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# Had Feminists Only Thought Of Food: Men's and Women's Relationship with Food, 1963-1981

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HAD FEMINISTS ONLY THOUGHT OF FOOD:  
*Men's and Women's Relationship with Food, 1963-1981*

BY

LAURA CREAN  
MA (Hons), University of Glasgow, 2010

THESIS

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire  
in Partial Fulfilment of  
the Requirements for the Degree of

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in  
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May, 2012

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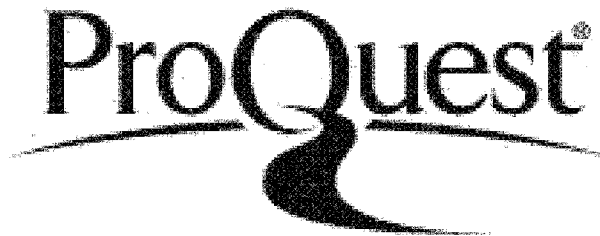


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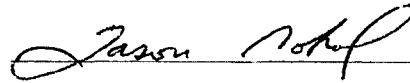
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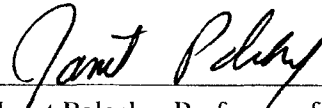
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4 May 2012

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## ABSTRACT

### HAD FEMINISTS ONLY THOUGHT OF FOOD

by

Laura Crean

University of New Hampshire, May, 2012

This thesis explores whether the women's movement changed how men and women interacted with food between 1963 and 1981. Through the examination of popular magazines *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle*, this thesis analyzes articles and advertisements to gauge where there was change. Men's relationship with food did not change. Men continuously cooked only as a hobby, recreating dishes they ate at fine-dining restaurants promoting themselves as connoisseurs. On the other hand, women experienced positive and negative changes as well as stagnation. Sexual liberation allowed women to embrace the sexual connotations of food for the first time in over a century. Yet, women still remained subservient in the home as they kept their role as primary food preparer. Women also experienced an increased pressure on women to control their food consumption in order to be thin by the 1970s. During the first leg of the women's movement, women were somewhat constricted by their relationship with food.

## INTRODUCTION:FOOD AND GENDER IN POPULAR MAGAZINES

When Betty Friedan published the *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, she essentially launched the women's movement in the Western World. By the time Friedan wrote *The Second Stage*, in 1981, there had been numerous successes in the acquisition of women's rights: women were featured in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, increasingly served on juries, and gained advances in reproductive rights and legal protections. Friedan had called for a change in what was expected of women and the options open to them. She expertly called for women to use their energy to fight for more opportunities, which she believed would benefit all of society. She claimed that "when women do not need to live through their husbands and children, men will not fear the love and strength of women, nor need another's weakness to prove their own masculinity. They can finally see each other for what they are. And this may be the next step in human evolution."<sup>1</sup> The women's movement wanted to free half of the human race, allowing them to realize their potential and achieve equality with men. The women's movement addressed many issues between 1963 and 1981, yet, it did not directly address one vital aspect of everyone's basic needs – food.

Despite food's vital role in everyday life, and women's association with the subservient role of food server, food was not something which the feminist movement consciously addressed until Susie Orbach's *Fat is a Feminist Issue* in 1978. Even then, it only brought into question the pressure on women to be thin, not men's and

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<sup>1</sup> Betty Friedan. *The Feminine Mystique* (New York, Norton and Company, Inc., 2001), 512.



women's roles with food on a wider scale. Why was this the case? Why feminists did not address gender associations with food can only be surmised. However, it is likely, as food was such a basic part of their lives, it was simply overlooked as an area of critique. Feminist scholar Sally Cline explained in 2001 that "food is a crucial political area. Women's subordination is locked into food; an issue even feminists have not yet sufficiently investigated."<sup>2</sup> Cline points out because women performed the role of food preparer and server for the majority of the twentieth century (and for centuries before), women assumed a subservient role to men. Women were subordinate to their husbands, taking the role of a servant in a fine household, because they served food. It would have been unusual for men to have helped their partners cook for the family, as men and women experienced food in the mid-twentieth century very differently. Evidence within popular magazines, *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire*, suggests that many women saw cooking as a daily chore to be accepted but one they did not always enjoy. In sharp contrast, men were often encouraged to see food and cooking as a hobby, having their own signature dish and eating out at gourmet restaurants.

Using Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* and *The Second Stage* as benchmarks, this thesis will explore the relationship men and women had with food between 1963 and 1981. It will explore whether there were any changes as a consequence of the women's movement. Had the women's movement targeted food as it did rights within the workplace, would men and women have reached a higher level of equality by 1981?

Anthropologists have long studied food rules and taboos in order to explain cultural connections to gender, class, and social order. It is a vital aspect of an

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<sup>2</sup> Sally Cline in Sherrie A. Inness, "Introduction: Thinking Food/Thinking Gender" in *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender and Race*, ed. by Sherrie A. Inness, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 6.

individual's sense of self and defines their power both within the home and society. Yet, it is a subject which has been neglected by historians until recently. As the scholar of African-American history Rafia Zafar states, "the simple act of eating cannot be separated from the personal, the literary, or the social. Neither can you remove the preference for, or the preparation of, certain foods from a historical context."<sup>3</sup> What we choose to eat, how we eat it, and who prepares our meals and serves them, are all issues that shape the society we live in and our perception and expectations of it.<sup>4</sup> It should be an important subject of analysis, particularly for historians.

Historians are increasingly recognizing the importance of food to culture and society. The history of food outlets and food production has been investigated by historians such as David Gerard Hogan and Richard Pillsbury. Yet, the relationship of food to gender history has not been extensively explored. Eating disorders, body image, and food's role in national cultures have been the subject of anthropologists' and psychologists' studies for years. Fortunately, historians are now following their lead. Jessamyn Neuhaus in *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking* compares cookbooks directed towards men and women, highlighting how cooking was, and still is, gendered. Labeling cooking as a male hobby meant that men only cooked on special occasions, which helped to define everyday meal preparation as a female duty. Neuhaus contends that men and women had varying expectations of food as their appetites and cookery skills differed as a result of the expectations reflected and reinforced through cookbooks. By examining cookbooks such as Peg Bracken's *The I Hate to Cook Book* (1960), Neuhaus questions the perception that women enjoyed

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<sup>3</sup>Rafia Zafar, "The Signifying Dish: Autobiography and History in Two Black Women's Cookbooks" in *Food in the USA: A Reader*, ed. by Carole M. Counihan (New York: Routledge, 2002), 259.

<sup>4</sup> Inness, "Introduction: Thinking Food/Thinking Gender," 5.

being in the kitchen. As Bracken's book suggests, some women did not enjoy cooking but learned to cook anyway; it was their duty. From the popularity of the book, Neuhaus argues that the ideal of women's natural place was in the kitchen did not hold true for many women.<sup>5</sup> Neuhaus looks at the period 1796 - 1963. Ending her analysis in 1963, Neuhaus neglects to examine whether these gender expectations were upheld when women were calling for change. Did the women who did not enjoy cooking and reluctantly cooked the family meals manage to be liberated from these duties by the women's movement? Neuhaus does not look far enough into the 1960s and 1970s to discover any change, leaving a key issue unexplored. Historians' lack of interest in food during the women's movement makes this thesis unique; this thesis explores what the women's movement meant for men and women's relationship with food.

Neuhaus explores the idea that men cooked as a hobby whereas women cooked for the everyday feeding of her family in her article "Is Meatloaf for Men? Gender and Meatloaf Recipes, 1920 - 1960." Neuhaus demonstrates that men cooked as a hobby, tending to prepare gourmet food or recipes, whereas women cooked regularly in order to feed their families. This idea is clearly seen within magazines *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle*, the main sources used in this thesis. *Esquire* encouraged men to indulge in fine-dining and to recreate the dishes they ate there at home. On the other hand, *Mademoiselle* supplied women with nutritional information and recipes which were easy and quick to prepare, indicating that women were the primary food preparers. Women were expected to be concerned about supplying themselves and their families with good food and on a daily basis, hence the recipes which were "quick and easy" to make. Women were not encouraged to take their time

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<sup>5</sup>Jessamyn Neuhaus, *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2003).

cooking and to enjoy their food in the same way men were.<sup>6</sup>Neuhaus' analysis set a benchmark by looking at cookbooks for both men and women. She was one of the first historians to explicitly look at men's and women's relationship with food preparation side by side. But Neuhaus' analysis of cookbooks is not enough. By looking at popular magazines this thesis explores how society on a wider scale perceived how men and women should interact with food. Looking at popular magazines provides insight into how men and women who did not necessarily take an interest in cooking were interacting with food. Relying on cookbooks alone is just examining men and women who were interested in cooking; examining popular magazines shows the reflections of society in general. Popular magazines tried to attract readers by including lifestyle articles and what they perceived to be of general interest to the specific gender they were targeting; therefore the inclusion or exclusion of food within the magazines is indicative of gender expectations. Unlike special interest magazines or books on a specific subject, popular magazines produced articles they perceived to be relevant and of interest to the whole of society.

Food advertising helped reinforce images and expectations of men and women's cooking. Katherine Parkin in *Food is Love* studies food advertising in magazines, particularly *Ladies' Home Journal*, and how they reflected, imposed, and shaped women's ideas in regards to food. Parkin argues that food advertisements in women's magazines of the 1950s and 1960s targeted women through six themes, including: love, pleasing men, and sexuality/beauty. Parkin argues that these themes and ideals were not a reflection of society's ideals but an attempt to shape them. Parkin shows the influence advertising could have on society. Parkin explains that as

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<sup>6</sup>Jessamyn Neuhaus, "Is Meatloaf for Men? Gender and Meatloaf Recipes, 1920 – 1960," in *Cooking Lessons: The Politics of Gender and Food*, ed. by Sherrie A. Inness, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, inc., 2001).

there was not much difference between brands, advertisers had to sell something other than the product. This led food advertisers to encourage women to take on the role of homemaker and to show how their products would be the best way to achieve that ideal. Their products would allow women to create a loving and comfortable atmosphere in the home, which would show their families how much they cared for them.<sup>7</sup> However, Parkin neglects to examine men's magazines, which weakens her argument. It is difficult to examine one gender without looking at the other. If Parkin had examined men's magazines throughout the 1950s and 1960s, she may have found similarities and differences, which would help gauge what was specifically expected of women. By comparing the expectations of men and women it is easier to see what societal expectations were. Parkin examined whether food advertising shaped gender expectations, but without contrasting the food advertising directed at women to that which was directed at men it is impossible to see what was specifically targeting women. It is because of the need to contrast men and women's experiences in order to gauge either sex's experiences with food that this thesis looks at both men and women's magazines. Without comparing both *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle* it is hard to gauge any change in regards to how men and women interacted with food.

Kate Kane takes a different approach to Parkin and Neuhaus. Kane, in her article "Who Deserves a Break Today? Fast Food, Cultural Rituals, and Women's Place," analyzes fast food and gender. Kane takes a Marxist approach as she claims that fast food restaurants alienated women. Kane argues that due to fast food restaurants providing food quickly and efficiently from friendly female servers, women became alienated from their role as family feeder. Kane also argues that certain fast food stores are gendered in order to affirm societal expectations of

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<sup>7</sup> Katherine J. Parkin, *Food is Love: Food Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006)

masculinity and femininity. For example McDonald's assumed a homely female role in comparison to Burger King, which assumed a male role. As Burger King used a male noun and emphasized male cooking activities such as broiling and flame-grilling, it clearly targeted male customers. Whereas McDonald's tried to act as a replacement for mother's home-cooked foods by advertising with all female servers and appealing to families with products such as the "Happy Meal."<sup>8</sup> Kane, along with Neuhaus and Parkin, is leading the way in examining food and gender in late twentieth century America. Their contributions help highlight to gender historians that food and gender are linked, therefore food needs to be examined when considering gender history. This thesis will add to their analysis and explore further how messages in popular magazines shaped male and female experiences with food.

Food has to be consumed by all, regardless of class, gender, or religion, which means a food product's potential market spans the whole of society.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the portrayal of food within the media and food advertising plays a significant role in consumers' cultural expectations of food and what role they should play in regards to food. As men's and women's magazines are as much about selling products as entertaining and informing their readers, magazines are the perfect avenue for companies to advertise their products.<sup>10</sup> Articles and columns can also show the relationship men and women had with food can also be seen in the articles and columns. During a period of technological enterprise, magazines became an avenue to sell multiple products and images to both men and women. Due to the power that these magazines had in shaping societal expectations through consumerism, they

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<sup>8</sup> Kate Kane, "Who Deserves a Break Today? Fast Food, Cultural Rituals, and Women's Place," in *Food in the USA: A Reader*, ed. by Carole M. Counihan, (New York: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>9</sup> Parkin, *Food is Love*, 2.

<sup>10</sup> Nancy A. Walker, *Women's Magazines 1940-1960: Gender Roles and the Popular Press*, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1998), 2.

acted as a vital source to gain insight into the expectations of gender between 1963 and 1981. They showed what was expected of men and women during the women's movement and how those expectations were starting to change, including expectations surrounding food. The articles and ads which appear within *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle*, give historians insight into the manner in which men and women interacted with food. They highlight when and how they cooked, what they were eating and where, and what popular culture expected of men and women.

Friedan claimed that in magazines "...the only goal a woman is permitted is the pursuit of a man... women do no work except housework and work to keep their bodies beautiful and to get and keep a man."<sup>11</sup> As Friedan explained, magazines were both reflecting and trying to shape gender expectations throughout the twentieth century. Food magazines only appealed to those already interested in cooking; they reflected whether men or women, or both, had a passion or hobby for food and cooking. As they were targeting a specific group for a specific reason, they did not give real insight into who was preparing what food, where people were eating, and general social perceptions of food. Popular magazines allow insight into general conceptions of how men and women were expected, and did, interact and engage with food. *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* were both popular magazines targeting young men and women throughout the period of 1963-1981. Thus, they serve as effective source material for this thesis. *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle* were selected for this thesis for several reasons, but primarily practical ones. *Esquire* was one of the only male magazines that ran throughout the second half of the twentieth century, and the only one which I had easy access to. *Mademoiselle* was also easily accessible and targeted a similar demographic to *Esquire*. These two popular magazines appealed broadly to

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<sup>11</sup>Friedan. *The Feminine Mystique*, 83.

one gender, so they are able to reflect and shape both the expectations and the realities for each gender in regards to food. They tried to appeal to a broad market and acted as guides on how to be a successful man or woman, so they reflected American society's expectations in regards to food and gender for young professionals.

*Mademoiselle* was first published in 1935 and marketed itself as “the magazine for smart young women.”<sup>12</sup> It was primarily a fashion magazine which targeted younger women of a middle class income, in contrast to the older woman who had more disposable income who read *Vogue*. Initially, the ideal reader of *Mademoiselle* was a woman who began reading the magazine when she was looking to choose a college and a suitable wardrobe for her academic career. Its editors also hoped the magazine would act as a job-guide once she had graduated and serve all her needs until she was married. When she was married they expected that she would favor a magazine such as *Good Housekeeping*. The fact that *Mademoiselle* was targeting single women is clearly indicated by its title. Naming the magazine the French title for single women reinforced the editors' assumption that it was directed at smart, sophisticated, but primarily single women.<sup>13</sup> However, in the late 1950s and early 1960s it appealed to young mothers as well as college students, even including fashion spreads and advice for how to clothe your child.<sup>14</sup> This is perhaps reflective of the generation bubble which Friedan described in *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan described young women of the early 1960s as pitying career women and that those who contributed to magazines wrote about themselves just as “housewives” as they saw that role to be more central to their lives than their careers.<sup>15</sup> With Friedan's help, by the 1970s the emphasis on the housewife was replaced with a stress on the working

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<sup>12</sup>Walker, *Women's Magazines*, 3.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid, 2.

<sup>14</sup>*Mademoiselle*, Pictorial of children's clothes, June 1959.

<sup>15</sup> Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 108.



woman. This continued well into the 1980s. The target demographic always remained the young woman, not appearing to market for women older than in their early thirties.

As *Mademoiselle* targeted younger women, it targeted women who were more likely to be influenced by changes in society. Young women studying at college and graduating during the women's movement had opportunities presented to them that the generation before them did not. They were the generation who were affected by and embraced the many changes occurring in the late twentieth century. The young women of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s helped pioneer changes in work laws, societal expectations, and women's legal rights in such areas as marriage. *Mademoiselle* altered to accommodate these changes within society, suggesting that *Mademoiselle* readers were open and receptive to the change occurring around them. Their desire to keep up with change and embrace it can be seen through the article "Something to Talk About On Campus". The article featured in the August 1967 issue suggested that women should talk about politics, including the group Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The article also questioned whether taking the contraceptive pill was advisable.<sup>16</sup> The inclusion of information about a student group which supported Civil Rights and the contraceptive pill, displays how *Mademoiselle* expected its readers to be aware of current events. In order to reflect the changing times it needed a change in the content of the magazine, mirroring the wants and needs of its readership.

There are several similarities between *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle*. *Esquire* brought out its first publication in 1933, just before *Mademoiselle* emerged. They both targeted a young demographic; *Esquire* also aimed its readership

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<sup>16</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "Something To Talk About On Campus," August 1967.

at young professionals and college students or graduates. Unlike many male magazines, it was not a special interest magazine, but one that catered to men's general interests. Margaret Ferguson saw the lack of general men's magazines in the first half of the twentieth century as a sign that men did not need affirmation of their male role.<sup>17</sup> However, as the mid-twentieth century drew on men started to need general magazines to help assert their masculinity by showing what was expected of prestigious men and how they could achieve this status.

