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Bodies, places and spaces for food taste and waste
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In a darkened auditorium, I project two images to the audience. In one, a picture of mass-produced, perfectly spherical, unblemished red tomatoes. In the other, a picture of some garden tomatoes: stretch-marked, unevenly shaped, blemished, and with slightly different coloration. I ask the group of students and community members assembled at this public talk: "Which tomatoes would you buy?" I have asked this question of audiences around the US, and surveyed distributors and consumers informally in Italy and Brazilⁱ. I have pointed out tomatoes or other produce and queried people in farmers' markets, community centers, convention halls and classrooms. My reasons for the inquiry and the implications of the responses, while seemingly simple questions of taste and consumption, are the basis for my journey in this chapter into the complexities of taste, waste, capital and embodiment that prefigure a preference for tomato (and other food) consumption.ⁱⁱ

To better clarify how these connections become so common sense as to orient us to the taste of our most "natural" of foods, I'll first briefly discuss how critical geographers discuss the connection among space, bodies and identity. Next, I'll look at how critical geography and food communication scholars theorize the connections from economics and embodiment to food and identities. Employing autoethnography to ground this theoretical orientation with/in my standpoint, I then map the relational and performative moves that construct my identity-in-relation to those (present and absent) spaces and people with whom I interact. *Relationality* is foregrounded in this essay as a means through which connections in time/space are emphasized. Connections are understood as discursive (language in use/play) and performative (a *doing* that implicates identities)ⁱⁱⁱ. Through this lens, I describe three public spaces in which I participate: a produce market and its dumpsters/bins and two "community" meals for the food insecure in the Northeastern US and Rome, Italy. I position these scenes at the intersections of taste and waste as they are positioned in the academic literature discussed, as well as through my chosen/avowed embodiments as professor, dumpster diver, amateur chef and community activist. My goal in this autoethnographic exploration is to imagine an approach to food waste that situates it as embodied in space and as a moment of ongoing relations-in-interaction. Doing so has implications for both the food justice and environmental sustainability movements and the bodies, materialities and policies constituted through these discourses.

Relationality, embodiment and space

For many decades, critical geographers and philosophers have recognized that space is not a vacuum but rather a container through which meaning is made of

bodies and identities (Massey 2005). Nonetheless, places and place names often remain disconnected in food justice and critical food scholarship from the meanings made of those who inhabit those locations, as shoppers, laborers or unwanted lingerers, or who are absent all together. Terminology such as food "oases" or "deserts" are often connected implicitly to bodies and mobilities, but from a geographical and demographic standpoint, leaving out both the relational aspects of the discourse and the interactions that construct someone as insider/outsider, researcher/subject, administrator/client or all of these performances simultaneously.

Centers and margins in geography traditionally have been considered in terms of markets (Andrucki & Dickinson 2015). Changing the view to encompass bodies traveling through space can uncover points of contact and interaction, fluidities rather than static hierarchies of material/economic need. In this view, if bodies exist interdependently with other bodies, our idea of space must encompass an understanding of space as relational. Such a relational understanding of space and bodies, while not denying the emphasis on self and other that necessitate geographical distinction, accounts for centrality and or marginality of aspects of identity that emerge in different spaces at different times. Difference is experienced by bodies in spaces that may be positioned as more or less equal, recognized, authorized, etc. (Shome 2003). Massey (2005) notes the crucial role of power in how bodily/discursive trajectories collide or otherwise encounter each other, and how space is controlled and ordered. A relational approach to emplaced meaning making does not discount power, identity or difference but looks at how these become storied experiences and (in/marked) performances with consequences for being, doing, and living.

Extending critical spatial analyses to food, Julie Guthman (in Cook et. al 2011) argues that Marxist analyses often uncover the ruse of big corporate food (exploitation of labor, quantity over quality, etc) but do so in a post hoc fashion that rarely complicates the increasingly obscured neoliberal relationships between value and commodity in the context of time and space. How are commodities constructed and experienced relationally, in performing everyday routines of procuring, preparing, serving, in addition to consuming? How might that experience impact ideas of quality (or taste, etc) differentially? Too often the value of food is determined first by the market and secondly, by the consuming/experiencing body. Yet, if we view value as embodied *and* in the (laboring, preparing, consuming) body, then the intimate relationship between body and the senses must be studied as well. Critical geographers of food with a phenomenological bent, such as Michael Goodman (2016) and Michael Carolan (2011), note the need for such analyses and observe that food taste (and waste) enter into our daily life via relations, emotions, and embodiments.

