstakingly designed kitchens and centrally dictated standards of service he aimed to feed in uniform and resource-conserving ways; as a parallel, he "employed the same central management techniques that had allowed Fred Harvey to standardize the Santa Fe's catering system."¹⁶⁶ Yet, to avoid the assembly line appearance and populist connotations of cafeterias and automats, the "subdivision of the restaurant into separate dining areas... helped to keep Howard Johnson's from seeming too

¹⁶⁴ Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 47-48.

¹⁶⁵ Belasco, "Toward a Culinary Common Demoninator," 513.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

massive and institutional for its predominantly middle-class customers."¹⁶⁷ As with the exterior, a balance was struck between mechanical consistency and efficient management benefiting the business and homey appearances and services pleasing the customers. Similarly, the menu consisted of many fried foods advantageous to operating the restaurant with speed and economy, a growing amount of salads and healthier fare to gain mothers' approval, and ice cream to serve children's tastes.¹⁶⁸

By these means Howard Johnson achieved what Warren Belasco calls "a Culinary Common Denominator," for he "synthesized the disparate roadside themes—the tea room's tasteful homeyness, the diner's democracy and efficiency, the stand's fast-fried formula—into a single pitch that was both aggressive in its marketing strategy and safely conservative in its appeal to the middle-class."¹⁶⁹ The beginnings of the wide-ranging "casual dining" segment can count this model as an influence in continuing family-centered restaurants with table service, but so can "fast food" establishments. Howard Johnson, and the transforming diner as well, showed the popularity of casting a wide net for a variety of customers through cultivating senses of "down home" familiarity and comfort in decor and service, as well as applying Taylorist principles to food preparation to the supposed benefits of producer and consumer alike. The products evinced uniformity and utility, an informal and practical pose that created "public attention through a studied appeal to democratic ideals" as defined by the discourses of the era.¹⁷⁰ The history of this business chain

¹⁶⁷ Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 50.

¹⁶⁸ Pillsbury, *From Boarding House to Bistro*, 57.; Jakle, *Fast Food*, 51.

¹⁶⁹ Belasco, "Toward a Culinary Common Demoninator," 512.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*: 514.

was the culmination of elements found in the diversity of earlier American restaurants: consistent and fast mass production of familiar food served in an informal and homey atmosphere that was inclusive by virtue of a family focus with nostalgic tendencies in the form and content of the food. It integrated the increasing number of Americans consuming meals outside of the home and set a standard for the crowds that would consult Duncan Hines.

As David Schwartz so aptly reminds, "the history of restaurants in America is not the history of American cooking," so that while regional specialties pushed along and amended traditional foodways in homes and community gatherings, this activity did not always transfer to the roadside.¹⁷¹ Instead, the many forms of restaurants developed in the early 20th century were increasingly designed to foster a variety of types of efficiencies, including those related to pleasing the culinary tastes of customers. In terms of efficiently pleasing many and differing palates, there developed a regularity of menu and normalcy of taste across most restaurants. Aimed at the goal of serving "providing basic food at affordable prices," this standard "created a cultural norm for eating meals outside of the home.... helping sustain a widely fragmented and heterogeneous society" around a set of culinary standards.¹⁷² This unvarying set of items were usually Anglo-Saxon in origin though increasingly called "American" as it developed into a standard menu serving the range of eggs and cereals for breakfast, soups and sandwiches for lunch, and meat and potatoes for

¹⁷¹ David M. Schwartz, "Duncan Hines: He Made Gastronomes out of Motorists," *Smithsonian*, November 1984, 90.

¹⁷² Hogan, *Selling 'Em by the Sack*, 15, 21.

dinner, with dairy and baked goods offered through out these meals.¹⁷³ Yet, at the same time, "one of the things that opened many Americans' eyes to the persistence of culinary regionalism was the automobile, along with the new ribbons of asphalt highway that allowed them to take long car trips across vast stretches of the country."¹⁷⁴ As discussed in Chapter 3, Duncan Hines was intimately involved in these trends.

The number of American dining out, the diversity of reasons why there were doing so, and the commercial responses to both proliferated during the early 20th century. As much as Americans were, because of automobility, venturing into foreign space, their new patterns of movement, coupled with an ever-developing patchwork of roads and settlements, created commerce. The restaurants searched for by Hines' and his fans were both old and found as well as new and created for the demands of the increasing stream of motoring consumers. The spatial reorganization of non-urban America meant that, for instance, "farm villages changed in socio-economic operation" as "crossroads centers lost their general trade and service functions to neighboring towns" and those lucky enough to be "located on highways developed facilities catering to tourist traffic."¹⁷⁵ The response to this traffic was varied if not chaotic in presentation and unplanned and individual in organization, but centered on

¹⁷³ Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 45-52.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁷⁵ Interrante, "The Road to Autopia," 96. For a history of the effects of this process on rural areas, turning these communities into both providers as well as consumers of services and goods for motorists, see Michael L. Berger, *The Devil's Wagon in God's Country: The Automobile and Social Change in Rural America, 1893-1929* (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1979), 103-126.

attracting passersby by any means possible.¹⁷⁶ At this original stage of the roadside, Karl Raitz characterizes it "as a place of vernacular invention" dialectically created by fledgling entrepreneurs and travelers, a landscape transformed as "an unintended consequence of the new automobility and the unfettered imagination of local people."¹⁷⁷

In terms of material structure, semblages of order came from the constantly expanding network of roads. As for social assessments of this order, made operative by the practical desire for information on where to stop for food, lodging, and other peripatetic needs, knowledge was a valuable commodity. By 1936, the years of Duncan Hines' first publication of his guidebook, the American landscape had evolved into a complex network of roads and roadside attractions yet to be explored and codified. It is against this background that American motorists demanded guidance on finding quality restaurants. The common unknown for travelers included not only places never before encountered but also questions surrounding the maintenance of daily life. Where to eat, where to sleep, what to see in a county never before seen in a state barely known? How should an American consumer sort through the proliferating options? Duncan Hines was a response to these demands for information on the "daily life rhythms" of automobility. In turn, he presented an articulation of the discourses of automobility, commodities, and cultural authority as well as an example of their practice.

¹⁷⁶ Jakle, *The Tourist*, 133-137, 166-138.

¹⁷⁷ Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America," 364, 380.

Chapter 2 – Authority

"Understanding these changes requires an analysis that is simultaneously structural and historical: structural in its identifications of the underlying patterns of social and economic relations that explain observed events; historical in its tracing of those patterns to the human actions that brought them about. I do not want to deny the value of narrative history without structural analysis, nor even of structural analysis without history (though the former is certainly more entertaining). But the two, it seems to me, go further in each other's company than either can go alone."

– Paul Starr¹⁷⁸

My understanding of Duncan Hines authority as a restaurant critic and expert on American food derives from theorists such as Paul Starr, Nicholas Abercrombie, and Arjun Appadurai. To them, an authority does not appear out of thin air to achieve power and an audience but emerges as a voice satisfying any number of needs and requirements in social and material contexts. The term authority has most commonly been used to describe institutional and political phenomena that command or even coerce obedience. This view is found in Max Weber's concept of *herrschaft*, succinctly broken into three types and processes:

Legal-rational authority involves obedience to formal rules established by regular public procedures.... By contrast, deferring to traditional authority involves the acceptance of rules that embody custom and ancient practices. In the case of charismatic authority, commands of a religious leader are obeyed by followers convinced of the extraordinary character of their leader, whose authority transcends existing rules or customary practices.¹⁷⁹

Sociologist Paul Starr argues for another type that is more voluntary in following, subtle in persuasion, and often more remote in impact, calling it "cultural authority"

¹⁷⁸ Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*, 8.

¹⁷⁹ Jun Jing, "Food, Nutrition, and Cultural Authority in a Gansu Village," in *Feeding China's Little Emperors: Food, Children, and Social Change*, ed. Jun Jing (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 139.

as opposed to the "social" authorities listed above. Starr states that, "social authority involves the control of action through the giving of commands, while cultural authority entails the construction of reality through definitions of fact and value."¹⁸⁰ Instead of finding support in tradition, threats of violence, or religious ordainment, cultural authority must rely on "the probability that particular definitions of reality and judgments of meaning and value will prevail as valid and true."¹⁸¹ While Weber's forms of *social* authority are backed by human acts of coercion or extraordinary charisma to foster compliance, Starr's concept of *cultural* authority does not require this because it can "reside in cultural objects, including products of past intellectual activity" and "recognized standards of reference."¹⁸² As such, cultural authority "may be used without being exercised; typically, it is consulted... in the hope of resolving ambiguities," bolstering justifications and facilitating decision-making.¹⁸³

Starr employs the concept of cultural authority to explain the co-evolution of medicine into a profession and an authority in the United States. However, Hines' role as a critic actually meets aspects of Starr's definition of a profession: "an occupation that regulates itself through systematic, required training and collegial discipline; that has a base in technical, specialized knowledge; and that has a service rather than profit orientation, enshrined in its code of ethics."¹⁸⁴ In his own way, Hines' authority did rest on a unique accumulation of knowledge afforded to him by his disciplined

¹⁸⁰ Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*, 13.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 15.

habits of exploration, philosophy of judgment, and ethics of business. This knowledge only became known and thus worthy of circulation and application within the context of people that needed it *and* were told they needed it. This community, of which Hines himself was a member, was empowered by their identity as white, affluent consumers; furthermore, they were catered to by commercial venues from magazine articles and advertisements to restaurants and other roadside services. His status as an authority was established through this community, a social outcome of the popular culture of cars in the 1930s to 1950s. Then, his authority was broadcast to the nation through magazines and Hines' own publications.

Nicholas Abercrombie furthers Starr's concept, arguing that, "everyday life is constituted by very *many* spheres of authority, perhaps overlapping, some of which may indeed be in decline, while others are hale and hearty."¹⁸⁵ With Duncan Hines, his authority was constituted by spheres of social and material life that convened to create a context in history in which he could rely on his expertise on the subjects of food and roads to become an authority. It is important to note here that "expertise does not confer legitimacy simply because people believe that an authority... has expertise," but is instead legitimated when the expertise "is manifested in certain actions and that it is consonant with general principles and skills," position and moment in society.¹⁸⁶ Consideration of these together creates an "authority context," a relationship involving any set of social actors and material factors that abet Hines'

¹⁸⁵ Nicholas Abercrombie, "Authority and Consumer Society," in *The Authority of the Consumer*, ed. Russell Keat, Nigel Whiteley, and Nicholas Abercrombie (London: Routledge, 1994), 44. Author's italics.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

authority in a setting in which he can attempt to gather together and persuade an audience of the import of his knowledge. The larger history narrated in the previous chapter provides such a background, as well as the framework of commodity exchange, helps to explain Hines' multifaceted position within it. Though the number of possible authority contexts in which to locate Hines are many, I will consider the overlapping contexts crucial to the establishment and maintenance of his role as critic: the changing community of consumers in which his motoring, writing, and veneration is situated; his identity as presented to the nation through the press and his own publications. Hines is both "the right man at the right time" and a figure adapting to historical shifts around him.

Built to aid the flow of people and their goods, the geographer Karl Raitz argues that "the road and the roadside" have always been "a didactic marketplace where knowledge – in its largest sense – could be delivered and exchanged."¹⁸⁷ Along the road is also where knowledge is produced by constructing and organizing this space in accordance with the perception of those traveling it. As Americans motored into areas in which their familiarity was limited, this landscape of new roads and restaurants posed the problem of managing a dispersed and diverse field of things. As narrated in the previous chapter, the early 20th century saw an increasingly complex array of choices for consuming food out of the home. Between the disparate restaurateurs and their potential customers is the necessary mediation of information since "with increased social, technical, and conceptual differentiation... a traffic in

¹⁸⁷ Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America," 364.

criteria concerning things develops."¹⁸⁸ The exchange of roadside dining as a commodity in this era required collecting, organizing, and translating information. Conceptually speaking, this was the role of a critic like Duncan Hines, an authority guiding the traffic by developing the criteria that facilitate the consumptive side of automobility. That "there were restaurant writers, though no restaurant critics, in the 1930s" who wrote about the *entire* landscape of American restaurants, and not just one city or region, left an opportunity for Hines to create and dominate such a national role.¹⁸⁹

The ideals of liberty discursively entrenched in automobility bred a demanding attitude to the habits of middle to upper class Americans. The growing accessibility of America by car coincided with an ever-widening availability of commodities; in combination, the American motorist looked for more and better choices for roadside attractions, ones that often attended to their demands. Additionally, across all categories of commodities "the pattern of expenditure for the bourgeoisie reflected considerable individuality," so much that "to manage this expenditure in turn demanded the exercise of huge expertise, taste, and power."¹⁹⁰ Simply, "to be a consumer in modern America was to be in communication with, and

¹⁸⁸ Appadurai, "Commodities and the Politics of Value," 54.

¹⁸⁹ Richard H. Collin, "Gastronomy in American Society: American Writing on Restaurants," in *Commemorating the Past: Celebrations and Retrospection*, ed. Don Harkness (Tampa: American Studies Press, Inc., 1987), 54.

¹⁹⁰ Victoria de Grazia, "Establishing the Consumer Household," in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 153, 154.

guided by, a new group of experts."¹⁹¹ Within this group of experts, their positions and titles within the chains of commodity exchange varied, but their role was always indispensable to the process of guiding consumers through the complexity of their choices.¹⁹² Yet, social studies of consumer behavior put forward a corrective to the idea that consumers are always in search of experts' information when "in fact they frequently forgo opportunities to learn more about their purchases" because they must "bear the cost... in time and effort of absorbing the information."¹⁹³ Hines eliminated much of these efforts for the consumer when he specified the name, location, decor, menu, and other pertinent information in a highly abbreviated style that came organized in listings and codified in principles for consuming along the roadside. As historians like Victoria de Grazia suggest, in the early 20th century white Americans of the middle and upper classes alike looked to experts and authorities to help them understand the terms and processes involved in making the "best" purchases possible. This narrative follows the structural argument, from Arjun Appadurai, that "in

¹⁹¹ Carolyn M. Goldstein, "Educating Consumers, Representing Consumers: Reforming the Marketplace through Scientific Expertise at the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, 1923-1940," in *The Expert Consumer: Associations and Professionals in Consumer Society*, ed. Alain Chatriot, Marie-Emmanuelle Chessel, and Matthew Hilton (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 78.

¹⁹² Home economists, consumer advocates, advertisers, designers, and critics are some of the most well-recognized members of the group of experts in the early 20th century. See Steven Lubar, "Men/Women/Production/Consumption," in *His and Hers: Gender, Consumption, and Technology*, ed. Roger Horowitz and Arwen Mohun (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 29-31.; William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), 9-12.; Fox, "Introduction," x-xii.; Christopher P. Wilson, "The Rhetoric of Consumption: Mass-Market Magazines and the Demise of the Gentle Reader, 1880-1920," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980*, ed. Richard Wightman Fox and T.J. Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon, 1983).; Sarah A. Leavitt, *From Catharine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

¹⁹³ Ralph K. Winter, "The Consumer Advocate Versus the Consumer," in *Consumerism: Search for the Consumer Interest*, ed. David A. Aaker and George S. Day (New York: Free Press, 1978), 85.

complex capitalistic societies, it is not only the case that knowledge is segmented (even fragmented) as between producers, distributors, and consumers" but "knowledge *about* commodities is itself increasingly commoditized."¹⁹⁴ Furthermore, "whenever there are discontinuities in the knowledge that accompanies the movement of commodities," as evident in the predicament of pioneering motorists, "problems involving authenticity and expertise enter the picture."¹⁹⁵ In applying this structural framework to the history of 1930s to 1950s, Hines was thus a figure in demand. His authority served to fill with expert advice the "information gap" problem often seen by consumers as significant to their judgments of commodities.¹⁹⁶

Hines' biographer Louis Hatchett says his life "is the story of an average man who came to America's attention, was perceived by them as unusually trustworthy and who, because of that perception, became an American icon."¹⁹⁷ In this chapter, I am concerned with conceiving, in part, this perception because, as Hatchett admits, it was the *perception* that made his importance. It must be underlined that Hines was a career salesman, and was aware of the need to play to audiences. Without a doubt, "Duncan Hines rose to fame simply because he possessed human qualities many Americans wanted to see in their fellow man: character, uncompromising honesty, and integrity."¹⁹⁸ Understanding the creation and maintenance of this perception of Hines, and the power wrapped in it, involves the analysis of his emergence as an icon

¹⁹⁴ Appadurai, "Commodities and the Politics of Value," 54.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁹⁶ David A. Aaker, and George S. Day, "A Guide to Consumerism," in *Consumerism: Search for the Consumer Interest*, ed. David A. Aaker and George S. Day (New York: Free Press, 1978), 8.

¹⁹⁷ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 3.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

relative to the bases of his authority in his community and his identity. In reference to these, Hines' authority stemmed from representations of his character and his knowledgeable expertise, assertions that were both products of his socially powerful subject position as a white male successful in his career and well-traveled and well-fed as a motorist and consumer.

With a career as a traveling salesman and a hobby of enjoying food, Hines was both constantly on the road and on the hunt for better dining. A simple notebook helped him collect the names of favorite restaurants as he drove in wide radiuses away from his home office in Chicago. Hungry salesman was thus the first position from which he entered into a community of consumers similar to himself. Many of the stories about Hines shade toward the apocryphal, like the "best meal [he] ever ate," found after eighteen hours of wandering through a July snowstorm in Wyoming.¹⁹⁹ One that can be vouched for was the process of his transition, in the minds of others, from passionate hobbyist to acclaimed expert. Amongst his fellow Chicago salesmen the word spread that Hines had a list of great dining establishments ranging across the unfamiliar or otherwise rural areas of the Midwest. "Dyspeptic salesmen are always hunting for a good place to eat, and they spread the good news among the fraternity" that Hines had useful information.²⁰⁰ Generous with this information, Hines' reputation spread through word-of-mouth communication to the point where in 1934 one of the many short-lived neighborhood-focused papers then

¹⁹⁹ Duncan Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1955), 1-6.

²⁰⁰ Milton MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," *The Saturday Evening Post*, December 3, 1938, 81.

circulating in Chicago printed an article about his hobby-turned-service. The flood of phone calls, notes, and queries for recommendations was tremendous to the point of ruinous; Hines' response was to codify his list, print it professionally, and distribute them through Hines' annual Christmas cards to friends, as well as anyone else who had asked for his advice. This did not stop the onslaught of requests but instead furthered his renown as well as the amount of requests pouring in to his home.²⁰¹

Though the practice of asking others for recommendations is so regular and mundane as to be dismissed as insignificant, the history surrounding Hines and his recommendations should provoke further analysis and wider synthesis as culturally momentous. As argued in the previous chapter, the popular practices of dining outside of the home, guided by the critical judgment of an expert, developed in the 1930s and 1940s, the era of Hines' rise to position as critic. According to "the 1909 food consumption survey, expenditures for eating out were so low they hardly registered on family spending records," yet in less than fifty years "20 percent of food expenses involved eating away from home."²⁰² The audience that constituted Hines' initial authority context was part of the vanguard of the American public's increasing habit of eating meals outside of the home, especially by automobile. These traveling businessmen that spent their days and nights in cars, constantly on the move and often in unfamiliar territory, ushered along by roads, roadside services, and recommendations. They often spent their leisure time again in cars, taking full

²⁰¹ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 46-47.

²⁰² Roger Horowitz, *Putting Meat on the American Table: Taste, Technology, Transformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 130.

advantage of their automobility and expendable income to keep on driving and consuming.²⁰³ Counting himself as one of them, Hines remarked that these "tourists are free spenders and 'eating out' amid country surroundings is the modern vogue - the prevailing country fashion."²⁰⁴ As such, his list of restaurants was also, in Hines' words, "the result of a recreational impulse to do something 'different', to play a new game... in my hours of relaxation from a strenuous and exacting business."²⁰⁵

Yet Hines' accumulation of knowledge did not happen by his efforts alone. During leisure trips and vacations "Hines and his wife swapped experience in good eating with other motorists," and thus "began to accumulate lists of restaurants which he exchanged with other people, and before he long he had achieved a minor-league reputation as a connoisseur."²⁰⁶ That they could swap "experience" was possible because they shared similar subject positions formed by history and really did meet each other on the roadside, striking up conversations amongst peers and exchanging information and building camaraderie.²⁰⁷ This community of motorists experienced the privileges of their position in society as white, employed, car-owning, and restaurant-affording. That Hines and his peers could travel, lodge, and visit restaurants freely in the 1930s was made possible because of their social and racial identity in the 1930s mapped onto material and social environments supportive of

²⁰³ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 33-45.

