THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

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Celebrity chefs:
class mobility, media, masculinity

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Amuse-bouche

Abstract

There is an unprecedented construction of contemporary celebrity unique to the figure of the chef. This thesis considers the position of chefs in celebrity culture, and the construction of a particular kind of authoritative celebrity identity, with an emphasis on empirical research. I examine the effects of celebrity culture on the work of chefs and in terms of gender, taste, and class. I argue that the commercial kitchen is a space that institutionalises masculinity, and that popular media and celebrity culture augment the process of institutionalisation. This thesis also considers the production of economies of cultural capital across different platforms and in different forms. I position social media as a key site that produces global economies of cultural capital, and that facilitates diverse modes of consumption and production of cultural capital. Celebrity culture has altered the way chefs are perceived by consumers and the media. In response to celebrity culture, chefs' work has moved outside the kitchen and is becoming increasingly abstract. Intellectual labours enable class and social mobility and articulate taste, positioning celebrity chefs as middle class rather than working class.

Celebrity chef culture has created what I call the 'chef economy', within which restaurants trade on the brand and celebrity status of their chefs. This thesis provides a close examination of celebrity chef culture, drawing on principles of ethnographic research and one-on-one interviews with chefs who have extensive experience working with popular media and have negotiated celebrity culture in their work. My ethnographic approach and empirical research responds to suggestions for more empirical data in celebrity studies (Ferris 2010; Turner 2010b, 2013). Through developing a multimedia, multi-sited ethnography, in addition to in-depth interviews with chefs, I offer a discussion on the changing nature of celebrity culture and the changing labours of the chef.

Ethics Approval

Research for this project included in-person interviews with working chefs.

Ethics approval was granted by The University of Sydney Human Ethics Committee under the working title '**Masculinity in the kitchen: intergenerational ideas about masculinities from Sydney chefs'**, protocol number 12854, on 18 June 2010.

Ethics approval was renewed for one year by The University of Sydney Human Ethics Committee under the revised title **'New labours of the chef: media, celebrity and spectatorship' on** 16 July 2013, protocol number 12854, project number 2012/2526.

Acknowledgements

To express my thanks and appreciation to each and every person who has contributed in some way to the following pages would far exceed the word count of this dissertation; therefore what follows is merely an abridged expression of my gratitude. This work wouldn't exist without the contributions of some of the busiest and best chefs in town: my deepest thanks goes to Colin Fassnidge, Analiese Gregory, Hamish Ingham, Jonny Lake, Felicity Martin, James Parry, and Jowett Yu. Our conversations have shaped every paragraph; thank you for your patience, time, and insight. You are all really great.

Someone else who was integral to the production of this thesis is my supervisor, Dr Anna Hickey-Moody. Her tireless enthusiasm, sharp mind, and steadfast commitment to scholarly work are unparalleled. Anna's unwavering confidence in me was the North Star that guided me through my candidature, and her empathy for the research process kept me afloat. Writing a PhD can be a strange and confusing process; often I was overwhelmed and could not see the forest for the trees. Anna always saw the forest. Anna and I have worked together since my Honours year, and over that time she has been a mentor, counsellor, and friend. We finished the thesis over Skype after she had moved to London, having been snapped up for a fabulous new job. Over different time zones, Anna's patience and wisdom guided me to the finish line. I will always be grateful that she stuck with me, and am absolutely certain that this dissertation would be worse without her and all of the hard work she put in. I am a better writer and a better thinker for the time we have spent working together. It is not possible to thank her enough for everything she has done for me, though I suppose I could give in to her cajoling and turn this thesis into a book! You have never steered me wrong, Anna – thank you.

You couldn't ask for a better place to work than the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney – it's a wonderful, supportive, and close-knit group of very clever people with extraordinary minds. A chance encounter in my undergraduate studies grew to something that informs my life in profound ways, and I am privileged to have learned and worked with this group of brilliant scholars. I want to thank Dr Melissa Gregg, my first associate supervisor, who read drafts when Anna was on sabbatical and gave my work (and me) a much appreciated re-charge and some sage advice. Thank you Dr Anthea Taylor, who stepped in as associate supervisor in the last stages, and gave

I am so lucky to have many generous and excellent friends. Justin Grant is a steady rock on which I frequently lean. Proof-reader, dinner companion, truth-teller – he's always there for me, a decade after our first adventures in titration. Thank you to Chris Heaton for your kindness, support, and enthusiasm for 1D. Justin and Chris – you have sustained me through so much over the years, I love you both. Thanks and love to Vivienne Egan for always being an excellent feminist cheerleader, last minute proof-reader, and encouraging me to think outside the square. Your friendship means more than you will know (we'll always have Toby). Thank you Karen Grant, for giving me kicks up the butt when needed, and also for getting me into one of my all-time favourite jobs ever (in my pre-thesis life). For being a pillar of reason and ramen buddy, there's no one better than Milli Savann – you're rad. Milli and The Gin Club, a.k.a Jacquie Drewe and Von Terkes, thank you for being there during dark days and keeping me going when it all got a bit too much – you guys know how to make a girl feel better about anything. Jacquie – Taylor Swift/Emma Stone forever. To my fellow PhDers, especially Sean Cosgrove and Sophie Virachit, thank you for your empathy, coffee dates, and pep talks. You guys will be here soon and I'll be right there cheering you on.

I'd like to thank my family for their love, support, and encouragement over the last three years while I was wrestling with this thesis. Jenny, Sam, Eva, Richard, Harry (my cat) and Belle (Eva's dog) were lovely rays of sunshine when I needed them. Y'all mean the world to me. Thank you Anne and Uncle Phil, Aunty May, and Grandma for feeding me and making sure I was feeding myself. And last, but never least, thanks mum and dad for letting me crash at your place for the last three months with my thesis – I couldn't have finished it without you, and I certainly wouldn't be where I am without you. My mum and dad taught me everything there is to know about hard work (and good food). This thesis is dedicated to them both.