In the early 1960s, both *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* contained fiction and a multitude of advertisements encouraging readers to buy certain products – the men were encouraged to purchase certain alcoholic beverages to create an image of prestige, and women anything from buying the best brassiere to weight-watcher ready meals. By the 1980s, there were a lot more similarities as *Esquire* began to increase its focus on fashion and lifestyle, which *Mademoiselle* had always done. The magazines themselves even recognized the similarities as *Mademoiselle* referred to articles featured in *Esquire*, and for one issue even parodied it.<sup>18</sup> Food featured regularly throughout the 1960s, '70s, and into the early '80s in both *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle*. However, what they featured about food was somewhat different. *Mademoiselle*, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, had numerous articles about quick and easy food preparation and dieting for weight-loss. In contrast, *Esquire* included articles and columns on restaurants and how to recreate fine-dining dishes at home, along with the occasional ad for food products. *Esquire* also had an incredible number of ads for alcoholic beverages and mixers.

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<sup>17</sup> Margaret Ferguson in Walker, *Women's Magazines*, 5.

<sup>18</sup> In *Mademoiselle* September 1980, the column 'The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Sex' referred to an article in *Esquire* celebrating women's muscles. The July 1963 edition of *Mademoiselle* parodied *Esquire* with the help of *Harvard Lampoon*.

The issues of *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle* which were analyzed for this paper were selected as a sample to ensure even coverage of the period between 1963 and 1981. The issues had to be evenly spaced to guarantee noticing any changes in men and women's interaction with food. Issues from at least every three years were selected to analyze and at least three issues per year of each magazine were looked at. The same months were not examined each year to gain a good cross-section of the magazines' contents and to avoid focusing solely on months which may have tended to include more coverage of food. For example, in contemporary magazines January and February have higher amounts of dietary advice due to the high number of individuals who include losing weight in their New Year resolutions. To avoid coming across such tendencies and wrongly assuming that diets were a regular feature in the magazines, random months were selected each year in order to gain a better cross-section. This allows a better understanding of how men and women interacted with food, and what cultural messages they absorbed. The issues of *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* that were analyzed, where possible, were sampled from the same years, in order to make the comparison of change as accurate as possible. The magazines are complemented by data from the questionnaires Betty Friedan conducted on her fellow Smith Graduates while she was researching *The Feminine Mystique*.

This thesis looks to explain how ignoring the issue of food undermined a lot of the changes feminists achieved between *The Feminine Mystique* and *The Second Stage*. It will explore exactly what changed and what stayed the same in men and women's eating and cooking habits, as well as their perception of food during the first ebb of second wave feminism. By analyzing popular magazines and Betty Friedan's questionnaires, it will examine whether the women's movement affected the way men and women interacted with food. The women's movement did not directly address the

issue of food when critiquing women's roles within society or when calling for improvement in women's rights. It will argue that very little changed in regards to women's role as "feeder", which meant they remained subordinate to men within the home. Women remained the primary food preparer whilst men maintained their role as connoisseurs of fine-dining and only cooked as a hobby. This shows that as a consequence of not targeting food, the women's movement did not change woman's role within the home - women were still doing the majority of household chores in the home, even though by the late 1970s it was clear women wanted to share the workload.

However, there was a change in regards to women and dieting for weight-loss, but not a positive one. Between 1963 and 1981 women were being subjected to more pressure to be thin. Both men and women had continuously been encouraged to stay in shape and remain healthy. But by the 1970s there was a surge in dieting advice and dietary supplements in *Mademoiselle*, which suggests that there was an increasing expectation and pressure on women to be thin. Men were subjected to a continuous small number of ads for dietary aids, but it wasn't until the mid-1980s that *Esquire* included articles about fitness. However, men were expected to conform to a certain image physically as well as being expected to take women to the right restaurants, order the right dishes, wear the right clothes and have great parties. Therefore, men and women were continuously pressured to conform to certain images, but women were more exposed to pressure to diet and be thin. Women were also expected to control their body shape differently from men. Men were encouraged to exercise in order to stay in shape, but women were to control their size through the food they ate. Women's bodies were being controlled by the increased expectation that women ought to be thin, and in order for them to become thin they had to consume less food.

Another way in which women's relationship with food changed was through the expression of sexual appetite. Traditionally women had refrained from any sexual connotations as to be seen as sexual was socially unacceptable. As the women's movement led to women's sexual liberation women became more comfortable with expressing their sexuality and this can be seen through their interaction with food. Women were no longer inhibited from using food and their hunger as an expression of their sexual appetite. Through the use of poetry, a search for aphrodisiacs, and ads for recipe books, *Mademoiselle* documented the change in women's use of food as a means to show their sexuality. Men had always been able to show their sexual appetite through their appetite for food, and this did not change between 1963 and 1981. Alcoholic beverages used the connection between consumption and sex to advertise their products in *Esquire* as alcohol was also a way for men to show their prowess and sexual appetite.

The thesis will be divided into three chapters, exploring the themes of food preparation, dieting and the link between hunger and sexual appetite. The first chapter will explore when men and women prepared meals and why, analyzing whether there were changes in who was cooking, and what food they were cooking. Diets and dietary aids became increasingly popular between 1963 and 1981, so chapter two will explore why this was the case and whether it was just women who became focused on diets. The final chapter will explore the relationship between food and sex. The advertisements and articles within *Esquire* show that food and alcohol were means for men to impress and attract women continuously throughout 1963-1981. But were women able to celebrate their sexuality through food in *Mademoiselle*? These chapters will draw conclusions from the popular magazines *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle* and

Friedan's questionnaire to show that the women's movement caused some changes in regards to how men and women interacted and used food between 1963 and 1981.

Betty Friedan created a questionnaire for her fellow Smith graduates in 1957, fifteen years after they graduated. She inquired about numerous things: their sex life, how many rooms there were in their home, what their husbands did and whether they thought they were more attractive than they had been when at college. Friedan also asked about which household chore women enjoyed most, with the most popular answer being cooking: a third of women said that cooking was the most enjoyable element of keeping house.<sup>19</sup> Yet, women's role as food preparer and server made sure they remained subservient within the home. Did women's opinion about cooking change as the women's movement highlighted women's subordination within the home? Chapter I explores exactly how the women's movement affected when men and women cooked and whether it was for pleasure or duty.

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<sup>19</sup>Betty Friedan Papers, 1933-1985; Questionnaire for *The Feminine Mystique*, 1957. MC 575, folder 418, 419, 420, 421a. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

## **CHAPTER I: CONNOISSEURS OF CUISINE AND FAMILY FEEDERS: HOW MEN AND WOMEN PREPARED AND INTERACTED WITH FOOD.**

Between 1963 and 1981, men and women prepared food for different reasons. Men usually prepared food when they desired to display their expertise and recreate the dishes of the fine-dining establishments they frequented. Women were the ones feeding the family. Even in the 1980s, women were the primary food preparer and server in the household expected and encouraged to create home-cooked meals for themselves, friends and family. Cooking for men was a hobby; for women it was a duty. *Esquire* encouraged men to eat at fine restaurants and offered elaborate recipes from those restaurants to recreate at home. In contrast, *Mademoiselle* supplied women with advice on how to create home-cooked meals quickly and easily. Women fed and served food to their families continuously throughout 1963 – 1981. They were the prime food preparers even when the feminist movement was in full-swing and new technologies such as microwaves were emerging. However, the idea that women could cook for enjoyment and as a hobby did emerge during this period. By the late 1970s, there were signs that women were encouraged to take up cooking as a hobby. This showed that, to some extent, women changed how they perceived their role with food. Despite this slight variation, men's and women's roles in regards to food preparation did not change. Men remained connoisseurs of fine-dining restaurants and amateur chefs, whilst women fed others day-in-day-out. The women's movement did not directly address and therefore did not affect how men and women interacted with and prepared food.

In the *Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan quoted a housewife who, as a consequence of the laborious and monotonous life she led, lacked a sense of identity. The woman said: "I am a server of food and a putter-on of pants and a bed maker, somebody who can be called on when you want something."<sup>1</sup> Magazines and perceptions within middle-class society promoted the idea that women of the 1950s and 1960s could only feel fulfilled when they were married and mothers; so it is hardly surprising that the housewife felt the way she did. Women's magazines reinforced the idea that fulfillment for women came only through being a wife and mother. Popular magazines of the 1950s were brimming with stories of happy housewives, as magazine editors claimed that women would not be able to relate to articles addressing politics or profiles of female artists.<sup>2</sup> The idea that women's only fulfillment came from being wives and mothers, and therefore their only aspirations were to marry can be seen through advertising in *Mademoiselle* in the early 1960s. An ad for Lane Furniture is very explicit in regards to this as it informs young women "[h]ow to find out if he's serious about marriage." In order to do so, all a woman has to do is ask her partner for some Lane Furniture as "[i]f he wants to go to a ball game and you want to go dancing and he takes you dancing, that's a clue. But if you ask him for a Lane Sweetheart Chest and you get it, that's an answer."<sup>3</sup> The expectations for women to marry and become housewives led many women to develop "the problem with no name," that contributed and reinforced women's roles within the household and helped maintain women's role as server and feeder.

As the housewife interviewed by Friedan suggested, women were expected to prepare and serve the family meals. These duties contributed to women's subordinate

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<sup>1</sup> Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, (New York, Norton and Company, Inc., 2001), 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Mademoiselle*, Ad for "Lane Furnishings," October 1964.



role within society and forced many women to live their lives through others. Women were often expected to be feeders for their family, acting as a part of a supply chain. However, according to the questionnaire Friedan conducted in 1957 on her fellow Smith graduates, when asked about what part of housework they enjoyed the best, the most popular answer was cooking.<sup>4</sup> Although not the majority, over a third of the married women questioned claimed cooking was the, or one of the, best parts of keeping house; one graduate claimed that specifically making desserts was the best part.<sup>5</sup> These figures are complemented by the fact that when asked what part of their housework they detested, only four said that they found cooking detestable.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that a third of married housewives enjoyed cooking and the majority either enjoyed or did not mind cooking. These statistics show that the housewife Friedan quoted in *The Feminine Mystique* was not representative of all married women, as many may not have seen serving food as a part of their drudgery. However, many feminist scholars agree with the housewife's assertion, seeing feeding the family as intrinsic to women's subordination within the home.

The statistics from Friedan's questionnaire point towards women having a positive relationship with food and cooking, but within the pages of *Mademoiselle*, food does not get much coverage until the 1970s. But what about men and their relationship with preparing food according to *Esquire*? Did men relish cooking? Or did they just prefer eating? This chapter looks to explore how men and women engaged with food preparation and whether their cooking habits changed according to popular magazines *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* between 1963 and 1981. Through a reading of *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle*, the perceived experiences of women will be

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<sup>4</sup>Betty Friedan Papers, 1933-1985; Questionnaire for *The Feminine Mystique*, 1957. MC 575, folder 418, 419, 420, 421a. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid [54/157 women said that cooking was their favorite household chore, which exacts to 36%].

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

compared to those of men: did young women's interaction with food change? Did they cook more for pleasure and less for necessity as the feminist movement developed?

Both magazines specifically targeted theseparate genders and explored and discussed areas and activities associated with men and women. Each magazine's targeting and celebrating of one of the genders can easily be seen from their taglines: *Mademoiselle*'s being "[f]or the Smart Young Woman" whilst *Esquire*'s claimed that it was "[t]he Magazine for Men." These magazines celebrated and flaunted masculinity and femininity throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In the August 1970 issue of *Mademoiselle*, a fashion piece called "Frontier Ladies" harked back to a time when "men were men and women were women, [and] they made clothes so you could really tell the difference. Clothes like these..."<sup>7</sup> The pictorial featured several pages of models in mid-calf length skirts, blouses with puffy sleeves and shoulders, and belts pinching in, accentuating their waists. These images reinforced gender expectations in regards to fashion, but within both magazines there was also reinforcement of how the genders should interact with food.

In *Esquire* there was the promotion of and expectancy that men liked hunting and ate meat. The October 1963 issue of *Esquire* contained an advertisement for Mexico which highlighted all that a visitor could see and do when vacationing there: the unique architecture of the Aztecs, the local folklore and handicrafts, as well as the potential for fishing, and hunting. The game that could be found in Mexico included jaguar, wild boar and iguana. This advertisement suggested that one of the activities the advertisers believed would sell Mexico as a holiday destination to men was hunting exotic and unusual game. The advertisers promoted the game as unique to

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<sup>7</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "Frontier Ladies," August, 1970.

Mexico in the hope that it would bring in tourists; men who enjoyed hunting would enjoy being able to hunt game that was unavailable in the United States.<sup>8</sup> The role of man as hunter reappeared again fifteen years later in February 1978 as the column “Outdoors” discussed “[t]he Sportsman’s midwinter dilemma,” – the dilemma being that they can’t really hunt much other than a few rabbits over the winter months, meaning they had to fish instead.<sup>9</sup> The inclusion of advice on what to do instead of hunting in the winter months suggests that hunting was popular amongst *Esquire* readers and they were interested in learning about alternatives. The celebration of traditionally male food-related activities was further reinforced by the idea that men were dominant in the art of barbecuing. The article “The Great Barbecue War: My Pig beats your Cow” featured in June 1975 saw two men, one Texan and one North-Carolinian, fight it out as to whether Texan beef or Carolinian Pork was better.<sup>10</sup> Hunting and meat were claimed as male spheres of influence, helping maintain different roles in regards to food for men and women.

The assumption and affirmation of men as hunters and meat lovers reinforced gender roles during this time period. Similarly, certain female stereotypes in regards to food were established and reaffirmed between 1963 and 1981. One of these roles was women as feeders. Kate Kane in her article “Who Deserves a Break Today? Fast Food, Cultural Rituals, and Women’s Place” dissects what women’s role as feeder meant for her place within the home and society in the 1970s. Kane argues that feeding was (and in many cases still is) a primary part of a woman’s role in American society, which is both “problematic and [a] central element to femininity”.<sup>11</sup> She argues

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<sup>8</sup> *Esquire*. Ad for “Mexico,” October, 1963.

<sup>9</sup> *Esquire*. “Outdoors: The Sportsman’s Midwinter Dilemma,” August 1978.

<sup>10</sup> *Esquire*. “The Great Barbecue War,” June 1970.

<sup>11</sup> Kate Kane “Who Deserves a Break Today? Fast Food, Cultural Rituals, and Women’s Place,” in *Food in the USA: A Reader*, edited by Carole M. Counihan, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 63.

that woman's role as feeder led to sexism, as it informed society that women prepared and served food for the family, suggesting and encouraging a role of servitude. She also claims that it encouraged women to be gratified by feeding and nourishing others but not themselves; their role as nourisher and feeder was only deemed relevant to others.<sup>12</sup> This enlightening analysis of women's role in regards to food is important and integral to the understanding of women's subordination within society. Women's subordination in the home came from their subservient role as server of food, so it would have been logical for the women's movement to have targeted women's role with food to gain equality for women within society. Had the women's movement directly attacked women's role in regards to food there may have been more and quicker changes in regards to men's and women's relationship with food.

*Mademoiselle* echoed the expectations that women should be feeders, right up to the early 1980s.

By the early 1980s, women had established themselves within the working world and were fighting (and winning) battles about sexual harassment within the workplace. But when it came to the home, they were still expected to feed themselves, their friends, and their families. As *Mademoiselle* tended to target single women, many of the readers did not have to prepare meals for a large family on a regular basis. But they were expected to feed their boyfriends and friends, and were always encouraged to create home-cooked dishes, as if in training for when they were married with a family. As women became more career-minded in order to keep up their role as feeder they had to adapt, which included getting new kitchen equipment. An advertisement in February 1981 promoted "Kitchen Gadgets: That save you time and space." It claimed that "[w]hether you're coping with cooking in a dorm room or

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<sup>12</sup> Susan Bordo, "Hunger as Ideology" in *Eating Culture*, ed. by Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 22.

looking for an appliance to make your kitchen more efficient, here are a few new ones to choose from – all designed for maximum convenience in a minimum amount of space.”<sup>13</sup> This ad suggested that women wanted high tech gadgets such as small convection ovens in order to prepare fresh food. Similarly, in September 1980 *Mademoiselle* produced a “Kitchen Basics: A Checklist” of all utensils, tools, pots and pans that you could possibly need for your kitchen. The necessity for a woman to have this checklist suggested that women were still expected to cook regularly and to cook a variety dishes. Of course, this could just suggest that women enjoyed cooking and saw it as a hobby - an increasing trend in *Mademoiselle* by the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, it does suggest an element of necessity in regards to what should be in a woman’s kitchen. As “the confident cook” or “wannabe chef” were not singled out, the ad implied that all women were expected to have a functioning kitchen and therefore needed that checklist. It suggested that women could not successfully feed others and themselves if they did not have a kitchen and the right equipment.

Knowing a food’s nutritional benefit was another important element a woman was expected to know as her role as feeder. *Mademoiselle* informed its readers of how to understand the nutritional information on food packaging and what the contents meant. An example of this can be seen in the August 1980 issue, which featured an article informing women of how to be a “supermarketer.” The article explained what *Mademoiselle* readers should look for on the side of food packaging in order to gauge the true nutritional value and benefits of the product. For example they informed the reader that sugar did not always simply appear as sugar on the label but also as dextrose and molasses. It also explained the effects of certain additives. The article reassured women that additives were often tested on animals first to ensure that

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<sup>13</sup>*Mademoiselle*, Ad for “Kitchen Gadgets,” February 1981.

they did not cause any damaging side-effects or other negative consequences such as birth defects.<sup>14</sup> The promotion of nutritional information in *Mademoiselle* implied that women were concerned about how healthy their food was and what nutritional benefits they gained from eating certain products. This links to the idea that women stayed in their role as feeder, as it suggested that women were concerned about what nutritional benefits certain food provided, for both themselves and those that they fed. Ann Cooper endorses this idea in her book about female chefs as she claims that “women’s connection with food is undeniably tied to their need to nourish, nurture, and provide for their families.”<sup>15</sup> Women could not interact with food without thinking about nurturing others. Within *Esquire* there were no articles dedicated to the decoding of food packaging or the nutritional benefits of certain foods, which suggests that men were not concerned about nutrition. Instead, they were concerned about flavor and appearance. Men obviously expected to rely on their mothers and partners to prepare them a balanced diet, because when men cooked themselves it was purely for pleasure.