How do food taste and waste become common "sense" in both physiology and social form? Extending the famous Brillat-Savarin quote, "Tell me what you eat and I'll tell you who you are," Carlita Greene and Janet Cramer (2011) observe that communication scholars bring to food studies a focus on just how identities are communicated to others through activities and the mediation thereof of production, sourcing, preparation and consumption of food. I add to these considerations

qualities of taste and waste associated with things in-relation-to identities. Carolan argues that we only really know food through our lived experience of it. He asks, "what happens to our understanding of 'food quality' as we become increasingly conditioned to eating and cooking with industrialized [or I would argue any] food. . . How are our understandings of, say, apples and beef [or tomatoes] shaped by our lived experiences of these phenomena?" (2011 2). Carolan prioritizes the body in that lived experience of taste, and indeed embodiment is at the core of the approach to place and the politics of waste and taste taken here. However, this essay places bodies in interaction as both experiencing and always already situated via social, economic and political mobility (as un/comfortable, un/natural) before and after those experiences.

As alternative food movements have become increasingly central to food politics, more academic attention is being paid to the discourses through which identities are constructed in authentic and alternative foodspaces. Instead of simply labeling food deserts in urban and rural environments, some geographers of food (e.g., Cook 2011; Guthman, 2014; Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Slocum 2011) have studied the ways which race, ethnicity, gender and class are implicated in food spaces. These scholars are interested in the various means by which social identities are (re) constituted and represented as inherent parts of urban, rural, obesogenic or leptogenic environments. Less studied are the ways that spaces for and discourses about food taste and waste situate identities along a continuum of taste and amidst dialectics of autonomy/dependence, safe/dangerous, clean/dirty, etc. (Cooks 2018). As well, embodiment, for Michael Carolan and other food scholars, remains more or less embedded in individual experiences rather than interactions: thus, meanings for food are focused on sensing/sensuous bodies and acts of production, preparation or consumption, rather than in the differing constructions of meaning amidst often unequal relations and spaces.

Michael Goodman (2016) recently called for critical geographers to study the "radical relationalities" that construct meanings of and for food, implying considerations of taste, authenticity, and incorporation. For Goodman, radical relationality brings into relief the ways food is constructed not as an object but as subjectivity in and through relations of bodies, matter, social connection and contingency. Nonetheless, in practice relationality remains on the meso level: theorized as structural relations in practice, rather than moments/spaces of interaction, embodied and performative as subjectivity and materiality. This paper takes up Goodman's call, extending the theorization of relationality to encompass communicative practices with particular attention to the ways performances of food taste and food waste are embodied, relational and intersectional---always messy and never simply about matter, substance or subsistence. Food and waste are named and measured as objects, as quantities either consumed or left behind. Yet food and food waste are never experienced statically, but incorporated into bodily processes of eating or wasting. Food travels from spaces of pre-use to use to disuse and from value to neglect, and along the way our relationships to each other--as producer, provider, server distributor, consumer--mark determinations of use, status and value. Although this journey is necessarily always in process, research on

how meaning is made of food and/in space must acknowledge the positioned and embodied viewpoints from which research emerges.