Menu

List of figures

Like, do you become a celebrity chef first? Do you have some media recognition first, then become a better chef? Or do you become a good chef and then become recognised by the media? As you get more media recognition, it just rolls, the ball starts rolling and you become more and more involved. But whether that has to do with your cooking, I'm not so sure. – Jowett Yu, personal communication, 11 July 2011

Only outwardly is celebrity culture about selling things. At the heart of the matter is a battle for the mind. Those who see celebrity only in terms of harmless fun or exuberant liberation, without recognizing its immense power for codifying personality and standardizing social control, do not see celebrity at all. – Rojek 2012, p. 185

Introduction

In late 2011, I was organising myself for a conference on food and gender at Indiana's University of Notre Dame. I had decided I would go travelling after presenting a paper on celebrity chefs and Twitter, and two of my best friends were tagging along. We would visit Chicago and New York City. Somehow London was tacked onto the itinerary, and since we were going to London, my best friend remarked, "Why don't we try for a reservation at Noma and go to Copenhagen?" Noma had been named the best restaurant in the world two years running by the San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' judging panel. The head

chef, René Redzepi was (and still is) a familiar name in the food media, being described as "a true hybrid" (Bittman 2011, para. 5), "a culinary sensation", and his cookbook was lauded as "the most important of the year" (Durrant 2010, para. 3). His food is described as "intelligent and delicious" (Bittman 2011, para. 5). Su Holmes and Sean Redmond suggest "consumption choices [are] strongly influenced by the stars and celebrities who are 'in fashion' at any one particular moment" (2006, p. 2). *The Sydney Morning Herald* food critics were calling Redzepi "one of the most significant figures in modern gastronomy" ('René Redzepi for Good Food Month' 2013), and we were trying to get a table at his restaurant.

Noma takes reservations three months in advance. The restaurant releases a date and time at which they will open the phone lines and website to take reservations. On the day it was due to accept February bookings, my best friend and I set up our laptops and iPhones and waited for 8pm to tick over. As soon as bookings opened, we Skyped the restaurant and frantically refreshed our screens. We Skyped the restaurant 49 times in 45 minutes. We refreshed our screens every three to five minutes. It felt like the rest of the world was trying to get a reservation at the same time we were. Finally, we got through and secured a Friday night booking. We checked the website again five minutes later and the entire month of lunch and dinner at Noma had been completely booked out in the space of 50 minutes. Once we secured the dinner reservation, it was time to book flights.

"One might posit that celebrities are, in part, the projection and articulation of unconscious and subconscious desire" (Rojek 2001, p. 110). It is hard to pinpoint why we wanted so desperately to go to Noma. The restaurant is expensive and I was, at the time, a student working part-time as a retail assistant. By no means did I consider myself part of the 'target audience' for Noma. The restaurant is famed for its work with indigenous Nordic produce. The concept of 'foraging' in contemporary high-end restaurants (chefs personally

sourcing produce locally) is widely acknowledged to have been popularised by Redzepi (Brion 2012; Chua-Eoan 2013; Graville 2012; Kramer 2011; Small n.d.). While lauded by critics, Redzepi's food is known to be unusual – around the time we decided to try reserving a table, the most talked about menu item was live prawn. It was served on a bed of ice – anaesthetised, but still alive. Another menu item Redzepi was working on (I knew only because he was tweeting about it) was to include ants. Because Noma had been named the best restaurant in the world, because Redzepi and his restaurant had been attributed cultural capital by the media and because Redzepi was one of the biggest celebrity figures among chefs, I was prepared to pay more than a thousand Danish Krone to eat an uncooked prawn and some ants.

Henry Jenkins' work on fandom (1992) seems to be an appropriate entry point to thinking about the consumption of celebrity chefs. Jenkins argues that to understand the "particular discursive constructions of fans, we must reconsider what we mean by taste. Concepts of "good taste", appropriate conduct, or aesthetic merit are not natural or universal; rather, they are rooted in social experience and reflect particular class interests" (1992, p. 16). Fandom is an expression of taste, but it is also "to speak from a position of collective identity, to forge an alliance with a community of others in defense of tastes" (1992, p. 23). To think about celebrity chefs is also to think about their fans, including myself.

I do not think of myself as a 'food snob'. Friends express surprise (or horror) when I happily tuck into a McDonald's cheeseburger – but I am first and foremost a fan. I am a fan of chefs and a fan of eating in restaurants. My participation in the restaurant industry dates back to my early teen years – as I will detail in chapter two, my family's background in restaurants proved to have a profound influence on my interests. But it was as I was frantically trying to secure a table at Noma, a year into my doctoral candidature that I realised

there was another path to explore in my research. Until that point, I had focused on chefs, gender, and identity. As my empirical research progressed, conversations with chefs made clear that celebrity culture was having a significant effect on their work and careers. Since being a chef is not a vocation one would immediately equate with celebrity, it is an area worthy of critical examination, and chefing increasingly becoming a critical part of celebrity studies. This thesis shows that celebrity culture is a useful lens to consider the labour of chefing – my empirical research indicates that celebrity culture has changed chefs' labour and is increasingly integrated into their day-to-day work.

Sydney's reputation as a major dining destination is bigger than it has ever been – various media articles declare Sydney as a must-visit food city (see DeJesus 2014; McKeever 2013; 'Sydney named third best food destination in the world' 2012; Williams 2014; Woodgate 2011) and internationally-acclaimed chefs visit often, with some deciding to open their own restaurants in the city. In 2012, New York celebrity chef David Chang[1] opened Momofuku Seiōbo in Sydney's Star Casino as part of his Momofuku New York brand. UK chef Jamie Oliver opened a Sydney branch of Jamie's Italian, which saw two-hour-long queues in its first few weeks (Doherty 2011; Durack 2011). Sydney is full of fans and is a destination for food enthusiasts. Growing enthusiasm from both media and consumers for the robust restaurant industry in Sydney has produced a cultural shift resulting in celebrity chef culture. Celebrity chef culture has changed practices of consumption and has been incorporated in the labours of chefs. Including chefs in the consideration of celebrity culture (as Collins 2012; Hollows 2003; and Rousseau 2012a have done) can open up different ways of thinking about the labours of celebrity.

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[1] Chang owns and runs several restaurants in Manhattan, NY, and Toronto in Canada. He is known for his no-nonsense attitude and for being a trendsetter in the New York restaurant industry. In 2013, Chang was named one of the '13 gods of food' in *Time* magazine (Chua-Eoan 2013).