²⁰⁴ Duncan Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 8th ed. (Bowling Green, KY: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1941), viii. 8th ed.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, vii. 8th ed.

²⁰⁶ Horace Sutton, "The Wayfarer's Guardian Angel," *Saturday Review of Literature*, November 27, 1948, 38.

²⁰⁷ In the words of Joan Scott, experience here is "that which we seek to explain, that about which knowledge is produced" in order to articulate social structure. Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," 780.

their automobility and consumption habits. The phenomenon of motorists exchanging information was, in fact, privileged whites sharing the social and material spoils of their position in American society.²⁰⁸ Hines' "book literally sold itself at the beginning, with only word-of-mouth recommendations to push it along" within a relatively homogeneous community that communicated quickly and easily because of their similarities.²⁰⁹ Thus, Hines did little to no marketing of his guidebook, relying instead for its reputation to circulate through the network of motorists on its own social inertia. Explicitly stated,

The Hines public consists largely of persons like Hines – middle aged, of substantial income, who travel for pleasure. They are accustomed to certain comforts. At the sight of antediluvian plumbing or gravy reminiscent of library paste their dispositions ruffle perceptibly. Hines feels it his sacred duty to protect his fellows.²¹⁰

Hines took the initiative to lead his peers after "nearly all of them remarked that there ought to be a reliable directory... available to discriminating motorists."²¹¹

This initial audience of Hines – his friends, professional peers, and others of their class – constitute what Daniel Boorstin calls a "consumption community," a group that "consists of people who have a feeling of shared well-being, shared risks, common interests and common concerns that come from consuming the same kinds

²⁰⁸ My inquiries and conclusions emerge parallel to Cotten Seiler's, in that his "own archival research on early automobility in the United States... furnished virtually no documentary evidence of a widespread awareness of driving as a privilege of whiteness—though of course it was.... This historical vacuum can be partially attributed to the ways in which white supremacy was a discourse both commonsensical (therefore not in need of explication) and logically tenuous (therefore deliberately hidden from scrutiny)." Cotten Seiler, "The Significance of Race to Transport History," *The Journal of Transport History* 28. 2 (2007): 308.

²⁰⁹ "From Hobby to Publishing," *The Publishers' Weekly*, August 6, 1938, 355.

²¹⁰ Phyllis Larsh, "Duncan Hines," *Life*, July 8, 1946, 17.

²¹¹ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, vii.

of objects."²¹² Hines' consumption community was the "freemasonry of motorists," the fellowship of Americans with similar interests who "recognize[d] in the book that started as a personal hobby a serviceable enterprise" in aiding hungry motorists.²¹³ The community was similar to the very first American motorists: middle to upper-class white Americans who motored to find adventure in heretofore unseen territories and imagined their activities to be similar to settlers manifesting destiny across new land. They were, in Hines' words, the "gasoline pilgrims whose main interest seemed to be the relative merits of inns" and "to whom the price of a meal is a minor consideration."²¹⁴ In similar terms, Hines was cast by others as a "purposeful vagabond," a leader of motorists who "pioneered for themselves" on "gastronomical safaris."²¹⁵ Like miners rushing to virgin land for resources to turn in to riches, Hines said he and his peers had "found prospecting for good meals great adventure. We often don't hit a vein of good eating until after several tries, even in territory we know."²¹⁶ Hines was known as the best at this type of mining, typified through word-of-mouth as a *savant* at finding the best meals regardless of locale. At the same time, he never separated himself out as different from his peers, but instead cast himself as just another American helping other Americans and, in the process, learning from them, too.

²¹² Boorstin, "Welcome to the Consumption Community," 22.

²¹³ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 17.

²¹⁴ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, vii, viii. 8th ed.

²¹⁵ "Best," *New Yorker*, April 17, 1954.; MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 16.; Frank J. Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," *Scribner's Commentator*, June 1941, 14.

²¹⁶ Duncan Hines, and Frank J. Taylor, "How to Find a Decent Meal," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 26, 1947, 18.

It should be noted that Hines also publicly "sp[oke] of the restaurants in his books as the Duncan Hines Family," thus attempting to create communities of consumers and producers alike.²¹⁷ Starting in 1941, through the connections he forged with restaurant owners and industry V.I.P.'s by attending National Restaurant Association conventions he inaugurated the "Annual Duncan Hines Family Dinner." This banquet brought together the restaurateurs and hoteliers listed in his guidebooks as a celebration of their inclusion in this community. It was also a stage for Hines' to, first, cajole them to continue as well as improve their efforts to meet his standards and, then, remind them of their customers, the community of consumers that he cultivated and communicated with on a daily basis.²¹⁸ While this chapter does not focus on his relationship with the producers of the commodities he was deemed an expert on, that he was in active and often collaborative contact with them underlines the significance of his role as a mediator between producers and consumers.

In establishing the social structure of authority contexts, Abercrombie states that those who "share the same cultural framework as the professionals they consult" are more likely to "regard the competence that professionals claim as valid."²¹⁹ Part of Hines' elevation from well-known hobbyist to full-fledged professional critic was his constant cultivation of and communication with the community of hungry motorists, of a certain class. While at first relying on a small band of peers with which to trade restaurant recommendations, immediately after publishing the first edition of his

²¹⁷ Carol Lynn Gilmer, "Duncan Hines: Adventurer in Good Eating," *Coronet*, November 1947, 105.

²¹⁸ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 127, 202-203.

²¹⁹ Abercrombie, "Authority and Consumer Society," 12.

guidebook Hines "realized he had to rely on others of like taste and temperament" to investigate new listings and check-up old listings in ways up to his personal style and standards.²²⁰ Most were old friends though some were new contacts; "all of them have eaten and slept badly: many of them have done almost as much touring as Hines and are glad to contribute their information toward the correlating" of a guidebook.²²¹ As Hatchett notes, Hines' "dinner detectives were usually successful people" because "people from this social strata tended to travel frequently enough to experience" good dining.²²² Furthermore, Hines thought that only those "who had succeeded in life" in terms of high income and illustrious titles "could be trusted," since such success was proof of their status as "honorable members of society" and owners of "superior tastes when it came to the finer things in life – such as good restaurants."²²³ Also, their personal wealth potentially could act as a shield against their opinion being bought by restaurateurs or even Hines himself; it also afforded them the chances to travel and eat widely and often. "They are not paid employees – 'You can't buy service like theirs' – but are acquaintances whose judgment in food he has found reliable," said Marion Edwards, quoting Hines.²²⁴

Almost every magazine article about Hines parades a list of these "detectives," taking time to name them and, if needed, describe exactly how successful or famous

²²⁰ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 56.

²²¹ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 17.

²²² Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 57.

²²³ Ibid. Hines even employed other critics and evaluators of taste to compound his authority: by the 1940s *Adventures in Good Eating* included a section on how to properly choose and enjoy wines with meals written by Julian Street, a renowned wine authority. Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, xvi-xvii. 8th ed.

²²⁴ Marion Edwards, "They Live to Eat," *Better Homes & Gardens*, March 1945, 30.

they should be considered. For instance, the first national article on Hines proudly stated that, "there are many famous names on the roll call" of Hines' volunteers.²²⁵

The only examples of volunteers quoted in the text are those with extreme wealth, like Warren R. Gibbs, "a man of substantial income, a great traveler, a connoisseur of food."²²⁶ This description reads as a string of synonyms or, rather, as a line of consequence where each phrase is the cause of the next – income, traveler, connoisseur.

For Hines, "without these assiduous volunteers... the books would be out of the question" since it is the "several bank presidents, professors, corporate executives, all proud to be Hines' checkers" that created the listings of recommendations.²²⁷

Eventually he listed their names in the introduction of each edition of *Adventures in Good Eating*, emphasizing their particular importance "among the thousands who have written to me."²²⁸ So, in turn, the audience for these listings was other affluent Americans:

That one can eat cheaply and eat well, is, in the long run, nonsense, he believes. A frequent criticism of his book is that he offers no assistance to travelers who have restricted themselves to a very limited daily food budget... Hines believes that good eating is more or less a luxury matter, and he has directed his book at people who are willing, and can afford, to pay for it.²²⁹

Hines justified this outlook by a calculation of quality, suggesting that, "once in a while I encounter a sixty-cent meal for two dollars. But I have never had a two-dollar

²²⁵ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 17.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 15.

²²⁸ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, xiii. 8th ed.

²²⁹ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 80.

meal for sixty cents" since in his estimation excellence is never inexpensive.²³⁰ Moreover, "the difference between a cheap meal and one that costs more is the amount you pay the doctor or the undertaker."²³¹ If the existence of "community requires a consciousness of a community," then Hines' volunteers qualified since "they regard[ed] *Adventures in Good Eating* not as Hines' book, but as their communal own."²³² Hines' work began in the mid-1930s by and for the same class of Americans.

However, as his notoriety quickly soared in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Hines extended his community of consumers by appealing to a wider audience of any American, regardless of class, who would converse on American food along the roadside or dream of it at home. This process had Hines' authority persist as contexts shifted, for World War II brought a context different from his original consumption community. Wartime mobilization increased his potential audience by putting Americans on the road and living in new, and often constantly changing, locations. Rather than making his guidebooks irrelevant due to the privations of homefront resource conservation, Hines sold better than ever; for example, between April and May of 1942 he sold more copies than in the entire previous year.²³³ Despite the rationing that reduced gasoline consumption by a third, Hines remained in demand because of pent-up desires and income for increased automobility and consumption

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 31.

²³² Boorstin, "Welcome to the Consumption Community," 24. 24; MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 17.

²³³ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 140.

fanned by higher rates and wages of employment.²³⁴ *Adventures in Good Eating*, "packed in the glove compartment beside the road map in prewar days, now peeks out of the back pocket of dusty G.I. trousers and the crowded traveling cases of tagalong brides and wartime businessmen."²³⁵ These mass movements, in combination with the restaurant industry's "exemption from rationing, the tripling of the number of women workers, and massive amounts of overtime work and pay" meant that "from 1939 to 1946, restaurant sales almost quadrupled."²³⁶ Hines even conjectured that after the war "the wartime family habit of going to the restaurant once a week to save rationing points will carry over because it also saves mother. More frequent travel by motor, train, and plane will increase the demand for public dining rooms."²³⁷ Within just months of V-J Day, over a half million copies of his guidebook were sold as Hines was welcomed into a postwar era preoccupied with consuming.²³⁸

The close proximity of Hines and his expanding community was encouraged by his portrayal in magazines and his own publications as simultaneously a leader of *and* intimate peer in a consumption community that was increasingly of more than upper-middle class Americans. Carol Lynn Gilmer, writing in the *Coronet*, suggested that "Hines doesn't write for his readers - he talks to them" in "conversational prose

²³⁴ Bradley Flamm, "Putting the Brakes on 'Non-Essential' Travel: 1940s Wartime Mobility, Prosperity, and the Us Office of Defense " *The Journal of Transport History* 27. 1 (2006): 71.

²³⁵ Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 30.

²³⁶ Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 127.

²³⁷ Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 30.

²³⁸ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 149.; Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 7-10.

[that] not only makes good reading but inspires confidence in his fans."²³⁹ Hines' furthered fanned the flames of his popularity by reiterating the open door policy he had established with regards to comments and inquiries – he even advertised his private residence to the public and thus regularly had fans knocking on his door for food and conversation. Magazines often ran sidebars of Hines' tips and always quoted his common entreats for Americans to join his community of "Pet Peevers, Unlimited," for "when a million travelers join Pet Peevers, Unlimited, and make it their crusade to insist upon getting what they pay for, this country will again become a joyful land in which to hit the open road."²⁴⁰ Hines wished to make products better by making consumers better at consuming the best products the right way. After spotlighting his favorite motels, an article in *Look* printed an entire page of "road-tested tips by Duncan Hines on how to pick a good motel."²⁴¹ *Better Homes & Gardens* listed his five rules for good home cooking.²⁴² A spread in *Coronet* had three separate insets of bullet points on "How to Enjoy Eating Out", "How to Judge Food and Service", and "How to Rate Restaurant Cleanliness."²⁴³ The *Saturday Evening Post* ran an entire spread titled, "How to Find a Decent Meal," replete with advice on all aspects of driving, dining, lodging, and judging experience.²⁴⁴ The authority of these national magazines reinforced Duncan Hines' authority, for their inclusion of

²³⁹ Gilmer, "Duncan Hines: Adventurer in Good Eating," 104.

²⁴⁰ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 100.

²⁴¹ "Duncan Hines Picks Ten Best Motels in U.S.A.," *Look*, January 12, 1954, 34.

²⁴² Edwards, "They Live to Eat."#30

²⁴³ Gilmer, "Duncan Hines: Adventurer in Good Eating," 102, 103, 105.

²⁴⁴ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 18-19, 97, 99-100, 102.

him in their pages granted him power and elevated his knowledge to the status of valuable and applicable to a national audience.

What made Hines recommendations read as encouragement from a peer rather than advice from a distant authority was the intimacy with his audience that Hines cultivated by writing in an un-literary, "homey" style and being presented by others as simultaneously an everyman and an expert. He cut a friendly figure rather than that of a condescending gourmet. Opening each edition of *Adventures in Good Eating* with invitations to visit or write to him and ending many of them with tear-out forms for sending in updates and other information for his use, Hines made constant efforts to connect with consumers and producers who relied on his guidebook. His concerns were theirs, and vice versa, as he championed their shared worries, demands, and preferences. In the least, Hines guidebooks were "written from the traveler's point of view, without the slightest effort at literary style... exuded the author's sincerity."²⁴⁵ While his passion for experiencing the private pleasures of food was the central reason for his dogged search for better restaurants, it was also a practical fear of food poisoning and outrage over poor service that furthered his scrupulous, public-minded evaluations and, hence, his rapport with the public. Such a stance reflects how "citizen and consumer were ever-shifting categories that sometimes overlapped" in the 1930 and 1940s, with the former attempting "to safeguard the rights of individual consumers and the larger 'general good'" while the latter "championed pursuit of self-

²⁴⁵ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 14.

interest in the marketplace."²⁴⁶ Doing both created a larger audience for Hines as he exhorted Americans to demand better service and higher product standards while encouraging the sovereignty of the American who consumes via self-concerns and through Hines' selective recommendations and determinations of taste.

While Harvey Levenstein argues that urban restaurants, influenced by the Pure Food movement of the turn of the century, had been making efforts at increased cleanliness, the fear of sickness and death from careless cooks and frugal restaurateurs did seem to be more of a problem in rural areas.²⁴⁷ Here motorists passing through unknown landscapes faced "unkempt roadhouses where adequate refrigeration and sanitary practices were no more predictable than visits from the health inspector."²⁴⁸ Bernard DeVoto, a contemporary of Hines also interested in American foodways, complained that, "these roadside lunch counters" were "a menace to the national health; botulism and dysentery lurk in them."²⁴⁹ These worries gave rise to Hines' line, varied in phrasing in many publications, that "I've run more risk eating my way across the country than in driving the highways, dangerous as the latter have become. More people will die this year from hit-or-miss eating than from hit-and-miss driving, and more will be incapacitated."²⁵⁰ As his fame and authority later grew, whether this claim was true or not mattered less than the concern it

²⁴⁶ Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 8.

²⁴⁷ Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 186.; Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 35-36, 43. For legacies of the Pure Food movement, see Lorine Swainston Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders, 1879-1914* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Inc., 1999), 266-288.

²⁴⁸ Schwartz, "Duncan Hines: He Made Gastronomes out of Motorists," 88.

²⁴⁹ Bernard DeVoto, "Notes from a Wayside Inn," *Harper's*, September 1940, 448.

²⁵⁰ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 18.

invoked in readers, further impressing the importance of selecting dining choices well and thus underlining the weight of Hines' recommendations and the rigor that supposedly bolstered them. This concern over sanitation, a principal theme of his criticism, aligned with prevalent discourses and practices of bourgeois cleanliness that aided his connection with middle-class audiences.²⁵¹

Hines consciously styled himself as a consumer advocate and educator. By testifying before the 1942 Ohio State Health Commissioner's Conference and establishing the Duncan Hines Foundation to further issues of public health and dining, Hines fit into an era of advocates for consumers' interests.²⁵² Like the Pure Food crusaders earlier in Hines' life, he encouraged Americans to take part in participatory democracy to evince change while also exemplifying this process through his work.²⁵³ By the 1930s, concurrent with the rise of Hines as a critic, the "Consumer Movement" had gained national prominence. With roots in Progressivism, and spurred in part by the conditions of the Depression, Lawrence Glickman places its origins at the publication of *Your Money's Worth* by Stuart Chase

²⁵¹ Hines' other principal themes that convene in his gastronomy will be the topic of the following chapter. On the American preoccupation with cleanliness in the early 20th century, see Andrew McClary, "Germs Are Everywhere: The Germ Threat as Seen in Magazine Articles, 1890-1920," *Journal of American Culture* 3. 1 (1980).; Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 91-236.; Suellen Hoy, *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 87-178.; Vincent Vinikas, *Soft Soap, Hard Sell: American Hygiene in an Age of Advertisement* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1991), 21-44, 79-94.; Juliann Sivulka, *Stronger Than Dirt: A Cultural History of Advertising Personal Hygiene in American, 1875 to 1940* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2001), 107-249.

²⁵² Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 130-131, 138, 141-133.; The Duncan Hines Foundation was funded by all proceeds from the sales of Hines' guidebooks, providing scholarships for students to attend hotel and restaurant management schools "to improve the health of the nation by giving more people sanitary, appetizing food." Duncan Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, unknown ed. (Bowling Green, KY: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1950), x.

²⁵³ Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders, 1879-1914*, 289-296.

and F.J. Schlink, with an avalanche of similar publications, conferences, and even a nationally broadcast radio show focusing on consumer issues.²⁵⁴ Furthermore, consumer movements have tended to have "their origin in a vocal minority" whose power usually stems from their "ability to properly articulate those issues which are consistent with what the majority is ready and willing to believe."²⁵⁵ These few are granted authority due to their displays of expert knowledge and vigorous advocacy in the form of reports, testing, and, at times, the rhetorical force and sensation of media spectacle.

The two most renowned founts of authoritative expertise on consumer goods from the 1930s to the 1950s, Consumers' Research and its off-shoot Consumers Union, both perceived "the market economy as inexorably separating people from objects, creating a need for experts who would help individuals overcome this alienation by providing objective knowledge about products."²⁵⁶ They believed this knowledge was made possible because "most goods could be reducible to scientifically derived standards and specifications, a neutrality that itself stood independent of marketplace discourse and served to ensure the consumer's own

²⁵⁴ Lawrence B. Glickman, "The Strike in the Temple of Consumption: Consumer Activism and Twentieth-Century American Political Culture," *The Journal of American History* 88. 1 (2001): 103-106. For historical development of the consumer movement in the early 20th century, see Norman Isaac Silber, *Test and Protest: The Influence of Consumers Union* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983), 1-38.; Robert N. Mayer, *The Consumer Movement: Guardians of the Marketplace* (Boston: Twayne, 1989), 1-33.; Colston E. Warne, *The Consumer Movement: Lectures by Colston E. Warne*, ed. Richard L.D. Morse (Manhattan, KS: Family Economic Trust Press, 1993).; Laurence P. Feldman, *Consumer Protection: Problems and Prospects* (New York: West Publishing Co., 1976), 1-29.; Lucy Black Creighton, *Pretenders to the Throne: The Consumer Movement in the United States* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Co., 1976), 19-34.

²⁵⁵ Feldman, *Consumer Protection: Problems and Prospects*, 45, 46.