Further confirmation that women desired information on nutritional foods was the article “Spud: The Unsung Potato” published in January 1981. With pictures to show what they looked like, it walked women through different kinds of potatoes, describing what their textures were and what they were best used for. Most importantly, the article described how to cook potatoes for maximum nutrition retention, including keeping the skins on, steaming and baking them.<sup>16</sup> This contrasts with the recipes and tips that *Esquire* included. The recipes that did appear in *Esquire* usually featured in regular column “Dining In/Out with Esquire.” The

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<sup>14</sup> *Mademoiselle*, “How to be a Supermarketer,” August 1980.

<sup>15</sup> Ann Cooper, “A Woman’s Place is in the Kitchen”: *The Evolution of Women Chefs* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1998), 13.

<sup>16</sup> *Mademoiselle*, “Spud: The Unsung Potato,” January 1981.

column explored the best restaurants to dine at and occasionally included recipes from those restaurants to recreate at home. The recipes were signature or popular dishes from fine-dining establishments, showing that men tended to cook gourmet food and most likely for special occasions. This reaffirms the idea that women were concerned about food for nutrition but flavor, appearance, and prestige were more important for their male counterparts. Women showed more concern over nutrition than men who saw cooking as an enjoyable hobby, as they were not the ones preparing the everyday meals. It is not shocking then, that in 1983 90.8% of Dieticians were female.<sup>17</sup>

The importance of home-cooked food was integral to women's role as feeder. It was implied that in order to feed people well, food had to be home-cooked. This obviously proved difficult for career women. There was an increased amount of recipes within *Mademoiselle*, which helped reinforce the desire and pressure for women to produce home-cooked foods. In the mid-1970s a regular column called "Eat" emerged, which supplied women with recipes, usually attached to a story from columnist Mary Cantwell's life. This column brought life and cooking together alluding to the idea that cooking fresh meals everyday was not impossible. The preference for home-cooked food was still pronounced after the period examined here. In April 1984, *Mademoiselle* included the article "Warming Up to TV Dinners: A Look at the Latest in Late-show Cuisine," which looked at the revival of ready-made dinners in supermarkets and stated how they were better than "the junk-food staples of working singles" but no substitute for a homemade meal.<sup>18</sup> This article reflected that women did not have time to prepare a meal from scratch every night, but reinforced the benefits and preference for a home-cooked meal.

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<sup>17</sup> Richard Maidment and Michael Dawson *The United States in the Twentieth Century: Key Documents*, (London: Hodder Education, 1999), 130.

<sup>18</sup> *Mademoiselle*, "Warming Up to TV Dinners: A Look at the Latest in Late-Show Cuisine," April 1984.

The emphasis and importance placed on home-cooking is something which Kane also explores in her article. Kane argues that society preferred home-cooked food, therefore restaurant and fast food chains had to appeal to customers by appearing to serve home-cooked food. Kane argues that in order to do this the food servers in fast food restaurants' commercials were often friendly, happy, mother figures. She analyzes one specific McDonald's ad as an example where the server was represented to be a "mother-server;" the idea being that if the server resembled a "mother-at-home" she helped create an image of home-cooking.<sup>19</sup> Kane argues that McDonald's tried to make it appear that their food was home-cooked food, even during a time of increased need and popularity of fast food. As home-cooked food was esteemed so highly fast food restaurants had to appear as if they supplied home-cooked food to appeal to customers.

Kane argues that the inclination towards home-cooked food meant an increase in pressure for women to maintain their roles as food preparer, and therefore kept them in a subordinate role within society. This can be seen within *Mademoiselle* as quick and easy recipes appeared throughout the magazine; alongside the idea that whilst ready-meals were acceptable they were no substitute to freshly prepared food. Yet Kane's analysis seems a little extreme. Although fast food restaurants' emphasis on the benefit of home-cooked food undoubtedly pressured women, as fast food restaurants wanted their food to look more appealing and appear to be a decent replacement for home-cooked food they did it to appeal to customers. As working women dealt with the guilt of not always being able to supply their children with fresh home-cooked food on a daily basis, fast food restaurants offered a cheap and welcoming alternative. It could even be said that fast food restaurants were trying to

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<sup>19</sup> Kane "Who Deserves a Break Today?", 319.



relieve women of the burden of continually preparing home-cooked meals for their family. Fast food restaurants felt the same pressure to produce home-cooked food. Therefore, fast food restaurants were just trying to appeal to the public, not forcing women to remain subservient food servers. One thing that can be conclusively deduced from Kane's analysis and the features within *Mademoiselle*, is that men were absent from these images which confirms the idea that women were the everyday food preparer. Women made the home-cooked food and this was not changing as the women's movement advanced.

As men were not sharing the daily burden of food preparation with their girlfriends, wives and mothers, when did they cook? Well, if *Esquire* is anything to go by, not often. And when they did cook, they recreated gourmet cuisine they had experienced in restaurants recommended to them in *Esquire*. *Esquire* regularly featured a column called "Dining In/Out with Esquire" (DIOE), which was a regionally specific article. The issues examined for this thesis were on pages that were labeled either "E" or "NY" meaning either East or New York. Even when labeled E, the majority of restaurants featured were based in New York City showing that NYC was perceived to have better eating establishments than other cities. These articles appeared throughout the 1960s and into the late 1970s, but faded out in the 1980s. They described selected restaurants focusing on what the ambience was like, the cuisine they served, the price range, and its location. For example, in the article featured in the January 1964 edition, Michael's Pub is described to have soft lighting and polished wood, which was "a spot for mannerly drinking and civilized dining... and [the] atmosphere is almost as much a factor in furthering such pleasures as is food and drink itself." It went on to give details on the prices, with entrees at lunchtime ranging from \$2-\$5.75. They also gave some background about the owner asserting

that “[h]e can’t seem to subscribe to the theory that you can’t please everybody.”<sup>20</sup>

Clearly praising the restaurant and acting as an advertisement for the establishment, DIOE informed its readers what they should expect from a good restaurant and which were the best places to dine at.

All the DIOE articles followed the above format. In the September 1963 issue, the article described TV producer Mike Manuche’s restaurant “as masculine in tone as it can be,” unlike neutral restaurants which also catered to women.<sup>21</sup> *Esquire* celebrated the restaurant’s focus on catering for men, encouraging men to occasionally inhabit separate spaces from women. *Esquire* further praised the restaurant as it believed Manuche had hit the right tone with paintings that dominated the walls and à la carte dining. The article also included a recipe for shrimp basso to be recreated at home. The inclusion of a recipe shows that men were interested in cooking, but at a sophisticated level, which emulated and replicated the dishes served in fine-dining restaurants. Other DIOE articles suggested excursions out of New York City as fall descended and people returned from their summer jaunts, and where to go for Sunday brunch recommending infamous “Tavern on the Green in Central Park” as it was “a beautiful place in a beautiful setting.”<sup>22</sup> The articles also celebrated and praised tradition as Pietro’s restaurant steak row was “unaffected by the current trend of beautiful restaurants.”<sup>23</sup>

Clearly dining and eating at the right places was perceived to be important to the *Esquire* reader. They wanted to attend recommended and esteemed restaurants to show their knowledge of food, because great men understood true haute cuisine. This

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<sup>20</sup> *Esquire*, “Dining In/Out With Esquire,” January 1964.

<sup>21</sup> *Esquire*, “Dining In/Out With Esquire,” September 1963.

<sup>22</sup> *Esquire*, “Dining In/Out With Esquire,” October 1963 and ‘Dining In/Out With Esquire,’ October 1968.

<sup>23</sup> *Esquire*, “Dining In/Out With Esquire,” February 1978.

was explicitly shown when *Esquire* included the “Feast Noël” of author Alexandre Dumas. The article described him as a man who was present when haute cuisine, as we know it, was created in Paris. It also noted that he wrote a book about cuisine and all its delicacies and delights. It described how Dumas started his meals with champagne and demanded that whenever he had fish, that it was served whole. The article treated him as if he were the voice of authority when it came to haute cuisine as they quoted his definition of what true gourmet cuisine was:

It requires intelligent appreciation, and diversified, calm conversation. It should sparkle with the diamonds, and rubies of the wine. It should be deliciously suave with the sweetness of the desserts. It should reach true profundity with the coffee and cognac. The meats after all are only the material side of the meal. Wine the intellectual.<sup>24</sup>

Dumas elevated the atmosphere and accompaniments of the food to be as important to cuisine as the food itself. This echoed the tendency of *DIOE* to describe the atmosphere of an eatery as well as the food it served. Especially for the occasion, *Esquire* recreated a menu which Dumas would have eaten and supplied a list of the 37 restaurants where you could dine “a la Dumas.”

The emphasis on dining at good quality restaurants continued into the 1980s. The main feature of August 1981 was “The 100 Best New Restaurants in America.” The cover promised to inform the readers of the “choicest dishes and the finest chefs in twenty-two cities.”<sup>25</sup> The guide created by local food critics from around the United States, demonstrates how the desire for gourmet food and knowledge of the best restaurants did not change for men between 1963 and 1981. The editor’s note even stated that the article was for the “gourmet reader.”<sup>26</sup> The

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<sup>24</sup>*Esquire*, “Alexandre Dumas (Père) invites you to the Feast Noël,” January 1970.

<sup>25</sup>*Esquire*, Front Cover, August 1981.

<sup>26</sup>*Esquire*, “Backstage with *Esquire*: Food for the Mind and Body,” August 1981.

gourmet reader was obviously a cut above the rest because he understood haute cuisine and sought the best places to dine. He stood out amongst other men because of his knowledge of fine cuisine and good restaurants.

The regular “Gastronomy” column had already established the link between prestige and food within *Esquire* before 1963. Gastronomy stopped appearing in *Esquire* the first few years of the 1960s. It focused on a restaurant’s status, how to define different types of eateries, and what made some restaurants better than others. These explanations included an account of how Michelin stars were awarded and which restaurants received them.<sup>27</sup> The article of November 1960 addressed the issue of defining different types of eateries, asking the question “What is a Bistro?”<sup>28</sup> The article outlined the characteristics that defined a bistro, but claimed that the real test of a bistro was its ambience. The article stated that a bistro also had to be the right size with a good array of food and wine, and that the owners did not run the establishment for profit alone – they must run it out of love too. In describing what made a good bistro *Esquire* assumed a hierarchy suggesting that its readers only wanted to go to the best. There was even advice recommending what to eat at bistros with the acknowledgment that “[m]ost bistros don’t bother with fancy desserts because serious eaters wind up their meal with a good cheese.”<sup>29</sup> The importance of knowing what the best restaurants were, what to eat, and how to be aware of the different types of eateries, insinuated that men desired to be seen as knowledgeable and prestigious through their choice of restaurant and cuisine. They were perceived by the editors to want knowledge of restaurants and what fine-dining truly meant. However, as *Esquire* was providing information and advice, it suggests that the magazine was to some

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<sup>27</sup> *Esquire*, “Gastronomy” February 1961.

<sup>28</sup> *Esquire*, “Gastronomy: What is a Bistro?” November 1960.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

extent aspirational; some *Esquire* readers could not evoke a prestigious or knowledgeable demeanor without the guidance of the magazine.

In most issues the DIOE article was surrounded by restaurant advertisements. The most commonly advertised cuisine was French. In the January 1975 edition there were eight separate French restaurants surrounding the DIOE article and three more described as “continental,” which inferred French-influences. The promotion of French cuisine matches the idea of men’s expertise in haute cuisine and gourmet food. However, there were other national cuisine restaurants advertised including Japanese and Indian. In the same issue there were three Indian, two Spanish, and an Argentinian restaurant also advertised around DIOE. The appearance of these restaurant ads within the magazine denotes a sense of the exotic, which suggested that men were willing to be adventurous and try these glamorous foreign foods.<sup>30</sup> One of the main features in that same January 1975 issue celebrated the diversity of food available to Americans throughout America, but particularly in the larger cities. “The *Esquire* Holiday feast: A New York Dream Dinner” acknowledged that as the bicentennial of American Independence was approaching many people would be celebrating American dishes, but it was also important to remember that there were a wide variety and diversity of cuisines on offer in America. The variety on offer should also be celebrated as it represented America’s mixed heritage and its willingness to adapt and accept others.

DIOE occasionally included recipes from restaurants so men could recreate them in their home. A typical example would be the November 1973 issue’s DIOE which included a recipe for orange cake. Five years prior there had been even more focus on cooking in the home as the DIOE in the December 1968 issue focused on the

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<sup>30</sup>*Esquire*, Several Restaurant Ads on p. NYM152B, January 1975.

best cookbooks. The article stated that the “next best thing to dining in a fine restaurant is to dine at home from recipes supplied by the proprietors of that restaurant. Few of the great restaurants will deign to supply recipes, especially to non-patrons, unless they are sponsors of a cookbook.”<sup>31</sup> The article implied that cooking at home could not recreate the food served and the atmosphere of a restaurant but good restaurants were willing to give out recipes. Although restaurants were better, men could make a hobby and take enjoyment out of cooking and eating at home. The recipe books DIOE recommended included *La Cuisine Creole* by Lafcadio Hearn published in 1885, Julia Child’s *The French Chef Cookbook* and *Gourmet Cooking For One*, by Robert Graham Paris. Recommending these books shows that *Esquire* recommended prestigious chefs past and present. These books also suggested that prestige came from foreign foods. Not only was Child’s book about French cuisine, and Hearn’s on Creole food, but Graham Paris supplied recipes from around the world. Graham Paris’ recipes book included recipes from the U.S. such as corn oysters from Illinois and sauerkraut from Pennsylvania. Of course DIOE supplied examples of recipes throughout the article trying to tempt and persuade the readers to go out and buy one of the books and recreate the dishes.<sup>32</sup> This article demonstrated that middle-class men who wanted to impress expected gourmet cuisine in restaurants, and within the home. It alluded to the idea that when men cooked they created gourmet cuisine within the home, not basic healthy food to feed themselves and their family on a daily basis.

Prestige and gourmet were so crucial to men’s interaction with food that ads for convenience food needed to sell themselves as gourmet. In *Esquire* the ads for convenience food would be presented as luxury food items. Ads for frozen meals did

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<sup>31</sup> *Esquire*, “Dining In/Out With Esquire,” December 1968.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

not feature heavily in *Esquire*, but when they did they played upon men's desire for status in regards to food. The best example of this featured later than the period of examination for this thesis in July 1984. The ad was for "Le Menu" which claimed that "[t]hose who serve Le Menu, tend to see Frozen Dinners in a different Light." The consumer would no longer see frozen meals as bland and boring if they chose Le Menu. They would even have enjoyed their product to the extent that they would have drunk vintage wines with them: "Probably the only 10-minute meal you'd serve with a 10-year old wine."<sup>33</sup> The use of vintage wine within the ad acted as a way to show elitism and prestige. Le Menu included an element of elitism in its ad as it knew what the readers of *Esquire* desired and expected. Le Menu had to sell their product as being better than other frozen meal and something that could be easily incorporated into a man's lifestyle and image. These frozen food companies allowed men the convenience of gourmet food within their home, which required little effort and no cooking. *Esquire* showed little change in men's desire for gourmet food, to dine out at restaurants, and their tendency to only cook occasionally. The lack of men preparing food remained constant throughout the period, as they maintained their position as connoisseurs. The lack of change that occurred, suggests the women's movement and increased amount of women working did not force men to change their eating and cooking habits until the mid-1980s. The change in the mid-1980s can be seen through the emergence of ready-meals ads within the magazine. Even then, the need to cook for themselves on a daily basis or using convenience food was not referred to within the articles of *Esquire*, and even when convenience food was advertised they focused men's connoisseur expertise.

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<sup>33</sup>*Esquire*, "Le Menu Ad," July 1984.

Jessamyn Neuhaus comes to a similar conclusion in her writing.

Neuhaus compares the recipes of the cookbooks which targeted men and women in post-war America. In both her book *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking* and her article "Is Meatloaf for Men?" Neuhaus argues that cooking was promoted to men as a hobby and not a task to be performed every day in order to feed his family. Instead, she suggests that a man would cook on special occasions and when he did cook he would tend to create gourmet dishes. In her article about meatloaf, Neuhaus analyses the difference between meatloaf recipes in cookbooks directed at men and women. Meatloaf appeared more frequently in recipe books targeted at women than those for men. When directed at women it was presented to be a quick, easy meal which could easily incorporate left-overs, whereas the meatloaf recipes in men's cookbooks required lean cuts of meat and exotic ingredients, very rarely suggesting the use of left-overs.<sup>34</sup> Neuhaus accurately highlights an obvious disparity between men and women's cooking in the second half of the twentieth century: that women were meant to prepare and serve food everyday and that men only occasionally cooked special dishes. This analysis can easily be seen within *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* as when food was included in men's magazine it was gourmet food and prestigious dining, but for women there was a focus on the nutritional value and the ability to create meals in a short amount of time. Ron Scapp and Brian Scheitz also comment on this division of labor in the kitchen in the introduction to their book about the culture of eating. Scapp and Scheitz highlight the distinction between eating to stop hunger and eating for pleasure. They suggest that when women cook they cook to stop hunger whereas men

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<sup>34</sup>Jessamyn Neuhaus, "Is Meatloaf for Men? Gender and Meatloaf Recipes, 1920 – 1960." In *Cooking Lessons: The Politics of Gender and Food*, edited by Sherrie A. Inness, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001), 88-121.



cook to excite pleasure.<sup>35</sup> Gendered roles in regards to preparing food did not change between the 1950s and 1980s for the middle-class. The women's movement did not influence or change who was cooking and when.

However, men and women did both tend to entertain. Entertaining was perceived to be important in both *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* as they gave hints and tips for readers on how to best impress and entertain their friends. When informing their readers on how to entertain, the emphasis on what food to serve and what drinks should be offered was different in *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle*. In January 1968, *Esquire* published an article about how men could impress at their New Year's Eve party, by having a "Moveable Feast." The article documented a man taking twenty-four guests to a more interesting location than the usual venues, such as an apartment or restaurant, by taking them to the woods by helicopter. Once the party arrived at the log cabin there was a cook on hand, the article recommended it being the wife of the farmer who rented out the log cabin. She served and prepared numerous courses including canapés, chicken pot pie, kidney bean salad and cinnamon rolls.<sup>36</sup> Clearly *Esquire* readers were expected to admire such spending or were capable of doing so to impress and entertain their guests.