My visit to Noma was motivated by an urge to believe the hype – I wanted to know what the world's best restaurant in the world would be like. Of course, the judging system for the 'World's 50 Best' is flawed – more than 800 international judges must vote for three restaurants each and only one has to be outside their own geographical region. There is certainly an element of novelty required in order to be considered by the judges – before Noma claimed the top spot, Spanish restaurant El Bulli was ranked number one for five years[2] (though not consecutively). Currently, the top-ranked restaurant is El Celler de Can Roca in Girona, Spain. Noma is now ranked second. Comparatively, there has been less media frenzy over the two owner-chefs, Joan and Jordi Roca, with even the critics describing them as "low-key" ('World's 50 Best' 2013). In the quote from Yu at the beginning of this introduction, the chef muses over whether or not celebrity chefs' celebrity status has anything to do with their cooking – that is, with the quality of their cooking. But the measurement of quality is not necessarily of mainstream standards – food critics work within "specialized fields of production" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 227) in which aspiration is encouraged.

Going to Noma is described as surprising "in the best possible way" (Hudson 2011, para. 5). After all, "Noma is the restaurant currently setting the agenda in world cuisine" (Franklin 2014, para. 3). Food critic Michael Harden says that although "Noma quietly and emphatically exceeded expectations […] it's an experience for the fanatical and the wealthy – dinner with wine costs about $A400 or more" (Zanellato & Harden 2011, para. 20). Redzepi "calls himself a craftsman and an artisan, wants to create 'better deliciousness' and find 'more vocabularies in our culinary language'" (Wood 2012, para. 4). Certainly, for chefs, their celebrity comes part and parcel with their work, which is cooking and specifically, impressing critics. Bourdieu suggests, "The value of culture, the supreme fetish, is generated in the initial investment implied by the mere fact of entering the game, joining in the

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[2] See 'El Bulli, 'world's best restaurant', closes' 2011.

collective belief in the value of the game which makes the game and endlessly remakes the competition for the stakes" (1984, p. 247). The cultural value of chefs, and therefore their cultural capital, is constructed by food critics. Once exposed to mainstream media we are invited to enter the game, to join the "collective belief in the value of the game". This is how celebrity is created for chefs. Key to chefs' celebrity is their authority on matters of food and eating, and their specialised skills. Chefs fill a cultural role made for them by the media to be authoritative about food and also to push the boundaries of how we understand food, as Redzepi has so successfully done. This thesis explores the consequences of celebrity chef culture and offers empirical research on the celebrity chef – a form of celebrity consisting of authority and specialised skills that are unique to the chef.

What is a celebrity chef?

Chefs have different ideas of what it means to be a celebrity chef. Their differing perspectives reflect the ambiguity of the definition of celebrity. Analiese Gregory worked at acclaimed Sydney restaurant Quay, which has experienced extensive international media attention. She suggests,

> *Personality, I guess. I think that's the main thing. Also, lots of people I know have great personalities, but being able to project that. And to be yourself to camera or in front of people, which is really, really different.* […] *So then it's just like being able to put yourself out there. And whether that's able to capture people's imaginations. Like I know some people do, and some things don't* (personal communication, 29 November 2012).

Hamish Ingham was courted by Sydney's Four Seasons hotel to be consulting chef for their new-concept hotel restaurant, The Woods, and bar, Grain. The partnership received plenty of

positive media attention (Bolles 2012; Lethlean 2013, Durack 2012; Rigby 2013). I put it to him that this meant perhaps he could be considered a celebrity chef. He responded,

> *I'm shy. I don't really want to be* [a celebrity chef]*... I probably am, to be honest. I just don't want to admit it, I don't think. Well, I don't know. I guess I would be some form of celebrity chef. Because I get a lot of media, and I guess as soon as you get... I'm probably B-grade now* (personal communication, 5 November 2012).

Colin Fassnidge, a popular Irish chef building his television experience on reality programs like *MasterChef* and now on *My Kitchen Rules*,[3] is circumspect.

> *Oh I think there's* [sic] *a couple of types of celebrity chefs. There's my type of chef, which is using it to... Like, cos I still like my job, but I've seen this other avenue where I can do really well out of and I have a foot in both areas* [television and restaurants] *and I use both of them to my best advantage. Well basically that's why they hired me* [for 'My Kitchen Rules']*, because I'm still a chef. Then the celebrity chef, I dunno, for some reason you go on television and you fucking don't step foot in a kitchen again unless there's a camera, and you just endorse stuff and just do shitty cook books* (personal communication, 8 November 2012).

Yu agrees, suggesting celebrity chefs are "the ones who don't cook anymore" (personal communication, 11 July 2011). But he concedes,

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[3] In *My Kitchen Rules*, contestants from Australia, and once New Zealand, cook a three course meal for their fellow contestants in their own home. In previous series of the program, Fassnidge appears as a chef-judge after the preliminary rounds of the program.

> *The cult of celebrity chef really brings a personal connection to the business. Like, you can identify, you can look at him in person, you know. This is* [the] *person who cooked this dish* (personal communication, 5 November 2012).

There are many different types of celebrity (Rojek 2001; Turner 2013), and so it is that there are different types of celebrity chefs; that is, it is not a homogenous category. Critical work on celebrity has been produced for decades (Rojek 2001, p. 9; Turner 2013, p. 7) but only in the last few decades has celebrity studies as a field been developed, often through reading celebrities as 'texts' (Turner 2013, p. 156) or through 'case studies' of particular celebrities or celebrity events (e.g. Cashmore 2002; Holmes & Redmond 2006; Lumby 2006). It is necessary to understand the construction of celebrity (see Dyer 1979 and 1986; Gamson 1994; Turner, Marshall & Bonner 2000; Rein, Kotler & Stoller 1997), but equally necessary to understand the lived experience of celebrity. Kerry Ferris (2010) calls for "a focus on the experiential and relational dynamics of celebrity from the point of view of celebrities themselves" (2010, p. 392). She adds,

> *One way to accomplish this goal is to move in the direction celebrity itself seems to be headed: toward local or subcultural celebrities and their smaller, more segmented audiences. Empirical research on the lived experiences of local celebrities provides a practical way to generate celebrity-level data and makes an important sociological contribution to broader theorizing about the cultural phenomenon of celebrity* (Ferris 2010, p. 392).

I use the quotes from chefs as a guide to exploring how celebrity is understood by chefs, and also how it might be perceived by their audience. The diverse ways in which chefs understand celebrity chefs – and at times their own reluctance to identify as such – provide lines of inquiry with which to refine an understanding of the cultural phenomenon of

celebrity. Examining celebrity through chefs allows me to contain my analysis in a specific cultural context, but also shows that chefs are a significant site of inquiry in celebrity studies. This thesis combines textual analysis of the media's construction of chefs' labour and cultural value in print and television – with empirical research to contribute to a deeper understanding of how celebrity culture operates in the industry of chefs. In the next section I outline my approaches to understanding celebrity chef culture.