Autoethnography: (Dis)locating my body in foodspace

Autoethnography can function inter-relationally as a conversation among geographies of food spaces (deserts, oases, etc.), bodies, food, (not)food and the political and social structures and performances that offer constraints and possibilities. Autoethnography considers how and whose bodies (mine, yours and ours) are implicated in these spaces as well as how and where bodies are displaced through raced, classed, national, etc. ideologies of health, taste and consumerism. Autoethnography has been defined by Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner as “an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural” (2000 739). What is personal and cultural in autoethnography is also political (Madison and Hamera) and this approach to research often points to the previously invisible, whether in the hegemonic texts and performances of the researcher, research, or audience. Tami Spry refers to autoethnography as “a self-narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with other social contexts” (2006 710). A term often invoked in the context of socially constructed categories of selfhood, situatedness here also implicates spatial and bodily relationships: literally and metaphorically measuring distance between food taste, waste and embodied performances thereof. Autoethnography requires reflection on the construction of a “self” and the ways that “self” is bound to the subjective and objective knowledges produced in and through research. The self can never be a completed whole, nor can it be completely fragmented or quantified as self and/or other. Nonetheless, it can be disrupted, with those ruptures pointing to possibilities, of different spaces and different interactions.

In food justice research, the position/location of the researcher is rarely accounted for with-in the spaces in which they interact. As a white, middle class, cis-gendered female, US citizen with educational privilege I am located in relation to issues of access, waste, and justice with-in social and geographic distance mediated by choice and autonomy over my diet. That I choose to traverse and engage food secure and insecure spaces marks me and my privilege in ways that are both complex and immediately identifiable to those marginalized in ways I am not aware of. At times, I have either been viewed as belonging in this or that space, or as not belonging, depending on my clothing, appearance and actions. I may be identified as food secure or insecure based on where I am located spatially in relation to the shelter or dumpster and on who is viewing (e.g., patrons, personnel and clients). My identity is co-constructed with the spaces of the neighborhood, the market, and even the cars in the parking lot.

Thus, while privileged, my body is not a stable attribute of class, among other identifiers of capital. At food shelters, I have been interviewed by news crews who assumed that I was a client, and I have been physically tackled while walking down the street by store security because I “looked like” someone who had shoplifted in the store. My choice, privilege, and power is not predetermined to be dominant

and/or oppressive in, or across all interactions, but is, like my embodiment, produced *in relation* to others. My body is a discursive and performative force that impacts, is visible or may remain invisible, but, nonetheless, has social and political consequences. Building on the work of critical geographers, and other cultural studies and food performance scholars, I view the construction and de-valuation of spaces and identities as “inside/outside” of taste, capital, and society. Performance, much like what Goodman (2016) calls visceral geographies, unfixes us from the discursive markers that determine “good,” “bad,” “abject,” “unsafe,” or “impure.”

Looking first at the space of the dumpster, I explore the various ways in which dumpsters and divers have been characterized in relation to food, waste and taste. Analyzing my own embodied privilege in relation to my various attempts at dumpster diving, I look at how this space for refuse/the refused and for recovery marks my own and others' bodies. The second space I examine is the food shelter, or more specifically the community meals served by two shelters using, in part, reclaimed food. In each of these spaces my focus is on how taste and waste are constituted and performed in relation to the procurement, preparation, service and consumption of food.

Dumpster/Bin relationalites

At dusk, I turn into the parking lot and slowly approach the dumpsters in the back of the produce market, checking to see first if anyone else is already busy taking food from the produce bin. There are three dumpsters: one for cardboard, one for plastic and one for produce, but all three are often mixed together in the same bin. The few small produce markets in this large city with many food access, employment and public health concerns often cater to the varied ethnicities and nationalities of the local neighborhood. This market sells vegetables common to Latin American, Eastern European, and Southeast Asian diets. Also, they often buy seconds or rejected produce from distributors and sell them at a slightly reduced price from the regional chain markets. Markets such as this one are easily distinguished from the larger supermarkets and upscale food retailers in nearby cities by, among other things, their lack of signage for and interest in what is locally sourced or organic.

Sometimes there's a Jaguar parked behind the market and a nicely dressed older white man takes fruit and vegetables out of the dumpster and puts them in a large roller bag suitcase before loading them in his car. Other times, there's a woman in a newer model SUV loading several paper bags with her finds. The only people I have ever seen taking from the dumpsters have been white, in contrast to those who load the dumpsters or who shop at this market in a working-class neighborhood at the edge of the city. In fact, I do shop here, and frequently. On a recent evening, I asked an employee culling vegetables from the displays in the market if he might just hand me the food he was putting in boxes to take to the dumpster. He looked at me quizzically and then asked his boss in Spanish, the language of most customers conversing in the market, if "the lady could have the trash?"