In the summer of 1975, men were apparently less confident and assured in their entertaining. *Esquire* included an article about how to entertain outside entitled: "Fear is having to feed and water fifty people, not knowing what kind of wine and liquor to buy or how much, not knowing what to serve..."<sup>37</sup> The article consisted of advice from three cookbook authors, experts on how to be the perfect host. The

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<sup>35</sup> Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz, "Introduction" in *Eating Culture*, ed. by Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 9.

<sup>36</sup> *Esquire*, "The Movable Feast," January 1968.

<sup>37</sup> *Esquire*, "Fear is having to feed and water fifty people..." June 1970.

suggestions included a breakdown of the quantities of alcohol, and providing light food that could be served at room temperature. Although not as flamboyant as the previously mentioned New Year's Eve party, entertaining was obviously still a concern for men as they wanted to impress their guests. When men were entertaining it was all about impressing their guests and having as successful and smooth an event as possible. In the movable feast, cooking was not required, but it was for entertaining in the summer; showing that men would cook if they needed to as they were unable to afford outside catering. However, in *Mademoiselle*, advice on entertaining emphasized making it straightforward for women by suggesting "quick and easy" recipes and time-saving tips for their parties.

In March 1981 *Mademoiselle* featured an eleven page guide to entertaining called: "Mademoiselle's Guide to Good Food and Drink: Company's Coming." Within this section there were subsections which covered the different aspects and elements required when entertaining. The first section was about food (the most important part of a party!) and more specifically "Feeding a Crowd for Cheap." This section supplied the readers with quick to fix party starters such as exotic curried bananas and anchovy toast. The need for these crowd pleasers to be cheap suggests that women were not able to, did not want to, or were not expected to entertain on the scale men were able and expected to. Not only did *Mademoiselle* consider the cost of supplying food, it also considered the calorie intake. It provided recipes for a four course meal which was only 400 calories – "A Feast for Dieters." Maintaining the idea that entertaining could be easily achieved for these women, each recipe was meant to take only 30 minutes to prepare. They also supplied tips on how to "trim the fat off any meal" so women could make their own recipes and meals low-fat. The main dishes were quick, but the desserts were even quicker as they were "Instant Indulgences: 5 Minute

Desserts.” It was deemed that a good hostess would know that she needed to satisfy her guests’ sweet cravings so *Mademoiselle* also supplied some quick and low calorie recipes so she could do just that.<sup>38</sup>

When men entertained they were concerned about making a good impression; it was also the same for women. Just as *Esquire* deemed what alcohol was supplied to be vital in creating a good impression, *Mademoiselle* also the importance of alcohol so provided a list of recommended wines. *Mademoiselle* suggested that a hostess should give her guests plenty of options to choose from as wine lovers liked variety. The article claimed that if women performed these subtle acts they would wow those who enjoyed their wine and give an impression that they knew what they were doing and did it well.<sup>39</sup> Although making an impact was as important for women as it was to men, *Mademoiselle* gave women more precise details and focused on tips to entertain successfully on a budget and with time constraints. In *Esquire* it was more about the impression the host would make, often suggesting that men should delegate vital tasks to others, which required a lot of money and time to organize. For women it was the opposite, entertaining needed to be quick, easy and cheap, whilst still being deemed suitable. Even though men and women both entertained in order to impress their friends, they had different methods and means of doing so.

Recipes were prized for being practical and time efficient throughout *Mademoiselle*, but by the late 1970s and early 1980s there were glimpses of women cooking for pleasure within the magazine. By 1977, there was an ad for a book on “The Cooking of China,” which openly appealed to the adventurous cook, tapping into the fact that like men, women may wish to try creative and exotic new recipes at

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<sup>38</sup>*Mademoiselle*, ‘Mademoiselle’s Guide to Good Food and Drink: Company’s Coming,’ March 1981.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

home.<sup>40</sup> During the 1970s, a column “Eat,” by Mary Cantwell became a permanent fixture, which was later replaced by “Flash in the Pan.” Within these articles the primary focus was recipes that women could create for themselves and enjoy creating. They often were set around a theme, but not normally about weight-control, as by the late 1970s there was a separate dietary column in every issue. For example in September 1980 the column “Eat” discussed the benefits of using herbs in cooking. Entitled “A Touch of Tarragon, a Sprinkle of Chives can make a big difference” the column enclosed four recipes which included tarragon and/or chives, showing that women enjoyed receiving advice on how to make their cooking more enjoyable and flavorful whilst experimenting with new ingredients.<sup>41</sup>

Women’s enjoyment of cooking can be seen in January 1981 with the article “Flash in the pan: Hearty and Elegant – Steak for Two.” Not only were they celebrating steak, a traditionally male food, they described it to be: “haute cuisine and a hearty supper, no matter how you cook it.” The language echoed that of *Esquire* and emphasized the enjoyment of haute cuisine, but it still kept its rhetoric focused on simplicity in cooking - fusing the two worlds together. The article supplied its readers with recipes for different cuts of steak, explaining that all steaks did not have to be expensive, especially when cooked in the right way. They gave the example of the tenderloin, which was great when just grilled and served with a Roquefort sauce.<sup>42</sup>

The emergence of food columns with recipes not just about nutrition, dieting, and time-savings suggests that women started to cook as a hobby, and that magazines were embracing that women enjoyed food and cooking. Although women in the 1970s

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<sup>40</sup>*Mademoiselle*, Ad for “The Cooking of China,” January 1977.

<sup>41</sup>*Mademoiselle*, “Eat: A Touch of Tarragon, a Sprinkle of Chives can make a big difference.” August 1980.

<sup>42</sup>*Mademoiselle*, “Flash in the pan: Hearty and Elegant – Steak for Two.” January 1981.

were still expected to be the main food preparer in the home, by the end of the decade they were seen to enjoy cooking and turned it into a hobby just like men. It is most likely that women used shortcuts such as frozen foods and ready-made meals during the week, but when they had more time at weekends they would create home cooked food that entered into the realm of fine-dining, which in the past had been reserved for men. The uptake of cooking as a hobby led to an encouragement of men and women to cook together.

In the late 1970s articles and ads started to emerge in *Mademoiselle* which encouraged men and women to cook together. An example of this is the ad for the “Beginners’ Book of Beautiful Food: Two Cooks Are Better Than One... and A Lot More Fun!” The ad promoted couples who cooked together, describing it as a pleasurable activity to do with your partner. The book was described to be perfect for beginners such as newly-weds, but also for the “modern couple.” The emphasis on the modern couple reinforced that this was a new idea and concept that would not have been practiced by the generation before them.<sup>43</sup> This advertisement indicated a change in who was cooking and when by the late 1970s. As women were starting to cook for pleasure, men were also being forced by changes in women’s roles due to the women’s movement, to try and share the burden of housework. This concept cropped up again in an article in September 1977 called “Young Working Couple: How They Share” which addressed how one couple cut costs and shared the cooking splitting it “down the middle”.<sup>44</sup> This article emphasized the practicality of cooking together and sharing the burden of purchasing and preparing food. The appearance of couples working together in the kitchen showed how potentially both men and women’s relationship to food was changing; men were sharing the burden of housework with women, which

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<sup>43</sup>*Mademoiselle*, Ad for “Beginner’s Book of Beautiful Food,” April 1977.

<sup>44</sup>*Mademoiselle*, “Young Working Couple,” September 1977.

allowed women a more enjoyable and liberated experience with cooking. However, it is impossible to gauge from magazines alone how widely accepted these views were, and if they were in fact practiced in the home, especially as *Esquire* did not reflect any such changes.

The lack of promotion of couples cooking in *Esquire* highlights one of the problems that emerges from just looking at magazines to gauge changes in food and cooking patterns. *Esquire* did not encourage men to cook with their partners in the 1970s, but instead maintained its endorsement for men to eat out and take their significant others to dinner. The lack of recipes and encouragement of couples to cook together shows a disparity between the two magazines. This disparity suggests that advertisers and editors had a tendency to present what they believed their consumers or readers wanted, rather than what was actually happening in society. As both *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* were similarly targeting young, white, working, singles if ads and articles within the magazine were to merely reflect society, both magazines would have featured the same things. Therefore, it would appear that both magazines were appealing to what they believed their readers wanted and were shaping their desires. For *Mademoiselle* readers that was a change in men and women's role in regards to preparing meals. For *Esquire* readers it was to continue their passion for gourmet food and avoid the mundane aspects of food preparation. The appearance of couples cooking together within *Mademoiselle* promoted women's desire to not be burdened by the housework. It is also an indication of a growing and more overt sexual connotation with food; the topic for chapter three.

Despite these disparities, *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* both give us insight into the food preparation and eating habits of men and women between 1963 and 1981. When food preparation was featured in *Mademoiselle* it was advertised as quick and

easy with its nutritional benefits clearly stated, showing that women remained the prime food preparers when it came to everyday cooking. Women were concerned with what they put into their own and their family members' bodies- maintaining their role as feeders - whilst men remained inclined to eat and prepare gourmet cuisine that they would find at famous restaurants. However, women appear to have engaged more with food and cooking as a hobby by the end of the period as they were encouraged to create inventive and delicious dishes. This can be seen from the increased appearance of articles about food and recipes within *Mademoiselle* by the early 1980s as well as the change in focus of their content. According to *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle* every little changed in regards to how men and women interacted and prepared food. Yet there was a glimmer of hope as women embraced food as a hobby, just as men did, and they started to want and expect help from their partners with the daily grind of preparing food.

## CHAPTER II: 'TUMMY TAMERS' AND 'TEMPTATION-FIGHTING TIPS':

### FOOD AS A MECHANISM OF CONTROL.

The desire for a thin body led women in the 1970s and 1980s to seek information about new and effective diets. Unlike men, women were encouraged to sculpt their body into a desirable shape by dieting rather than through exercising. Women were urged to lose weight and be thin, and in order to achieve that physique they were to limit what they ate. Between 1963 and 1981 *Mademoiselle* increasingly featured dietary aids and ways for women to lose weight. In the 1960s and into the early 1970s diet advice and tips appeared sporadically throughout the magazine. But over the 1970s the number of dietary ads and articles greatly increased so by the early 1980s dietary advice featured in every issue with regular column "Diet News." *Esquire* did not go through such a transformation, but instead consistently included the occasional ad for weight-loss strategies. There were never as many dietary advertisements or articles in *Esquire* as compared to *Mademoiselle*. Neither did they feature as prominently as those included in *Mademoiselle*, as dietary advice never featured as a main article. However, the continual appearance of diet aids from the early 1960s onwards, suggests that it was not only women who were concerned about their physical appearance; men too were conscious of their weight and physique. Yet, they were not encouraged and pressured to be in shape to the same extent women were, and for women the emphasis was on becoming thin by controlling what they ate.



Magazines, fashion styles, and food production companies forced men and women to control their weight. As Betty Friedan suggested in *The Feminine Mystique*, magazines influenced society through the content and messages they featured. Friedan described the choices magazine editors made about the content of their magazines in the late 1950s, with one editor claiming that “[w]omen are so completely divorced from the world of ideas in their lives now, they couldn’t take [content about the world outside the home].”<sup>1</sup> Friedan argued that the decisions made by the magazine editors created a narrow view of what was expected of women and helped reinforce it within society. This was also the case within the period 1963-1981, as magazine editors selected what went into their magazine and therefore also helped shape the expectations of their readers. Magazines were an integral part of a wider culture that encouraged men and women to conform to set body images.

Unsurprisingly, Betty Friedan did not think very highly of the lucrative business of dieting and exercising that emerged in the early 1960s. She claimed that the process of losing weight was “that futile battle to take off the fat that cannot be turned into human energy by the American housewife.”<sup>2</sup> Dieting to Friedan was just another way to help reduce and restrict women’s energy and creative abilities, holding them back from being beneficial members of society. It was another way for women to feel that they had a purpose while simultaneously zapping them of their zeal and making them, quite literally, weaker. However, Friedan was aware of the importance of physical appearance to women. When conducting her questionnaire under the section “Personal,” Friedan asked whether the women felt they were more or less good looking than when they graduated from Smith in 1942. She also inquired whether women had gained or lost weight and whether they were more concerned

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<sup>1</sup>Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, (New York, Norton and Company, Inc., 2001), 119.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

with fashion. Interestingly, she asked in the same section whether the women completing the interview, or any other family member, had had psychotherapy and what they found difficult in fulfilling their role as a woman.<sup>3</sup> The placing of these questions within close proximity of each other is no coincidence. Friedan was inferring that women were expected to conform to certain roles and images, but many women could not achieve these ideals. The women who could not achieve or maintain this image often suffered from boredom and depression and so went to psychotherapists to try and cure their depression or disenchantment. For example one woman wrote that she had gained ten pounds since she graduated, causing her to have a “lumpier” figure, that she had less psychic energy, and that she got no satisfaction from her life. Unsurprisingly, she was one of the women who had gone to psychotherapy. Approximately a quarter of the women interviewed had been to psychotherapy, showing that housewives really were troubled and concerned about their dissatisfaction of their lives.<sup>4</sup> Patriarchy promoted an image for women to conform to, which increasingly focused on physical thinness in the 1970s. As women gained more power in the public sphere, they were being controlled and restricted by the need to be thin and physically weaker as that was the popular conception of what was attractive in women.

Feminist Catherine Manton, in her book *Fed Up: Women and Food in America*, argues that women feeling pressured to be thin during a time they were calling for more rights was no coincidence. Manton argues that in the 1920s being thin and a “flapper” was the fashionable style for women and this was because they were gaining more political rights, including suffrage. She also notes that in the 1960s, when second wave feminism emerged within Western society, women with

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<sup>3</sup>Betty Friedan's Papers. Folder 421a, Questionnaires.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

very thin frames, such as the model Twiggy, became fashionable once again. Manton believes that the pressure for women to be thin was due to the idea that women should not take up too much space.<sup>5</sup> She argues that as women encroached further into the world of men and had more cultural influence, a larger woman appeared more of a threat than women who took up less space; thinner women took up less space and therefore seemed to have less power and presence. Manton's theory would be one way to explain the increased popularity of diets and weight-loss aids in *Mademoiselle* during the women's movement. Other explanations could include the increasingly busy lives of working women and the rise in obesity, but her feminist interpretation is just as likely. As women demanded more space and power within the public sphere and legal and political rights, women were challenged by society to become thinner, weaker and less threatening. Women were being influenced through images, which caused them to control their size by controlling their food intake.

The idea that women ought to be thin was promoted to women of the middle and upper class throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and well into the 1990s. Anthropologist Carole Counihan's study showed that women in the 1990s still believed that being thin was key to being attractive. Counihan conducted a study of female college students that showed that women held different standards of attractiveness for men and women. Women judged their own and other women's attractiveness by how thin they were, which was not the case when they looked at men.<sup>6</sup> Feminist writer Susan Bordo draws a similar conclusion in her book *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body*. Bordo claims that it is more

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<sup>5</sup> Catherine Manton, *Fed Up: Women and Food in America*, (Westport: Bergin and Garvey, 1999), 95.

<sup>6</sup> Carole M. Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power*, (New York: Routledge, 1999), 115.

important to men that their partner is slim than it is for women.<sup>7</sup> Men and women were held to different standards when it came to attractiveness: men did not need to be thin to be attractive, but for women it was vital to be slim if they wanted to be seen as attractive by men and other women. Women's lifestyles and bodies were being oppressed by a need to be thin.

In *Unbearable Weight*, Bordo also claims that the idea women had to be thin was fuelled by mother-daughter relationships. She argues that women were brought up to believe that "their daughter's ability to catch a man will depend largely on physical appearance, and that satisfaction in the role of wife and mother will hinge on learning to feed others rather than the self – metaphorically and literally."<sup>8</sup> Here Bordo is suggesting the idea that women needed to be thin was part of a vicious cycle that women passed to the next generation. She also makes the interesting link between women as feeders and their attractiveness. As discussed in the previous chapter, being feeders was vital to a woman's role. An important part of that role was to feed others whilst controlling what they themselves ate. Bordo links the importance for women to feed her family well, but for her to remain thin; it was all about controlling what they consumed whilst successfully feeding others. This emphasis on controlling what they ate and how much they weighed helps us understand why *Mademoiselle* so often included dietary advice.

*Mademoiselle* in the 1960s did not include many dietary items. In fact in July 1964, there was not one article on losing weight, or food and cooking in general. At this point *Mademoiselle* was primarily a fashion magazine which featured ads and photo spreads of fashion items. However, there was an ad in regards to body image

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<sup>7</sup> Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body*, (Berkeley, University of California, 1993), 202.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

called “Wate-On.” The product “Wate-on” supposedly helped “fill out skinny figures.” The ad claimed that a woman did not want others to call her skinny, so she ought to get this product to gain a fuller figure.<sup>9</sup> The appearance of this ad shows that the expectations of women’s figures in the early 1960s was one in which women did not wish to be skinny; women wanted a rounder, more curvaceous figure. However, women in the mid-1960s were also concerned about not being overweight. October 1964 featured an article on “Diets: The New Dos and Don’ts.” *Mademoiselle* documented a conversation with endocrinologist Jerome Comet Klein on the best ways to diet. Klein acknowledged that women lived under different circumstances and therefore faced different challenges when it came to dieting. For example, he argued that women who lived in dorms or sorority houses at college were more likely to come into contact with starch. As canteen food tended to be bulked up with starch in order to fill people up at a low cost, women at college had to consider that when they wished to lose weight and gain a balanced diet. Klein also highlighted the importance of not thinking in terms of just calories but about food and nutrition. He accurately pointed out that products which were low in calories were not always good for you and did not provide the body with the nutrients it needed.<sup>10</sup> From earlier editions of *Mademoiselle* it is clear that a change in what was desirable occurred. Women went from being expected to be curvaceous in the early-1960s to being thin in the 1970s. *Mademoiselle* was not an innocent bystander in the situation, as it too aided this change by including fashion styles best suited to thin women and encouraging women to achieve thinness by increasing the number of diets within the magazine.