Chapter outlines

For a chef, the most important tool he or she has is the *mise en place*. French for "putting in place", it is the chef's kitchen set-up with everything needed for service. Similarly, to consider celebrity culture it is necessary to have the tools to negotiate the field. In the first chapter, Mise en place, I outline the literature that forms the framework for my analysis of celebrity chef culture. Celebrity is a vast topic with many different approaches (Marshall 1997; Rojek 2001; Turner 2004, 2010b). According to Graeme Turner, "celebrity has demonstrated its usefulness as a productive location for the cultural shifts around gender, race or nationality" (2010b, p. 13), but points to a need for more depth in research, rather than textual analysis (2010b, 2013). In order to do so, I draw on the theoretical framework of celebrity construction and consumption. Key figures in this area include P. David Marshall (1997), Chris Rojek (2001, 2012), and Turner (2004, 2013); their work is dialogical and builds on Rojek's history of celebrity (2001), Marshall's discussion of various approaches to understanding its discursive effects (1997), and Turner's emphasis on analysing the industrial construction of celebrity (2004, 2010b). Their approaches to celebrity as a cultural form and as a "genre of representation" (Turner 2013, p.10), and emphasis on the mediatised production of celebrity, provide lenses best suited to consider celebrity chef culture in terms of gender, class, and labour.

Rojek, Marshall, and Turner lay the foundations for a theoretical approach to understanding celebrity. Turner argues, "Multi-factoral, conjunctural and multi-disciplinary approaches are needed to ensure that we fully explore the productiveness of celebrity as a site for examining the function of the media and the cultural production of identities" (2010b, p. 19). In order to respond to this, I develop a research methodology that seeks to incorporate the many aspects of celebrity chef culture – from consumption to production, to representation to lived experience.

In the second chapter, 'Social media and participatory celebrity culture', I outline my ethnographical approach to examining celebrity chefs. In order to focus my analysis on a burgeoning site of contemporary celebrity chef culture, my study is contained in Sydney; however, the cultural phenomenon of celebrity is certainly global. Social media in particular allows access to different celebrity forms on a global scale. As well, print and television media are vital in the representation of celebrity chefs – indeed, the print media is at the root of the production of celebrity chefs, particularly in food criticism. What was most important to me, however, was how chefs felt about the sudden imposition of celebrity in their careers. They started out training in gruelling conditions, hoping to run a successful restaurant of their own and ended up being thrown into the spotlight – on television, on the cover of glossy magazines – all the while being publicly judged by food critics and an ever-discerning dining community.

My ethnography of celebrity chefs involves social media participation, participation in the industry (I ate at most of the restaurants in this study), textual analysis of television and print media, and interviews with Sydney chefs who are at the 'top' of their game. Though they might reluctantly identify as celebrity chefs, their extensive experience with and exposure in mainstream media, both print and television, certainly places them comfortably

in the upper regions of chef celebrity. Ethnography is important in social science research (Burawoy 1991a, 1998; Gilles & ÓRiain 2002; Marcus 1995; Singer 2009) because it illustrates nuances in day-to-day life and media is a core part of most people's daily lives. I draw on the principles of ethnography (Burawoy 1991, 1998) in my extensive social media analysis, which acknowledges the significance of social media in contemporary celebrity culture formations. My immersion in the social media communities of the restaurant industry produced in-depth observations and offers a different way to consider 'traditional' ethnographic practice. Alice Marwick used ethnographic research to examine the impact of social media on celebrity and branding in Silicon Valley (2010, 2013); I apply a similar approach in my consideration of celebrity chefs. Participation on social media platforms is a significant component of my ethnography. By spending time on social media in the communities I am researching, I gained an awareness of how chefs interacted on social media, and was able to research the effects of social media on chefs' work. As both observer and participant of a community of food enthusiasts, I read the mood of both the industry and its consumers, and watch the formation of trends. Engaging in social media as part of a multimedia and multi-sited ethnography illustrates the role of social media in everyday life and is part of a focus on new media in the social sciences and cultural studies. The combination of ethnography and textual analysis allows for a greater detailed investigation of celebrity chef culture.

The professional kitchen is a highly masculine environment. Chapter three, 'The Brigade', examines prerequisites of celebrity chef culture – homosociality and hegemonic masculinities. Celebrity culture has led to more media space for chefs in roles of mentor, leader, and expert. These roles are shored up by representations of Raewyn Connell's (2005; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005) hegemonic masculinities, setting a template for what the 'ideal' (or at least successful) chef should be like.

Connell's (2000, 2005) work on institutionalised masculinities is extended in chapter three in a discussion of the professional kitchen as a space that institutionalises masculinity characterised by leadership, aggression, and ambition. This institutionalised masculinity is facilitated by homosocial (Sedgwick 1985) bonds and further reinforced by media representations in celebrity chef culture. Interviews with chefs reveal their experiences training in uncompromising kitchens; I consider their stories alongside the gendered depictions of chefs in popular media. Popular media, as well as food critics, play a significant role in constructing celebrity figures out of chefs, and produce an environment in which chefs actively contribute to their own celebrity.

In chapter four I position food criticism as the instigator of Sydney's celebrity chef culture. *The Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide*[4] is a cultural gatekeeper in the Sydney restaurant industry and its food criticism is the foundation of the chef economy in Sydney. The chef economy is produced by the media; chefs are commodified by food criticism when their work is judged by symbols of cultural capital – for example, with 'hats' or a score out of 20 (as in Sydney's *Good Food Guide*). The *Guide* uses a similar template to international food criticism, most notably the *Michelin Guides* and the San Pellegrino-sponsored 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list, in which cultural capital is represented through symbols – stars and rankings.

The authority of food critics – borne from the history and collective experience of print media – legitimises the work of chefs and commodifies them at the same time. Chefs' specialised skills and knowledges are emphasised in food criticism, producing them as representatives of the industry. Their standing with critics' judgements determines their value in cultural capital, but also forms the basis of their celebrity. As such, food critics in print

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[4] The same guide is published for Melbourne restaurants, with its own local editors and reviewers. It is published by Melbourne's broadsheet, *The Age*.

media form the foundation of celebrity chef culture. In addition to textual analysis, conversations with chefs show the necessity, and influence, of food criticism in the industry. Celebrity chef culture reinforces the significance of print media in the food industry.