²⁵⁶ Glickman, "The Strike in the Temple of Consumption," 117.

autonomy."²⁵⁷ As this information was put to use by consumers through purchasing, evinced was "a form of ideal Jeffersonian independence not only in the marketplace but also in society at large – each individual consumer required and deserved independent and scientifically valid information about goods and purchasing."²⁵⁸ While scientifically judging food served in a public commercial setting was never the aim of Hines and his volunteers, that it could be evaluated and verified was undoubtedly assumed, drawing on this culture of consumption. Moreover, these premises were at the heart of Hines' guides, made possible by their shared taste and made active through automobility. Though this process was thoroughly subjective, Hines nevertheless staked a firm stance on neutrality that was unequivocal and repeatedly underlined: no outside influence entered into his arbitrations, a proof of fealty to his audience. He evaluated according to principles of practicality that mattered to his audience, then communicated this information in simple formats to help consumers make informed and less complicated choices. On the origin of his guidebooks on roadside services, restaurants and lodging alike, Hines declared, "to make this expenditure more satisfactory is the purpose of this book," to provide "the information necessary to an intelligent decision."²⁵⁹ In other words, "what do I care if

²⁵⁷ Charles McGovern, "Consumption and Citizenship in the United States, 1900-1940," in *Getting and Spending: European and American Consumer Societies in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Susan Strasser, Charles McGovern, and Matthias Judt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 53.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

²⁵⁹ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, viii. 8th ed.

Washington slept there? Do they have a nice, clean bathroom and do the beds have box springs – that's what I want to know."²⁶⁰

Hines' opinions were almost never expressed without mentioning his practice of impromptu kitchen inspections, "one of the myths Duncan Hines deliberately perpetuated about himself."²⁶¹ Whether he did this or not is not verifiable, but what mattered then was the constant retelling of this myth, especially when bolstered by "enough personal restaurant inspections to make the public and restaurant owners think he did it."²⁶² For example, Frank Taylor's journalistic portrayal proclaimed Hines as "harsh in his verdicts, he has dropped out of his book dozens of places that fail to live up to standard he thought they should maintain... in particular as regards to cleanliness."²⁶³ His judgment of sanitation was displayed as a requirement above reputation, menu, or other considerations: "Hines started going into a restaurant kitchen before he ordered his meal. If the owner refused to allow him, Hines declined to eat in the dining room. If the kitchen was dirty, he walked out."²⁶⁴ The first line of a *Life* article declared that, "when Duncan Hines goes out to eat a new restaurant, he never uses the main entrance."²⁶⁵ In a large 1947 article Hines was even photographed standing in a kitchen, hands on hips, peering down his nose through spectacles judging the *mise en place* of a cook hiding in the background. The caption

²⁶⁰ Larsh, "Duncan Hines," 17.

²⁶¹ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 85.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 16.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Larsh, "Duncan Hines," 16.

reads that, "the back, not the front, is what counts with Hines, who sometimes tips dishwashers."²⁶⁶ His image was stern and message was vehement:

I would like to be food dictator of the U.S.A. just long enough to padlock two thirds of the places that call themselves cafes and restaurants, and about half of those offering lodging to the public. While I had the power, I would pass a law requiring that before anyone could be a cook or chef he or she would have to go to a school to learn sanitation, cooking and the chemistry of food, and one requiring periodic health examinations for restaurant employees of all categories.²⁶⁷

To the public he is then the champion of sanitation and protector of their well-being, while to the restaurateurs and cooks he is the ominous and unpredictable threat scaring them into better habits. For Hines, the point "was not the exactitude of his stories but the lasting effect they had on the public.... if his anecdotes compelled Americans to demand they remain spotless at all times, they served their intended purpose."²⁶⁸

The introduction to later editions of *Adventures in Good Eating* included a section, "The sanitary conditions," which professed, contrary to Hines' dictatorial dreams, that "I have no idea of attempting to police the food industry or of telling other people how to run their businesses, but I shall continue to give my approval and my support to the thousands of operators who are making a sincere effort" to keep high standards of sanitation and safe cooking practices.²⁶⁹ Like critics before and after him, Hines used his popularity to foreground issues and shape the terms of the debate

²⁶⁶ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 19.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 18-19.

²⁶⁸ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 159.

²⁶⁹ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, xii. 15th ed.

around them. He furthered these by encouraging his readers to follow him, for although "many laws have been passed in States all over the nation to safeguard the public's health, yet nothing will accomplish so much so quickly as an aroused public opinion."²⁷⁰ Consumers and producers together, both inspired to agitate and inspect for themselves, caused one of Hines' most ardently and long-vouched recommendations, The Maramor of Columbus, Ohio, to have scheduled kitchen tours booked two months in advance. Another Hines' favorite, the Rathskeller of Rockford, Illinois, installed a plate-glass window between the dining room and the kitchen, a rare design for a family-styled, sit-down restaurant of the 1940s.²⁷¹

When Frank Taylor wrote that, "the public sensed that the Hines' books were something new in travel guides" he is referring to not only the scope of listings but their presentation as honest and without outside influences.²⁷² Louis Hatchett argues that it was the constant reiteration of his code of ethics that "characterized and defined his persona in the minds of the American public" as an independent-minded consumer advocate, an idea that "contributed to his emerging fame" as much as, if not more, than any other.²⁷³ Preceding the listings in the first edition of *Adventures in Good Eating*, Hines stated,

I have never accepted a free meal or any other consideration from any inn. Those mentioned are included because, in my judgment, they are entitled to be listed on the merits of their food and their service. Until a

²⁷⁰ Ibid. 15th ed.

²⁷¹ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 161.

²⁷² Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 14.

²⁷³ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 52.

meal has been eaten and paid for, no mention of the directory is made
– and then only if the inn meets its standards.²⁷⁴

Such a statement stood in contrast to competing publications since "most dining-out guides of the 1930s and 1940s read like advertisements rather than critical opinions."²⁷⁵ Critics revealing themselves to restaurateurs during a visit, critics receiving free meals, and guidebooks carrying advertisements by the establishments listed were common practices.²⁷⁶ Hines repeatedly refused to run advertisements in his guidebooks, even for an offer of \$10,000, because "he began it as a mine of information for people who like good food and traveling, and he intends that it shall continue to be impartial."²⁷⁷ Seen as "no self-righteous do-gooder, Duncan Hines lives, all the same, by what he calls a 'live-right, do-right' credo.... He has also been characterized by his friends as 'the man Diogenes was looking for.' He dismisses encomiums gracefully."²⁷⁸ Against the mediocre field of manuals whose listings were, in effect, advertisements bought by restaurateurs, Hines' honesty was perceived as "the missing ingredient for a successful guidebook."²⁷⁹ His "Puritan-like code of business ethics" avoided money ties of any sort because, "once he succumbs, he says, he has lost his most valuable asset – independence."²⁸⁰ These and the other

²⁷⁴ Duncan Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 1st ed. (Chicago: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1936), 9-10.

²⁷⁵ Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 128.

²⁷⁶ Schwartz, "Duncan Hines: He Made Gastronomes out of Motorists," 94.

²⁷⁷ "From Hobby to Publishing," 355.

²⁷⁸ Sutton, "The Wayfarer's Guardian Angel," 39. The reference to Diogenes of Sinope points to the apocryphal story of the Greek cynic philosopher searching, in vain, for a truly honest man.

²⁷⁹ Gilmer, "Duncan Hines: Adventurer in Good Eating," 101. After the initial editions, his guidebooks included on nearly every single page multiple excerpts from letters to Hines praising his publications as, first, original and, furthermore, fully praiseworthy.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 102, 103.

characterizations of Hines' as a great consumer advocate and fellow member of a consumption community greatly aided his stature as a critic. Yet, such attributes would not be attached to his persona if not for his particular subject position, an identity constructed in the same texts that presented him to the public.

Power is an implicit aspect of a critic: what power puts the critic on a pedestal, what power keeps the critic there, and how power is wielded from such a position of authority. Power, in Michel Foucault's estimation, is never singular but exists as a field of forces varying in influence and constitution, creating subjects through discourse in historical context according to "the economic advantages or political utility that derives from them."²⁸¹ I argue that to attract consumers Hines' identity as white, male, wealthy, experienced, and "knowledgeable" was displayed as part of, and thus the reason for, his cultural authority. This subject position assigned power that, first, allowed him to freely enjoy automobility and consumerism, made him notable for consideration by the popular press and allowed consideration of him as an entity of value to multiple audiences – notably consumers, producers, and publishers. Hatchett contends that "to understand why the American public developed an almost instant affinity for Duncan Hines, it is necessary to understand the public persona they encountered" through his portrayal in media.²⁸² That his persona was "quite

²⁸¹ Michel Foucault, "Two Lectures," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 101.

²⁸² Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 87.

appealing to the popular imagination" requires an investigation of the social groups that constituted the "popular" and what figure this audience was presented.²⁸³

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham's notion of race as a metalanguage explains how it can signify in multiple ways through "continually expressing overt and covert analogic relationships."²⁸⁴ As such, Hines' identity presents us with "a fluid set of overlapping discourses," as the details of his figure were ascribed as analogous to his whiteness: male, affluent, white-collar, experienced, Southern, folksy, and a wise elder.²⁸⁵ It was the intersection of these that constitute him as a powerful subject in the historical moment of the 1930s to 1950s, and it is the analysis of these marks of identity that will aid in understanding his elevation to, and maintenance on, the pedestal of critic. This intersectional analysis will be of the "intracategorical" type that "aspire to situate subjects" in the "network of relationships that define their social locations," while also recognizing that in order to manage complexity this type of identity analysis can only consider some of the "many sides of a set of intersecting social relations, not social relations in their entirety"²⁸⁶ that surrounded Hines.

The formation of Hines as a subject began in the context of food in the popular press. His identity contrasted with that of food writers and the location of their texts, as before the late 1950s food writing was almost wholly by women and their work was located in "the women's page of the newspaper, a home-economics

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," 255.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Leslie McCall, "The Complexity of Intersectionality," *Signs* 30. 3 (2005): 1781, 1782.

ghetto of recipes, advice columns, and helpful household hints."²⁸⁷ He also veered away from the elite world of super-wealthy gourmets, a world of conspicuous consumption and lavish display well-chronicled by a variety of New York City based journalists.²⁸⁸ Molly O'Neill narrates the history of American food journalism as having a few "schools of food writing and each served as social arbiter," with gender dualism performed by "the gentlemanly tradition of gastronomic prose, the food writer was a sort of everyman's 'Jeeves,' the one who knew all" and the opposing "domestic science branch of food writing was the voice of an uber-Mom."²⁸⁹ Hines' image attempted to blend the two, using a variety of poses and practices, some of which were strictly, others ambiguously, gendered. Moving everyday food out of the "home-economics ghetto" required a position that straddled purportedly male and female ideas and actions.²⁹⁰ Foremost a guide to restaurants, driving his wife and fellow Americans to good eating, the image of Hines' and his expertise was presented to also extend over judging the best in lodging, vacations, and cooking.²⁹¹

The origin of Hines' position began in his own automobile with his wife as a passenger. Often photographed with him, each of his three wives were silent partners in the public eye, an image that plays into discourses of femininity, masculinity, and

²⁸⁷ Kamp, *The United States of Arugula*, 4.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 5-9.; Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 133-146.

²⁸⁹ Molly O'Neill, "Food Porn," *Columbia Journalism Review* 42. 3 (2003): 39.

²⁹⁰ This mixed positioning is echoed in the next preeminent American culinary critic, James Beard: "It's very important that Jim was a man. That's how he made a difference. Historically, you had cookbooks and cookery writing by two groups of people, women and chefs. And, as in so many things, Jim was a crossover person. Also, because he wasn't afraid to be enthusiastic, he went right to the heart of people. His real talent was for the American voice." Barbara Kafka, quoted in Kamp, *The United States of Arugula*, 21.

²⁹¹ Published only three years after his first tome on dining, Hines' cookbook often outsold his guidebook. Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 114.

automobility from the early 20th century. Furthermore, such images established Hines as a heterosexual in a period anxious about gay male activity, as the 1930s were "marked by a public backlash against homosexuals of significant proportions" that continued into the following decades.²⁹² To Carroll Pursell, it is unfortunate but historically persistent that, like with men and cars, "technology is so obviously masculine."²⁹³ For the analyst, then, to "study the role of masculinity in the history of technology" is "to remember that gender is a matter of boundaries, and boundaries have two sides."²⁹⁴ As both products of human behavior, social hierarchies and technological hierarchies coincide as products of social structures actively shaping the conjunctures of history.²⁹⁵

Historians who have investigated the intersection of gender and automobiles have consistently noted that, "although class status, age, geographical location, occupation, race, and ethnicity profoundly affected people's access to and control over cars, sex always outdistanced these other social factors."²⁹⁶ By the 1920s, the discourse of automobility, as expressed in articles and advertisements, was "identifying women with automotive features associated with affluence and leisure and considered cosmetic or superfluous," while "linking male automobility with thrift

²⁹² Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 268.

²⁹³ Carroll Pursell, "The Construction of Masculinity and Technology," *Polhem* 11. (1993): 207.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Nina E. Lerman, "'Preparing for the Duties and Practical Business of Life': Technological Knowledge and Social Structure in Mid-19th-Century Philadelphia," *Technology and Culture* 38. 1 (1997). Furthermore, for Lerman, "to treat technology as a social product is to recognize that technology in our society has reflected, reinforced, and been built into the social boundaries that we construct and reconstruct." (58)

²⁹⁶ Virginia Scharff, *Taking the Wheel: Women and the Coming of the Motor Age* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 166.

and work."²⁹⁷ The latter built upon deeper links between masculinity and facility with nuts and bolts, as "competence in the operation and repair of machinery formed a defining element of masculinity for many male groups in this period."²⁹⁸ The former, as a function of dualism, was an outcome of the fact that the "explicitly male technical domain came into existence at precisely the same time that 'the consumer' became more and more explicitly gendered female."²⁹⁹ This ideal was a discursive articulation of the developing social geography of gender and automobility: men's work is placed away from the home and thus is constructed the commuting breadwinner, while women's activities are anchored to the home and naturalized is the role of housewife not as a laborer but as a shopper.³⁰⁰ When women did drive it exposed them as helpless prey to an expanded world of corruptive influences and numerous vices, on top of further endangerment brought upon themselves by their

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 119.; See also Laura L. Behling, "The Woman at the Wheel: Marketing Ideal Womanhood, 1915-1934," *Journal of American Culture* 20. 3 (1997).; Roger Miller, "Selling Mrs. Consumer: Advertising and the Creation of Suburban Socio-Spatial Relations, 1910-1930," *Antipode* 23. 3 (1991): 282-284.

²⁹⁸ Kline, "Users as Agents of Technological Change," 778.

²⁹⁹ Ruth Oldenziel, "Boys and Their Toys: The Fisher Body Craftman's Guild, 1930-1968, and the Making of a Male Technical Domain," *Technology and Culture* 38. 1 (1997): 62. Moreover, Steven Lubar argues that "the study of the consumer revolution has been tied from the start to the study of gender." Lubar, "Men/Women/Production/Consumption," 14. For a synthesis of the repeated conceptions of between women and consumption in history, see Victoria de Grazia, "Introduction," in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 1-7.

³⁰⁰ Martin Wachs, "Men, Women, and Urban Travel: The Persistence of Separate Spheres," in *The Car and the City: The Automobile, the Built Environment, and Daily Urban Life*, ed. Martin Wachs and Margaret Crawford (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 88-96. In historical practice, Scharff shows that the automobile was a tool of exploration as well as execution, employed in materially and socially diverse ways by both women and men alike, contained by and transgressing the boundaries erected around it. Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, 15-164.

stereotyped mechanical incompetence.³⁰¹ Hence, that a white, affluent male like Duncan Hines would come along and be an expert on aspects of automobility was not a surprise. This image was bolstered by representations that connoted his identity as a metalanguage communicating a number of ideas that aided in the construction of Hines' character. His wholesome, folksy, and honest image – the gentleman of southern manners and taste, impeccable Victorian ethics, and earnest discipline – is inscribed with power which allowed him to produce knowledge and be foisted to the pedestal of authority.

One period commentator described Hines as a "master printer... recognized as an expert craftsman in his field" to give credence to the claim of "his comparative omniscience in the matter of dining on the road."³⁰² The former is implied to be tied the latter, as explicitly stated in the "Foreword" to most editions of *Adventures in Good Eating*, written by *Saturday Evening Post* columnist Forrest Crissey:

Good taste is an unruly human faculty not easily confined to a single channel. Years ago I became acquainted with Duncan Hines, a man of exquisite taste in the printing art. He was a master craftsman who could do almost unbelievable things with types, paper and ink. Eventually I was to learn that this taste is equally remarkable in a very different field.³⁰³

Elsewhere, Horace Sutton claimed that, "Mr. Hines got to be the wayfarer's guardian angel because he refused to work for a salary. He wanted his income to be based

³⁰¹ Berger, "The Car's Impact on the American Family," 70-72.; Blanke, *Hell on Wheels*, 87-89. For an essay ranging over the entire 20th century with a focus on the dynamics of gender and the automobile, see Sanford, "'Woman's Place' in American Car Culture."

³⁰² MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 16.; see also "Eater," *American Magazine*, April 1941, 81.

³⁰³ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, v. 8th ed.

directly upon what he earned," so he became a traveling salesman.³⁰⁴ The implication was that Hines fulfilled the image of the "self-made man" whose character is forged by mobility, ambition, and discipline, prospering or failing by his own effort and appearances.³⁰⁵ Furthermore, though "he may look like a lawyer, he may have the attitudes of a businessman, but there runs through his conversation a tender and touching attachments to such items as unsweetened cornbread, white first-run maple sirup [sic] and properly cured hams, which at once stamps him as a sentimentalist and poet."³⁰⁶ His appearance signified wealth, ambition, hard work, and, moreover, white, male, capitalist, and, altogether, hetero-normativity.

Yet, Hines was imaged as affectionately epicurean, embracing food with a romantic spirit and not hedonist wanton. Accompanying the seminal *Saturday Evening Post* article are two illustrations of Hines.³⁰⁷ The first, on the first page of the article, depicts Hines dressed in a suit, concentrating intently on a hot plate served to him by a burly but happy waiter dressed in grubby short-order cook's attire. The attending caption reads that "Hines knows two places outside Chicago where there is oilcloth on the tables and the waiters wear greasy caps."³⁰⁸ The contrast of clothing and the insinuation of low-end dining in the description of the two restaurants serves two purposes. The illustration corresponds to the last page of the article where it

³⁰⁴ Sutton, "The Wayfarer's Guardian Angel," 38.

³⁰⁵ On the history of this ideal, see Irvin G. Wyllie, *The Self-Made Man in America: The Myth of Rags to Riches* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1954).; John Cawelti, *Apostles of the Self-Made Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965).

³⁰⁶ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 80.

³⁰⁷ It is argued that this specific publication launched Hines to national prominence. Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 83-84.

³⁰⁸ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 16.

explains, through a careful balancing of Hines' opinion, how to find quality yet inexpensive meals among a field of restaurants increasingly emphasizing efficiency over other priorities. Decrying the fact that restaurants, in particular corner cutting hotels, "have adapted the factory-assembly-line system to their kitchens," the two "roadhouses" in the Chicago suburbs are mentioned because they serve "potatoes freshly fried" despite serving 1800 pounds of them at one place and 5200 pounds at the other.³⁰⁹ The implication was that not only does appearance does not equate quality of goods and/or attention to detail, but that in having this attitude, and in the contrast of class signifiers in the illustration, that Hines was a man beyond prejudices. His honesty trumped his class.