There was only a gradual increase in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the number of dietary products and tips so that issues of the early 1970s had a similar

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<sup>9</sup>*Mademoiselle*. Ad for “Wate-On.” July 1964.

<sup>10</sup>*Mademoiselle*. “Diets: The New Dos and Don’ts.” October 1964.

number to those of the 1960s. The May 1972 issue included a few items about dieting and staying in shape. There were articles on how to “whittle your waist” and to “shape up your legs and feet” which focused more on exercising than diets, but maintained the focus of being thin rather than being fit. There was also an ad for vitamin tablets that appealed to the dieter. Its opening line was “Take a tip from a professional dieter,” which was referring to a model who continually had to remain healthy and diet to maintain her shape and energy levels. The model claimed that successful dieting meant balanced meals, regular exercise and plenty of rest along with making sure she got plenty of vitamins and minerals. She ensured she got her minerals and vitamins by taking “One-a-day” which maintained her energy levels and kept her healthy.<sup>11</sup> The next issue of *Mademoiselle* provided a diet for readers to follow which claimed to be “the coolest summer diet.” It was an eight day diet which required minimal cooking (hence being “cool”). However, unlike the ad for vitamins the issue before, the summer diet was less concerned with overall balance and health. It did not encourage balanced meals, but actually encouraged skipping meals: on day six of the diet, there was only one full meal as breakfast, morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack were all drinks.<sup>12</sup> The diet supplied by *Mademoiselle* suggests that women were not as bothered about jeopardizing their health as the vitamin company would have hoped. Women were willing to not eat for the majority of the day if it meant losing a few extra pounds.

By the late 1970s ads for diet products and articles on weight loss were more numerous. The April 1977 *Mademoiselle* contained the “Californian Diet: Easiest, healthiest way to lose weight” and again in August of the same year there was “The Junk Food Diet.” The article on “The Junk Food Diet” addressed the growing

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<sup>11</sup> *Mademoiselle*, Ad for “One-A-Day,” May 1972.

<sup>12</sup> *Mademoiselle*, “The Coolest Summer Diet.” June 1972.

presence of fast food in America, and due to it being easy to access for those with a busy schedule, the writers of *Mademoiselle* believed it would be beneficial to have a diet that incorporated fast food. They got a reluctant nutritionist to work out a diet which involved eating at fast food restaurants all week.<sup>13</sup> The nutritionist warned how it was difficult to gain all the nutrients an individual needed from just fast food. This reaffirmed that although readers' prime goal was to lose weight, health professionals were still conscious that women should eat a healthy balanced diet. The inclusion of two diets within months of each other shows how prevalent diets became within *Mademoiselle*. It also shows that the editors believed that the readers wanted to know about various ways to lose weight, and included dietary information more regularly to increase magazine sales. The increasing number of diets included in *Mademoiselle* promoted a need to be thin. Diets were included more readily in the magazine, which caused an increased number of women to be affected by the idea that they should be thin. The more diets featured in women's magazines, the more women felt pressure to control their weight and body shape, creating a culture of thinness.

In the January 1977 issue there was both an ad for the "Ultimate Diet Supplement" and an article on the body called "The Truth About..." which included information on thinning hair, cellulite and binge eating. The inclusion of an article solely dedicated to binge eating displays how women's dietary habits and attempts to remain, or become, thin were becoming a serious health concern. The article highlighted the harm which binging and then starving could have on the body. However, it highlighted that it was only really dangerous when done to the extreme.<sup>14</sup> It is unclear whether the article was being solely informative, or if it was condoning

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<sup>13</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "The Junk Food Diet," August 1977.

<sup>14</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "The Truth About... Binge-eating," January 1977.

women who overindulged one day and did not eat much the next day, if they seldom did it. Either way, it is apparent that by 1977 the need to diet had become a pressing matter for women. Dieting and a desire to be thin were dominant throughout society causing eating disorders to become more common, to the extent that *Mademoiselle* felt it needed to inform and warn its readers. Despite this concern, it did not stop *Mademoiselle* from publishing diets; in fact they increased the number of diets featured in the magazine.

In September 1980 there were six articles solely on, or featuring information on, dieting. From the “one-pot sure-shot diet: meal plan and recipes” to “Diet News: How to kick the salt habit, dieting “Dallas” star & more” to “Temptation-Fighting Tips for Working Women,” all the articles were about easy ways for women to lose weight. Interestingly, one of the articles about body image and dieting was about female muscles. The regular column “The Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Sex” by Judith Coburn, focused on how women were discouraged from having muscles as they were expected and urged to be fragile. Coburn questioned whether women still felt pressured to conform to the traditional ideal that women should be fragile and if that meant they had to choose whether to be attractive to men or to be strong. Coburn suggested that men did not like the challenge women posed to them by being strong, particularly as women were becoming more dominant in the public arena.<sup>15</sup> This article showed that women were starting to question what was seen to be attractive and what physical strength and challenging traditional images could mean for them. It showed that women were becoming aware that they were being controlled by popular images and expectations in regards to their body and gender. Women were pressured to be thin and weak, which meant they were being controlled and prevented to

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<sup>15</sup>*Mademoiselle*, “The Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Sex.” September 1980.



achieve their full potential. Coburn realized this and wanted to have women see that they were being controlled in this way. However, as Coburn's article was a part of an issue brimming with ways to lose weight to become thin, it was an idea in early fruition which did not have mainstream support. Ironically, *Mademoiselle* did not completely support the idea; it promoted thinness over physical strength as it continually included dietary advice rather than techniques to strengthen muscles and keep fit.

Five out of the first six issues of 1981 front covers advertised some sort of diet. In January 1981 there was "The Gain Energy Diet," in April "Go on a losing streak!: 6 winning diets in 1" and in June "Summer Slim-Down Exclusive!" Diets were obviously becoming a selling point for *Mademoiselle* as what featured on the cover of the magazine was what sold the magazine. Readers were interested in how to lose weight and in effective ways to achieve their desired weight, so *Mademoiselle* made sure that it advertised that it catered to this demand. Not only did *Mademoiselle* include main feature articles on diets in nearly every issue, but in each issue it now included the column "Diet News." This meant that most issues had a minimum of two articles about dieting. The articles about dieting gave details on a variety of things, such as the best way to eat to achieve a certain goal. For example in January 1981 the issue included an article about eating for energy. Shockingly, the article described only two different types of eating: weight control/loss and for energy.<sup>16</sup> There was no mention of an individual eating for pleasure and enjoyment, showing how different men and women's perceptions of food were in the early 1980s. As *Esquire* was featuring the best restaurants in America and supplying recipes from fine-dining restaurants to recreate within the home, women were being told that eating was done

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<sup>16</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "The Gain Energy Diet," January 1981.

for just two reasons: weight control and gaining energy. The message that women were not to enjoy food, but to eat for energy and controlling their shape featured continually within the magazine. Women were told they were unable to enjoy food if they were to be attractive and successful.

The significant role diets played in the content of *Mademoiselle* by the late 1970s showed how women's concerns about their weight and wanting to maintain a thin frame increased over time. The new emphasis on diets not only suggested that there were high demands on women to be thin, but also that women were finding it harder to maintain their desired weight. This can be deduced by the change in tone and target readership of *Mademoiselle*. Its target demographic changed from graduates who were young mothers and wives, or intended to be, to young female professionals. As women's lives got busier, they felt they had less control over their weight and therefore needed to control their diet more effectively, so were continually seeking advice on how to do so.

Corresponding to the idea that women were finding it harder to control their weight and were using food as a tool to try and achieve, or maintain, their target weight was an article on "Easy Cooking" featured in August 1973's column "Eat." "Eat" usually included recipes embedded within a piece of autobiography relating to the journalist, which they deemed relevant to the readership - not dissimilar to food columns featured in newspapers and magazines today. The August 1973 edition enclosed recipes which were easy to make and comforting to eat. The columnist Mary Cantwell wrote about how her relationship with food changed from seeing food as fuel to food as companion due to being bored at college.<sup>17</sup> Cantwell spoke about how she ate when she had nothing to do and no structure in her day, and

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<sup>17</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "Eat: Easy Cooking," August 1973.

that this led to her love of food, but that it was unhealthy. Cantwell's experiences highlighted women's problem with maintaining a weight they were happy with, and saw the solution as changing how they ate. Even though Cantwell's article suggested recipes for women to find comfort in food, women were not encouraged to continuously eat for companionship. Eating for companionship was seen to be a negative way to spend their time and a sign that women were unable to control their appetites. Women should stick to consuming food just as means to gain energy and control their weight.

However, men were also subjected to pressure to conform to a certain body. Yet, how men were affected by the changes within society and their response towards food has not been as extensively explored. Men were being used in more advertisements and were therefore as subjected as women to images of an ideal body. Anderson argues that "[a]dvertisers glamorize buff, shirtless hunks and poke fun at fat guys,"<sup>18</sup> and this glamorization caused men to become more concerned about their appearance. According to Anderson, these images increased in the 1980s, a time when obesity and the number of diet products available to consumers were increasing. Although, Anderson is right in that there was an increase of these images and more pressure placed upon men in the mid-late 1980s, he does not explain that there was also pressure earlier. When looking at *Esquire*, it is clear that even in the 1960s men were subjected to images of good-looking men modeling clothes and used in other advertisements. There was also a pressure for men to show prestige and to impress other men and attract women, so why did this not affect men and pressure them to achieve a buff body? This is part of the reason why it is important that historians as well as psychologists and sociologists engage with the idea of food and

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<sup>18</sup> Arnold Anderson, Leigh Cohn and Thomas Holbrook, *Making Weight: Men's Conflicts with Food, Weight, Shape and Appearance*, (Carlsbad: Gurze Books, 2000), xvii.

identity. Historians put food and identity into an historical context and examine patterns and changes over time rather than just focusing on a period of increase or upheaval, which allows us a better understanding of what was happening at the time and how each gender perceived themselves. Anderson comes up with an idea about food companies who produced dietary products tapping into a new market. This seems feasible, but why wait so long to target men? According to *Esquire* they were already to some extent targeting men in the 1960s and 1970s.

Men were expected to maintain a certain shape just as women were. The “Relax-a-cisor” regularly featured in the ads at the back of *Esquire*. It featured as early as August 1960, where the ad’s fictional male character’s wife got the mechanism so that she did not have to diet, and he used it so he did not have to exercise.<sup>19</sup> The disparity of how men and women were expected to control their weight and body shape is exemplified in this ad. The ad expected men to exercise to remain in shape; whereas women were expected to control the food they consumed to remain slim. The “Relax-a-cisor” was still present ten years later in January 1970 advertised as the “No-Work Workout,” again suggesting men stayed in shape by exercising. In the same issue there was an ad for the “Sauna Belt” which guaranteed to take one to three inches from a man’s waistline in three days or their money refunded.<sup>20</sup> The very similar “Tummy Tamer” appeared in August 1970, but the ad suggested that men both dieted and exercised. The tagline for the “Tummy Tamer” was that it “[t]ightens, trims, flattens your abdomen... without tiring exercises. Without diets!”<sup>21</sup> Men clearly were concerned about their abdominals and waistline, so contraptions such as the “Tummy Tamer” were advertised as an easy way to

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<sup>19</sup> *Esquire*, Ad for “Relax-a-cisor,” August 1960.

<sup>20</sup> *Esquire*, Ad for “Sauna Belt,” January 1970.

<sup>21</sup> *Esquire*, Ad for “Tummy Tamer,” August 1970.

maintain, or return, to great shape without taking up your time by going to the gym or going for a run. Just like women, men wanted easy and quick ways to a slimmer body. But as the ad for the tummy tamer suggested, men were also likely to diet in order to control their weight. Although not as prominent as the expectations for men to exercise, the idea that men would diet is present.

Dietary supplements were also advertised within the pages of *Esquire*. Although diets and dietary supplements did not appear as regularly within *Esquire* as *Mademoiselle*, their appearance confirms that as early as the mid-1960s men were concerned with body image. February 1964 featured an ad for Metrecal, a dietary aid which made sure a man stayed on his diet and lost weight. The advertisement is rather humorously set up as if it was a pros and cons list - one side headed as "How to Kid Yourself" the other "How to Lose Weight." Under "How to Kid Yourself" were suggestions such as using a sugar substitute in your coffee, skipping desserts, and living on reducing pills. Instead they suggested gaining your doctor's advice and using Metrecal. Underneath they supplied a paragraph claiming that Metrecal worked without explaining how or why.<sup>22</sup> In June 1975, there was also an ad for a protein powder which acted as a supplement to diets which was advertised with the title "Introducing the Ultimate Diet."<sup>23</sup> By the mid-1970s men were clearly either accustomed or believed to be using dietary supplements and exercise to control their body shape. However, *Esquire* did not publish ads or articles giving recipes or ideas for low-fat or low-calorie diets. Men even when dieting were expected to use pills and powders, not control their food intake. Men and women were under pressure to conform to certain images: women were expected to do so through controlling what they ate, and men mainly through exercise, but also through dietary aids. Men and

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<sup>22</sup>*Esquire*, Ad for "Metrecal," February 1964.

<sup>23</sup>*Esquire*, Ad for "Introducing the Ultimate Diet," June 1975.

women were expected to have different compositions, so used different means to produce the idealized body for their sex.

When comparing *Esquire* to *Mademoiselle*, there was only a slight increase of importance about body image for men between 1963 and 1981. Anderson claims that in the 1980s businesses that produced weight-loss products realized that they were missing out on half the possible market, by not directly targeting men. Therefore, according to Anderson, these businesses incorporated men into the world of dieting alongside women in order to increase profits.<sup>24</sup> Anderson argues that in the last few decades of the twentieth century, the use of images of the perfect male physique caused it to be no longer satisfactory for a man to be healthy; he also had to look healthy.<sup>25</sup> The need for men to conform to a certain body shape emerged as a consequence of magazines such as *Esquire*, but also caused magazines to adapt. Men's desire to be and look healthy and attractive meant that dietary information and ads appeared continuously in *Esquire*, but not with a sharp increase in the 1980s like Anderson suggests. For example in the September 1977 issue there was an ad for the "astro-trimmer" which showed a man and what he looked like before he started using the astro-trimmer and then with no bulging waist whilst wearing the device. It claimed to be able to reduce the waist by two to three inches. In the same issue there was an ad for the "The Ultimate New Diet Wafer" which made "dieting easier to swallow."<sup>26</sup> The emphasis on men needing to stay in shape displayed how bodily insecurities traditionally associated with women were also relevant to men. The

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<sup>24</sup> Refer to De La Pena's book *Empty Pleasures*, where she explores the world of weight-loss products and artificial sweeteners for more details. De La Pena argues that artificial sweeteners have become to be unhealthy for society and that they have discouraged us from accurately evaluating our own food desires. She also interestingly draws the link between the increase revenue of weight-loss products and the increase in the average American's average weight, deducing that artificial sweeteners are designed to sell products not create thin people.

<sup>25</sup> Anderson et al, *Making Weight*, 30-1.

<sup>26</sup> *Esquire*, Ads for "Astro-trimmer" and "The Ultimate New Diet Wafer," September 1977.

inclusion of diet advertisements before the mid-1980s suggests that body image had been a continual concern for men prior to the 1980s. Dieting and fitness for men was not a ground-breaking phenomenon that arrived in the 1980s, it simply became a concern that magazine publishers were more willing to discuss in the 1980s. The constant scattering of dietary aids in *Esquire* shows that men were also susceptible to conform to a certain body image. A man could not have free reign with his appetite and eat whatever he liked without exercising or using dietary supplements; men were just as aware as women of the importance of body image and attractiveness.

Susan M. Alexander argues in her article “Stylish Hard Bodies” that in post-modern society consumption has become more important than production. She sees this as changing and challenging traditional male identity as male identity had begun to be “based on consumption, a traditional female role.”<sup>27</sup> Alexander interestingly suggests that through images in popular culture, particularly *Men’s Health Magazine* but also computer games and movies, that men try and achieve the “G.I. Joe action figure” physique as women try and emulate the tall, slim, big-busted, Barbie. She argues that this puts added pressure on men, so they are also attempting to achieve an impossible physique; as the G.I Joe figurine converted to human form would equate to a chest of 51 inches and biceps of 27 inches.<sup>28</sup> Her argument that the ideal male form since the 1980s has been a toned muscular body, but not overly muscly, is convincing. Examining the covers and images within *Men’s Health Magazine*, and even the emergence of the magazine itself, Alexander manages to show that men did become more overtly concerned with body image and the preferred physique was that of a hard body.

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<sup>27</sup> Susan M. Alexander, “Stylish Hard Bodies: Branded Masculinity in Men’s Health Magazine.” *Sociological Perspectives*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (2003), 536.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 539.

However, the idea that men only became concerned with consumption in the 1980s seems inaccurate. From my own analysis of *Esquire* it is clear that advertisements were directed at men promoting certain lifestyles and trying to persuade the readers to purchase certain products. Popular magazines in themselves are mainly tools to sell products so the notion that men only became a part of consumer society in the 1980s seems incorrect. Alexander has a very good argument, which is accurate in many ways, but men's desire for consumer products and being influenced by image comes earlier than she implies. With this in mind, it is right to assume that society became more concerned with men's bodies and that, as Anderson suggests, dietary product companies wanted to make more profit. However, the idea that society wanted men to pay more attention to their bodies at a time when obesity was increasing and women had gained more power seems more logical. Perhaps women finally became as concerned as men about having a slim partner? Men throughout the 1960s and 1970s had been concerned about body image and been a part of a consumer society, so although it may have increased in the late 1980s it is inaccurate to say that it was not present before.