Apart from watching celebrity chefs on television and eating at their restaurants, audiences can engage with chefs on social media. In his discussion of American celebrity chefs, James Collins suggests that contemporary celebrity chef culture includes "new architectures of participation" (2012, p. 3). Collins primarily focuses on television and celebrity chef presenters demonstrating their skills on cooking programs, but I extend these "architectures of participation" by including social media. Chapter five considers the significance of social media in celebrity chef culture, extending the work of Marshall (2010), Alice Marwick and danah boyd (2010, 2011), and Turner (2013). In the context of chefs, Instagram is a notably prominent social media platform. Instagram's emphasis on the visual makes it an ideal platform for chefs to exhibit their work.

Chefs encourage a sense of intimacy with consumers on social media, responding to tweets and posting various 'behind-the-scenes' photos on Instagram. Social media sustains the chef economy by facilitating chefs' celebrity through the production of intimacy. As well, social media users can display their cultural capital (produced through a knowledge of the chef economy) in their own Instagram posts and tweets. Twitter and Instagram reinforce the participatory nature of celebrity chef culture, and are integrated into chefs' daily labours. My ethnography on social media (outlined later in this chapter and in more detail in chapter two) allows me to get to know chefs on different platforms, and the different labours they undertake in response to celebrity culture. Again, interviews with chefs highlight the different ways social media has become significant in their day-to-day labour.

Celebrity chefs are expected to engage on social media and maintain an approachable but knowledgeable profile. Increasingly, this includes engaging in more intellectual labours in order to maintain an authoritative status, particularly in the media. In chapter six I consider the cultural and labour shifts that have occurred as a result of celebrity culture. The MAD Food Symposium (held annually in Copenhagen and curated by René Redzepi) emphasises chefs' sharing of knowledges; chefs take to the lectern and speak for 45 minutes about something that informs their work, be it environmental sustainability or the importance of texture. Locally, the *Good Food Guide* includes the Young Chef of the Year Award, which has an emphasis on intellectual labour over manual. These cultural shifts among elite chefs are examined through Beverley Skeggs' work on making class (2004) and the notion of class mobility (Bourdieu 1984, p. 127; Skeggs 2004, p. 47).

Celebrity chef culture motivates chefs to engage in intellectual labours. Chefs associated with celebrity culture are increasingly moving away from manual labour and towards a middle class that is constituted by creative and intellectual labour. Celebrity culture has created a cultural and labour shift in the chefing industry, highlighting the operation of celebrity among different individuals. Chapter six examines two key sites of cultural significance within the chef industry – the Josephine Pignolet Young Chef of the Year award in Sydney, and globally, the MAD food symposium. Chefs make class through enacting different labours of celebrity, and in considering the lived experience of celebrity we can gain a better understanding of the cultural shifts that have occurred as a result of celebrity culture.

Celebrity chef culture and empirical research

My visit to Noma turned out to be underwhelming. I had been carried away by hype. Even so, I felt like I had made a significant pilgrimage as a member of the culinary community. Redzepi was (and still is) a pioneering figure in the chef world and his influences can be seen

in the kitchen of many chefs – James Parry, a chef in this study who has previously worked at Noma, is one of them.

At the end of our 20-plus course dinner, we were invited to take a tour of the Noma kitchens. Tom Halpin, an Australian chef at Noma who had taken a shine to us (as fellow Australians), took us through the prep kitchen, the 'hot' kitchen (in which the few hot dishes are prepared), and the staff/experimental kitchen. We saw their indoor garden, which allowed some of their produce to flourish away from the harsh Nordic winter; and their staff cafeteria, which was littered with numerous cook books by chefs from around the world. Certainly, this tour would not have taken place if not for the celebrity culture that has engulfed Redzepi and his restaurant. The restaurant itself acknowledges its status in the chef economy by offering these tours – over the course of the evening, cameras flashed all around us; diners laughingly posed with their food, and table by table were taken around the restaurant for a guided tour. The restaurant's awareness indicates that on some level, chefs are active in their own celebrity, and so understanding their self-awareness is fundamental in understanding the construction of their celebrity.

This study builds on some of the literature on the construction and function of celebrity by examining chefs, with an emphasis on empirical research. There is academic work on celebrity chefs, focusing on different aspects of their work and their celebrity (Collins 2012; Hollows 2003; Jones 2009; Rousseau 2012a), indicating the significance of chefs in the discussion of celebrity culture. Empirical research is a missing factor in much academic work on celebrity culture and is difficult to access for many scholars (Ferris 2010). However, by focusing on the culture of chefs, I am able to access invaluable insights from a group of working chefs who have experienced and negotiated celebrity culture. What they share with me has informed every part of this thesis and is weaved through the narrative of

life as a busy, highly sought-after chef in Sydney. The following chapters unpack the effects

of celebrity on chefs, their work, and their own perceptions of themselves, forming a unique

insight into the experience, construction, and consequences of celebrity culture.

Snacks

A celebrity chef…is there to either sell a product or

inspire people to use the same product, or get them to

cook something. But I guess everything they do is about

selling a cook book or a product or motivating people to

go to a certain event. […] *But your grandma isn't famous*

for the nice meal she cooked you, is she? – James Parry,

personal communication, 14 November 2012

Chapter one

Mise en place: **Cooking with celebrity culture**

Most 'fine dining' restaurants in Sydney are full of celebrity chefs. In addition to running dinner service and mentoring a brigade of cooks, Sydney chefs can be found on television, on the cover of cook books and in weekly recipe columns of glossy magazines. The work of a chef is no longer just about cooking, but about building a recognisable profile – a celebrity profile constructed in the social, print and television media. To reach a level of success that transcends working in the kitchen, chefs have to be media-savvy, authoritative, and appear approachable. The plethora of media channels through which Sydney chefs can reach their audience include television programs like *MasterChef Australia* (2009–) and *My Kitchen Rules* (2010–); media-run festivals like the Good Food Month festival[5]; and maintaining a presence on online social networking sites like Twitter and the photo-sharing platform, Instagram. Successful utilisation of these media channels, in addition to the authority and taste standards constructed by food critics for chefs and diners, builds the chef as a celebrity figure. This chapter examines some of the literature on celebrity culture, and

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[5] The Good Food Month festival is held annually in October in Sydney. It is sponsored by various commercial outlets and run by the city's major broadsheet, *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

suggests ways celebrity culture can be understood through an ethnography of the celebrity chef.