Honesty has its bounds, though, as Hines' pledge of impartial judgment led him to present an inaccurate picture of himself. "Hines prints his own photograph – and very natty he looks, too – in his book, and this might seem at first glance to belie a passion for anonymity. Hines' explanation is that he deliberately uses a youthful picture of himself in order to deceive the Bonifaces."³¹⁰ This justification kept in line with his professed standards of integrity and independence. Yet, as a salesman with a career in print and the media, that Hines chose the most attractive photo available points as much to a goal of image-conscious self-promotion as to dissimulation for loftier purposes. In descriptions he was cast as "a modest person.... a stocky, greying,

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 84.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 17.

slightly-grumpy citizen of Bowling Green, Kentucky, who till recently was merely a successful Chicago salesman."³¹¹

Horace Sutton described Hines in the *Saturday Review* as "a homey individual with thinning gray hair and glasses who looks like everybody's grandfather."³¹² The inset cartoon casts him with little hair, dressed in a suit with a sly, boyish grin on a rotund face simultaneously eyeing the reader and food in his hand. Again, a light-hearted tone was cast to balance his "gray" and stolid appearance as another suited businessman. Later, another *Saturday Review* article featured Hines' much-celebrated travel to Europe with a collage of his chuckling face pasted onto a baroque-styled line-drawing of him seated in front of an opulent spread of delicacies.³¹³ The *New Yorker* called him "a bluff, ruddy, and vigorous man of seventy-four, with close-cropped white hair, a not unexpected *embonpoint*, and the pleased expression of one who has turned a good deed into a gold mine."³¹⁴ *Newsweek* echoed this portrayal, calling him "ruddy." Moreover, they balanced a paragraph describing a feast in his honor with notes that "he eats five times a day, but never quite eats his fill at any sitting," explaining how despite "eating for a living for twenty years [he] weighs just about the same as when he started."³¹⁵ This was to say that, "Hines' work shows in his figure, which is inching toward corpulence, his love for his work in his dark-eyed

³¹¹ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 13. This article was republished in *Reader's Digest*, expanding the dissemination of Hines to tens of millions of readers, providing a surge in the sales of his publications and requests for interviews matched only by the first *Saturday Evening Post* article. Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 131-133.

³¹² Sutton, "The Wayfarer's Guardian Angel," 38.

³¹³ Horace Sutton, "What Do You Want, Oomph in Your Butter?," *Saturday Review*, July 17, 1954, 31.

³¹⁴ "Best."

³¹⁵ "Eating for a Living," *Newsweek*, May 23, 1955, 75.

twinkle, his little-boy grin."³¹⁶ Even on the dust-jacket of his "mellow gastronomical memoir," underneath a photo of him in suit with a barely held-back sly smile, described Hines as "an erect and well set-up individual, just short of six feet tall, with thinning gray hair, a ruddy complexion, a genial twinkle in his eyes, and only slightly on the rotund side."³¹⁷ Connoting wisdom, eminence, and a jovial character, the image of the grandfather welcomed readers to the figure of Duncan Hines. As "colorful, eccentric, never dull," Hines thus "reminded many of an uncle they had somewhere in the family tree."³¹⁸

The familial casting of Hines was rounded out by how he was quoted when the regional aspects of Hines' identity were revealed as evidence of his taste in and knowledge of food. As "a real extrovert and a true Southerner," Hines is depicted in a folksy manner extending out of his grandfatherly image.³¹⁹ First, as a "true Kentuckian [he] is an expert on hams," curing his own authentically "with hickory ashes and salt and pepper and a bit of saltpeter."³²⁰ That "he personally selects" his meat supports his credentials beyond the table to the agricultural source since "he is a small town boy from Kentucky whose knowledge of food is unlimited."³²¹ Because of this Horace Sutton lets him hold court in full quote and thereby

shatter our illusion in the matter of peanut-fed hams. 'Know those peanut-fed hams?' he asked, 'Why those sweet little piggies never get

³¹⁶ Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 31.

³¹⁷ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*.

³¹⁸ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 87.

³¹⁹ Gilmer, "Duncan Hines: Adventurer in Good Eating," 101.

³²⁰ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 82, 84.

³²¹ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 15.; Gilmer, "Duncan Hines: Adventurer in Good Eating," 101.

to see very many peanuts. First place, the peanut crop is too valuable, so they get mostly corn. If they ate all peanuts you couldn't eat the pig. Its flesh would be too oily.³²²

Hines' guidebooks further attest to his food expertise as founded in his Southern, rural identity:

His judgment of what constitutes a "good meal" is a matter of birth and training. He is a native of Kentucky, where the preparation of delicious foods is a household rite in the homes of the "quality folks." Good living there is a proof of social standing and of competency. In its fine country houses, the ability to serve guests with unforgettable meals of native foods, prepared with consummate care and forethought, is a family tradition, handed down from generation to generation.³²³

"Hines' theories about food go back to his Kentucky boyhood," for "Hines' mother died when he was four, and a colored cook took over" to educate and fee him with an "emphasis on quality and quantity."³²⁴ Besides being bred for expertise on food, Hines' identity as southern was also used to cut a figure of American comfort, as in comments that while traveling Europe, "we had more fun than a case of monkeys, but I'll be durned glad when that train gets in tomorrow night and I get me some hot biscuits."³²⁵

Drawing these phrases and images together, Duncan Hines' publications, personality, and history were intertwined: a "well-tailored man in his 60's, Hines, like his books, combines good taste and mature judgment with boyish exuberance.... Like

³²² Sutton, "The Wayfarer's Guardian Angel," 38.

³²³ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, v. 15th ed.

³²⁴ Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 70. Hines praises "Negro cooks" as "artists of the saucepan and skillet" and "everyone who loves good cookery should thank them from the bottom of his heart." Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 105.

³²⁵ Sutton, "What Do You Want, Oomph in Your Butter?," 31.

his books, he is unassuming, unpretentious.... Like his books, he combines good nature with crusading earnestness."³²⁶ His age, race, former profession, childhood, body weight, and face swirled together to connote expertise, authenticity, hard work, success, and high morals. His gender was implicitly the foundation of representations of him as a motorist, Southern gentleman, odd but sweet grandfather, and good businessman in the context of Hines as restaurant critic. His masculinity treads across these prescribed gender lines when he is shown cooking, gardening, and eating vegetables in magazines. The nexus of gender, consumerism, and founts of information on consumerism (like magazine articles, advertising, and critics' publications) presented a context for the cultural dissemination of Hines' authority.

In the early 20th century publications like the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's*, *American Magazine*, and *Esquire*, amongst others, folded ideals and habits of consumerism into definitions of manhood in the early 20th century, opening up an interest in consumption much as magazines had done the same for women in the late 19th century.³²⁷ The *Saturday Evening Post*, the first national journal to write about Hines, "was the first American magazine to appeal directly to a male audience, and for the first four decades of the 20th century was the champion of Victorian masculine ideals," as defined as "a property-owning man of character who believed in

³²⁶ Gilmer, "Duncan Hines: Adventurer in Good Eating," 104.

³²⁷ Tom Pendergast, *Creating the Modern Man: American Magazines and Consumer Culture, 1900-1950* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000).; Kenon Brenzeale, "In Spite of Women: 'Esquire' Magazine and the Construction of the Male Consumer" *Signs* 20. 1 (1994).; Carole Turbin, "Fashioning the American Man: The Arrow Collar Man, 1917-1931," *Gender & History* 14. 3 (2002).; Stefan K. Cieply, "The Lineaments of Personality: *Esquire* and the Problem of the Male Consumer" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Maryland, 2006).; Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture, 1880s to 1910s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

honesty, integrity, self-restraint, and duty to God, country, and family."³²⁸ That Hines appeared in this magazine, more than once, fits. Hines' own family described him as "a Victorian, who dressed conservatively, was always clean shaven and had a conservative philosophy toward life."³²⁹ Yet, in depictions Hines crossed gendered boundaries regarding food. These re-conceptions of food and gender are examples of "the immense transformative powers of capitalist-driven consumption as it constantly refashions notions of authentic, essential woman and mankind" to create new ideas to help sell new products in new markets (or old markets reconfigured).³³⁰ Specifically, it lends weight to the idea that "men's and women's ability to produce, provide, distribute, and consume food is a key measure of their power."³³¹

Marjorie DeVault argues that, "representations of household practice provide public, ideal images of family life – images that are influential even if they are not accurate reflections of actual household life or achievable by any more than a small fraction of the population."³³² Representations of this sort relied on "the invention of the male breadwinner," a product of "the modern sexual division of labor dat[ing] back to the mid-19th century factory system."³³³ Brought forward a few generations, the "scientifically efficient division between the wage-earning half of the family and

³²⁸ Pendergast, *Creating the Modern Man*, 51, 10.

³²⁹ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 125.

³³⁰ de Grazia, "Introduction," 8.

³³¹ Carole M. Counihan, "Food and Gender: Identity and Power," in *Food and Gender: Identity and Power*, ed. Carole M. Counihan and Steven L. Kaplan (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998), 8.

³³² Marjorie DeVault, *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 215.

³³³ de Grazia, "Establishing the Consumer Household," 155.

the consuming half is purely an invention of the early 20th" practices of Fordism and Taylorism as applied to "the family as the primary consumer unit."³³⁴ Mapped onto these ideals were constructions of cooking as a woman's role, a gendering reinforced from 1900 to 1950 by cookbooks, articles, advertising, and the education system.³³⁵ These display the process in which "claiming different in roles in regard to food and distinct attributes through identification with specific foods, men and women define their masculinity and femininity."³³⁶

The title of Hines' cookbook covers both women's work at the stove (*Adventures in Good Cooking...*) and the men's performance at the table (...*and the Art of Carving in the Home*). His introduction drives this point home, arguing that, "the modern home kitchen is no longer the exclusive domain of the gentler sex, for it is common knowledge that many a male is also adept with skillet and pan."³³⁷ His kitchen pose in the 1947 *Saturday Evening Post* article underlined this, as does as the Hines' penned appearance in *Flower Grower* magazine.³³⁸ This figure attempts to push against the mid-century discourse of food and gender that conceived of "men's cooking as an optional hobby" yet asserted that "only men could raise cooking to an art form."³³⁹ In pose and prose, Hines sought to break down the idea that "men's and

³³⁴ Ibid., 156.

³³⁵ Sherrie A. Inness, *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001), 52-163. On the crucial role of women through out the history of American cooking, see Haber, *From Hardtack to Home Fries: An Uncommon History of American Cooks and Meals*.

³³⁶ Counihan, "Food and Gender," 7.

³³⁷ Duncan Hines, *Adventures in Good Cooking and the Art of Carving in the Home*, 1st ed. (Bowling Green, KY: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1939), vi.

³³⁸ Duncan Hines, "I Like Vegetables," *Flower Grower*, May 1958, 37.

³³⁹ Inness, *Dinner Roles*, 22, 29.

women's taste in food are antithetical," set in the binary of meaty "guy food" versus "dainty" feminine food.³⁴⁰

A second article in the *Saturday Evening Post* began with photos of Hines throwing his head back in laughter, wearing a chef's *toque* and a wide floral-printed apron that highlights his width. He stands over a stove and stares down at a pork chop forked and raised in the air by his right hand. One, but not two other, of his cabinet doors conspicuously turns open behind him, showing ingredients, some self-canned. The image blends signs of professional, elite culinary training, home-maker femininity, rural self-reliant food preservation, and the girthy gaiety associated with a professional eater. The inset text below, entitled "Champion Diner-Out", runs through his path from hobbyist to best-selling author, underlining his "traveling constantly to re-check" his judgments and his reliance on "fans" that "keep him up-to-date." Addressing his appearance, since "it is a dull day when he fails to address himself to six or more meals," the ready smile and consequent weight of Hines in the accompanying photograph is tacitly connected.³⁴¹

An article in *Better Homes & Gardens*, considered a women's magazine, had multiple thumbnail photos of Hines with captions consisting of quotes from Duncan Hines. The first page had Mr. Hines pointing at a cookbook, instructing his wife on how to prepare the goods in front of them on a kitchen table and in Mrs. Hines' hands, since "sometimes I putter in the kitchen." Directly under this was a scene of Mr. Hines standing with tongs in hand over his wife at the dinner table, because "serving

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 18, 52-70, 23-29.; see also Brenzeale, "In Spite of Women," 6.

³⁴¹ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 18.

the salad is a man's job." In a third, Mr. Hines sat in front of a large meal, staring at the camera with an aggressive glare and his sleeves rolled up as he tears through a fried chicken wing, instructing the reader to "pick up the chicken for real satisfaction." A second page juxtaposed Hines inspecting rations with a soldier ("the army is changing a lot of eating habits"), pruning bushes ("our mint spices sauces and breezes"), and gardening under the watchful eye of his wife ("I like well-arranged flowers"). Altogether, the photos mixed the perpetuation of typically male gendered activities (aggressive meat-eating, the military) in contrast with their reversal (men's interest in salad and gardening).³⁴²

The article's prose ended with recipes written by Hines and a subtle twist on his participation in cooking, especially given the best-selling status of multiple cookbooks with his name on them.³⁴³ The writer reveals that, "he does comparatively little puttering in the kitchen. Occasionally he wanders out, suggests that lemon juice be included in the salad dressing or a dash of salt be added to the beans - and Mrs. Hines may or may not pay attention to what he says."³⁴⁴ The photos represent a common structuring of the American household, wherein "women are in charge of purchasing and storing food and preparing meals but... men will ultimately control

³⁴² Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 30, 31.

³⁴³ Hines, *Adventures in Good Cooking and the Art of Carving in the Home*.; "The Art of Grilling, Baking, Barbecuing, Plus 12 of Duncan Hines' All-Time Favorite Recipes," (Hamilton, OH: The Estate Stove Co., 1952).; *Duncan Hines Favorite Recipes* (Ithaca, NY: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1954).; Inc. Duncan Hines Institute, *Duncan Hines' Dessert Book* (Ithaca, NY: Duncan Hines Books, 1955).

³⁴⁴ Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 71.

family food decisions."³⁴⁵ Yet, the text shows a subtle dig at Duncan Hines, a push against the suggestion from Hines that, "when I'm at home in Bowling Green, Kentucky, I keep a strict watch on the two women in my kitchen – Clara, my wife, and Myrtle, our cook – to make sure they don't overcook the vegetables."³⁴⁶ Was Hines a good cook or just an overseer? Despite breaking up the identification of what is and is not men's food and encouraging men's participation in the kitchen, he still reinforced the mid-century notion that "women cooked humdrum everyday meals, but men cooked for fun and to exercise creativity at the stove."³⁴⁷ The representations of and publications by Hines suggest an attempt to extend his authority to all things related to food by flirting with gender boundaries. Given the mid-century context of food and gender, this image could draw, and thus command, a wider audience of home cooks and motorists, women and men.

Duncan Hines' authority was also used to espouse a range of opinions that go beyond those analyzed in this chapter yet were in many ways tied to them. Besides giving his readers the location and a brief list of special dishes for restaurants, he also outlined a broad philosophy towards food and foodways with which American could orient wanderings by car and cooking alike. This larger whole was created by Hines connecting spatial differences through the separate but related discourses discussed in this chapter. Informed by his position vis-a-vis automobility, class, race, gender, and

³⁴⁵ William Alex McIntosh, and Mary Zey, "Woman as Gatekeepers of Food Consumption: A Sociological Critique," *Food and Foodways* 3. 4 (1989): 321.

³⁴⁶ Hines, "I Like Vegetables," 37.

³⁴⁷ Jessamyn Neuhaus, "Is Meatloaf for Men? Gender and Meatloaf Recipes, 1920-1960," in *Cooking Lessons: The Politics of Gender and Food*, ed. Sherrie A. Inness (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001), 88.

consumerism, his outlook was a product of a thought complex that blended ideas about geography, agriculture, aesthetics, and nationalism to create an American gastronomy. This gastronomy attempted to bring together nascent cultural mythologies, aesthetic biases, and agricultural knowledges to shape America's view of their own traditions. The discourses he entered into and amended have persisted and inform a range of current American foodways.

Chapter 3 – American Gastronomy

"At night we turned to restaurants recommended by Duncan Hines' *Adventures in Good Eating*, a book that my mother carried on her travels like a Bible. These were restaurants individually owned and managed, each unique to a degree in terms of decor and menu. For travelers, as strangers from away, restaurant expectations were often built around guidebook descriptions. Otherwise, the look of a building's facade, its sign, or some other physical cue to quality had to suffice when choices of where to eat were made."³⁴⁸

– John Jakle

"I have dinner with you every night of my life. I have such a good time eating with you. Every night before I go to sleep, I take your book, select some place in it and have an imaginary meal with Duncan Hines.... I go all over the country with Duncan Hines."³⁴⁹

– Unnamed Hines' fan

In his gastronomic memoir, Duncan Hines declared that his narrative "must be a geographical rather than a chronological rambling; it will have to follow the road map and not the calendar."³⁵⁰ As shown in the previous chapters, automobility was decisive for Hines: it established a material environment around him, helped sustain a social community of which he was a member, and empowered him to produce knowledge deemed valuable. But what did his criticism of American food actually say? This chapter investigates the assertion made by his peer in food writing, Clementine Paddleford, that "Hines is an authority on the geography of eating in this country."³⁵¹ I argue that automobility and consumerism gave social and material stages for American food discourses and Hines' personal experiences to shape his gastronomy. I define gastronomy as "the reasoned comprehension of everything

³⁴⁸ Jakle, *Fast Food*, 5.

³⁴⁹ In a fan letter sent to Hines, quoted by him in Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 257-258.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁵¹ Clementine Paddleford, "60,000 Miles of Eating," *This Week Magazine*, January 12, 1947, 25.

connected with the nourishment of man."³⁵² Gastronomy is often thought of as the aesthetics of food, a philosophy of excellence that views food as a formalized art. While gastronomy often does focus on what food is "best," I conceive of these aesthetics as having more than purely artistic aspects. Instead, it includes social, political, and economic considerations as part of the idealization of foods and foodways.

Hines' gastronomy of America was first based on regional foodways, often ethnically inflected, whose many cultural and agricultural traditions when drawn together as a national whole create an American cuisine. Within the ideal of regionality, his gastronomy was organized around principles of seasonality, simplicity, and "common sense" practicality.³⁵³ Combining these principles, Hines aimed to construct a nationalist perspective on American foodways, a perspective aided and, later in his career, hindered by automobility. This juncture of cars, foods, and geography presents an example of how "the national can be entrenched in numerous symbolic, material, spatial, and habitual ways," as automobility turns these ways into a "constellation of factors that constitutes the national... across popular culture and everyday life" and thus "sustains the sense of national belonging, anchoring the national in a grounded, everyday culture" of driving and eating.³⁵⁴

³⁵² Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, trans. Anne Drayton (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 52.

³⁵³ The term regionality is defined as the idea that each region in the United States has unique food products and practices that symbolize the region, outcomes of the particular cultural communities and agricultural circumstances of each area.

³⁵⁴ Tim Edensor, "Automobility and National Identity: Representation, Geography and Driving Practice," *Theory, Culture & Society* 21. 4/5 (2004): 117.

Gastronomy and geography both have aspects of the real and the imaginary; both involve the physical relationship to land and the food that comes from it as well as the ideas we form around these things. Hines' gastronomy conceived the geography of American foodways by traveling and consuming across the country.³⁵⁵ To investigate his spatialized food philosophy we must respond to the questions of anthropologists Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson: "how are spatial meanings established? Who has the power to make places of spaces?"³⁵⁶ Geographer Philip Crang suggests "a plethora of social actors who potentially can be involved in the production and dissemination of this knowledge" of food in space, including "institutions, promotionalists, distributors and packagers, experts and other commentators such as journalists, and vitally of course variously positioned consumers."³⁵⁷ As one of these actors, Hines established idealizations of place by constituting them as areas in space whose unique articulations of culture and agriculture typify America. This view expands on Lawrence Grossberg's theory "of the production of culture through a spatial becoming."³⁵⁸ Applied to Hines' perspective on American food, when he defined and described the places from which foods originate, his making of place produced knowledge, which in turn constituted

³⁵⁵ The relationship between travel and western gastronomy in producing knowledge and experience has actually existed since antiquity. See Coronas, "Multiculturalism and the Emergence of Gastronomy."

³⁵⁶ Akhil Gupta, and James Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," in *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Ethnography*, ed. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 40.

³⁵⁷ Philip Crang, "Displacement, Consumption, and Identity," *Environment and Planning A* 28. 1 (1996): 54.