The best place to understand dieting in its historical context is Hillel Schwartz's *Never Satisfied*. Schwartz outwardly dismisses dieting and the "thin society" of the twentieth (and twenty-first) century. He highlights the hypocrisy of a society that seems to want everything, but at the same time is suspicious of surplus.<sup>29</sup> Documenting the idea of fatness and slimming from as early as the middle ages, Schwartz provides a succinct history of how ideas about the body have continually changed over time – from ideas of gluttony to buoyancy and then to slimming. Schwartz explains fatness was something that was a concern to both men and women

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<sup>29</sup> Hillel Schwartz, *Never Satisfied: A Cultural History of Diets, Fantasies and Fat*, (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 5.



throughout the early modern and modern period. Schwartz explains that the first idea of fatness was to do with gluttony. A glutton refused to take the true measure of one's needs as it disordered the appetite, which was committing a sin. Venetian Luigi Cornaro claimed that "gluttony deprives [Italy] of more souls yearly, than either a war, or the plague itself could have done," showing how critical the sin of gluttony was seen to be in the late medieval and renaissance periods.<sup>30</sup> Cornaro ended up writing a book about what to eat to remain healthy and how not to become a glutton. Schwartz highlights that Cornaro was not the only male to write a diet treatise. In fact, until the twentieth century it was men who wrote the key dieting texts and up until the nineteenth century the most public archetypal dieters were also men.<sup>31</sup> He claims that this is due to several factors in regards to women. As women's weight tends to change at certain moments in their lives, such as puberty, pregnancy and menopause, women's weight gain was associated with their uterus, seeing the stomach and the uterus as the "twins." Consequentially, women were seen to not be able to control their weight and treated as patients when it came to controlling their bodies. Part of the reason there was a change in the nineteenth century change was due to the change in men's fashion. Men stopped wearing form-fitting clothes, which meant that ill-formed men were less conspicuous than ill-formed women.<sup>32</sup>

Schwartz shows that until relatively recently dieting has historically been associated as much with men as it was with women. The first weight-watcher according to Schwartz was Sylvester Graham who decided that gluttony, not starvation, was the cause of evil and encouraged an abstinent diet.<sup>33</sup> However, dieting was not about being thin, but about gaining a wholesome appetite and most

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid,9.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 16-17.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid, 18.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid,21 &25.

importantly not being gluttonous. This idea changed in the Victorian period as men became obsessed with muscles and women wanted to appear to be buoyant. They desired to appear to be light and airy whilst being voluminous – they saw it as putting on pounds of volume rather than pounds of weight. They were fixated with the sensation of lightness.<sup>34</sup> This desire to be light transcended to desiring the “weightless body” in the late twentieth century. Schwartz describes dieting of the late twentieth-century to have been “a means not just to health or to beauty but to newness and perfection.”<sup>35</sup> Dieting became a way to achieve perfection and regeneration but it relied upon being public; weight-loss could not be secure without being open and exhibited for all to see. Schwartz argues that really dieters were succumbing to capitalist pressure that benefited from dieters as ultimately dieters consumed more. Not only did dieters tend to consume more due to failing, the inevitable binge eating, and the purchasing of specific dietary products, they also allowed companies the opportunity to re-use their waste products as they profited from using chaff as filler for dietary products. Food producers were not only able to generate revenue from creating dietary products; they were also able to reduce wastage from other product lines, meaning that they truly did win when it came to the dieting craze.<sup>36</sup> As the United States population was increasingly consuming diet products there was a rise in obesity showing how ineffective dietary products were.<sup>37</sup>

Schwartz’s *Never Satisfied* helps contextualize dieting seen in the second half of the twentieth century. The ideas of weight, body, and eating changed over time but body image was always a concern for both men and women. By the twentieth century

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 64.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 315.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 328.

<sup>37</sup> Obesity figures for children between 12-19 grew from 4.6% in the late 1960s to 6.1% in the early 1970s, which quadrupled to 16.7% in 2001-02. See <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/health/obesity-statistics-in-the-united-states.aspx> [accessed 03/03/12] for more figures.

the idea of weight and fatness had been established, which meant that men and women were not only concerned about their physical shape and image anymore, but also their weight as the two became intertwined. Schwartz quotes Pulitzer prize winning social commentator Ellen Goodman, that by the 1970s “eating had become the last bona fide sin left in America.”<sup>38</sup> They both see eating, and enjoyment of food in the United States by the end of the twentieth century to be something intolerable. As implied in *Mademoiselle*, food became fuel and a way to control your weight. Of course, this is a very dramatic interpretation but one that grasps the mood of society and its need to diet. From the previous chapter, it is very much clear that both men and women found an interesting and enjoyable hobby in cooking and eating food. However, that does not mean that there weren't restraints on what they ate and how much of it. I agree that men and women were forced to conform to certain body images and this became associated with weight by the latter part of the twentieth century. But weight and food were associated only in regards to women. From analyzing *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* it is clear that in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s men were encouraged to enjoy food and stay in shape by exercising and using supplements, whereas women were encouraged to control what they ate and see food as a way to control their body, not as an avenue of enjoyment. It was women who were seen to sin when they ate and enjoyed food, for food made women fat, not men.

In the nineteenth century, women's relationship with food was very symbolic. If they ate meat they were regarded to be acting out of place as they were assuming a male prerogative.<sup>39</sup> Food was seen to be a time-consuming and an exhausting job, which many middle-class women wished to disassociate themselves, so if they could,

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<sup>38</sup>Schwartz, *Never Satisfied*, 308.

<sup>39</sup> Joan Jacobs Brumberg, “The Appetite as Voice” in *Food and Culture: A Reader* ed. by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (New York: Routledge, 1997), 169.

they would hire a cook. This and an association of gluttony and ugliness established a negative relationship between women and food.<sup>40</sup> Women had also been pushed away from food when notorious dieter and celebrity poet Byron proclaimed that “[a] woman should never be seen eating or drinking, unless it be lobster salad and champagne, the only truly feminine and becoming viands.”<sup>41</sup> The assertion that women should not be seen eating was a notion that to some extent remained and stayed with the female population for generations. Women wanted to be seen as controlling what they ate, even when feeding others. It also explains why women did not want to be associated with too much eating and food. Just as Byron himself was a ferocious dieter, men too were concerned with their appearance and how much they weighed. *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* show that men and women were continually concerned with their weight throughout the period of 1963-1981. *Esquire* featured ads for dietary aids and shaping-contraptions consistently throughout the period. *Mademoiselle* similarly featured a consistent number of ads and articles on dieting and shape-controlling mechanisms. But in *Mademoiselle* there was a crescendo at the end of the 1970s and early 1980s that saw the magazine become dominated by dietary advice.

The presence of so many dieting and shape-controlling ads and articles showed that during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s men and women were concerned about their weight and appearance. In *Esquire* the ads tended to be for ways in which to exercise without really exercising, or dietary supplements. This is in contrast to *Mademoiselle* which inundated readers with dietary supplements, toning mechanisms, and advice on what to eat and the best diets to lose several pounds. In popular magazines, women were encouraged to control their appetites and food consumption more than men. It was vital that they controlled the food that they consumed if they

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid, 168.

<sup>41</sup>Schwartz, *Never Satisfied*, 38.

wanted to stay in shape and be attractive. For men, it was more about exercising and using the odd powder or dieting product to help become toned; confirming Alexander's idea that men needed to be toned to be attractive, whereas women needed to be thin.

The crescendo of dieting advice in *Mademoiselle* of the late 1970s and early 1980s was probably a result of several reasons, not just a more urgent desire for women to be thin. The increase in obesity rates, dietary products becoming lucrative business, and women's increased presence in the workplace; all help explain why diets appeared more in *Mademoiselle*. Even though men would have been affected by the same issues, the lack of increase in dietary advice and low-fat recipes in *Esquire*, exemplifies that men were not under the same pressure as women were to be thin and to control their body shape through food. Men were allowed to enjoy their food and use exercise as the means to keep fatness at bay, using the occasional diet supplement for help. For women, however, it was all about eating certain foods and restraining their appetites so they could be thin. Food was used by both men and women in the fashion industry, food production, and of course magazines, to control women and inhibit their physical presence within society.

### CHAPTER III: UNCONTROLLABLE APPETITES: MEN AND WOMEN CONSUMING SEX

Betty Friedan dedicated a whole section of her questionnaire to sex, and she did not shy away from direct questions about her fellow graduates' sexual activities. Friedan asked whether they thought sex with their partner was getting better, whether sex was the most important factor in their marriage, and whether they felt satisfied as a woman.<sup>1</sup> She clearly saw the importance of sex to women's lives and the stability and success of their marriages. Friedan claimed that the feminine mystique was a "sexual counter-revolution."<sup>2</sup> Yet, women who were embedded in the feminine mystique were still asked about their sex lives and its importance to them and to their marriage. This displays that even when sex was not celebrated, but subdued, in popular culture, sex was an important part of daily life for men and women. As the sexual revolution of the 1960s progressed, many men and women embraced the new sexual culture which allowed them to be more open about their sexuality. Through the pages of *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* it is clear that sex and sexual attraction were central to men and women's lives and how they consumed food and drink throughout 1963-1981. Eating certain food or consuming large quantities of food was seen as being sexually promiscuous. Men never shied away from showing both their appetite for food or sex, but it was only in the 1970s that women did the same. The women's movement made advances in women's sexuality which allowed women to interact with food in a new way.

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<sup>1</sup> Betty Friedan's Papers, Folder 421a, Questionnaires.

<sup>2</sup> Betty Friedan. *The Feminine Mystique*. (New York, Norton and Company, Inc., 2001). 450.

*Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* both included articles and advertisements that discussed sex and attraction. By 1973, *Mademoiselle* showed that women on a whole were comfortable with their sexuality and were embracing their ability to discuss sex and be openly sexual beings. This can be seen by the inclusion of regular sex column “An Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Sex” which discussed sex and topics surrounding it. Sex also featured in separate articles, advice columns and advertisements. Similarly, in *Esquire* there was a continual smattering of sex and attraction. *Esquire* did not document and inform its readers about sex and sexual attraction to the extent *Mademoiselle* did, but it did contain messages, particularly in advertisements, about attraction. Ads and articles implied that if *Esquire* readers appeared manly and successful, they would attract women. One of the key areas to show their success, knowledge and manliness, was for men to go to the right restaurants and consume the right products. Products advertised themselves as status symbols exuding a certain image which would show the consumer’s prowess and attract the opposite sex. Many ads claimed direct links to consuming their product and sexual attraction, particularly ads for alcoholic beverages. Women had historically been discouraged from connecting sexuality and food, so it was only when they had established their sexuality in society that they openly embraced the connection between sex and food. They did this by writing poems, trying to find aphrodisiacs, and openly linking eating on a date with sex. This chapter explores how women had previously been excluded from showing their hunger and sexual appetite and how *Mademoiselle* documented that change. It also examines how men continually embraced the connection and consumed products that would make them appear more masculine and attractive.

Food has been considered to be intrinsically close to sexual activity for a long time. It was something about which Graham Cracker inventor, Sylvester Graham, was particularly concerned. Graham and his followers in the first half of the nineteenth century believed in reforming the United States' diet, making them eat more wholesome food, which would stop them from being gluttons. He linked food with excitement, claiming that his plain abstinent diet would prevent over-excitement; which of course included sexual excitement. Graham believed that a diet of whole grains, vegetables, and pure water would prevent gluttony and sexual excess. Graham saw gluttony as the primary evil of nineteenth century American society. Gluttony brought about social disruption and civic disorders as well as indigestion and illness. Graham's relating abundant eating with sexual impropriety, shows that in the past sexual appetite was connected to food and eating and it was seen to be relevant and problematic for both sexes. Eating excessively was seen to be bad for one's health and for society's morality.<sup>3</sup> During the early nineteenth century both sexes were held responsible for the lowering of society's morality, but by the late nineteenth and into the first half of the twentieth century it became problematic only for women to have a prominent appetite. Therefore, women had to be more cautious in what and how they ate; women had to appear chaste and in order to do so they needed to eat delicate foods, with decorum, and were never to be seen eating too much.

During the Victorian period in order not to appear overly sexual, women were encouraged to eat in a "feminine way". The ideal of Victorian femininity was the woman who put her soul over her body. A woman with a thin body symbolized the rejection of "all carnal appetites" as sex was linked to food and hunger and to be

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<sup>3</sup>Hillel Schwartz, *Never Satisfied: A Cultural History of Diets, Fantasies and Fat*, (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 18-19.



“hungry, in any sense, was a social faux-pas.”<sup>4</sup> Women were not allowed to appear sexually promiscuous and as showing an appetite for food was symbolic of showing an appetite for sex, they were to refrain from eating certain foods and any food in vast quantities. This helped formulate the idea that certain foods were gendered. Virginia Jenkins explores the idea of food being gendered in her article “Bananas: Women’s Food.” Jenkins claims that bananas were gendered during the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Jenkins argues that bananas were seen as women’s food as women became associated with sugar and having a “sweet-tooth.” Jenkins credits this to the idea that when sugar became more readily available in the nineteenth century, it was a good way to get energy quickly. However, the breadwinner was still given meat because they were deemed to need to have the best diet due to their importance in providing their family with food. This meant that men still regularly ate meat, while women ate sugar and sugary items in larger amounts; leading to the association that women and children had a sweet tooth.<sup>5</sup> When bananas became readily available in the U.S. at the turn of the twentieth century they became one of the ways women could satisfy their cravings for sweet items. Jenkins also discusses how a woman eating banana was problematic in the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Due to its obvious phallic connotations, the banana posed a problem when women ate them. In order to avoid women looking overtly sexual, advice books recommended women to eat a banana by cutting it up on all occasions except those which were of a very informal nature.<sup>6</sup> Jenkins highlights that men and women were expected to eat different foods, and the way in which they ate also had to be modified in order for women to maintain an air of modesty.

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<sup>4</sup>Joan Jacobs Brumberg, “The Appetite as Voice” in *Food and Culture: A Reader* ed. by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (New York: Routledge, 1997), 170.

<sup>5</sup>Virginia S. Jenkins, “Bananas: Women’s Food” in *Cooking Lessons: The Politics of Gender and Food*, ed. by Sherrie A. Inness, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001), 115.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.* 121.

Jessamyn Neuhaus discusses the idea of food and sex as being intertwined in her article “The Joy of Sex Instruction: Women and Cooking in Marital Sex Manuals, 1920-1963.” Neuhaus explores how marital sex manuals would contain information about sexual issues and techniques along with broader household advice. According to Neuhaus, what other advice they would provide fluctuated between manuals, but they all had one topic in common: cooking. Just as many cookbooks told women that the way to a man’s heart was through his stomach, these marital sex manuals linked food with sex. They announced the importance of cooking and sexual intercourse to a secure and happy marriage. Often using food analogies when discussing sexual attraction and appearance, and vice versa, these manuals expressed what was expected of the genders and what made a happy relationship. A great example Neuhaus gives is from the late 1940s, where the author of an advice manual compared a woman’s appearance to the preparation of food. Claiming that if a meal was served on a “dirty and disorderly” table you would not eat off of it unless you were starving; the same went for a woman’s physical attractiveness: “[y]ou can hardly inspire desire in your husband if you keep your body dirty and in bad shape.”<sup>7</sup> Food imagery was used to explain the importance of sexual attraction, showing how food and sex were undoubtedly connected.

Neuhaus’ article is insightful and explains the intricacy of how a woman’s cooking was vital to the marital home and how marital sex manuals reflected concerns about changing societal norms. This can be seen in Kate Constance’s *How to Get and Keep a Husband: A Christian Businesswoman’s Answer to One of the Most Perplexing Problems of Our Time* published in 1957, which claimed that women

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<sup>7</sup>Jessamyn Neuhaus, “The Joy of Sex Instruction: Women and Cooking in Marital Sex Manuals, 1920-1963,” in *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender, and Race* ed. by Sherrie A. Inness (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 107.

working outside the home threatened the idea of womanhood and masculinity.<sup>8</sup> This idea occurred throughout the 1950s suggesting that women's cooking was a sign of male prestige and privilege. It also denoted the idea that if women were not to cook because they did not have time as they were working outside the home, it could crush the delicate male ego. These manuals were not necessarily reflective of contemporary values; they were more likely to be reactive to changes in society, such as the increase in women working outside the home. Therefore, the idea that the male ego would be shattered if they did not have a weak woman to support, is likely to be a myth they created and society adopted, rather than what people were concerned about on their own accord. Neuhaus argues that the importance placed upon cooking in these sex manuals suggests that women were gendered as domestic beings, and this was vital in their marriage and for their sex life; often having to put their sexual satisfaction second to their marriage's stability, which was secured by their domesticity.<sup>9</sup> Neuhaus only documents what preceded 1963 which confirms that 1963 was a turning point in gender history. It shows that prior to Betty Friedan, women's sexuality was intertwined with their role of housewife, and critically food preparer. Their ability to feed their husbands and remain in shape was deemed vital to their marriage and sex life. The idea that body image was important to attractiveness was prevalent throughout the period of 1963-1981 but as women became more willing to show their sexual appetite through food, it is clear women stopped playing a passive role in regards to sex. They were embracing their own sexual desires and using food to show them, rather than just using food as a way to maintain stability in their marriage.

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid. 105.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid. 108 & 111.

The connection between sex and food was apparent within mainstream popular culture by the 1980s. Susan Bordo argues that the earlier control of women's sexual appetite through food continued into the late twentieth century. She argues that women's sexual appetite was attempted to be curtailed to "prevent the consumption of the body and soul of the male."<sup>10</sup> She describes the 1982 Hall and Oates hit "Maneater," as a perfect example of how society was still trying to control women's sexual appetites. Bordo claims that the song "Maneater" warned men of women's sexual appetite and connected it to the process of eating. She analyses lyrics such as "watch out boys she'll chew you up" and claims that they show that women's sexuality was still being controlled by societal expectations. According to Bordo the lyrics implied that men did not find an actively sexual woman attractive.<sup>11</sup> However, the pages of *Mademoiselle* show that women were willing to show their sexuality and in fact were embracing it. Women may not have embraced their sexuality aggressively, but they certainly had the means and opportunity to enjoy sex and show that they did.