The celebrity chef must convey a sense of authority, accessibility, and be in possession of specialised knowledges and skills. These attributes are the result of constant reinforcement by the media and such factors are integral to a career as a successful chef in Sydney. Throughout this thesis I draw on the work of P. David Marshall (1997, 2006c, 2010), Chris Rojek (2001, 2012), and Graeme Turner (2004, 2010a, 2010b, 2013). Their conceptualisation of celebrity culture as a social function informs my approach to celebrity chef culture, and provides a wider conceptual framework in which to consider the integration of celebrity and media in chefs' work. Their emphasis on the construction of celebrity is the jumping off point I use to investigate further with empirical research. My intention is to consider the effects of celebrity and its construction on chefs' working lives, more so than the discursive effect of celebrity (though this is certainly not discounted in my analysis). I consider Turner and Marshall's collective work with Frances Bonner in *Fame Games* (2000) on construction of celebrity in order to position chefs within celebrity culture. *Fame Games* can be considered a foundational text on celebrity studies in Australia. My empirical research on Sydney chefs is the first of its kind, and as such it is useful to consider the development of celebrity chef culture in Australia through understandings of Australian celebrity. The country's relative isolation from the rest of the world influences what the audience values in 'celebrity' figures. For instance, the scale of the Australian entertainment and media industry is significantly smaller than Hollywood, thereby producing somewhat more modest media personalities in comparison to what is possible in the United States (Turner, Bonner & Marshall 2006, p. 770). This relative modesty is transferred to Australian audiences' reception of celebrity and reflects the country's cultural engagement with celebrity.

In addition to empirical research, my research extends to examine the nature of Australian celebrity in the context of a global idea of celebrity chefs. As Turner, Bonner and Marshall argue, "the Australian publicity apparatus [is] an apparatus that actively produces a local culture as well as marketing the products of imported cultures – celebrity now operates as a currency of value that moves between media forms" (2000, p. 176). Among chefs, the trappings of celebrity have been bestowed on a particular sector of the industry in the form of media coverage. Turner, Bonner and Marshall's (2000, 2006) examination of the "publicity apparatus" in Australian entertainment media sheds light on the restaurant industry's equivalent – food critics. The relationship between chefs and critics is not as transparent as that between actor and agent, yet the benefits – increased patronage and greater media exposure – are similar. Celebrity culture has transformed the ways chefs can further their work.

Turner's, Marshall's, and Rojek's work encompass different perspectives of celebrity and acknowledge its ambiguous and continually changing nature. Turner and Marshall, in particular, have written about Australian celebrity (Turner 2004, 2013, Turner, Marshall & Bonner 2000), making their work a necessary foundation for my consideration of Sydney chefs within both the context of Australian celebrity culture and, perhaps to a slightly lesser extent, a global context of celebrity culture.

In Turner's second edition of *Understanding Celebrity* (2013)[6], he argues, "it is the pervasiveness of celebrity across the modern mass media that encourages us to think of it as a new development, rather than simply the extension of a long-standing condition" (pp. 3-4). Certainly, celebrity culture has become more pervasive among chefs in particular, with the recent popularity of television programs like *MasterChef* and *My Kitchen Rules* bringing

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[6] I refer to the first and second editions of *Understanding Celebrity* as separate books as, to my mind, the revisions to the text are significant.

accomplished chefs into our living rooms and public consciousness. Turner also notes, "We are still debating, however, what constitutes celebrity – how precisely to describe and understand this phenomenon" (2013, p. 3). Marwick and boyd "conceptualize celebrity as an organic and ever-changing *performative practice* rather than a set of intrinsic personal characteristics or external labels" (2011, p. 140, original emphasis). With these points in mind, my empirical research on the celebrity chef does not seek to unequivocally label particular chefs as celebrities per se, but rather to examine the ways in which celebrity culture and ideas of celebrity affect the perceptions and the labours of chefs.

It is important to make a distinction between celebrity and celebrity culture here: Marwick and boyd note, "Celebrity is a complicated cultural construct. In the popular sense, celebrity is a noun meaning 'a famous person'" (2011, p. 140). The authors suggest that "you're either a celebrity, or you're not" (2011, p. 140) and argue that "celebrity has become a set of circulated strategies and practices that place fame on a continuum, rather than as a bright line that separates individuals" (2011, p. 140). Chris Rojek's *Celebrity* (2001) considers celebrity "as the attribution of glamorous or notorious status to an individual within the public sphere" (p. 10).

In the *Celebrity Culture Reader,* Catharine Lumby argues, "the celebrity is someone whose authority appears to emanate directly from the masses and whose power, as a result, is dependent on maintaining the illusion of contact with their public" (2006, p. 532). In current celebrity culture, this "illusion of contact" is maintained online through the social media platforms Twitter and Instagram. As I elaborate in chapter five, these platforms are optimised for mobile usage in order to encourage day-to-day engagement. Social media is a major factor in the current pervasiveness of celebrity culture (Marshall 2010, p. 41; Marwick &

boyd 2011). While the definition of celebrity as a noun may vary from person to person, the power of celebrity rests with audiences.

This chapter will go into more detail about the different ways celebrity can be understood; however, what the literature in this study seems to agree on is the idea of a culture of celebrity: that is, its pervasiveness and its usefulness as a lens through which to examine different cultural forms and activities. As Marshall suggests, "Attaching the word "culture" to an activity is in some senses a way to recognize its importance and significance and to imply that an anthropological investigation… is what is needed to unpack the various and often complex patterns of signification, expressions of power and influence, and the organization of groups and their interactions" (2006c, p. 799). Celebrity culture influences the way we interpret and consume celebrities – indeed, it can influence the way we define our understanding of celebrities themselves. Su Holmes and Sean Redmond suggest, "If you are *not* famous then you exist at the periphery of the power networks that circulate in and through popular media" (2006, p. 2, original emphasis). Celebrity culture produces an environment in which certain practices can be normalised and legitimised – for example, the expectation for chefs to publish cook books, or produce a line of condiments. Rather than attempting to adhere to an authoritative definition of 'celebrity', I consider the notion of celebrity based on how this idea makes us think and what it offers, rather than what it *is*.

Negotiating celebrity culture

My use of the term 'celebrity chef' aligns the chef with celebrity culture within the chef industry – such chefs are produced by the media and PR mechanisms described by Turner (2013) and Turner, Bonner and Marshall (2000, 2006), albeit in a different context, for example, to Hollywood celebrities. As Turner argues, "what constitutes celebrity in one cultural domain may be quite different in another" (2004, p. 17). A celebrity chef is

subjected to different processes of celebritisation to a celebrity actor from Hollywood. I am primarily interested in the ways celebrity culture adds to chefs' labours, and the cultural shift produced therein.