³⁵⁸ Lawrence Grossberg, "The Space of Culture, the Power of Space," in *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, ed. Ian Chambers and L. Curtis (London: Routledge, 1996), 177.

culture. Placed in the context of automobility, authority, and consumerism, these "geographical knowledges" became "associated with the materials that flow through these systems of provision, which for consumers form part of the discursive complexes within which they are increasingly asked reflexively to manage their food consumption habits."³⁵⁹ Exploring these spatial ideas requires analysis to "turn from a project of juxtaposing pre-existing differences to one of exploring the construction of differences in historical processes," investigating a social-material dynamic of travel and commodities "that differentiates the world as it connects it."³⁶⁰ Hines' work thus articulated the historical connections between travel and knowledge, geography and consumption.³⁶¹

This process of knowledge production is characterized by "displacement," defined as

a sense of a geographical world where cultural lives and economic processes are characterized not only by the points in space where they take and make place, but by the movements to, from, and between those points; and, indeed, to suggest a world where these various forms of travel and mobility – of people, objects, ideas – rather than with static dwelling.³⁶²

With regards to food mobilized amongst multiple points in social, material, and cultural systems, displacement explains how

³⁵⁹ Cook, "The World on a Plate," 138.

³⁶⁰ Gupta, "Beyond 'Culture'," 46.

³⁶¹ As John Jakle suggests, "tourism is a significant means by which modern people assess their world, defining their own sense of identity in the process.... Because tourism represents people's deliberate encounter with new places, it also provides an excellent opportunity to study their cognitive relationship to landscape." Jakle, *The Tourist*, xi.

³⁶² Crang, "Displacement, Consumption, and Identity," 47.

processes of food consumption are cast as local, in the sense of contextual; but where those contexts are recognized as being opened up by and constituted through connections into any number of networks, which extend beyond delimiting boundaries of particular places; furthermore, where imagined and performed representations about 'origins,' 'destinations,' and forms of 'travel' surround these networks' various flows; and where consumers (and other actors in food commodity systems) find themselves socially and culturally positioned, and socially and culturally position themselves, not so much through placed locations as in terms of their entanglements with these flows and representations.³⁶³

Each region and its food was thus distinguished by Hines in relation to its other(s), differences made active through the social and material networks that both connected as well as separated areas of the United States. The resulting imagined geography arose as a heuristic for consumers to make sense of the tangled and dynamic networks of mobile persons, places, and products. Yet, while these phenomena shifted in history, certain discourses of the cultural geography of American foodways persisted and inform Hines' writing. His gastronomy provides performances of regional identity that involve consumers, producers, and mediators alike.

The benefit of focusing on only Duncan Hines' perspective is that "personal views are the most elementary and accessible way of being in geographical space and place, for it is the way we constantly experience the world and act upon it."³⁶⁴ As the epigraphs to this chapter attest, Hines' authority guided both bodies and minds, thus displaying how "power does not enter... only at the moment of representation" of

³⁶³ Cook, "The World on a Plate," 138.

³⁶⁴ Robert David Sack, *Place, Modernity, and the Consumer's World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1992), 11.

space but in practices regarding space.³⁶⁵ His position is a strong reference point from which to examine the flows of commodities in social and spatial relations construed symbolically for consumers' to act upon. In other words, Hines' gastronomy was more than idle rumination, it was the rhetoric that aids commodity exchange between producers and consumers along the roadside. For those who wanted a gourmand's philosophy of cuisine, he provided an elaborated argument; for those who wanted a quick answer to where to find something good to eat, he provided numerous concise and organized recommendations. In both situations he produced signs with which Americans could orient their thoughts and actions, guiding them on their tours safely to finer dining and a greater appreciation of the land and people that make such eating possible as well as preferable.

Hines' gastronomy influenced Americans by circulating amongst the "circuits of culinary culture," social and material networks that "stress how flows of values and information are not simply imposed on passive viewers or readers by media institutions, but rather constructed and reconstructed through the interrelations of the full range of actors involved in the production, circulation and consumption of those meanings."³⁶⁶ Evidence of this is found in how Hines' knowledge was employed not only by consumers but also by business owners, magazines, and, late in his life, the massive corporate line of packaged goods that would bear his name.³⁶⁷ Across this

³⁶⁵ Gupta, "Beyond 'Culture'," 46.

³⁶⁶ Cook, "The World on a Plate," 141.

³⁶⁷ For a history of the transformation into a brand name of household goods, a particularly profitable and long-lasting one, see Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 179-197, 222-234, 249-258.

range of historical subjects and objects flowed the ideals of American food as presented by Hines. This knowledge included geographic and other aspects that functioned not only to aid commodity exchange but also to develop a form of nationalism through the definition of the meanings of goods and places and the dissemination of instructions on how to consume them.

To understand how products and places convene in culture I will conceive of "consumption as a major place-forming activity," as consumption in the 20th century has both de-emphasized the importance of place while highlighting its crucial effects on the value of commodities.³⁶⁸ When places are commodified and essentialized as signs for the purposes of facilitating their presentation and purchase, attention becomes limited to the most obvious pieces and processes of consuming. A few key aspects of a place are highlighted and, as in the case of tourist destinations, consumers are presented carefully crafted and performed versions of a place-as-commodity.³⁶⁹ This process has often lead consumers "to think of [their selves] not as links in a chain, but, rather, as the center of the world."³⁷⁰ Hines both encouraged this habit and attempted to break Americans of it: he grounded his gastronomy in his community-centered conceptions of regionality, yet he did so through the individualistic practices of automobility. In writing regions, Hines' was constructing knowledge that motorists

³⁶⁸ Sack, *Place, Modernity, and the Consumer's World*, xi.; David Bell, and Gill Valentine, *Consuming Geographies: We Are Where We Eat* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 148-207. As Gupta and Ferguson note, under the influence of modernity's mobilities "actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient." Gupta, "Beyond 'Culture'," 39.

³⁶⁹ See Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken, 1976).; Philip Crang, "Performing the Tourist Product," in *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*, ed. Chris Rojek and John Urry (New York: Routledge, 1997).

³⁷⁰ Sack, *Place, Modernity, and the Consumer's World*, 3.

utilized to make sense of cars, consumption, and space. As John Jakle notes, for Americans along the roadside "it is not what a place is so much as what it is thought to be that matters when behavior is formed. It is from assessing the symbolisms of location, time, and people in space (and their props and activities) that places are known."³⁷¹

For American motorists in the 1930s to 1950s the questions of where to eat and what to eat were intertwined. To understand how information on this subject was passed on to them requires a return to Arjun Appadurai's framework for commodity exchange. Standing between the small community of restaurateurs and the vast community of motorists, Hines' position exemplifies how "at every level where a smaller system interacts with a larger one, the interplay of knowledge and ignorance serves as a turnstile, facilitating the flow of some things and hindering the movement of others."³⁷² Hines, like all critics, edited as he mediated between producers and consumers, emphasizing not just certain restaurants but certain aspects of them and of American foodways in general. Yet, this situation is an opportunity for all of those involved in the long chain of exchange, as "gaps in knowledge and the difficulties of communication between producer and consumer are not really obstacles."³⁷³ The opportunity in the exchange of a commodity is that the product is enlivened as it is reformed by the knowledge produced to encapsulate it:

mythological understandings of the circulation of commodities are generated because of the detachment, indifference, or ignorance of

³⁷¹ Jakle, *Fast Food*, 17.

³⁷² Appadurai, "Commodities and the Politics of Value," 56.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 43.

participants as regards all but a single aspect of the economic trajectory of the commodity. Enclaved in either the production, speculative trade, or consumption locus of the flow of commodities, technical knowledge tends to be quickly subordinated to more idiosyncratic subcultural theories about the origins and destinations of things. These are examples of the many forms that the fetishism of commodities can take when there are sharp discontinuities in the distribution of knowledge [about them].³⁷⁴

The distance from one end of the commodity chain to the other thus provides the chance to rewrite myths surrounding things, altering their cultural constructions for any number of economic, political, or social reasons. Furthermore, "as the institutional and spatial journeys of commodities grow more complex, and the alienation of producers, traders, and consumers from one another increases, culturally formed mythologies about commodity flow are likely to emerge," and increasingly rely on middlemen to create and distribute this information.³⁷⁵ Against the historical background of Americans traveling through unfamiliar physical and imaginative territories, Hines was presented with a landscape that he could refashion to sell not just the commodities of restaurants and regions but also his authoritative power over them and knowledge about them.

Warren Belasco argues that in the early 20th century, "in addition to encouraging deliberation, motoring heightened attention to topographic detail and regional variation," and thereby "cars broke the railroad's monopolistic hold over American geographic consciousness."³⁷⁶ Belasco also narrates that, after an initial stage of awe and discovery that ended in the 1920s, the dominant trend of American

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 54.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 48.

³⁷⁶ Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 23, 24.

drivers was to prefer prescribed routes and regular roadside services.³⁷⁷ Within this historical context, Karl Raitz argues that as they then gained more familiarity with roads and roadsides motorists "became more sophisticated and increasingly sought refinement and trustworthiness in the businesses they patronized."³⁷⁸ This process was streamlined by Hines, for he was "doing something for the traveler as nearly ideal as possible.... working out this experiment in service to those who appreciate the refinements of good living, while seeing America."³⁷⁹ His guidebooks were "not intended to tell people living in a city where to eat in their home town, but the information therein is mighty convenient for anyone traveling in a strange territory."³⁸⁰ In fact, his publications were "a sort of Bible," for, as his contemporaries described, "motorists carry his guidebook as they do road maps."³⁸¹ In fact, Hines' work was a map of foodways layered over a map of the United States. Though it was intended primarily for "tourists" the information within could be, and indeed was, used by any American to aid their decision-making while consuming along the roadside or imagining destinations from afar.

Molly O'Neill notes that while "evoking distant lands, exotic flavors, and lives un-lived," the bulk of "gastronomic writing has also sought to ease readers' anxieties

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 71-173.

³⁷⁸ Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America," 385.

³⁷⁹ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, x. Brillat-Savarin entertains the idea that gastronomy can also be seen as "nothing but reflective appreciation applied to the art of amelioration." Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, 278.

³⁸⁰ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, x. 1941, 8th. ed.

³⁸¹ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 16.

and to affirm their ambitions."³⁸² As argued in the previous chapter, Hines' image was crafted to attract audiences of motorists who could afford dining on the road. Just like the hoteliers and restaurateurs attempting to attract consumers to their roadside motorists, casting their places as unique and desirable, so too did Hines encase his recommendations in rhetoric to make his readers hungry with excitement.³⁸³ In this process, "meanings are loaded onto commercial places to guide behavior" by Hines.³⁸⁴ For those being guided by Hines, "places are sought and used according to satisfactions anticipated," a cognitive appetite built up by reading his descriptions of a place and its food.³⁸⁵

By the 1930s, motorists were facing an increasingly cluttered roadside as signs, lights, architecture, building sites, and other items constructed to attract the eyes and wallets of consumers in cars.³⁸⁶ In terms of motorists trying to make sense of this landscape, any number of approaches could have been employed. Regardless of approach, in order to make decisions about where to eat and what they eat motorists had to interpret the increasingly dense field of symbols competing for their attention. Hines' educated motorists on how the symbols along the roadside "serve as icons that cue strangers, as outsiders, to basic place meanings," helping them "learn to read the landscape in order to identify places" and thereby "learn to anticipate correctly place

³⁸² O'Neill, "Food Porn," 40.

³⁸³ John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

³⁸⁴ Jakle, *Fast Food*, 18.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁸⁶ Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America," 379-386.

satisfactions, and to avoid, when possible, dissatisfactions."³⁸⁷ Hines believed that when "on a pleasure trip – particularly in strange localities – it is important to take no chances."³⁸⁸ His work would reduce such risks, if you followed his recommendations and internalized his principles. In fact, *Publishers' Weekly* explicitly called Hines' work the product of having "discovered that roadside signs were not always dependable guides to good food."³⁸⁹

Instances of the signs Hines' erected to lead their imaginations, appetites, and automobiles are found first within his guidebooks. Categorized by state, the alphabetical listings of recommended restaurants were usually written in curt and often ungrammatical sentences. At the beginning of many, but not all, of the book's sections by state Hines encapsulated his view of the state. These were written as a varying mix of social, historic, and other information that he deemed most important to understanding and then experiencing the state's geography and gastronomy. For example, on Kansas he wrote: "The eastern portion is beautiful and rolling, but as one drives west the plains begin and the towns get smaller and farther apart. Aside from larger centers, the eating places are typical cafés though once in awhile you come across a 'find.'"³⁹⁰ On Nevada: "The one state where gambling is legal, and on account of this those places that serve food derive much of their profit from the tables. Once more we have one of those high, wide and handsome states where when

³⁸⁷ Jakle, *The Tourist*, 43-44.

³⁸⁸ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, viii. 1941, 8th. ed.

³⁸⁹ "From Hobby to Publishing," 354.

³⁹⁰ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 122. 1941, 8th. ed.

men eat they EAT and no foolin.’”³⁹¹ On New Mexico: “As may be surmised, much of the cooking is tinged with Mexico, which is a novelty to those from the East.

Wherever tourists have taken a section for their own, as they have done with much of New Mexico, you will find that the quality, surroundings, and service of meals have been bettered. Simply a response to demand.”³⁹² On Alabama: “Industry has brought about many changes in this state. Birmingham is sometimes called the ‘Pittsburgh of the South’ because of its vast steel mills.... Yet there is still much of the Old South to be seen in these modern cities, places of historic interest and beautiful ante-bellum homes.”³⁹³

That his guidebooks were written this way – like a “pithy gospel”³⁹⁴ is one description – is explained through a fable he recounted:

Once upon a time, so the story goes, there was a rich nobleman who traveled far and wide in order that he might enjoy the comforts of the inns he visited and sample the splendid food and wines which graced their tables. It is related that in his search for excellent fare and comfortable lodgings, he sent one of his servants on ahead to test the amenities of those places which might be worthy of a visit. It was agreed that the servant would leave a sign on the doorpost of the inn, by which the master would know whether to turn aside in order to sample its wares and take his ease. If the quality of these were above the ordinary, the symbol to be written on the doorpost was the word ‘Est’... In ‘Adventures in Good Eating,’ ‘Lodging for a Night’ and ‘Vacation Guide’ many travelers have found a reliable servant who has gone ahead, as it were, and posted the places where pleasant and satisfying meals, lodgings and vacations are to be had.³⁹⁵

³⁹¹ Ibid., 189.

³⁹² Ibid., 202.

³⁹³ Duncan Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, unknown ed. (Bowling Green, KY: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1954), 22.

³⁹⁴ Taylor, “America’s Gastronomic Guide,” 16.

³⁹⁵ Duncan Hines, *Lodging for a Night*, 12th ed. (Bowling Green, KY: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1950), v.

Hines was explicitly framing motorists as guided by signs made discursively and materially powerful by himself, who, as shown in his use of his consumption community to cull and verify information, was the wealthy man of knowledge whose servants labor for him in finding the best places. In addition, Hines sold actual signs to restaurants that proclaimed the place to be "Recommended by Duncan Hines." Even if passing motorists were without Hines' guidebook the power/knowledge emanating from his authority could still be consulted; drivers could see the sign and end their hungry search. Furthermore, he reminded the public that, "only the official Duncan Hines sign on display in front of the place of business is authentic. This sign is shown on the back cover of the 1950 printings of both ADVENTURES IN GOOD EATING and LODGING FOR A NIGHT."³⁹⁶ As a career salesman Hines understood the importance of correct and consistent advertising to furthering his criticism and the commodities it advanced: "avoid places having signs with my name unless they are in the current printing of my books. Some have use signs with my name which never have nor ever will be recommended by me."³⁹⁷

In a way Hines was approaching the roadside in much the same way restaurateurs did in the first half of the 20th century. In this period, given the social-material context of automobility, Karl Raitz says that,

a clever entrepreneur could come up with an image that would symbolize intent and create a sign that, in the traveler's mind, would come to represent all businesses of the kind. By employing similitude in this manner, roadside residents could modify the spatial context of

³⁹⁶ Ibid., x.

³⁹⁷ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 61. 1954, unspecified ed.

roadside activity, inducing travelers to conceive of the roadside not as a linear collection of unique places but as a montage of interchangeable parts. As the association between the sign and the place it represented was reinforced by travel experience, the mere glimpse of a distant sign became the equivalent of a full frontal close-up and an inventory of services or commodities that awaited.³⁹⁸

It is via this process that, without hyperbole, it was possible to say "his seal of approval has become a beacon meaning good food and courteous service."³⁹⁹ The influence that Hines-as-sign had was also brought inside of the restaurant as well.

Hines asked his guidebooks readers,

when you have *enjoyed* a meal or lodging in one of the places listed, will you be kind enough to ask the proprietor to autograph your book? This will help me, and it will encourage the inns and restaurants to maintain and improve their high standards so they may retain their listings in future printings. Many people write me that they receive better attention when they lay their 'Adventures in Good Eating' on the dining room table or when registering for overnight state 'Duncan Hines sent me.' Don't be reticent about displaying your books.⁴⁰⁰

This request not only extended the reach of Hines' authority but also reinforced its influence when represented as a mere phrase, roadside sign, or pocket-sized book. His power was thus condensed and advanced as consumers and producers alike tried to align their actions with his authoritative advice.

Hines' gastronomy was most influenced by his conceptions of regionality, a process of categorization that, as Roger Abrahams has shown, is inherent to the

³⁹⁸ Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America," 371.

³⁹⁹ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, vii.

⁴⁰⁰ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 307. 1954, unspecified ed.

human approach to food through the lens of culture.⁴⁰¹ Marion Edwards surmised during his lifetime that "the basis for Hines' belief that each region should emphasize and learn the possibilities of its own foods" was found in his childhood, wherein "most food served was home-grown or made from home-raised products."⁴⁰² This informed Hines outlook, as he felt the first connection between a place and its food should be based in the specific agricultural products of the local land. Whatever grows best, in abundance, by season, and is more or less unique to that area should be highlighted in mind and on menus. As such, Hines believed "the best American cooking is regional cooking, and that is dependent upon the season when local specialties are available."⁴⁰³ This argument was born of practicality by virtue of proximity: "why should I stuff myself with chicken in California, when the whole Pacific Ocean, full of sea food, is right offshore?"⁴⁰⁴ This approach would, in theory, be cheaper for procuring ingredients and would strengthen the bond between location and taste, abstractly speaking. Hence Hines' complaint that "many inns and cafes in the smaller places might do much better if they would specialize in products near at hand. Why not utilize green corn, cream, eggs and cheese dishes, good chickens rather than tough steaks and meats that must come from a distance?"⁴⁰⁵ Phyllis Larsh also noted how "for years Hines has been trying to persuade restaurateurs to serve

⁴⁰¹ Roger Abrahams, "Equal Opportunity Eating: A Structural Excursus on Things of the Mouth," in *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*, ed. Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984).

⁴⁰² Edwards, "They Live to Eat," 71.

⁴⁰³ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 81.

⁴⁰⁴ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 100. 100.

⁴⁰⁵ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 166. 1941, 8th. ed.

more foods native to the region. 'Down on the Gulf Coast,' he grumbles, 'the emphasis is all on chicken and steak. It ought to be on red snapper.' He reproached a New Englander, 'Why don't you people down in Maine cook fiddlehead ferns?'"⁴⁰⁶

The fiddlehead fern is exemplary of Hines' thought process on food and location. Hines implored his readers to "come down East [to Maine] in early May if you would try my favorite 'greens,' for it's then the fiddleheads are ready to be eaten. They have a short season – probably less than a week – so your timing must be good."⁴⁰⁷ Sensitive to the rhythms of nature, "fiddleheads are young cinnamon-ferns (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), and there is nothing to approach their tender, delicate flavor" when they are briefly in season.⁴⁰⁸ To underline their authenticity in history, geography, and culture, Hines reminded that the "Early New Englanders learned from the Indians just how delicious they are when cooked, buttered, and salted."⁴⁰⁹ Yet, Hines failed to mention that this vegetable is usually not farmed but foraged by hand, a laborious and thus expensive operation. Any number of issues like these that surround the production, distribution, price, and popularity of a food held cooks back from focusing on local ingredients. Moreover, the connection that Hines' forged between a food and a place, like fiddlehead ferns and Maine, often did not exist in the culture of the region he was gastronomically conceiving.

⁴⁰⁶ Larsh, "Duncan Hines," 17.

⁴⁰⁷ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 71.

⁴⁰⁸ Hines, "I Like Vegetables," 37.

⁴⁰⁹ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 71.