Despite Bordo's assertions, *Mademoiselle* celebrated female sexuality rather than tried to constrain it. By the early 1970s when contraceptives were more readily available *Mademoiselle* included a regular sex advice column called "The Intelligent Woman's Guide To Sex" and sections devoted to sexual advice, which encouraged women's sexuality, showing that *Mademoiselle* embraced the idea of the more sexualized woman. In the February 1981 issue there were articles on vibrators, exercises to improve love making, and information about orgasms.<sup>12</sup> The magazine was also not afraid to connect sex and food as it featured an article on aphrodisiacs

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<sup>10</sup>Susan Bordo, "Hunger as Ideology," in *Eating Culture*, ed. by Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 20.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>*Mademoiselle*, Several articles in February 1981.

exploring “the facts about the fantasy of shortcuts to spectacular sex.”<sup>13</sup>As women were allowed more sexual freedom, the close connection between food and sexuality was celebrated and adopted by women. They were no longer trying to hide the sexual connotations of food, but instead embracing it as they embraced their new found open sexuality.

Women’s new found sexuality was clearly seen throughout *Mademoiselle* by the late 1960s and into the 1970s. In the back section of August 1970 there was an ad for a sex manual called “Sex and Love Today” by Dr. N. Junke. Junke was both a gynecology and psychology expert and helped thousands of unsatisfied couples find imaginative and fulfilling techniques to bring “new ecstasy to [their] marital sex life.”<sup>14</sup>The advertising of the book shows that women were concerned about sex and it was so important to them that they wanted manuals to ensure that they could have creative and satisfying sexual relations with their partner. However, the emphasis on it being for a couple’s “marital sex life” shows that the book expected women to only be concerned with sex when they were married or were intending to get married - or the advertisers were being deliberately cautious. Some of the questions the book promised to discuss were to do with how premarital sex affected marital sex and if masturbation affected performance. This potentially suggests that the book discouraged sex and sexual activity outside of marriage. However, Junke also claims to explain which couples had the best sexual compatibility and the best methods of birth control available in order to maintain enjoyment.<sup>15</sup>The idea that there were some people who were more compatible than others suggests that women were willing to “shop around” for a partner and that women saw sex as being a very important part of their

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, “Aphrodisiacs: How Potent Are Love Potions?”

<sup>14</sup> *Mademoiselle*, Ad for “Sex and Love Today,” August 1970.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

relationship. The inclusion of contraceptive advice also shows that women wanted to have a regular and enjoyable sex life, but without starting a family. This shows a profound change from the attitudes of women of the 1950s when their supposed fulfillment only came from having children. By 1970 women were welcoming a life of sexual liberation without jeopardizing their careers and futures by having children when they did not want them. Although contraceptives were available before 1970, contraceptive advice being given in sex manuals shows that more people were aware of such devices and that they were becoming more accepted within society. As the risk of unexpected children decreased, it allowed women more power and agency in regards to their sexuality.

Junke was not alone in writing sex advice manuals and advertising them in *Mademoiselle*. The very next issue in September 1970 advertised “Now! A Doctor Tells You Everything About Sex That You Were Afraid To Ask Until Now!” Similar to Junke’s book, “Now!” promised to answer questions about sex and sexuality. Some of the areas they promised to enlighten readers about included: male and female genitalia, sex after forty, and even prostitution. Some specific questions they claimed they would answer were: “What is the Japanese form of masturbation – said to be the most unusual in the world?” and “In what cases are nuns allowed to take birth-control pills?” One of the key areas which the book claimed to examine was aphrodisiacs. The book promised to let readers know which foods had been favored as aphrodisiacs throughout history and their true effect on sexual performance.<sup>16</sup> “Now!” shows that men and women were increasingly concerned about sex, their sexuality, and sexual technique. The book recognized that individuals were inquisitive and wanted to learn more in regards to their sexual orientation and urges. By featuring in

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<sup>16</sup>*Mademoiselle*. “Now! A Doctor Tells You Everything About Sex That You Were Afraid To Ask Until Now!,” September 1970.

*Mademoiselle*, the book displayed an increase in the number of *Mademoiselle* readers who were interested in sex and were aware of the connection between food and sex. Women were being encouraged to explore ways to use food as aphrodisiacs to improve their sex life; women were no longer forced to shy away from connotations food items provoked, but were encouraged to experiment with food for sexual pleasure.

Aphrodisiacs were occasionally mentioned in passing between 1963 and 1981, but in February 1981, as a part of the special section on sex in *Mademoiselle*, there was a whole article dedicated to the subject. The article discussed the fact that looking for a “pill, snack or potion that guarantees sexier sex and more and bigger orgasms” was not a new phenomenon and had in fact been desired throughout history.<sup>17</sup> Written by Joann Ellison Rodgers, the article goes through many different drugs which had been rumored to help with sexual performance or enjoyment. They discussed Spanish fly and how it could produce enormous erections, but could also cause convulsions. Drugs such as cocaine and alcohol were dismissed as making no difference by sexologists. Instead, they concluded that the Kinsey report was right in that nothing was better for a good sex life than a healthy diet, enough rest, and plenty of exercise. The main body of the article does not contain information or recipes about ways to increase sex drive or performance. But adjacent to the first part of the article was a complementary feature on “Passionate Nibbles.”

“Passionate Nibbles” included recipes for foods traditionally associated with being aphrodisiacs. Some of the key ingredients included oysters, figs, avocados, bananas and asparagus. Each known aphrodisiac had a description of why they were known to be an aphrodisiac, often with some nutritional information implying that it

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<sup>17</sup>*Mademoiselle*, “Aphrodisiacs: How Potent Are Love Potions?”, February 1981.

did work, and a recipe to create a delicious dish.<sup>18</sup>It is undeniable that by the 1980s it was truly acceptable for women to be seen eating and preparing notoriously provocative and erotic foods. It was so acceptable that they were informed of ways in which to prepare these foods, encouraging them to enjoy and enhance their sexual experiences. Information about aphrodisiacs was likely to have featured in the sex manuals Neuhaus analyzed, but they would have been included for different reasons. Here, it is clear women were given this information for their own personal needs and wants.

Food and sexuality were celebrated in ways other than providing information about aphrodisiacs. One of the winners of *Mademoiselle's* Annual College Poetry and Photography Competitions in August 1970 was a poem called "Bread" by Judith Kumin. Kumin's poem openly compared bread-making to having sex. She created erotic imagery when she described making bread as well as directly addressing the comparison. The opening line to the poem could not be any more explicit in its association of the two: "Making bread is like making love." Kumin further connected the process of making bread with having sex, as she compared kneading dough to how her partner moved in bed; "It rises the way you rise, / slow and hunchbacked."<sup>19</sup>The poem clearly evoked erotic images for the reader so they themselves could see the similarity. The idea of procreation also entered into the poem, as the poem culminated in a simile that the bread she produced was like the children they could produce in the future. This poem shows how women were beginning to become comfortable with their sexuality and openly discussing it by producing poetry for magazine competitions. In winning the competition it shows how *Mademoiselle* accepted that women were comfortable and willing to talk, and read, about their sexuality in a

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<sup>18</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "Passionate Nibbles," February 1981.

<sup>19</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "Annual College Poetry and Photography Competitions: Bread," August 1970.



popular magazine. Food was traditionally seen as being sensual but women were discouraged from embracing or revealing its sexual connotations, but that had changed by 1970. As women were encouraged to embrace their sexuality by the women's movement and sexual revolution of the 1960s, they also embraced what they had been previously prevented from doing: the connection of food and sex. Women were being allowed to address food in a way that had formerly been a male-only privilege.

*Mademoiselle* tried to inform its readers about what men wanted by featuring columns written by men. In the early 1970s, there was "Man Talk" which discussed issues the columnists' deemed important. In September 1973, David Newman and Robert Benton wrote about a psychiatrist's assertion that the reason for the increased amount of suicides was due to increased pressure placed on women as a consequence of the women's movement.<sup>20</sup> They dismissed the psychiatrist's assertions but used it as a base to discuss how the women's movement led to more women asking men out on a date. Consequentially, women were sharing the same experiences of pain and humiliation caused by rejection. Newman and Benton encouraged women to embrace this new power and the pains that went with it, especially as it would mean women empathized with the suitors they had rejected in the past.<sup>21</sup> *Mademoiselle* was welcoming a male opinion on issues that affected women and wanted women to understand certain issues from a male perspective. This suggests there was a certain amount of male influence on the magazine showing that men still influenced many areas of American culture. However, it gave women advice on how to interact with men and what they should expect from them.

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<sup>20</sup> *Mademoiselle*, "Man Talk," September 1973.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

By the late 1970s, *Mademoiselle's* "Man Talk" had transformed into the regular column "His" written by Peter Rainer. In the August 1980 edition, Rainer wrote "What it takes to wow a woman." Rainer surmised that the perfect height for a gentleman was about six foot and that no matter what his weight a man should avoid large muscles as "women... don't want to go out with Charles Atlas."<sup>22</sup> Rainer also claimed that no matter who the man was, he always looked good in a suit and that education was no longer as important as it had once been in impressing and attracting a woman. At first the inclusion of this article in *Mademoiselle* seems misplaced. Why is Rainer telling women what it takes for a man to wow and woo a woman? Surely, this would be better suited in *Esquire*, as it would help men know how to attract the opposite sex? However, it is not as misplaced as it may first appear. Rainer wrote the article for *Mademoiselle* as he wanted to show what women really should have expected from a man, and what their contemporaries were supposedly attracted to. In a way, Rainer was homogenizing what women should have found attractive and expected from a prospective partner; he was controlling their expectations. It can be argued that Rainer's article intended to encourage women to have the same taste in men and therefore make it easier for men to be deemed as a catch for women. What is interesting is that it denoted that men and women were concerned with what the opposite sex generally found attractive and that, women at least, wanted to know what their fellow sex also deemed appealing.

*Esquire* also included sex and sexual attraction in its issues; it even included articles documenting and supplying sexual fantasies. In December 1968, the cover story was "4 naughty dreams to last you till March," with model Lauren Hutton's face made up in four different ways. Her right eye represented "the Sadist," her left eye

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<sup>22</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "His," August 1980.

“the Virgin,” the left side of her mouth “the French Maid,” and finally the right side of her mouth “the Babysitter.” The respective article was titled “A Message of Importance for the Serious Reader” and consisted of four photographs of Hutton, one for each fantasy.<sup>23</sup> The article explained its presence in the magazine, which confirmed that such an overt display of sexuality was unusual for the magazine. The article claimed *Esquire* included these images because “[t]here are busy and perilous days ahead and we’re not going to have time to fool around with a lot of girl stories this year.”<sup>24</sup> Due to the need for urgency, *Esquire* included the images of what analysts and sociologists claimed to have been the “archetypal fantasies of the normal healthy American male.” The readers were meant to keep these images for a few months so that *Esquire* could focus on more pressing matters that were concerning America in 1969. This article showed that *Esquire* was aware and willing to provide content of a sexual nature for its readers. However, it also indicated that this was unusual as it was there in order to compensate for its intent to focus on things they deemed more important in the coming months.

*Esquire* in the late 1960s obviously did not see itself as being an avenue for male fantasy, but rather a magazine which documented current affairs. *Esquire* made these images more overt than they would usually have included to compensate for the predicted increase in serious content. However, this article was the cover article, which shows that *Esquire* was well aware that sex and women sold magazines. Yet, they did not want the inclusion of women in their magazine to outshine their dedication to serious journalism. *Esquire* included these images and forewarned its readers that it was going to be the last feature including “girl stories,” whilst simultaneously attracting new readers interested in sexualized images of

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<sup>23</sup>*Esquire*, Front Cover story “4 naughty dreams to last you till March,” December 1968.

<sup>24</sup>*Esquire*. “A Message of Importance for the Serious Reader...”, December 1968.

women. *Esquire* did not want to jeopardize the integrity of the magazine, but recognized that the inclusion of sex and women was vital in selling the magazine; and they were not afraid to be reasonably explicit to do it.

The explicit display of male fantasy in *Esquire* is something Susan Bordo claims a women's magazine would not have been able to do, as women were not even allowed to articulate their hunger. According to Bordo, it was acceptable for men to feel hungry and talk about their appetites throughout the twentieth century, because a hungry appetite was the "make of the manly".<sup>25</sup> Bordo argues that men were allowed to be hungry and to vocalize their hunger due to their sexual appetites being acknowledged and accepted within society. As women's sexuality was not accepted within society, they were not allowed to voice and show their hunger as devouring food went against conceived ideas of femininity. By showing their appetite for food, women would have been inappropriately displaying their sexual appetite. However, men were encouraged to show their sexual appetite and masculinity through eating. What men ate and drank was a sign of their power, prestige, and manliness.

The idea that men could display their masculinity by eating certain foods and showing their hunger led to men consuming items that made them look more powerful and manly. The readers of *Esquire* were encouraged to dine at gourmet restaurants and drink elaborate cocktails to show knowledge and prestige. *Esquire's* depiction of "The Night They Perfected Roast Sirloin Beef" demonstrates how men were encouraged to eat certain foods and *Esquire* readers were encouraged to dine at fine restaurants.<sup>26</sup> "The Night They Perfected Roast Sirloin Beef" is an illustration of clientele enjoying a roasted joint of beef. The illustration was set at the lavish

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<sup>25</sup>Bordo, "Hunger as Ideology," 16-17

<sup>26</sup>*Esquire*, "The Night They Perfected Roast Sirloin Beef", March 1961.

restaurant Simpson's-in-the-Strand, London, and had a central figure sharpening a carving knife over a large joint of roast beef. What is extraordinary about this image is the lack of women within it; not a single patron depicted within the picture is a woman. All the reader can see is male customers and waiters. The illustration featured in 1961, and although it is earlier than the period of examined in this thesis it helps show the culture and expectations surrounding men and women in regards to the food they ate. The lack of female presence suggests that women did not appreciate meat to the extent that these men did and that enjoying meat was a defining characteristic of being a man. Men and women were expected to eat different foods to reflect their supposed differing character traits and appeal to the opposite sex. A woman would want a man who knew where to dine and ate meat, whereas men wanted a demure woman who did not display her appetite.

The link between consumption, male appetite, and attraction is evident through the alcoholic advertisements which cluttered the pages of *Esquire* throughout 1963-1981. A large majority of the ads for alcohol referred to or inferred sexual attraction. Alcoholic ads that claimed that their product would attract women, appeared throughout the whole period examined in this thesis, and beyond. They appeared as early as 1960 and continued into the late 1980s. In the July 1960 issue there was an ad for Stregga, an Italian Liqueur, which stated that "when two people drink it together, they are united forever."<sup>27</sup> The tagline suggests that drinking Stregga with a woman would make her his permanent sexual partner. In the 1980s the messages were similar, but more direct and with less longevity. Both an ad for Absolut Vodka and an ad for Bombay Gin directly used a form of the word attraction. Absolut Vodka has an image of a cocktail glass bending towards the bottle of vodka as if there were a

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<sup>27</sup>*Esquire*. Ad for "Stregga," July 1960.

magnetic charge between the two under the tagline “Absolut Attraction.”<sup>28</sup> Bombay Gin visually depicts what a man could attract by drinking it (an attractive woman lounging in a bikini on a sun-lounger) and saying that, “Nothing Attracts Like the Imported Taste of Bombay Gin.”<sup>29</sup> The message of both ads is clear – if you drink this beverage you will attract the opposite sex. Although the images they used show different elements of attraction both ads suggested that drinking their brand gave men the edge and would attract women. The idea that drinking certain drinks would increase a man’s animal magnetism and attractiveness to women was used throughout the 1960s, ‘70s, and ‘80s. Attraction being continually used, showed that men’s knowledge of alcohol, including which brands were best, would reward them with female attention. These companies were suggesting that women liked a man who knew what to drink and, of course, the beverage to drink was the one they were advertising.

In December 1968, an ad for Martini & Rossi reinforced the idea that catching a woman was possible when drinking the right drink. The ad showed a man in safari attire leaning against a cage enclosing a woman dressed in leopard print. Clearly in the African bush, they had two cocktail glasses filled with Martini & Rossi vermouth just in front of the cage. The caption pronounced “What a catch! Martini & Rossi Imported Vermouth for cocktails that purr.”<sup>30</sup> The ad implied that by drinking Martini & Rossi a man would be able to catch his woman. A man drinking such a captivating drink showed a woman he had the prestige and knowledge to choose the best. This would automatically attract a woman, and help him catch her. In the same issue there was an ad for House of Lords Gin, which similarly claimed that drinking, and giving,

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<sup>28</sup>*Esquire*, Ad for “Absolut Attraction,” May 1984.

<sup>29</sup>*Esquire*, Ad for “Bombay Gin,” February 1988.

<sup>30</sup>*Esquire*, Ad for “Martini & Rossi,” December 1968.

certain beverages showed prestige. The ad called for readers to “Help support the class system. Give England’s noble gin.”<sup>31</sup> The ad suggested that there was some sort of class system in the U.S., or there should have been, and that buying good quality English gin would allow their purchasers to become the aristocracy of America. Amongst the twenty-three ads for either alcoholic drinks or mixers in the April 1972 issue, there was an ad for Grand Marnier. The ad provided a “tribute to Grand Marnier from three of the greatest restaurants of the world.”<sup>32</sup> As chapter one discussed, fine-dining and gourmet restaurants were a way for men to show their status and knowledge. That Grand Marnier used “the greatest” restaurants to promote itself, showed how prestigious their product was. Like other beverages at the time Grand Marnier claimed that they were an esteemed product that the best would buy and drink. Therefore, for the consumer to similarly become the best, they needed to have their product. Grand Marnier used this as a selling point, but other brands such as Martini & Rossi used their prestige not only as a way for men to be seen as the best, refined and knowledgeable, but also to directly attract and “catch” women.