Celebrity has fundamentally changed the nature of chefs' work in a particular sector of the industry, making celebrity culture a useful discursive tool with which to understand these cultural and labour shifts. I analyse these changes through empirical research; in particular through one-on-one interviews with working chefs. Chefs embody a specific, contemporary idea of celebrity – one that is constructed in large part by the media's representation of their skills but reinforced by a participatory interaction on social media. The landscape of contemporary popular media, with its myriad channels of engagement, produces different ways to understand celebrity; my empirical research on chefs offers a detailed analysis of the ways celebrity chef culture can be read through literature on celebrity and media cultures.

Focusing on the figure of the chef, James Collins (2012), Signe Rousseau (2008, 2012a), and the 2009 PhD dissertation of Mitchell Davis form the framework of my approach to celebrity chefs. Rousseau's work on the celebrity chef's influence on healthy eating (2012a) illustrates the reach and significance of chefs' contributions to topics relating to food – both cooking and eating. Collins examines the celebrity chefs in American popular culture through film studies methodologies; I draw on his ideas of audience and participation to form an ethnographic study of social media. Davis's PhD considers the role of food critics in constructing taste in New York City restaurants; I provide a similar examination of Sydney food critics; my Sydney research is elaborated through interviews with chefs on the effects of food criticism, and a consideration of how taste and class operate and are understood on social media.

The literature highlighted above all work to reinforce the importance of media in creating and sustaining the factors that make celebrity chefs. Marshall (2010), Marwick and boyd (2011), and Turner (2013) consider the impact of social media on celebrity in their recent work. Through an ethnographic study of the Sydney industry, I extend these analyses by providing a close analysis of the social media culture in which chefs are now embedded. Turner argues, "celebrity is a genre of representation and a discursive effect" (2013, p. 10). Marshall suggests, "The semiotic deconstruction of the celebrity and its audience provides a partial model of the nature of celebrity power" (1997, p. 61). Celebrity culture operates as a discursive effect in my empirical research; it is a useful and illuminating framework from which to understand the cultural shifts chefs experience in their everyday work. As Rojek notes, "Celebrity culture is functional. That is it has functions for people that produce it and for the people that receive it" (2012, p. viii). Celebrity culture's integration with chefs' work produces different ways of understanding and valuing the figure of the chef.

The purpose of this thesis is to position chefs within the literature of celebrity studies and consider how celebrity culture articulates cultural shifts occurring in the chef industry. From this position, I examine points from which ideas of celebrity can be extended through an understanding of chefing. My thesis addresses a gap in empirical research in celebrity studies literature (Ferris 2010). Rather than analysing the celebrity as an objective text, my empirical research with chefs who may be considered 'celebrity chefs' provides insight into the lived experience of celebrity. As Turner suggests, "the published work in cultural and media studies has concentrated upon the analysis of celebrity – often, of individual celebrities – as texts. Textual approaches have given due regard to the spectacular nature of celebrity as a media product but are less concerned with understanding how these spectacles got there in the first place" (2013, p. 156). Certainly, Turner, Marshall and Bonner address this in *Fame Games* (2000) through interviews with significant media and PR agents. Kerry Ferris

suggests that research in celebrity culture can benefit from "the perspective of celebrities themselves" (2010, p. 394). Ferris argues that contained analysis of celebrities within subcultures can contribute to "celebrity-level data" (2010, p. 394). Critical studies of celebrity culture have consisted predominantly of analysis of celebrities as texts (Turner 2013, p. 156). Empirical work is necessary to contribute to further understandings of celebrity culture and extend existing ideas, and my thesis offers this.

Turner, Bonner and Marshall's (2000, 2006) analysis of commentary provided by those in-the-know behind the scenes does much to illuminate the process of celebrity production. Turner, Bonner and Marshall argue, "Celebrities to some extent, then, are the objects of an interest over which they have no control" (2000, p. 9). My interviews with chefs focus on the "interest" they receive, from the media that produces them and from the audiences that consume them. First-hand accounts from chefs who have experienced the effects of what is considered 'celebrity' within the context of the restaurant industry contribute to, and refine, existing understandings of celebrity cultures. The 'interest' received by chefs is due to the social status that has been constructed for them by the media, but chefs are also active agents in the process. Chefs' agency and self-labour play a significant role in their celebritisation, as later chapters will explore.

While I (along with Marwick & boyd 2011 and Turner 2013) acknowledge that celebrity is an ambiguous term, it is necessary to have a basic working definition. Marshall describes celebrities as "overtly public individuals" (1997, p. ix). These individuals, he argues, are "given greater presence and a wider scope of activity and agency" (1997, p. ix). This thesis conceives celebrity in the chef industry as a result of popular media attention, and critical acclaim. Celebrity chefs, then, are "overtly public individuals" primarily within their industry, and to audiences of the industry. This audience has expanded significantly after

celebrity culture continues to be a significant factor in parts of the industry, namely in propelling certain chefs away from the kitchen to television hosting and cook book writing. Both Turner and Marshall agree that contemporary celebrity is the result of "a significant shift in popular culture" (Turner 2004, p. 6) and that it "constitutes a change in the way cultural meanings are generated as the celebrity becomes a key site of media attention and personal aspiration, as well as one of the key places where cultural meanings are negotiated and organised" (Marshall 1997, pp. 72-3). Celebrity culture has been integrated into the chef industry because chefs themselves have become key sites of media attention.

Jamie Oliver, a chef from the UK, has been a spokesperson for many causes including his own healthy eating campaign, The Ministry of Food. In Australia, he is an ambassador for a major grocery chain, Woolworths ('Woolworths Australia' n.d.). Self-titled domestic goddess and home cook Nigella Lawson dominated headlines when abuse at the hands of her husband lead to a highly publicised divorce (Scott 2013). These are global examples of celebrity chefs; my focus on Sydney chefs allows me to closely analyse the "cultural intermediaries" (Rojek 2001, p. 10) and processes from which they are produced. Cultural intermediaries in the restaurant industry consist predominantly of food critics; chapter four examines celebrity production through ideas of Pierre Bourdieu's cultural capital (1984) and the resultant celebrity culture. In the next section I consider how celebrity culture has introduced different ways of thinking about representation and "presentational media" (Marshall 2010, p. 35), followed by a discussion on why an examination of celebrity chefs is useful in understanding the changing nature of celebrity culture.