The boss responded (in Spanish) that no, the "lady could not have the trash." My interlocutor looked at me and shook his head. Duly embarrassed, but not deterred, I bought some vegetables in the store, and then picked my "trash" out of the dumpster behind the store. There, I was told by another employee that I could take what I wanted. As I got into my car to drive to my home in a different neighborhood, I felt deeply confused—a combination of shame and awareness of my privileges along with a stubborn determination to make use of this otherwise wasted food. These are contradictory impulses that continue to move my body in sometimes paradoxical ways, in spaces that move me toward and away from food waste, taste and "justice". Rather than determining the means, goals and value of food justice in abstraction from mine and others' bodies, I want to explore how and where these ideas are located in this performance, and among *these* bodies. But, such an accounting would be infinite of course, and so what remains is the partiality of the attempt.

Looking at the context for and comment about "hav[ing] the trash" from a spatial and relational perspective provides room for multiple trajectories through which to think through food taste, waste, identity and consumption. Our location, configured in part by where we stood in the store buying or selling produce, the option (or not) for our roles was dictated by familiarity, dietary needs and mobility, the choice to shop there or elsewhere. We were in part positioned as workers and consumers with limited capital relative to the store's relatively shabby appearance, with broken glass on the door and cardboard over one of the broken-out glass windows. By asking if I might "have the trash," I ruptured the expected performance of white, middle class consumer by suggesting the option of gifting and, in doing so, drew attention to other economies for participation in that foodspace.

Unpacking this moment, too, the shame and disgust at the possibility of eating "trash" shared by the patrons, many of whom differed culturally by nationality, ethnicity, or class from me, was apparent. Marginalization in any or all of these social group categories heightens the degree to which any association with trash is abhorrent. People who have rarely if ever had their marginality marked by their diet may either be ignorant of the power of such determination, or simply disregard it, because they feel morally and culturally justified to do so. Perhaps this moral high ground is evidenced in the pride that many white professionals, some academics who are food scholars and activists, take in their dumpster diving prowess (e.g., Pritchett 2009) and why there are so few Freegans of color (Barnard 2016). Anyone who consumes, much less recovers, food is implicated in decisions made about when food is no longer usable or useful and becomes waste (and then in what kind of waste the food might become). So, too, I must face the question of where all this produce goes once I rescue it. Over the years I have chosen to see this food as an opportunity both for community building and for pedagogy. Some of it gets cooked into community dinners. Other times it goes into the weekly meals I provide for my students and extended family, and often it ends up on my table. Am I obligated to reveal the source of the food to those who eat it? Does it depend on who's eating (allergies, preferences for organic, etc.) and in what context? Should I likewise reveal to those I serve food where I shop and how much I pay for it? What becomes concealment, and what purposes for concealment are (un)ethical? I have,

on occasion and as a pedagogical point, told students that the carrot soup was gleaned from leftovers at a local farm that the shelter did not want, or that the roasted vegetables were bought in the reduced produce aisle, out of concern for wastage, and not necessarily for financial reasons. Because of the symbolic and stigmatic transfer of meaning from discounted food to discounted people, I've never told shelter or community meal participants that any part of the prepared meal came from a dumpster. How might my food stories in relation to theirs resituate our bodies with/in food we eat, as well to the labor to procure and prepare it? I've spoken to my classes about my dumpster diving broadly, and I've presented it as both a food waste issue and a situated/embodied one. Of course, the space in which our bodies are located (*which* communities or neighborhoods) and our relationship to each other punctuate my/our words. Whether we shop in Whole Foods, at a corner store, or in a discount grocer, whether we are eligible for, or on food stamps/SNAP, whether we know or care about where our food comes from and where it's going; these positions locate us in these spaces, these words, and their silences as we break bread, or refuse to do so, together