The notion that women would be more attracted to men who drank the right drinks, is closely linked to the idea that how “manly” a man was could be determined by his choice of drink. The idea that what a man drank defined how “manly” he was, was directly addressed in ads, including 7Up. In 1964, 7Up advertised itself as the “Man’s Mixer” as it did not disguise the taste of whiskey.<sup>33</sup> Almost ten years later, in 1973, the idea that a real man liked to be able to taste his alcohol reoccurs in the ad for Myer’s Rum. Myer’s Rum prided itself on being strong enough to make a “rum and

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<sup>31</sup> *Esquire*, Ad for “House of Lords Gin,” December 1968.

<sup>32</sup> *Esquire*, Ad for “Grand Marnier,” April 1972.

<sup>33</sup> *Esquire*, Ad for “7Up,” February 1964.

cola taste like a rum and cola. Not just like a cola.”<sup>34</sup> Alcohol and mixers would expose the real men, who would then be admired by other men and become more attractive to women. These ads appeared frequently throughout the period, which suggests that men were continually using their ability to attract a woman as a sign of their masculinity.

Alcohol was not only shown in *Esquire* to be a way to differentiate men from other men, but also to show America’s superiority on the world stage. In January 1964 *Esquire* printed an article which compared the cocktails of the U.S.A. with their Cold War rivals, the Soviet Union. The comparison was shown through images on a double-page spread, with Russia on one side and the U.S. on the other. At the bottom of the respective pages were: “The Russian Way” and “The American Way.” There was just one drink above “The Russian Way” a simple glass of straight vodka. On the American side there were nineteen different cocktails in a variety of colors and different sized, and shaped, glasses.<sup>35</sup> The suggestion here was that America’s more sophisticated and educated array of drinks showed that the United States was a stronger and better developed nation. The comparison between the Soviet Union and the U.S. shows that alcohol was used as a way to compare power and sophistication. From this and the advertisements for alcoholic beverages, it can be easily assumed that men used alcohol as a way to display their knowledge, sophistication and supremacy in order to attract women and differentiate themselves from lesser men.

Men and women did not just embrace food and drink as a way to show their sexuality and attract the other sex separately. Men and women between 1963 and 1981 embraced the sexual connotations of food together by going out to dinner. This

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<sup>34</sup>*Esquire*, Ad for “Myer’s Rum,” September 1973.

<sup>35</sup>*Esquire*, “The Russian Way: The American Way,” January 1964.



happened increasingly throughout this period and as anthropologist E.N. Anderson asserts, going out to dinner is still the most popular and successful type of date.<sup>36</sup> Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz talk about how going on dinner-dates became more popular in the 1970s: according to the National Association of Restaurants the U.S. restaurant industry sales went from \$42.8 billion in 1970 to \$119.6 billion in 1980.<sup>37</sup> Scapp and Seitz explain in their book *Eating Culture* that eating out was a way for people to meet and develop relationships, as restaurants became important arenas for meeting others as well as being a place to eat.<sup>38</sup> *Esquire* drew upon this new area of sexual liaison by claiming that its readers knew “how to wine and dine her” in a subscription ad; if a man were to subscribe to *Esquire*, he would have the knowledge of the best gourmet restaurants that would woo and attract a lady. They even claimed that *Esquire* was “a catalyst for his ideas.”<sup>39</sup> The man with confidence gained knowledge and the ability to woo a woman by reading their magazine, and one of the most important lessons he could learn? Where the right restaurants were to take her to.

*Mademoiselle* also reflected the changing trend towards men and women celebrating the connection between sex and food together. An example of this was when *Mademoiselle* encouraged men and women to cook seductive meals together. This can be seen in September 1977 when an article described how a young working couple shared their space and entertaining together.<sup>40</sup> It showed the couple in close proximity to each other, suggesting cooking and eating together allowed couples to

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<sup>36</sup> E.N. Anderson *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 134.

<sup>37</sup> National Restaurant Association [www.restaurant.org/pdfs/research/state/newhampshire.pdf](http://www.restaurant.org/pdfs/research/state/newhampshire.pdf) [Accessed 02/06/12].

<sup>38</sup> Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz, “Introduction” in *Eating Culture*. Ed. by Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 9.

<sup>39</sup> *Esquire*, Ad for *Esquire* Subscription “The Knowledgeable Woman,” July 1970.

<sup>40</sup> *Mademoiselle*, “Young Working Couple: How they share space and entertaining,” September 1977.

become more intimate. The April 1977 issue of *Mademoiselle* featured an ad for a recipe book for couples, which was more obvious in its connection with eating, cooking and sex. The ad tried to persuade newly-weds and modern couples to buy their recipe book by claiming that it provided them with recipes that could give them “[s]eductive, romantic, candlelight dinners.”<sup>41</sup> The recipe book showed that men and women were making dinner a way to romance one another and a way to show their sexual attraction. Both inside and outside the home, couples were increasingly coming together over food and using eating as a way to meet new sexual partners and show their sexual desires.

Food has been associated with sex for centuries, but it was only in the late twentieth century that women were able to embrace the connection. As the women’s movement progressed and the sexual revolution further evolved, women became outwardly sexual for the first time in over a century. Their new found freedom of sexual expression allowed women to articulate their hunger for both food and sex. As *Mademoiselle* showed, throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, women were expressing and exploring their sexuality and often brought food into that. Although food was not mentioned in every issue in direct relation to sex, the association featured unashamedly. From poetry, to information about aphrodisiacs, to recipe books for seductive meals, women embraced the connection between sex and food, showing that there was at least some positive change to women’s relationship with food. As a consequence of the women’s movement success in liberating and empowering women sexually, women were allowed to express their sexual appetite. Women were no longer forced to avoid certain foods due to sexual connotations, or restricted to eat only a certain amount in order to appear demure. As being associated

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<sup>41</sup>*Mademoiselle*, Ad for ‘Cookbook for Couples,’ April 1977.

with sex was becoming acceptable for women within society, they were able to embrace food without fear of being chastised. It is arguable that their food consumption was still controlled due to the increasing preference for thin women, but women did change how they interacted with food. Women were able to use food as a way to display their sexuality, to find a sexual partner, and improve their sex life.

Men used food and drink as a way to woo the ladies and show their prestige and authority. Alcoholic advertisements claimed that if men drank their product, they would be choosing a good quality product, therefore showing their knowledge of fine beverages, or (but often as consequence) that by drinking that product they would be more likely to attract a woman. Men were also seen to be able to attract women, or impress other men, with their knowledge of fine-dining restaurants and gourmet cuisine. These advertisements and articles showed that men used food and drink as an avenue to show their intellect and authority. Men were comfortable with using food and drink as ways to explore their sexuality and not to shy away from any sexual connotations brought about by eating or drinking certain products.

Women broke the taboos associated with food and sex more and more as the twentieth century advanced. Women were no longer restrained by the fear of being identified as sexual and being dishonored. They embraced the sexuality of food and its use as a tool to meet sexual partners and its potential to improve their sex life. Women were accepting and celebrating themselves as sexual beings and using food and drink as a way to express that. Men consistently had this ability, which was reflected in *Esquire* from advertisements and articles. Men used food and drink to create and show their status in order to attract women and compete with other men. Both sexes embraced and used food as a tool for their sexuality, men had always been

able to do this, but for women it was a new phenomenon. Thanks to the women's movement, women were able to interact with food more freely.

**CONCLUSION: WHAT'S COOKING?: FOOD PREPARATION, WEIGHT  
CONTROL AND APPETITES IN ESQUIRE AND MADEMOISELLE, 1963-1981**

Betty Friedan claimed that magazines were a major contributor to the feminine mystique. She asserted that they promoted the ideal that women gained fulfillment only from their roles as wives and mothers. It was their duty to look after their husbands and children by performing household duties and looking glamorous. Friedan pointed out that women's magazines of the 1950s and early 1960s reinforced this image, as she claimed that in women's magazines "the only passion, the only pursuit, the only goal a woman is permitted is the pursuit of a man. It is crammed full of food, clothing, cosmetics, furniture, and the physical bodies of young women, but where is the world of thought and ideas, the life of the mind and spirit? In the magazine image, women do not work except housework and work to keep their bodies beautiful to get and keep a man."<sup>1</sup> Magazines shaped the ideals of society, but they also reflected them. *Mademoiselle* and *Esquire* were two popular magazines, which shaped and reflected societal expectations and values between 1963 and 1981, when feminists, inspired by Friedan, took on the world and fought for women's rights.

The women's movement brought about change in all corners of society which *Esquire* and *Mademoiselle* reflected. Women became players within the public arena, entering into politics and the job market, in numbers they previously had not

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<sup>1</sup>Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique with An Introduction by Anna Quindlen*, (New York, Norton and Company, Inc., 2001) p. 83

been seen. This meant that *Mademoiselle* had to provide career and sex advice as well as the usual information on cosmetics and fashion. *Esquire* started to reflect a change only in the 1970s and into the 1980s when it decreased the amount of fiction and articles about current affairs to feature more lifestyle and humorous articles such as their “Dubious Achievements Awards.” That said, neither magazine completely changed its approach. This correlates with the changing experiences men and women had with food. Some changes did occur, particularly in regards to how women interacted with food, but not to the extent that there was a revolution in eating or cooking. Men and women were interacting with food in new, but not necessarily positive, ways as a consequence of the changes caused by the women’s movements.

During 1963-1981 men and women prepared food for different reasons. Men only prepared food when they desired to display their expertise and recreate the dishes of the fine-dining establishments they frequented. In contrast, women were expected and encouraged to create home-cooked meals for themselves, friends and family. It could be concluded that for men cooking was a hobby but for women it was mostly a duty. *Esquire* encouraged men to eat at restaurants and offered elaborate recipes to recreate their gourmet dining experiences in the home. These dishes were too complex to create on a day to day basis, showing that according to *Esquire* men were not cooking every day meals for their family. In contrast, *Mademoiselle* supplied women with advice on how to create home-cooked meals quickly and easily so they could feed their family on a daily basis. Even whilst an increasing amount of women were entering the workforce and embarking on their own careers, women were still expected to be the primary feeders of the household. In the late 1970s, *Mademoiselle* started to reflect women wanting a change by including articles about couples sharing the burden of housework. However, *Esquire* did not reflect this change, suggesting

men did not want to take on more domestic duties such as cooking, which confirms that the expectation for women to be food preparers was constant between 1963 and 1981.

However, the idea that women could cook for enjoyment did emerge during this period. By the late 1970s, there were signs that women were encouraged to take up cooking as a hobby. At the end of the period, women were starting to take pleasure in creating food and not see it as a mere necessity. This can be seen from the increased appearance of articles about food and recipes within *Mademoiselle* by the early 1980s as well as the change in content. Despite this small change, men and women's roles in regards to food preparation did not change. Even though feminists tackled and targeted housework and tried to free women from the confines of the home, they did not succeed in freeing women from the bondage of daily food preparation as they did not directly address the issue of food. Men continued to be connoisseurs of fine-dining restaurants and amateur chefs, whilst their wives, partners, and mothers continued to supply meals for the family on a daily basis.

On one occasion *Mademoiselle* declared that women ate for only two reasons: energy and weight-control.<sup>2</sup> This, combined with an emphasis for women to be thin, led to women particularly in the late 1970s and early 1980s wanting to know how to lose weight through new and effective diets. Between 1963 and 1981 *Mademoiselle* increasingly featured dietary aids and ways for women to lose weight. In the 1960s and into the early 1970s diet advice and tips appeared sporadically throughout the magazine. But during the 1970s the number of dietary ads and articles increased in number so much that in the early 1980s dietary advice featured in every single issue. The increase of dieting advice in *Mademoiselle* in the late 1970s and early

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<sup>2</sup>*Mademoiselle*, "The Gain Energy Diet," January 1981.

1980s, was due to several reasons including: the new desirability of the thin woman, the need for a magazine that covered a multitude of issues, the obesity rates, dietary products became readily available and a lucrative business, and women's increased presence in the workplace. However, men would have been affected by the same issues, yet there was not an increase in dietary advice or ads in *Esquire*. The lack of an increase in dietary information in *Esquire* demonstrates that men did not feel the same pressure to be thin that women did. Men were able to enjoy their food and use exercise as the means to keep fatness at bay. For women, staying in shape was all about eating certain foods and restraining their appetites so they could be thin. Food and body image were used as ways to control women and inhibit their physical presence within society.

There were never as many dietary advertisements or articles in *Esquire* as compared to *Mademoiselle*, but they did feature within *Esquire*, which is important. The continual appearance of diet aids from the early 1960s onwards suggests that men were also concerned about their physical appearance; men too were conscious of their weight and physique. They were not encouraged and pressured to the extent women were, but they still felt some pressure to be a certain shape. This differs from previous analysis by scholars who have concluded that the pressure on men to stay in shape only began in the 1980s. Men were part of the consumer culture of the second half of the twentieth century, which meant that men, just like women, were subjected to images and expectations to conform to. It is wrong to assume that men were not being exposed to ideas of how they should behave, what they should look like, and what they should buy.

There was an area in which women's relationship with food changed and came to resemble men's relationship with food - food and sexual appetite. *Mademoiselle*



and *Esquire* both included articles and advertisements that discussed sex and attraction. *Esquire* included ads which alluded to sexual prowess, as products advertised themselves as being symbolic of a consumer's prestige and that their product would attract the opposite sex. In particular ads for alcoholic beverages associated their products with sexual attraction. Alcoholic advertisements claimed that if men drank their product, they would be choosing a product of good quality and therefore showing their knowledge of fine beverages and consequentially they would attract women. Men were also seen to be able to attract women with their knowledge of fine-dining restaurants and gourmet cuisine. Men were comfortable with using food and drink as ways in which to explore and display their sexuality, and women started to follow suit between 1963 and 1981.

Women had historically been discouraged from flaunting the connection between sexuality and food. It was only when women's sexuality had been established and more widely accepted within society that they started to publicly embrace the connection between sex and food. As the women's movement progressed and the sexual revolution developed, women became publicly sexual for the first time in centuries. Their new freedom of sexual expression allowed women to articulate their hunger for both food and sex. *Mademoiselle* showed, throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, that women were expressing and exploring their sexuality and often used food to do it. Women celebrated their sexuality through food by writing poems, trying to find aphrodisiacs and openly associating eating on a date with sex. Women were allowed to express their sexual appetite through food. Women were no longer forced to avoid certain foods due to their sexual connotation, or forced to eat set amounts in fear of appearing overtly sexual. They were able to embrace food without fear of being chastised, as being associated with sex was becoming acceptable within society.

Although women's food consumption was still controlled by society's increasing preference for thin women, there was a change in how they interacted with food. Women were able to use food as a way to display their sexuality, to find a sexual partner, and improve their sex life.

As the women's movement managed to positively affect women's relationship with food in regards to sex and food by targeting women's sexuality, could women have achieved more equality with men by 1981 if the women's movement had directly addressed the issue of food? The most likely answer is yes. If feminists had directly addressed women's role as feeder and food server to the family, they would have been addressing the subservient role women experienced within the house. Although they complained about household drudgery, they did not directly address the task of cooking, so women remained subordinate within the home to their husbands or partners. Later in the period *Mademoiselle* showed articles of couples sharing the housework which shows that there was some change in their opinion about women's roles by the late 1970s. This change was late within the period and part of the general progression of the movement. But as *Esquire* did not reflect a change, it is hard to tell how widespread this idea was and exactly how involved men became with cooking and everyday chores by 1981. It is safe to say that women were still expected to be the primary family feeder until the early 1980s and beyond, showing how the feminist movement did not address an important area that allowed women to remain subordinate to men. Had the women's movement directly addressed how women remained subservient because of their duties as family feeder, women may have been able to share the burden with men sooner, and been able to further embrace their new place in the public world. Had the women's movement addressed women's relationship with food, they may have also been able to prevent

the increased pressure placed on women to be thin. If feminists had critiqued the idea that women needed to be thin and deduced that it was a way to control women and weaken them, there may have been more women celebrating food and delving into a world of gourmet just as men did. It is impossible to know what could have happened, but it can be said that in ignoring the issue of food, feminists did not address a key issue which affected everyone's lives and helped separate the genders.

To conclude, not much changed in regards to men's relationship with food. Men remained interested in fine-dining, not only for genuine interest but also as a marker of wisdom and prestige. They did not cook often, but when they did, they recreated elaborate dishes from gourmet restaurants. Throughout the period of 1963-1981, men had the freedom to eat as they liked, using exercise as the means to obtaining the perfect male physique. Men also continually experienced freedom in expressing their appetite, both for food and sex. The expectation for women to create home-cooked food for the family also remained constant between 1963 and 1981. Women maintained the role as feeder throughout the eighteen year period, which ensured women remained subordinate to men within the home. However, women's relationship with food did experience some changes, but, unfortunately, they were not all positive. As the thin woman increasingly became the model of attractiveness women became more exposed to the need to diet causing them to further control what they ate. Women were being forced to have a dubious relationship with food as it could lead to them being unattractive; meaning women did not see food as an avenue of enjoyment to the same extent men did. The need for stricter control over what women ate alongside their remaining subservient to men in the home meant that food became a restricting force on women. Fortunately, there were also some positive changes as women were allowed to show their sexual appetite through food.

In spite of the advances caused by the women's movement, women were restricted by constraining ideologies in regards to their role as feeder and the need to be thin. On the other hand, men maintained an enjoyment of food and cooking as they were allowed the freedom to eat what they liked and used food and beverages to their advantage in the dating-game. Men's ability to avoid any major changes in regard to the preparation of food is indicative to the lack of positive change for women. Had women been able to escape their subordinate role as feeder, men would have had to take on the role, or there would have been evidence that men and women were starting to share the role. The intensification of women's need to be thin probably reinforced their role as feeder, as they needed to control what they were eating so vigorously in order to not gain weight, they made sure they were in control of what people were eating. The need for women to be thin also undermined their new found freedom to explore their sexuality through food – women who wanted to embrace their sexuality by showing their appetite were limited if they wished to conform to the contemporary ideas of attractiveness. The women's movement brought about incredible change for women in many realms of society. Unfortunately, it did not change women's relationship with food for the better.

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