Hines' definitions of the regional foodways of the United States were, like, any cultural discourse, made and not discovered. On this process, Ian Cook and Philip Crang theorize that,

foods do not simply come from places, organically growing out of them, but also make places as symbolic constructs, being deployed in the discursive construction of various imaginative geographies. The differentiation of foods through their geographies is an active intervention in their cultural geographies rather than the passive recording of absolute cultural geographic differences.⁴¹⁰

Hines gastronomy thus furthered the discourses of certain regional foodways, often dishes or ingredients that had been socially constructed as symbols of a place and/or its people. For instance, when "Hines urges his following to choose the food of the region" he did so by recommending "clams, lobsters and chowder in New England, soft-shelled crabs in Maryland, okra and shrimps in South Carolina, freshwater fish in the Great Lakes region, Spanish dishes in California and Texas, and so on."⁴¹¹ This pattern of identification of food with place was echoed in his food memoir, wherein Hines used various botanical, historical, and anecdotal evidence to support his conceptions of regionality. Hines' even admitted at the end of his memoir that doing this was an act of creativity and not objective accuracy: "It is increasingly difficult to generalize about foods and our food habits, since both are changing so rapidly. We're a restless people, and as we move from place to place we take our habits with us, so that a strictly regional dinner is becoming a thing of the past."⁴¹² Yet despite this acknowledgement, Hines proclaimed place-food combinations to both further his

⁴¹⁰ Cook, "The World on a Plate," 140.

⁴¹¹ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 17.

⁴¹² Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 242.

argument for an American gastronomy and to aid the education and consumption patterns of his community of motorists.

Hatchett argues that Hines' "favorite culinary region was New England" because "it was hearty regional food – victuals prepared over a hot stove all afternoon – that most gained his admiration and affection."⁴¹³ Hines saw New England, and the Midwest as well, as the best symbols of his gastronomy: "the awakening to good food is most marked, Hines says, in New England, which is the best place in the United States to eat;" "Midwestern cookery is like the land – solid, unadorned, and good; and, like the land, there is always plenty of it" in the form of "noble Old world dishes" retuned in America.⁴¹⁴ This fits the "image of midwestern food [as] meat and potatoes, home cooking, basic ingredients, and few spices or surprises," otherwise called "traditional, wholesome American food."⁴¹⁵ Therein is "an emphasis on hearty and filling foods; a conservative approach to new tastes and ingredients; and a pride in well-crafted, functional dishes that are economical and efficient."⁴¹⁶ From this discourse and practice is found a root of Hines' sense of simplicity, in that it included conservative and utilitarian impulses. In fact, Hines' references to simplicity were connotative of other values that he felt were important in American gastronomy, like frugality and authenticity. He lauded the Midwest for the same reasons as New England: their investment in eating foods of their region, and, moreover, these foods

⁴¹³ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 136.

⁴¹⁴ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 17.; Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 129, 131.

⁴¹⁵ Lucy M. Long, "Green Bean Casserole and Midwestern Identity: A Regional Foodways Aesthetic and Ethos," *Midwestern Folklore* 33. 1 (2007): 32.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*: 39-40.

were solid not insubstantial, unadorned not complicated. The culinary simplicity made New England and the Midwest exemplary of the "good" in American foodways, and their use of local and seasonal products was thought to ensure a proper bounty.

Before explaining Hines' conceptions of New England and the Midwest it is important to contrast these regions with his geographic and culinary origins. "Hines says that if this were a dream world, the best of all possible places a man to eat would be his own table," which for a man born, bred, and retired in Kentucky is a Southern one.⁴¹⁷ For Hines, the two places were intimately linked since "it's in the homes of my hospitable Southern friends that I've tasted the finest of southern cuisine."⁴¹⁸ Hines "think[s] that's because the home has always been the center of so much family activity in the South," and so much so that dining out became much less of a popular folkway there.⁴¹⁹ Yet, as a guide to eating outside of the home, Hines' had to address Southern cuisine as expressed in restaurants. On these commercial iterations he concluded that, "in fact, it's one of the misfortunes of Southern cooking that it is so widely and that so many of the imitations are poor."⁴²⁰ For example, he believed that "the *pièce de résistance* of Southern cookery is, of course, the chicken," usually fried.⁴²¹ Yet, he consistently bemoaned how often it is so badly prepared, a tendency that to him occurred most often when fried chicken was served out of the food's

⁴¹⁷ Paddleford, "60,000 Miles of Eating," 24.

⁴¹⁸ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 104.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Ibid., 103-104.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 105.

proposed region of origin, and mainly because of ignorance of correct battering and frying techniques.⁴²² Thus, his experience pushed him to think food was best when prepared in proximity of its origins in a geographic culture and its culinary techniques. This principle formed a version of authenticity for Hines as well as reinforced the nostalgia that underlied his preference for and definition of simplicity.

One of the primary reasons why the Midwest and New England were the best examples of American gastronomy was because Hines believed that they represented "good old American cookery," consisting of "things like steaks and chops, chicken and prime roast beef."⁴²³ Here he was tapping into long-running discourses that mark the origins and persistent foundations of "American food" in the cooking of British, German, and Dutch immigrants in the 18th and 19th centuries, a mainstream constructed in opposing contrast with what discourse, and subsequently Hines, perceived as peculiar and distinct regional-ethnic enclaves like Louisiana and the *mestizo* Southwest.⁴²⁴ Hines' furtherance of these discourses was evinced in his culinary "discernment," an outlook "marked by a peculiarity in that it is distinctively

⁴²² Ibid., 105-107.; MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 82.; Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 99.

⁴²³ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 193.

⁴²⁴ On the history of the Northern European foundations of American food, see Richard J. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America: A History* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1981).; Waverley Root, and Richard de Rochemont, *Eating in America: A History* (New York: Ecco, 1981).; Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 3-9.; Elaine N. McIntosh, *American Food Habits in Historical Perspective* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), 174-205.; Pillsbury, *No Foreign Food*, 22-51.; Brenner, *American Appetite*, 11-15, 86-88. On Louisiana and the Southwest as representations of American culinary difference, see C. Paige Gutierrez, "The Social and Symbolic Uses of Ethnic/Regional Foodways: Cajuns and Crawfish in Southern Louisiana," in *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*, ed. Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984).; Amy Bentley, "From Culinary Other to Mainstream America: Meanings and Uses of Southwestern Cuisine," in *Culinary Tourism*, ed. Lucy M. Long (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004). On Hines' elaboration of such discourses, and their related practices, see Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 15-24, 75-101, 221-226.

American and wholly independent of European gustatory standards."⁴²⁵ When he said, "I believe all of us would appreciate one more law in every State which would absolutely prevent the misnaming of foods that is practiced in many eating places throughout the country," it is because he was disgusted with "dishes disguised with French names that don't mean anything in a Midwest hotel."⁴²⁶ This gripe set Hines swimming against the grain of America's history of deferring to France in terms of culinary ideals and ways of expressing them in restaurant settings.⁴²⁷ Yet, this also empowered him to confidently describe his guidebooks as "designed as an authentic guide for the motoring public to the good food America has to offer."⁴²⁸ (GE 1950 v) His views were all-American because his tastes were all-American which was due to eating the products of America's own nature and culture, and authentically so. Yet, like geographic knowledges, "authenticity and naturalness [are] socially defined."⁴²⁹ For an American touring by automobile, Hines staked the authenticity of New England, in particular Massachusetts, in its colonial and Revolutionary eras as echoed in its historical sites, vernacular architecture, and plain food.⁴³⁰ In fact, Hatchett notes

⁴²⁵ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, v.

⁴²⁶ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 129.; Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 99.

⁴²⁷ On the food-related Francophilia see Kamp, *The United States of Arugula*.; Mariani, *America Eats Out*, 23-33, 49-59, 223-237.; Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 10- 22.; Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 137-143, 213-220.; On its expression in restaurant menus, see Ann D. Zwicky, and Arnold M. Zwicky, "America's National Dish: The Style of Restaurant Menus," *American Speech* 55. 2 (1980): 89-91.

⁴²⁸ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, v.

⁴²⁹ Richard A. Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 211. Peterson outlines the varying senses of authenticity as meaning authenticated, not pretense; original, not fake; relic, not changed; authentic reproduction, not kitsch; credible in current context; and/or real, not imitative.

⁴³⁰ Duncan Hines, *Vacation Guide* (Bowling Green, KY: Adventures in Good Eating, Inc., 1953), 94.

that, "Massachusetts may have been his favorite New England state when it came to food, while Maine was close a second."⁴³¹

His reasons for judging New England's food as best typifying American gastronomy were as following: the food was "as simple and unadorned as any in America"; having "been settled longer than most of the country... New Englanders have a long heritage of fine cookery"; the use of cooking techniques made "New Englanders have fewer gastric disturbances and spend less time at the drugstore and the doctor's for that complaint than any other provincial group in the country;" and "that famous Yankee frugality" aids in finding and using ingredients.⁴³² Besides the aforementioned fiddlehead greens, Hines selected the cranberry and the lobster as symbols of New England's culinary principles of simplicity, history, seasonality, and frugality within the confines of geography. They are examples of how, in his opinion, "New England does the best job of bringing her local dishes to fame."⁴³³ Hines thought the cranberry "as much a part of New England as the little farms against the snow and the dark, forested hills" because making food out of this "bittersweet little red fruit" required New Englanders "to get the best of a bargain" by the "Yankee ability to 'make do' with whatever was at hand."⁴³⁴ Similarly, "lobsters and New England are one and the same thing to anyone who appreciates good food" because in they were simple and historically linked to the area.⁴³⁵ First, the settlers enjoyed

⁴³¹ Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 94.

⁴³² Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 70.

⁴³³ Paddleford, "60,000 Miles of Eating," 36.

⁴³⁴ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 70-71.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

them; second, they were argued to be unique to the area; and third, they were prepared in the simplest ways possible (e.g. merely boiling without extra ingredients).⁴³⁶

Hines' use of lobster as a symbol falls into a common "culinary fakelore," a mythology built around a food and its accompanying foodway through rhetorics varying somewhat by context.⁴³⁷ The intent of such myth making, though, is invariably to elevate the food and foodway to the service of an ideology. In relation to this process in popular culture, John Storey defines ideology as, "discourses which attempt to impose closure on meaning in the interests of power to make what is cultural (i.e. made) appear natural."⁴³⁸ In just this manner, as George H. Lewis has proven,

the significance of the lobster... was crafted more by literate summer visitors who had adopted the state and saw in the lobster a symbol of uniqueness than it was by local residents, who saw lobsters traditionally as a low-status food item but one that was now, due to outside demand and heavy fishing, becoming both scarcer and higher-priced.⁴³⁹

Hines was exactly of the former type, an affluent tourist who came to Maine and lobsters through other affluent tourists. Together, they created a class-based community of socially and economically powerful consumers that, through their

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 59-61.

⁴³⁷ Andrew F. Smith, "False Memories: The Invention of Culinary Fakelore and Food Fallacies," in *Food and Memory Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2000*, ed. Harlan Walker (Devon, UK: Prospect Books, 2001).

⁴³⁸ John Storey, *Inventing Popular Culture: From Folklore to Globalization* (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), x.

⁴³⁹ George H. Lewis, "The Maine Lobster as Regional Icon: Competing Images over Time and Social Class," in *The Taste of American Place: A Reader on Regional and Ethnic Foods*, ed. Barbara G. Shortridge and James G. Shortridge (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 68.

knowledge production, re-made the lobster into an increasingly rare commodity and symbol of high status, erasing its history as an abundant and cheap food for the mostly working-class poor population of Maine. Hines' gastronomy exemplified this discourse and practice, showing, first, how foodstuffs are polyvalent symbols and, consequently, how then "foodways help mark existing social boundaries and, depending upon one's viewpoint and focus, inclusion within or exclusion from a group."⁴⁴⁰ Hines took part in naturalizing the lobster by representing it as Maine essentialized and commodified by and for the powerful tourist.

Looking more closely at the listings in *Adventures in Good Eating*, the 1941 edition imagined Massachusetts' food through the lens of history to a degree not found in his listings for other states and often to the exclusion of ever discussing the food served at these places. Hines, like many Americans foreign to this area and touring it in the early 20th century, thought that, "Yankee culture, no matter the immigrant dilution, preserved a persistent identity," and "the New England landscape retained a sense of the past critical to perceived regional character."⁴⁴¹ To start, Fieldstones of Andover was an "old New England house" while the Ashfield House of Ashfield was a "homelike inn featuring 'plain New England cooking.'" The Old Woodberry Tavern of Beverly Cove was "probably one of the oldest inns in New England, having been built before 1690." Durgin-Park of Boston boasts that, "countless famous personages have crossed its historic threshold. You, too, can enjoy

⁴⁴⁰ Susan Kalcik, "Ethnic Foodways in America: Symbol and the Performance of Identity," in *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*, ed. Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 48.

⁴⁴¹ Jakle, *The Tourist*, 207.

New England fare of excellent quality in an atmosphere teeming with old and interesting associations." So with the Lock-Ober Cafe of Boston, as it too "follows the New England tradition – it traces its ancestry back." At the Brookfield Inn of Brookfield, "ghosts of past Presidents may stand behind your chair at this inn," while The Old Mill Dam Tavern of Concord is "hallowed ground... for Ralph Waldo wrote several of his essays while living in this house." The Black Horse of Hingham was typified by its structure, "built in 1690 in a very old, very staid New England village... where you can enjoy some of their old-fashioned dishes."⁴⁴²

In Lexington, Massachusetts, Seiler's 1775 House is most importantly "situated on the farm of Benjamin Wellington, the first Minute Man to be captured in the Revolutionary War." The Skipper of Nantucket served "on the deck of a hundred-year-old schooner, lying beside the wharf (relic of whaling days) overlooking this quaint town," recommended because, as the description leads, it rightfully serves the food of its locale, "Skipper chowder, steamed clams, broiled oysters, swordfish." The Manning Manse Tea Tavern of North Billerica was an "'ancient house by the side of the road' [that] has been in the Manning family for 240 years" serving "in Revolutionary days... doughty patriots and and weary travelers." The West Townsend Tavern of West Townsend "was an important stage coach stop... in Colonial days," with "the meals so exceptionally good" because "the food is English in character." The Wiggins Old Tavern and Hotel Northampton of Northampton aimed "to re-create the atmosphere of a tavern such as our great-grandfathers might have visited." Aunt

⁴⁴² Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 139-145. 1941, 8th ed.

Tempey's of Osterville was even named after a woman "remembered in Osterville for over 150 years because she was so hospitable," just like the rest of New England past-perfect inns. When Hines paused from his focus on history the rest of his recommendations read like his listing for the Forget-Me-Not Inn and Tea Room of Williamstown: "Distinctive tea room and small hotel in the lovely New England town which is the home of Williams College. Home-cooked meals. Steak, chicken, and lamb chops are featured."⁴⁴³

The listings for Massachusetts did not change much in the 1950 edition of his guidebook. Of interest, though, is that he starts the Massachusetts section with this summary: "In this historical State, there are many of the most interesting and beautiful scenic highways in America. Being one of the most food minded section of our country, you are seldom far from a place serving unusually good and appetizing meals."⁴⁴⁴ As for Maine, the listings were terse and overwhelmingly favored places that served seafood. Of the twenty-four restaurants mentioned, nineteen were said to serve seafood and almost all of these were noted for preparing lobster. Of the remaining five places, two had no mention of food whatsoever, one was "Old New England cookery," another was merely a "nice place to dine," as the last had three sentences describing its architecture and landscaping conclude with four words, "quality of food and service."⁴⁴⁵ Four years later, the 1954 edition displayed barely a change in the number of listings and their descriptions.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 145-153.

⁴⁴⁴ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 143. 1950, 15th ed.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., 136-138.

The exotic place whose otherness produced the difference crucial to Hines' production of geographic knowledge was Hawaii. He positioned this state as both the geographic and culinary distant other. Interestingly, it was the one state he could not drive to, and, consequently, his tourist perception was more evident in the knowledge he constructed about it. For Hines, Hawaii was a product of culinary tourism, "a framework for seeing the varieties of interfaces in which adventurous eating occurs as instances of negotiating individual and social perceptions of the exotic."⁴⁴⁶ His 1954 edition of *Adventures in Good Eating* even included a two-page essay introducing the reader to the wonderfully strange tropics of Hawaii, an addition that was highly unusual relative to the many other editions of his guidebooks. This essay proclaimed that, "it's all true – what they say about Hawaii! The breezes are balmy – coconut palms do shimmer in the moonlight, and white ginger blossoms perfume the air. Few places in the world capture the visitor so completely, in so short a time."⁴⁴⁷ The proceeding seven paragraphs depicted a tourist's playland, a profusion of sights, sounds, and activities "that is part of the enchantment" of its not-so-American culture and nature.⁴⁴⁸ Fret not, the reader is told, for "though you hear foreign tongues all around you there is no language difficulty to cope with since nearly everybody speaks English out there."⁴⁴⁹ The other still put on the appearance of an American, thankfully.

⁴⁴⁶ Lucy M. Long, "Culinary Tourism: A Folkloristic Perspective on Eating and Otherness," in *Culinary Tourism*, ed. Lucy M. Long (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004), 46.

⁴⁴⁷ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 92. 1954, unspecified ed.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 92.

Hines' food memoir continued in the same discourses, as "Hawaii is never-never land come true.... 'it's like a stage setting.'"⁴⁵⁰ In terms of foods, he described the exotica of poi, papaya, and mango, all of which were attractive because they were foreign, and, consequently, not to his taste. He also enjoyed the Chinese and Japanese restaurants of Hawaii, perceived as more authentic culinary expressions than mainland ones because of their closer geographic proximity to Asia.⁴⁵¹ But, Hines' did seem to recognize the performative aspects of this state. For instance, the prime symbol presented to visitors was (and still) is the *luau*, which Hines believed,

like most things Hawaiian, has felt the impact of twentieth century civilization, and has taken on some aspects of the New England clambake, the Southern barbecue, and the Sunday picnic in the park. It's not unusual these days to... find a loudspeaker system and a microphone... the food will be traditional, however, even though the poi comes in paper cartons and the tiny salted shrimp are served in strawberry baskets.⁴⁵²

He recognized how tourists had impacted the presentation of this Hawaiian tradition of food and community, a process that Hawaiians themselves understood and have consciously exploited for economic and social gains for decades.⁴⁵³ Yet Hines could only make meaning out of this experience through referencing mainland – the truly American – traditions. His gastronomic and geographic judgments were thus

⁴⁵⁰ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 215.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 215-221.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 216.

⁴⁵³ Kristin McAndrews, "Incorporating the Local Tourist at the Big Island Poke Festival," in *Culinary Tourism*, ed. Lucy M. Long (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004). What Hines and McAndrews are both pointing to is that geographic "knowledges are not just images projected on to commodities and gazed at by those encountering them but are also resources for incorporating meaningful commodities into varying social selves and arenas, in part through embodied performances of those meanings." Cook, "The World on a Plate," 140.

configured by his tourist perspective, identity-forged experience, and principles for evaluating foodways.

A principle central to his imaginative geography and linked to his perception of tradition, Hines' gastronomy prioritized simplicity but only through a hazy definition of this term. He never truly defined the word but alluded to it often, referencing simplicity when praising food that was less complex in its accompanying ingredients, its cooking process, and its presentation at the table. Furthermore, Hines never explicitly outlined a definitive list of simple dishes but instead judged each culinary encounter against some private store of standards. Reading through his guidebooks, it does seem that simplicity was an expected culinary outcome of regionality, so that preparing truly geographically-coded food would involve highlighting that food with the least amount of interference by other ingredients. For instance, with regards to lobster Hines advocated using the most austere recipes, so thereby the flavor and symbolism of Maine is clear and alone on center stage.⁴⁵⁴

Speaking on American food in general, Hines felt "much of our cooking falls down through the fact that too many cooks are still trying to discover something will take the place of good butter, fresh eggs, rich milk and a loving touch."⁴⁵⁵ As a result, he complained about "how hard it is to find simple dishes finely prepared. Cornbread, fried potatoes, codfish cakes, baked beans, eggs, etc."⁴⁵⁶ These comments displayed a belief in the power of "quality" products, however judged as such, to taste best when

⁴⁵⁴ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 60-61.

⁴⁵⁵ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 17.