Situating Taste and waste in food aid spaces

Next, I describe two scenes where the "taste" of food waste was made visible in ways that underlined the different spatial locations and performative positioning of volunteers and "clients." In the first space, I volunteered to fix lunch for a group of shelter clients I had previously met with, to discuss food access. At this event, we agreed we would address concerns about food access for people with their particular needs in more detail. For the lunch, I made chicken barbecue, grilled vegetables, empanadas, homemade salsa, cookies, pies and quiches. Though there was not the expected big crowd, within minutes, all the food was gone, with large helpings and plates taken "to go" by clients and staff. It quickly became clear that this lunch was not a typical one at the shelter. I had hoped that the menu would draw people to the discussion of food access, and it did, but the meal itself quickly became the basis of a larger discussion of food taste. Clients complained about the quality of the food served to them by the agency, who in turn relied on donations from food banks, government, and community sources.^{iv} They asked if I would come and cook for them or if I could provide recipes and instructions to the cooks. Since one goal of the agency is to help people with mental and physical disabilities to transition into work, several of the clients and former clients volunteered to cook as part of their service to the organization. Although the staff present played along with good humor, and asked me for recipes, I was not contacted again to cook for them, nor did I think I would be. Without the resources for chefs and ingredients, food taste or preference is not and cannot be a priority for shelters. Often, too, though rarely discussed, the assumption is that if you're hungry enough, you'll eat food without regard for preference or quality.

In another time/space, I had just arrived in Italy to set up a community service learning, study abroad course on food waste. I left the airport and went straight to work as a visiting volunteer with a local partner for the course—a food aid organization that gleaned food from local markets and then prepared meals that

were bagged and handed out to food insecure people in the lot in front of the train station. Although these bagged meals were ostensibly provided for anyone who needed them, it was well known that the local homeless population congregated in this area at night. The volunteers, in the first hours a group of ten people ranging from teenagers to energetic seniors, worked for several hours in a Church courtyard to prepare the food recovered from local stores. We cut loaves of hardened, leftover bread donated by a large mega market to make sandwiches. Tins of tuna were mixed with cans of black beans, bags of (expired) mixed salad and olive oil-- all but the oil recovered from local markets. After that, the food was taken to the train station nearby, where other volunteers showed up with recovered vegetables and fruit from markets around the city. A long table was set up next to a concrete barrier, and a rope placed to mark off the area for volunteers. We were told not to interact with the people in line, and that many of them were refugees, homeless and/or on drugs. Apparently, although it was never verified, some violence had occurred in this area recently, and concern for our (myself and a student) safety was the reasoning given.

We, then, stood behind the tables and cut up the fruit and salvaged vegetables that seemed less brown or were not rotten, and put all into bags. Recipients of the food were told to line up on the other side of the low wall that went around the circular drive. In well-organized fashion, volunteers first handed off the bags of sandwiches to each of those waiting. Large canteens of lemonade and water and cups were placed on another table. After those in line to eat a meal had received and eaten their food, they got in line again, and we proceeded to hand out the bags of vegetables and fruit we had culled to be as presentable as possible. Nonetheless, the items, such as sliced cantaloupe, were dripping and messy and-- despite my deep sense of loss when produce is wasted--I felt uneasy about the assumption that food insecure people would want the food, much less find it appealing. We had started this endeavor when one of the recipients of the meals walked up to the front table and asked to speak to the man in charge of the nonprofit organization that provided the meal and donations each week.

As the conversation between the two men began to grow loud and seemed to get heated, I turned to the server beside me and asked if she knew what was going on. She said that the man was complaining about the quality of the food. He said the sandwiches were dry and he could not chew the bread. A long-time volunteer, she said that the man was homeless and drunk. She added that when the people had been drinking the atmosphere sometimes became contentious and grew more so later in the evening. As she recounted to me much of the good work the man who headed the organization was doing, both to recover food and feed the homeless, she got quite upset on his behalf and went to comfort him as he parted ways with the man who had confronted him. We went on, behind our barrier and the table, handing out the bags of fruit and vegetables and no more was said on the matter.

Since I knew it would be quite late (early morning hours) when we finished and I would need food myself, I had earlier asked for some leftover bread and salad that were going to be thrown out. The other volunteers looked at me quizzically, but said "sure." Later I went back to my hotel room, located in a much nicer neighborhood, to eat for the first time myself. I was very hungry after a long flight from the States and then going straight to work at the shelter, and I began to devour

the leftover bread and salad. The bread was so dry I could not swallow it and the salad had turned to a slimy black substance, which I could not bring myself to eat. As I threw out what I did not consider to be food, I thought about the questioning looks directed at me by the volunteers when I'd asked for the leftovers, and the responses to the man who had questioned the taste of that same food later in the evening. Who was expected in those interactions to question matters of taste, or simply to eat what would otherwise be classified as waste? What bodies were allowed, or even conditioned to perform taste and which were expected to appreciate, in fact to be grateful for, leftover food? Although I was a visitor and ignorant to many of the dynamics at play in this scene, I also saw these moments of disjuncture and resistance as ruptures in relational performances of taste, charity and service that were instructive of larger relations of identities to capital.

That food exists as a commodity and not as a freely distributed right or resource is well known. Less noticed or understood are the consequences of that valuation for bodies and relationships in neoliberal societies. Where food becomes waste it no longer participates in commodity flows, regardless of il/legality or (black) market. Food insecurity implies a body that is no longer a consumer, and, thus, an appropriate outlet for donated food that cannot be commoditized. Important to both of the scenes above, is the idea that, while meanings for food waste seemed to be mutually shared, they are attached to bodies and performances in varying ways. In both scenes, the taste of donated food was questioned by clients whose bodies were not authorized to perform "taste" in those spaces. In these scenes, the dividing line of food security was the serving table and the constitution of taste based on the embodiment of that in/security. But here too, food shelter workers and clients also play various roles in performances of food waste and recovery. By serving the recovered food, volunteers presumably are reducing food waste, just as clients play their role in sustainability by eating it.

Taste in food confers status through its associations to bodies and substances of quality with authenticity and selection. Alternatively, food waste is associated with disgust, danger/risk, (Evans 2011) and increasingly with recovery and reuse for hungry people and animals (Cooks 2018). The latter association distinguishes identities that *have trash* and those who might need *to eat it*. Food shelters have been long critiqued as a short-term solution to the long-term problem of hunger. Increasingly, however, shelters are seen as part of the solution to reducing food waste. Food recovery for the purposes of feeding the hungry has become the larger goal of food waste reduction efforts ostensibly aimed at a more sustainable food system and environment. And, as recovered food is increasingly diverted to shelters, shelter staff and clients become increasingly dependent on waste recovery. As a shelter volunteer, I have gleaned, prepared and served clients repurposed food. As noted above, ruptures occur through resistance and refusal, as well as through attempts to equalize the food/waste stratification by feeding food/waste to all, whether it is with or without their explicit knowledge of provenance.

The hierarchical status assigned to taste and waste is mirrored in the academic, popular and activist literatures in food studies and food recovery that align studies of taste with quality, cuisine, history and culture and studies of food waste with quantity, and amounts of wasted and recoverable calories (Cooks 2015).

The former speaks of spaces where consumption is valued and valuable, the latter of marginal spaces outside the value economy where identities are marked only through need. While it may be obvious that choice over diet is choice over consumption, the easy equation of choice and money and the consequences of having a lack of options to autonomy, citizenship and rights are obscured through narratives of food recovery. These appeals promise that through the redistribution of food waste the problems of hunger and sustainability of the planet are solved. The narrative of food recovery preserves the achievement of financial capital as the ultimate goal of neoliberal democracy. While food recovery discourses place primacy on values of community and charity in practices of donating, recovering, serving and eating repurposed food, the societal primacy placed on consumption marks bodies for taste (status) and waste (disgust) in spaces and discourses designated differentially for consumption. Food recovery, for those who give and those who receive, is thus interconnected to ways we value food and identity in society.