⁴⁵⁶ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 153. 1941, 8th ed.

left pure and barely adorned in the cooking process. For that reason he advised to order "ham and eggs when in doubt, as it would require a very poor cook to spoil good ham, and the best chef cannot rejuvenate a bad egg."⁴⁵⁷ Hines seems to be pointing out the inherent goodness of certain foods, a characteristic too easily and too often obliterated. With this in mind Hines noted that "one reason diners-out get such unappetizing dishes is that so-called chefs douse them with strong seasonings, catsups and sauces so that all anybody can taste is condiments. After which the customers douse them some more at the table."⁴⁵⁸ Commenting on his experiences eating in Europe, so too "over there, the vegetables are swimming in sauce and you can't taste the flavor of the vegetables."⁴⁵⁹ The logic behind prioritizing simplicity was that employing this principle would most likely show the quality and care that could make a food "really what it is" in Hines' imagination. Along these lines Hines remarked that, "whatever the dish you're cooking, choose high quality fruits and vegetables; there's no true economy in using cheap, poor quality fruits and vegetables. And remember, if you want to be a really good cook, you must enjoy cooking and put care, thought and love into the preparation of every dish."⁴⁶⁰

Hines last set of instructions on how to approach the roadside were practical in nature but still supportive of his gastronomic outlook. First, he remarked, "my travels have taught me never to judge any eating place by its front appearance. Gay neon signs and bright chrome can smoke-screen a lot of filth in back. Also, the

⁴⁵⁷ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 271. 1954, unknown ed.

⁴⁵⁸ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 99.

⁴⁵⁹ Sutton, "What Do You Want, Oomph in Your Butter?," 31.

⁴⁶⁰ Hines, "I Like Vegetables," 37.

reverse is true; a drab front may hide a gem of a restaurant."⁴⁶¹ Instead, as he was most famous for, it was the sanitation and the food itself that mattered, two things that, in Hines' view, could not be readily deduced from appearances. Further advice was mostly meant to make the eating experience more enjoyable as well as change what Hines' saw as bad "American eating habits," of which "Hines believed the remedy for this deficiency lay in education, and he thought himself to be the perfect teacher."⁴⁶² Hines advocated a number of practices:

To avoid disappointments, it is advisable to phone ahead for reservations.

When motoring I always carry a Rand-McNally Road Atlas.

Courtesy costs nothing, but it pays big dividends.

If you arrive promptly for lunch or dinner, you will probably have a better selection to choose from.

Frequently a small party of friend will plan a trip together. Every member of such a group should decide for himself or herself whether the party is going to be wholly congenial and whether all the members have enough common interests to preserve amity. One selfish self-will person can spoil the happiness of a whole party; there must be some 'give and take' on the part of all to keep things rolling smoothly.

The most dangerous time to be on the highway is the hour around sundown when everybody's tired and stepping on the gas, trying to make another hundred miles that ought to be saved for tomorrow morning.⁴⁶³

As for amending Hines' judgment of bad eating habits:

⁴⁶¹ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 97.

⁴⁶² Hatchett, *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix*, 138.

⁴⁶³ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 45, 225, 265, 127. 1954, unknown ed.; Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 90. 1941, 8th ed.; Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 90.

There are places to eat and places to dine. When you go to the latter, take time to really enjoy your food.

The American people are too much inclined to 'bolt it and beat it.' Nothing is more enjoyable than good food, good companionship and good talk around the dinner table.

A good meal is received by him who shows wisdom in ordering.

Order something different. Many people do not know of the unusual dishes (not often listed on a menu) available in the better restaurants of our cities.⁴⁶⁴

Altogether, Hines was asking the American public to more or less treat the experience of dining outside of the home as they would eating at their home or in the home of a neighbor. Come prepared and come safely, find the place, have manners, ask questions, and relax and be present. Applying such "common sense" from the domestic sphere would keep the social event of restaurant going from devolving into the rushed informality Hines so often decried.

Hines' also asked his readers to "not judge a place by the length of its listing" in his guidebooks.⁴⁶⁵ For instance: "Camden, ARK – Hotel Orlando – I believe you will be well pleased with meals served here."⁴⁶⁶ In contrast to this listing, also in the same state: "Jonesboro, ARK – Hotel Noble – A good dinner in this small town – the center of Arkansas' rice fields. There's one dish in particular – a chicken-cheese concoction – that's good. Maybe they will give you some Susie Q potatoes. Air-conditioned and the menus are so entertaining that you'll read them from 'kiver to

⁴⁶⁴ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 54, 224, 231. 1954, unknown ed.. Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 17.

⁴⁶⁵ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, x. 1941, 8th ed

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

kiver."⁴⁶⁷ Motorists were asked to trust Hines' authority when he is succinct, and be enticed when his descriptions are detailed or otherwise notable in style. "Whether our means enable us to travel without cramping our style or whether we must make out travel dollars carry us as far as they will, we all want value received for what we spend," and Hines' shorthand was a practical way to ensure that.⁴⁶⁸ Relying on him simplified the consumers' decision-making process, smoothing the road to food for motorists.

Hines was found of paraphrasing and rephrasing the classic gastronomic idea, expressed in Latin, *de gustibus non disputandum est*.⁴⁶⁹ For example, to him "taste is a very personal matter;" "simply a matter of taste;" "each of us is a gourmet in his own way, and truly, there's no accounting for tastes;" "tastes being as individual as they are."⁴⁷⁰ The causes of Hines' tastes were many and can be accounted for. First, the social and material history of automobility was the setting that empowers his knowledge. Second, his authority in the context of early 20th century consumerism gave his knowledge value for exchange and application. Also, his geographic outlook pushed to cover America in all areas, a project greatly aided by the consumption community that helped him research the taste of the United States. Hines' perception

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., 26.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., 76.

⁴⁶⁹ This maxim is commonly translated as "there is no accounting for taste" and interpreted to mean that there is no way to explain each person's taste preferences. Instead, they just are the way they are, idiosyncratic and therefore presumed to be inexplicable.

⁴⁷⁰ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 60, 167, 246, 247.

of these places, and thus their food, was partly shaped by the "gaze" of America he possessed as he traveled mentally and physically.⁴⁷¹

Hines' perspective is also influenced by his memories of growing up in late 19th century rural Kentucky and, later, his daily adult life spent alternating between having a seat at a dining table or a foot on a gas pedal. His memoir particularly highlighted the impression left by his rural childhood and the formative experience of eating at Harvey House restaurants during his young adulthood.⁴⁷² These foundations for Hines' gastronomy fit "a strong current in the imagination of the geographies of modern consumption" that involves "the nostalgic narrative construction of previously comparatively differentiated culture areas falling victim to homogenisation through increasingly global commodity flow and consequent standardisations of consumption practices."⁴⁷³ Nostalgia for his childhood eating instilled a drive for authenticity, highlighting the strong connections between experience, memory, and the judgments of what foods are and are not bona fide.⁴⁷⁴ This admixture pushed him to employ personalized versions of the discourse of the "authentic" in deciding on the inclusion of a restaurant in his guidebook, the highlighting of a particular food at such establishments, and the organization of such foods and places into categories by region/culture. His fond memories of eating locally grown foods at the leisurely pace

⁴⁷¹ John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (New York: Sage Publications, 1990). For the purpose of my analysis, it is important to note that according to Urry the gaze "varies by society, by social group, and by historical period" and, thus, are plural and "are constructed through difference." (1)

⁴⁷² Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 1-13, 16.

⁴⁷³ Crang, "Displacement, Consumption, and Identity," 48.

⁴⁷⁴ Sharon Hudgins, "In the Eye of the Beholder, on the Tongue of the Taster: What Constitutes Culinary Authenticity?," in *Authenticity in the Kitchen: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2005*, ed. Richard Hosking (Devon, U.K.: Prospect Books, 2006), 238-239.

of a Southern family dinner inspired him to push against trends that would obscure or otherwise erase such habits from roadside dining. He did admit that, "Grandma's cooking, seen through a screen of nostalgia and remembered with a youngster's appetite, is better in retrospect than it was in actuality."⁴⁷⁵ But he also refused to let go of the types of dishes she served, most often those that were slow to make, comprised of local and seasonal ingredients, prepared as plentiful and hearty as possible to fuel hard manual labor, and served to people who expect their dining experience to be organized by values of commensality, and not the alacrity and other rude habits of modernity.⁴⁷⁶ Yet, Hines' view was not so singular and idiosyncratic to his experience and worldview. Simon Bronner contends that folk things – which include food and foodways – are commonly perceived in this way. He argues that, "in America, it is common to mythologize the virtues of community, spirituality, and austerity, while goals of obtaining individuality, property, and wealth seem greater than ever."⁴⁷⁷ Furthermore, these myths are most often attached to the simple products of a community, most often rural and "close to the land," that serve as reminders of greater values and practices being lost in the fast dash of modernity.

Between excerpts from letters to him written by appreciative fans of his work, on almost every single page of his guidebooks were also *bon mots*, some of which have been discussed above. Arguably the most common were varied phrasings of his complaint that Americans eat too fast, that they "bolt it and beat it." Surveying the

⁴⁷⁵ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 245.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 243-245.

⁴⁷⁷ Simon J. Bronner, *Grasping Things: Folk Material Culture and Mass Society in America* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 215.

trends around him, Hines believed that more and more often “the American wants his food in a hurry,” so restaurateurs respond in kind, and thus “efficiency has been served, but the appetite has been insulted.”⁴⁷⁸ As argued in Chapter 1, efficiency in the speed of both preparation and consumption was indeed a dominant historical trend in serving food to the American public in the early 20th century. Warren Belasco argues the reason and results of this trend are the intertwining of the social and the commercial:

It is an irony of modern travel that those who flee off the beaten track often beat a path for those they flee.... [since] an economy increasingly reliant on the consumption of leisure requires an expanding consumer base. But democratization and expansion inevitably change the travel experience. With numbers comes a specialized tourist infrastructure to control, service, and exploit the increased flow.⁴⁷⁹

What started out before World War I as an adolescent infatuation, a passionate celebration of fresh experiences and unprecedented intimacies, developed by 1940 into a tamer, more restricted concern for comfort, efficiency, security, and privacy.⁴⁸⁰

John Jakle agrees, arguing that "standardization was the earmark of the maturing age of the automobile travel," as do other scholars of American roads and roadsides.⁴⁸¹

Harvey Levenstein's narration of early 20th century food habits also concurs, as "the nationalization of food habits was reflected in restaurant fare as well, and regional

⁴⁷⁸ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 80, 84.

⁴⁷⁹ Belasco, *Americans on the Road*, 71.

⁴⁸⁰ Warren J. Belasco, "Commercialized Nostalgia: The Origins of the Roadside Strip," in *The Automobile and American Culture*, ed. David L. Lewis and Laurence Goldstein (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 105.

⁴⁸¹ Jakle, *The Tourist*, 197.; On the standardization of the roadside, see Raitz, "American Roads, Roadside America."; Pillsbury, *From Boarding House to Bistro.*; Seiler, "African American Automobility and Cold-War Liberalism," 1110-1111.

cuisine was given short shrift in this booming industry."⁴⁸² Hines' authority and knowledge as a motorists' guide were thus fighting a losing battle by the time the Federal Highway Act of 1956 ushered in the fully modern era of automobility.

An outcome of the standardization of American roads, Hines felt that "one of the saddest facts about the national scene is that highway inns have become increasingly citified – many of them have abandoned regional dishes in order to serve the patron" from a stock menu.⁴⁸³ As a result, "my travels have taught me that it is not the big, high-priced hotel dining rooms or the swanky city cafés that serve the most memorable foods, but the wayside places whose owners have enough imagination to feature the products of the area."⁴⁸⁴ To Hines, the missed opportunities were not only the fault of the producers of food along American roads but consumers as well. In their rush to "beat it and bolt it" they sped by the delightful variety and uniquely American places and foods around them. Hines would agree that automobility "provided an important means by which the complex world could be simplified and understood in its innerconnectedness;" yet, the increasingly standardized roads and roadsides created a regularized driving experience, and thus "effortless adventure diminished diligence in geographical awareness."⁴⁸⁵ If it is assumed that "the individualized mobility of the car transformed the space of pleasure – privatizing while extending and homogenizing it," then Hines gastronomy never had a chance to

⁴⁸² Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 170.

⁴⁸³ MacKaye, "Where Shall We Stop for Dinner?," 81.

⁴⁸⁴ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 100.

⁴⁸⁵ Jakle, *The Tourist*, 301, 307.

take hold during his lifetime.⁴⁸⁶ Yet, it is possible to see Hines' work as a push against this rising tide of geographic and culinary homogenization. Lucy Long argues that "the mobility, individualism, affluence, and consumerism that characterize American culture have also shaped American foodways" by nurturing "a corresponding increase in nostalgia for place as well as an awareness of distinctions between the various regions and types of place in the United States."⁴⁸⁷ As such, Hines was not just a guide of practical instruction on consuming but also a catalog of the cultural preservation of America.

Amongst theorists, "the dominant position is that tourism should be interpreted as a quest for authenticity."⁴⁸⁸ Hines, like many of his community of motorists and affluent consumers, saw America through the tourist gaze and was thus highly concerned with American gastronomy being authentic. Yet, because of the trend of standardization discussed above, his examples of authenticity were odd products of remote locations: "some of the best dishes... were served in obscure spots seldom found by travelers other than truck drivers."⁴⁸⁹ The perception of which places and foods were demonstrating regionality and authenticity were then outcomes of the combination of chance and creativity. For example, fiddlehead ferns and lobsters were authentic, regional, and simple to Hines – and thus a potent symbol of American

⁴⁸⁶ Cross, *An All-Consuming Century*, 60.

⁴⁸⁷ Lucy M. Long, "Introduction," in *Culinary Tourism*, ed. Lucy M. Long (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004), 13.

⁴⁸⁸ Chris Rojek, and John Urry, "Transformations of Travel and Theory," in *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*, ed. Chris Rojek and John Urry (New York: Routledge, 1997), 11.

⁴⁸⁹ Taylor, "America's Gastronomic Guide," 13.

gastronomy – and yet people as local to Maine as these foods did not serve, consume, or extol them. In the least, though, Hines' views helped independent and idiosyncratic businesses stay open: "Hines delights in inducing motorists to detour from main traveled highways to find exceptional inns tucked away in mills or barns or distinctive old homes. His books have made it possible for scores of meritorious inns to prosper in delightful out-of-the-way settings."⁴⁹⁰ Richard Collin explains that the famed Michelin restaurants guides, *the* blueprint for Hines' work, were also formed by the same set of social and material influences but in a different country. Like Hines, the infamous authority behind the Michelin publications, "Curnonsky, the first writer to bring the automobile and food together, made French regional cuisine as famous as Paris's national cuisine."⁴⁹¹ As such, the convergence of modern consumption and automobility can be conceived as instrumental in the association of the process of rediscovering geography with the creation of modern gastronomy.⁴⁹²

David Bell and Gil Valentine suggest that, "food and the nation are so commingled in popular discourses that it is often difficult *not* to think one through the other."⁴⁹³ Hines' gastronomy attested to this idea, for "at its best I think American cookery the best in the world. In flavor, in balance, in all around general satisfaction."⁴⁹⁴ He came to this conclusion by recognizing the greatness around him: "I'm no gourmet, and it doesn't take one to enjoy the adventure of discovering

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 16.

⁴⁹¹ Collin, "Gastronomy in American Society," 54.

⁴⁹² Anne-Mette Hjalager, and Greg Richards, ed., *Tourism and Gastronomy* (London: Routledge, 2002).

⁴⁹³ Bell, *Consuming Geographies*, 168. Author's italics.

⁴⁹⁴ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, 152. 1941, 8th ed.

outstanding foods by the wayside. All I've had to do is be appreciative."⁴⁹⁵ His memoir cited the origin of his appreciative outlook in the blessing of the awesome bounty and quality of food, a fact that he thought was completely unique to the land and history of America and made possible by our vaunted mobility, all long-standing discourses/practices of America and its food.⁴⁹⁶ In light of the above, Harvey Levenstein's judgment that Hines was the best illustration of mid-century America's culinary "national provincialism" is fair.⁴⁹⁷ Hines' self-professed personal goal was "to see as much of America as possible, to test its outstanding food, to meet interesting people along the way."⁴⁹⁸ His goal for the American public was to present a simplified picture of American food and place to assist their motoring and consuming. He guided people like would a map, an authority to be referenced for objective information. He also educated and judged like a critic, using his authority to circulate perceptions. He made places and their meanings concurrent to judging foods and conceiving foodways as the best, and thus the most true, of America or not.

As a salesman of authentic American food and a guide to physically finding it, Hines followed the trend in American consumer culture to further the discourses and practices of nationalism through recommending commodities that symbolize it. Charles McGovern has shown that in the early 20th century, "through constant assertions that their products were part of a specifically American mode of living,

⁴⁹⁵ Hines, "How to Find a Decent Meal," 100.

⁴⁹⁶ Hines, *Duncan Hines' Food Odyssey*, 239.; Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 110-111.

⁴⁹⁷ Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 125.

⁴⁹⁸ Hines, *Adventures in Good Eating*, vii. 1941, 8th ed.

advertisers forged powerful links among consumption, nationality, and culture,"⁴⁹⁹ presenting and inventing American traditions in the "persistent depiction of consumption as the characteristic folkway of true Americans."⁴⁹⁹ Moreover, "tradition is a vital element in culture; but it has little to do with the mere persistence of old forms. It has much more to do with the way elements have been linked together or articulated."⁵⁰⁰ For example, discourses of colonial history, Christianity, gender, family, sport, and others have convened to support the linking of food and nation in the imagining and enacting the preeminent American food tradition, Thanksgiving.⁵⁰¹ With regards to Hines, he promoted cultural nationalism via consumption by articulating supposedly all-American regionalism, simplicity, and practical manners, and advocating them to the American public through the millions of books he sold as well as the score of articles about him in nationally circulating magazines.

David Bell and Gil Valentine also postulate that, "if, as Benedict Anderson has famously proclaimed, the nation is an 'imagined community', then the nation's diet is a feast of imagined commensality."⁵⁰² While Hines organized his gastronomy into categories that built upon distinguishing geographies by producing knowledge about them, despite their differences Hines attempted to synthesize regions and their foodways into an American whole. If an area cooked with what was local and seasonal, preparing it simply and authentically, then that place had fallen in line with

⁴⁹⁹ McGovern, "Consumption and Citizenship in the United States, 1900-1940," 48.

⁵⁰⁰ Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'," 450.

⁵⁰¹ Janet Siskind, "The Invention of Thanksgiving: A Ritual of American Nationality," *Critique of Anthropology* 12. 2 (1992).

⁵⁰² Bell, *Consuming Geographies*, 169.

his formulation of American gastronomy. As Hines ascribed the material, social, and cultural differences between Massachusetts and Hawaii, or Alabama and California, he constituted not only these regions as separate but links them as syntagms of the nation. Motoring across space, the roads connected together while identifying as unique each area as place. In fact, it was their place-ness that made them American, so long as the place performed its authentic identity according to principles of regionality, simplicity, and practicality.

Sidney Mintz argues against overarching, synthesizing definitions of American cuisine as found in Duncan Hines' gastronomy. He feels that attempts to collect regional cuisines and present them as constituting American cuisine when drawn together are false since "variety does not equal a cuisine, and is not the same as a cuisine," for "*regional* cuisines [are] the only 'real' cuisines, anyways," and thus "national cuisines are not cuisines in the same sense."⁵⁰³ National cuisines are not cuisines because he does

not see how a cuisine can exist unless there is a community of people who eat it, cook it, have opinions about it, and engage in dialogue involving those opinions. This is not to say that people cannot debate the merits of various restaurant renderings... but that is not the same as having a cuisine.⁵⁰⁴

Mintz assumes that such a community can only be of intimate neighbors in non-commercial settings, American who live in the same geographically restricted social and material context. Similar to Hines, Mintz believes the combination of food and foodways that make a cuisine comes from the nexus of regionality, seasonality, and

⁵⁰³ Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*, 112. Author's italics.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 117.

the influence of groups (ethnic, etc.) on the products of those two cultural-agricultural perspectives. Hence, Mintz suggests it is not "that I object to the *idea* of an American cuisine... I only think it is impossible now to create one."⁵⁰⁵

The work of Duncan Hines was an attempt to start the community-based discussion that, in Mintz's definition, is constitutive of cuisine. Instead of a community bound by place and shared culture, and unadulterated by commerce, Hines attempted to organize a consumption community that by sharing in automobility and the consumers' republic would thus share similar social and material relationships to American foods and foodways. His gastronomic principles pulled together not only America but Americans from different places going to different places, as well. These ideals were mobilized, materially and socially, to advance an idea of an American cuisine defined by Hines' perception of the similarities across the differences it contains, a whole made by the sum of its parts.