Tomatoes and food/waste and space pedagogies

In the tomato inquiry that opened the paper, the vast majority of answers given by people indicated their preference for the first picture or display. The choice of the "perfect" tomatoes seems obvious because it seems so natural to associate the good taste of tomatoes with the sight of deep red, unblemished, and perfectly spherical fruit. For those who prefer the mass grown and marketed tomatoes found not in their gardens or on community farms, but in supermarkets, the connections between product and source are often obscured, or more generally not considered, outside of communities where agricultural labor is common. Judgements about where to find tomatoes, or other produce, and what "looks good" are most often measured by the distance to the market and who has the "freshest" appearing produce (see, e.g. Goodman, DuPuis, and Goodman 2012). Those few people I've spoken to, who prefer the less handsome, lopsided and blemished namesake, have generally cultivated a different relationship to their food sources: in this case, to tomatoes and the land they grow on. Sometimes the experience is constructed through membership in coops, by visiting farmer's markets, through cultivating their own food in gardens, or by working for others on farms. Regardless, the relationship between tomatoes and the spaces they are associated with may be marked by privilege or necessity, the choice of where to shop, what to shop for, and/or having the time and space to grow your own. The visual aesthetics of tomato taste are further determined and increasingly predetermined by mediated and marketed images of perfect—and abundant-- food. Research has shown what any produce marketer would say is the number one rule of display: piles of perfect produce (or most any food that can be displayed abundantly), stacked neatly, will always outsell a few items sitting on a shelf or in a box (Buzby et al. 2015). In the U.S., and increasingly around the world, the mass marketed and mediated images of perfect foods, often called "food porn," have both democratized taste and contributed to issues of food access, food waste, and the sustainability of the food system. Food taste, when accessed via mass mediated and culturally produced

images of food porn, excess and perfection, is democratic in the desires it produces, yet status conscious in its association with particular identities and spaces tied to economic capital.

Elizabeth Keating (2015) observes that space and discourse interconnect in many functional ways: as tool for expression, cognition, identity, access, naming the public or private, language structure, among others. After many years of teaching food courses, researching academic and popular literatures on taste and waste, and working with/in community food aid agencies and food justice groups, I hear and see good food consistently described as “fresh,” “clean,” “healthy,” and “visually appealing.” Not coincidentally, this good food is intimately connected to people and spaces that also are clean. Spaces for “fresh”, “healthy”, “natural” foods have migrated from our visceral and lived experience to representations thereof. Fresh food may now be found not in field, restaurant or supermarket, but can be viewed on our computers and televisions or found within movies. Its representational value holds these spaces stable for our (imagined and realized) consumption.

I've found that, regardless of concerns about waste as it may be related either to hunger or sustainability of the food system, the emphasis on taste of food infers the status of those who eat it, while food marked as “waste,” and which may be diverted to those who, willingly or not consume it, infers need or lack. After years of surveying university students and other food secure consumers about boundaries that separate what we determine “food” from “waste,” I've observed that responses reliably group into most of the areas discussed above (Evans 2011): waste is disgusting, dangerous, or (more charitably or politically correct) for donation. My more recent surveys of stores and markets have produced a slightly different response: waste is emerging as a potential source of profit, as markets put aside a larger portion of their food waste to sell to the highest bidder for compost or energy. Food waste is also poised to play a more dominant role in the food commodities market (OBrien 2012). Reuse of food waste for niche business or entrepreneurial reasons is becoming more common, especially as more media coverage profiles celebrity investment in artisanal ales and breads created though reused food waste, or apps that alert consumers to restaurants offering leftover food at a discounted rate (Strom 2016).

Many people I talk to, whether producers, distributors and/or consumers of food/waste, are quite willing to discuss the relationship between food waste recovery and hunger as a moral issue. Often mirroring popular culture discourse, they talk heatedly about the contradictions of living in a land of abundance, both of food and of hunger. Few discuss the connection of food waste and hunger from an experiential or relational perspective: that is, what it means to their own and others' embodiment to eat recovered, reused food. The absence of such stories may be due to closeness to or distance from the experience of consuming what, to them, is not food, as well as with the language with which to express it. Hunger denotes poverty and depravity both of taste and of identity (Eikenberry & Smith 2005). World hunger/food security research from international entities such as the UNDP, Global Food Programme, worldhunger.org, international Food Policy Research Institute Global Hunger Index, as well as popular media, describe the problem of hunger and the solution of food aid, not in terms of quality, but rather in terms of the quantity of

food (Cooks 2015). After all, why should hungry people care what their food tastes like? But when we query *how* hunger is located in positionalities and in-relation-to others, or *what* food is associated with hunger, we open new possibilities for understanding the connections among food, space and embodiment.