What is American food, the best and most exemplary of the nation? "Of the items on any serious list, nearly all of the dishes would be assignable to regional cuisines, which is as it should be: all so-called national cuisines take from regional cuisines," says Mintz.⁵⁰⁶ In a practical sense, yes, a national cuisine cannot develop over a territory that stretches across such geographic, cultural, and many other differences. Yet, a national cuisine has always existed in the realm of the ideal, which is where it is first conceived and finds its continuation despite impediments. If instead of the common paraphrase of Brillat-Savarin that "you are what you eat" we assume

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 133.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., 114.

that "you are where you eat," then Duncan Hines' American gastronomy shows that when in the 1930s to 1950s American motorists followed his guide they consumed via his geographical imagination. Sharing these ideals could begin the process by which the nation could share a table and a cuisine.

Coda

Hines' democratic palate established a detailed inventory of American restaurants and a measure of the cultivated American palate.⁵⁰⁷

– Richard Collin

People who learn our tastes and can recommend on a personal level are incredibly valuable. These agents of selection – people who serve as arbiters of "good" taste – are a requirement no matter where or what one consumes. There is some definite value that comes from middlemen.⁵⁰⁸

– Evan Hansen

Walking into a liquor store, your pupils dilate and your chest heaves a sigh as the problem arises: hundreds of bottles of wine to choose from, with labels in a mish-mash of English and Romance languages, categorized in unheard of and unpronounceable regions, organized by arcane agricultural commodity classification systems, described in a blur of overblown adjectives, near-pornographic adverbs, and pretentious metaphors, wrapped in labels designed in either fancy fonts of Old World authenticity and the weight of tradition or glossy multi-colored abstract art redolent of modern marketing. Which wine to choose? The labels are too much information with no discernible pattern or principle beyond their fussy surfaces. You cannot taste their contents and the two employees staffing the store are busy handling the register and the stock room. The prices are too high to justify risking a barely educated guess on a bottle. But, thankfully, under some of the multitude of choices are pieces of paper that simply say, "Wine Advocate: 94." Concise, seemingly coherent, posing expertise, and patterned on the well-known American educational grading system. The wine is an "A" and a knowledgeable critic says so. The sign is a heuristic, and an exceedingly

⁵⁰⁷ Collin, "Gastronomy in American Society," 55.

⁵⁰⁸ Personal conversation, January 9, 2008.

simple one, but given the situation you are in it is one necessary to guide your decision.

Duncan Hines also exemplifies the concept of necessary heuristics in commodity exchange. He evaluated, organized, and simplified an expanding network of roads, roadsides, regions, and restaurants. In doing so, his work capitalized on the early 20th century material and social contexts of increasing automobility and consumption, speaking through the discourses of his era to espouse knowledge that was made possible by the power and positioning of his identity. A consumer himself, he was actively involved in the same practices as his peers, the motorists in search of the geographic and gastronomic bounty of the United States. In sum, he codified their experience and perspective on places and products, outlining the physical and mental processes by which these should be apprehended and comprehended. The heuristics were his principled guidance through space and commodities, piquing the interest of consumers by performing authority and expertise in order to present his perceptions of the exotic, the nostalgic, and the authentic. The heuristics were necessary for multiple reasons: the options for hungry motorists were many and growing; the areas visited were often unknown to Americans; and the terms by which both of these phenomena could be understood were not yet developed. Most importantly, Hines' made material and mental shortcuts for consumers, arbitrating to serve their tastes for "good," authentically American food via automobility. Like the sign in the liquor store pointing the consumer to quality goods, Hines guided hungry Americans by literally making physical signs along the roadside and culturally developing

discursive signs in print media that both led to "authentic" American places and foods.

Setting the terms of consumption is a prime way of influencing taste. Yet, as historian Neil Harris notes, there is much more involved in the process:

Now what was public taste? Although rarely specified, it seems probable that the notion meant then, and means now, the aesthetic knowledgeability, experience, and preferences of the entire population. But because taste involves some kind of expression, the population can be divided, by transaction, into three separate groups: producers, sellers, and consumers. Together they make up the national marketplace. Influencing public taste, therefore, means increasing knowledge, expanding experience, and shaping preference for all or some of these groups.⁵⁰⁹

In the case of Duncan Hines, selling hundreds of thousands of books, appearing in dozens of articles, hanging his "Recommended by Duncan Hines" signs in front of restaurants, and eventually having a multi-million dollar brand of goods were avenues through which he circulated his authority. Furthermore, by recommending specific restaurants' foods as well as larger relationships to foodways Hines shaped the eating habits of Americans in both discourse and practice. Through all of this activity, he assuredly attempted to raise the amount of knowledge, widen the experience, and sway the preferences of Americans. As his peer in food writing, Clementine Paddleford, declared, "his main purpose behind all this is to raise the standard of U.S. eating."⁵¹⁰ As a middleman in the exchange of commodities he did measure and inventory for the growing crowd of motorists and entrepreneurs he set out to serve.

⁵⁰⁹ Neil Harris, *Cultural Excursions: Marketing Appetites and Cultural Tastes in Modern America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 57.

⁵¹⁰ Paddleford, "60,000 Miles of Eating," 24.

He thought he was raising the standards of consumers and producers alike, a process that, like Harris' conception of taste, carries more ideas and practices in it than the surface belies. The standards of taste involved much more than evaluating flavors on a plate.

Hines' *Adventures in Good Eating* did more than ease the decision-making of American consumers in their automobiles. Through them he also articulated discourses and attached them to the mundane operations of driving and eating, making these everyday occurrences reflective of larger ideals. Hines' work thus functioned in ways strikingly similar to how Arjun Appadurai conceives of cookbooks:

Cookbooks, which usually belong to the humble literature of complex civilizations, tell unusual cultural tales. They combine the sturdy pragmatic virtues of all manuals with the vicarious pleasures of the literature of the senses.... [They are] an effort on the part of some variety of specialist to standardize the regime of the kitchen, to transmit culinary lore, and to publicize particular traditions guiding the journey of food from marketplace to kitchen to table. Insofar as cookbooks reflect the kind of technical and cultural elaboration we grace with the term *cuisine*, they are likely, as Jack Goody has recently argue, to be representations not only of structures of production and distribution and of social and cosmological schemes, but of class and hierarchy.⁵¹¹

Automobility and liberty, consumption and civic republicanism, regionality and nationalism, and food and gender roles were some of the intertwined discourses enunciated in Hines' practical and ruminative recommendations. Appadurai further argues that cookbooks in India, much like Hines' gastronomy, created a national

⁵¹¹ Arjun Appadurai, "How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30. 1 (1988): 3. Author's italics.

cuisine by synthesizing disparate regions and practices through the creative destruction of tradition with the goal of forming an overarching framework of national authenticity. Just like Hines' work, these cookbooks created an "interplay of regional inflection and national standardization" that "reflects and reifies an emerging culinary cosmopolitanism" while also seeking "to resolve shortages of time and money" through new technology and more knowledge.⁵¹² As a transnational practice, Appadurai notes that cookbooks "are fueled by the spread of print media and the cultural rise of the new middle classes" seeking educational texts on food: so too with Hines' guidebooks.⁵¹³

Moreover, Duncan Hines also attempted to make a whole out of differences, mythologizing and evaluating in the process of expressing his ideas of the all-American practices and principles of all-American food as perceived through the windshield of an automobile and the experience of the hungry visitor. With New England as his symbol, Hines' writing set out "to inflate and reify an historically special tradition and make it serve, metonymously, for the whole."⁵¹⁴ Americans consumed all of these ideals when they consulted the heuristics of an authority's recommendation out of a necessity bred by real and perceived constraints on knowledge and time. More importantly, they turned ideals into material practice by consuming commodities that fitted the "daily life rhythm" prescribed to them by changes in the geography and technology of work, home, and leisure. As

⁵¹² Ibid.: 6, 7, 8.

⁵¹³ Ibid.: 5.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.: 18-19.

representative of the trends of the era, Hines' shows how eating outside of the home, gazing at the other while touring, and doing both by the speed of the automobile support David Harvey's contention that "[t]ime and space both get defined through the organization of social practices fundamental to commodity production."⁵¹⁵

There has been a recent increase in publications on the influence on American foodways of the culinary tastemakers James Beard, Craig Claiborne, Julia Child, and Alice Waters.⁵¹⁶ In particular, David Kamp's book focuses on these critics and cooks to find out "how food in America got better, and how it hopped the fence from the ghettos of home economics and snobby gourmandism to the expansive realm of popular culture."⁵¹⁷ My work on Duncan Hines is not just an attempt to further populate this list of tastemakers with someone from the culinary dark ages of mid-century mass consumption. Moreover, it is *not* a judgment of whether foods, foodways, and gastronomic opinions are "better" or worst at one point in history versus another. What I do believe is that Duncan Hines is a convenient figure through which to open up new historiographical avenues on the popular culture of food in America, especially perspectives that shift the predominant view of the 'gray days' before the 1960s. As social historian Harvey Levenstein argues, it is only in that decade that Americans developed an interest in regional, ethnic, and seasonal foods as the counterculture and the rise of multimedia celebrity chefs enlivened our gustatory imagination beyond the mid-century decades narrated as having only consisted of

⁵¹⁵ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990), 239.

⁵¹⁶ On some of these leading figures, see Kamp, *The United States of Arugula.*; Brenner, *American Appetite.*; O'Neill, "Food Porn."

⁵¹⁷ Kamp, *The United States of Arugula*, xv.

frozen, pre-packaged, convenient, and bland food.⁵¹⁸ Levenstein employs this generalization about the food of the 1930s to 1950s to frame Hines as representative of the "sorry state of gastronomy" of this period.⁵¹⁹ The charges leveled against Hines are that of culinary "national provincialism" that encouraged "customers' conservatism... the product of the timidity that came from an ignorance about food."⁵²⁰

That Hines helped "American cooking [be] included in the postwar era's celebration of the country's greatness" is not disputed.⁵²¹ Yet, it is erroneous to overlook the fact that he was trying to champion the diversity of American foodways, advocate fresh and local food, and shake people out of their comfort zones to at least begin, tentatively, to explore and appreciate the unique results of the cultural nexus of place, people, and products – and doing so ahead of the post-1960s shifts to these ideas and practices. My purpose here is not to argue an apologia or narrate a hagiography for Hines: his outlook is riddled with myths and projected an ideology concomitant to his white privilege, and he was oblivious to the power he possessed and wielded as a white motorist, affluent consumer, and cultural authority. Instead, the point is that gastronomy should be analyzed in its context of time and space *in relation to* how it was expressed in that context's articulation of discourses and choice of available practices. As shown in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, Hines should be seen as both playing into as well as resisting the dominant culture of his era, displaying the

⁵¹⁸ Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 213-226.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 125, 127.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 124.

"double stake in popular culture, the double movement of containment and resistance, which is always inevitably inside it."⁵²²

Levenstein believes that through the middle of the 20th century "regional cuisine was preserved best, not in roadside stands or in daily meals at home, but in the communal eating festivals that were still a hallmark of small-town America."⁵²³ Since the home and the roadside were Hines preferred locations for the performance of authentic regionality it makes sense, given the historical judgment quoted above, that Levenstein would dismiss Hines as a shill for corporate chains, a gastronomic simpleton, a macho booster of America, and a sanitation-obsessed bourgeois bore that iconically "represented the general mediocrity of the American restaurant-going experience" before the 1960s.⁵²⁴ Hines is viewed as too national rather than local, commercial rather counter-hegemonic, modern rather than traditional. Rather than illuminating Hines multifaceted role in American food, these views relegate him to the category of the "sorry," written off as unfortunate in taste instead of analyzed as important in history. Whether or not we personally like him or the foodways of which he is constructed as the representative should have little bearing on conceiving his significance.

Levenstein's perspective also reveals his unstated assumption that, as in the definition from Sidney Mintz, "a genuine cuisine has common social roots, it is the food of a community – albeit often a very large community," but never one as

⁵²² Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'," 443.

⁵²³ Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, 41.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, 45-52. Quote on 45.

geographically diffuse and corrupted by commerce as the community of motorists.⁵²⁵

The cuisine outlined by Hines' gastronomy and guidance is judged as not legitimate because it is constituted through the discourses and practices of automobility and the consumers' republic. Yet, if a "cuisine requires a population that eats with sufficient frequency to consider themselves experts on it," and "they all believe, and *care* that they believe, that they know what it consists of, how it is made, and how it should taste," then Hines' community definitively fits this definition. That the community was made by and through the social and material networks of modernity does not disqualify them from forming a cuisine. I argue that we must instead frame cuisine as a product of the social and material activities surrounding it as well as the larger discursive flows that inform it, *regardless* of whether the final outcome does not fit the traditional, pre-modern pattern of a foodway being the product of a people bound to a confined space, a singular cultural tradition, and finite agricultural resources. The concept of cuisine should be updated to include how communities and foodways are socially and materially constructed in the modern, post-industrial era.

A cultural studies approach to Hines would, in a Foucauldian sense, archeologically locate him in the historical flow of multiple discourses and practices of America, and not just those solely centered on food. As Stephen Mennell argues in his historical sociology of food in Europe,

Certainly people's cultural tastes and 'needs' are the product of their social experience.... But the social forces which shape the taste of one generation are themselves the products of long-term processes of social development running back many generations. The experience of

⁵²⁵ Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*, 96.

generation cannot be understood with looking back to that of its predecessors. To explain changing tastes, we have to look at the matter historically.⁵²⁶

The current culinary obsession with regional and ethnic foodways as well as local and seasonal foods and their cultures find a predecessor in Hines.⁵²⁷ The search for authentic American food is ongoing and, as of yet, still debated, begging the question of whether Sidney Mintz's definition of cuisine as that which is argued in a community has been met.⁵²⁸ The nostalgic longing for simplicity and tradition also persists, fanning the flames of the discourses of geography and authenticity.⁵²⁹ The fast food phenomenon also finds an origin in the work of and larger history surrounding Hines, for therein is a major root of Americans eating outside of the home via the automobile.⁵³⁰ Also, Hines adds another example of how the emergence

⁵²⁶ Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present*, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 15.

⁵²⁷ The number of recent publications professing these principles are too many to list. For the leader of this phenomena, and an entry way into the vast scholarly and public literature on these discourses and practices, see the pronouncements of the organization Slow Food International and the restaurateur Alice Waters.

⁵²⁸ See Betty Fussell, *I Hear America Cooking: The Cooks and Recipes of American Regional Cuisine* (New York: Penguin, 1997).; John L. and Karen Hess Hess, *The Taste of America* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000).; Jane and Michael Stern Stern, *Roadfood: Eat Your Way across the USA* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997). Like Hines, the Sterns investigate restaurants by automobile, judging authenticity through a similar framework of regional authenticity and homey simplicity, and publishing nearly twenty volumes of their opinion.

⁵²⁹ For an impressive synthesis and analysis of the persistence of the discourse and practice of nostalgia with regards to food, called "culinary Luddism," see Rachel Laudan, "A World of Inauthentic Cuisine" (paper presented at the Symposium on Cultural and Historical Aspects of Foods: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, Corvallis, Oregon, April 9-11 1999). On the two millenia-old discourse of simplicity in food, see Michael Symons, "Simplicity," in *Proceedings of the Eighth Symposium of Australian Gastronomy*, ed. Jennifer Hillier Barbara Santich, and Catherine Kerry (Adelaide: 1996). On the discourse of rooting of food's authenticity in region, season, and tradition, see Jennifer Hillier, "Authenticity," in *Proceedings of the Eighth Symposium of Australian Gastronomy*, ed. Jennifer Hillier Barbara Santich, and Catherine Kerry (Adelaide: 1996).

⁵³⁰ For an opening into the expanding literature on fast food, see Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* (New York: Harper, 2005).

of restaurant critics has repeatedly coincided with the emergence of popular cultures of eating out.⁵³¹

Focusing on a critic like Hines also opens up avenues to analyze the consequences of consumption. The ethics of criticism become more than a parlor game of lofty rhetoric and abstract aesthetics when you focus on an authority who so dominating a field of culture. Hines had such a profound effect on his field of roadside dining not just because he was deemed knowledgeable, but because he was *the only* critic of such things in his lifetime. While having some competition in expertly judging and recommending his chosen food commodity, Robert Parker, the origin of the "Wine Advocate" sign mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, has thoroughly dominated the field of wine criticism for the past 25 years. In doing so he has made some wine producers go bankrupt and turned others into millionaires literally overnight by publishing the numerical version of his personal tastes in compendiums eerily similar to Hines' guidebooks.⁵³² As a critical documentary on Robert Parker argues, there is a serious ethical component to criticism that many critics are at best blithe to and at worst actively deny behind a fortress built on their supposed neutral objectivity, the right to exercise freedom of speech, and the

⁵³¹ See "Of Gastronomes and Guides" in Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 266-290. Furthermore, Rebecca Spang's manuscript, *The Invention of the Restaurant*, could have been titled "The Invention of the Restaurant Critic," for these phenomena are presented as concomitant in her narrative.

⁵³² On Parker's penchant for evaluating wine on "objective" principles of taste, geographical knowledge, and perceptions of value versus authenticity just like Duncan Hines, as well as his tremendous and constantly extending power over the wine industry, see McCoy, *The Emperor of Wine: The Rise of Robert M. Parker, Jr. And the Reign of American Taste.*; William Echikson, *Noble Rot: A Bordeaux Wine Revolution* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 89-110.

sovereignty of consumer's demands over the terms and processes of commodity exchange.⁵³³

As many scholars of consumption have contended, Daniel Miller reminds us that purchasing is an act that goes beyond the self, as "today it is the process of consumption itself that must be engaged, through an act of self-revelation, into taking responsibility for the power that it wields without consciousness, and therefore largely without responsibility."⁵³⁴ Furthermore, beyond the practice of consumption, the discourse of consumption also brings with it questions of consequence and morality. Robert Sack thinks that "agents, especially powerful ones, must be responsible, and that means they must know the consequences of their actions," which will happen by "tracing, through geographical space and time, the effects of our actions on nature, meaning, and social relations."⁵³⁵ Currently, and to name only a few, efforts like tracking food-miles and the regulation and certification of food's organic and fair-trade status have begun this connection between materiality and morality. To examine the making and guiding of taste is to begin to press on figures of such cultural authority to more fully comprehend the social role of their descriptions and material ramifications of their prescriptions. Evaluating a commodity and using it to represent a culture and its locale has real effects – a critic's words are not mere ink on a page but tools in commodity exchange. They are judgments used by

⁵³³ Jonathan Nossiter, "Mondovino," (2004). Absolutely central to the dispute over Parker, as presented by Nossiter, is his power over the terms of the cultural geography of wine and their economic effects, specifically the recasting of *terroir* to meet the strictures of rapacious American consumers' strictures on aesthetics, space, and time.

⁵³⁴ Miller, "Consumption as the Vanguard of History," 19.

⁵³⁵ Sack, *Place, Modernity, and the Consumer's World*, 22.

consumers to actively discriminate between products to then favor certain products over others, which, when viewed in aggregate, can dramatically shape the material and social environments.

The critical utterances of cultural authorities are also discursive formations infused with ideologies that reify, disseminate, and make active the structures of power, inequality, and difference wrapped into material objects by the culture around them. Following this back through the commodity chain, the exclusion or inclusion in an expert's pantheon, the binary of either being inscribed in the almanac or excluded to non-existence, makes or breaks the financial and cultural livelihood of the peoples and places from which the commodity originates. As many a restaurateur attested in the 1930s to 1950s, "being a member of the Duncan Hines Family means a chance to stay in business, thanks to the customers who place an almost blind faith in the Duncan Hines endorsement sign."⁵³⁶

⁵³⁶ Larsh, "Duncan Hines," 16.

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