Indeed, as this chapter has endeavored to portray, pictures or displays of something as "natural" as tomatoes, or any fruit or vegetable, demonstrate that food is never simply substance, there or not, accessible or not, calories burned or not used. Food that is desired and chosen, where there's a choice to be made, is always dependent on the bodies and spaces in which those choices occur and are made meaningful. These standards for taste are connected to food waste in the first instance anywhere the cultivation and mass marketing of taste has led to unnecessary and excessive waste (in the US estimated at 50% of produce alone). In the second instance, taste and waste are interlinked where--in the name of hunger and environmental sustainability--food waste is increasingly diverted to those considered irrelevant to matters of taste in a capitalist society.

We are all bodies in and of waste, but the spaces and means through which food waste is embodied and performed in society vary in relation to capital. In order to study the relationalities of procurement, preparation, and consumption of food waste in this paper, I have used my body as example. While I have briefly discussed my own consumption of recovered food, before ending chapter, I want to explore my embodied relationship to that consumption. I can choose whether to consume recovered food in private or in a public space marked for recipients of food donation. I have done both, with a keen awareness of how these performances in these spaces mark my body in un/comfortable ways. It changes the ways I taste the food, the ways I digest it, the conversations, or lack thereof, with others. It's hard to separate the physical sensations of taste in these spaces from my sense of embodiment in them. Who I am in relation both to others as well as the food in these spaces (procurer, provider, server, fellow recipient) impacts the degree to which I or others might delight in the unexpected sweetness of a rescued tomato or a creamy soup made from recovered butternut squash. In private spaces, when I eat the food I glean, I experience a sense of pride over saving vegetables from the landfill mixed with the shame of knowing that I not only have the choice to do so, but also that my performance of eating food waste obscures the importance for many others of having a choice over what they eat. My body, then, becomes a project of revaluation and recognition, but always in relation to privilege. I read often of middle class professional gleaners who exhibit great pride in the morality or resistance displayed in their dumpster finds. My response is much more complicated. I find value in small acts of salvage, but the limitation is that it hardly changes the economy of food redistribution, nor solves the problem of waste. I see the larger place for activism in the reduction food waste at the source, and in the resistance to the easy calculation of redistribution as a means to solving hunger.

Perhaps a different approach to food/waste pedagogy is in learning to ask different and difficult questions. In supplement to the seemingly endlessly quantification and development of new and more accurate technologies for calculating and redistributing food waste we might ask, what is clean food and what is its appeal? What are the discursive functions of dirt: who or what is/*becomes*

dirty and where? What is “fresh” food and why is it also “good” food? When, in what spaces, does good food become fresh? Where does fresh food become old, spoiled? Dirty? A pedagogy for food justice must include these questions, not just as abstractions but also as locations for our own and others' relations-embodied in performativities of procurement, of consumption, and even of activism.

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Endnotes

ⁱ Another time, I show a photo of abundant piles of clean, fresh, perfect produce at one market, and a picture of another market where there are just a few of each item (though no less perfect) on display. Again, the question is posed: "Which would you buy?"

ⁱⁱ It may be argued that projecting pictures and asking questions about taste privileges sight over taste or touch, and would bias responses. Sight is indeed the primary determination of something that may be seen as individual but is always already prefigured as well by mediated images of good taste, and these images are held as the mirror for good taste for others.

ⁱⁱⁱ Although other nonhuman beings also enter into these relational spaces, they are not included for consideration in this paper.

^{iv} It should be noted that the agency provided, in addition to meals and a small food pantry, assistance with employment, job training and housing for adults with disabilities.