Celebrities and celebrity culture

Marshall's *Celebrity and Power* (1997) considers celebrities as "images of possibility" (p. 9) and as "the embodiment of the potential of an accessible culture" (p. 26). The representational aspect of celebrity is also taken up by Rojek (2001, 2012). Rojek argues,

> *The role of celebrities in class battles, to say nothing of the wars between the sexes and racial conflicts, is of historical importance. Celebrities not only represent private troubles and anxieties, they articulate general collective aspirations of class, gender, race and nation* (2012, pp. 99-100).

Celebrities themselves can be understood as "a form of rationalisation" or "as a sign and text" (Marshall 1997, p. 52). Of course, as both Marshall and Rojek show, unpacking the impact and meaning of celebrity is more complex than sign and signifier. Marshall argues, "celebrity signs represent personalities – more specifically, personalities that are given heightened cultural significance within the social world" (1997, p. 57).

In the restaurant industry, much is invested in the circulation of food media. While food criticism is at the core of the restaurant industry's marketing in terms of targeting existing dining enthusiasts, popular media programs such as *MasterChef* bring chefs to the attention of mainstream audiences. Celebrity chefs have become more mainstream in the last five years; *Time* magazine featured René Redzepi on a March 2012 cover. The cover line claims, "he's not your typical celebrity chef" ('*Time* covers' n.d.). This magazine cover attests to the pervasiveness of celebrity culture among chefs, suggesting that there is a "typical" way to understand the idea of 'celebrity chef'. By analysing the celebrity culture closely in a smaller context, namely of Sydney, we see how the city is positioned in the global context of celebrity chefs. In order to do this, I use Arjun Appadurai's notion of "neighborhoods" (1996, p. 183) to understand the networks that develop among consumers

and chefs. By neighbourhood, Appadurai refers to people bound by common interests or goals, regardless of space and geography. Sydney's food industry creates a neighbourhood united by a common interest in food and Sydney's chefs. In addition to engagement with Sydney restaurants, the maintenance of this neighbourhood is facilitated through social media.

While chapter five will consider Appadurai's neighbourhoods in greater detail to understand aspects of media convergence, it is also useful to consider the idea in terms of understanding celebrity culture. Rojek argues, "issues of articulation in class and race are based on collective experience" (2012, p. 100) and Marshall suggests, "The representative quality of celebrity produces a proxy effect in the public sphere" (2006c, p. 800). Appadurai notes, "long-term interaction of neighborhoods… creates… complex hierarchical relations" (1996, p. 198). Different kinds of chefs are part of different neighbourhoods – for example, fine dining chefs have access to different levels of visibility and cultural capital to a chef cooking in the newest trendy restaurant. The chefs in this study, with their numerous accolades and media acclaim, belong to an elite sector of the chefing industry; however, their levels of celebrity vary. Celebrity is a hierarchical system (Rojek 2001, Turner 2013 p. 25), and the chefs in this study negotiate the hierarchy by actively engaging with audiences. In order for celebrity culture to operate successfully – that is, for audiences to consume and engage in the culture represented – both the audience and the representatives must be 'in the know'. By this I mean that there needs to be mutual interest in what is being consumed and produced. A mutual interest in food, cooking, and dining out among people, bolstered by celebrity chef culture, constitute what I call the chef economy.

The chef economy has been created through the integration of celebrity culture with chefs' work. Marshall suggests, "The kind of individuality that celebrities embodied also

intersected with the expansion of consumer capitalism enabling the populace to use consumption as a means of self-actualization and transformation" (2006a, p. 317). With food critics setting certain expectations for particular chefs, the implication is that from consuming food at the restaurants of critically acclaimed chefs (increasingly, the chef brands the restaurant at which he or she works), the consumer will be engaging in a form of self-actualisation. Describing established Australian chef Neil Perry's[7] flagship restaurant Rockpool as "a lovely combination of new and old, energy and experience… The legend continues" (Durack 2013b, para. 10), the restaurant reviewer positions Rockpool as an institution of fine dining in Sydney. The tone of the review is reverential, and urges the reader to add Rockpool to their 'to-dine' list:

> *There's quite a pause before "main courses" of South Australian lamb saddle with bo ssam[8] shoulder and miso-braised beans that has serious, meaty grunt; and Rockpool's classic rich and noble congee. An all-out hit, its fleshy lobes of Balmain bug team sweetly with lush rice, crisp-fried breadstick, star anise-scented peanuts and almond beancurd. The one who ordered it has not stopped talking about it* (Durack 2013b, para. 6).

The adjectives used to describe the food, including "classic", "noble", and "all-out hit" flag the restaurant as a notable venue to visit because of the chef's talent, inviting the reader to value and take note of the chef. "Head chef Phil Wood, inevitably referred to as "a star in the making" when in fact he has burnt brightly for years, keeps things light and balanced" (Durack 2013b, para. 3). Durack's use of the word 'star' also gestures to celebrity culture,

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[7] Perry is one of Australia's most commercially successful chefs. His company Rockpool Group oversees restaurants in Western Australia, Melbourne, and Sydney; Rockpool Group menus are conceived by Perry. He is also the consulting chef for Australia's national carrier, Qantas.

[8] Bo ssam is a Korean dish of pork belly served with sides of rice and kimchi (pickled and spiced cabbage). Bo ssam means 'wrapped' or 'packaged'; the pork is to be wrapped with a selection of the sides with lettuce or cabbage leaves.

invoking Richard Dyer's seminal work on star studies and celebrity (Dyer 1979, 1986). Dyer suggests, "the star can become a part of the coinage of everyday speech" (1986, p. 3). Chef Phil Wood is referred to as a "star" who has been "burning brightly for years"; celebrity culture is evident in food criticism, and in turn, the chef economy.

Marshall draws on Louis Althusser's work on identification and state apparatuses to argue the media works as an "ideological state apparatus, offering images with which the viewer can identify. Althusser calls this process "interpellation" or hailing" (Marshall 1997, p. 64). Sydney food critics 'hail' a particular audience – "the subject is temporarily positioned or called by the cultural text to see himself or herself as having a relational reality to the text" (Marshall 1997, p. 64). The audience hailed by food critics can be expanded with the integration of celebrity culture, creating an even bigger neighbourhood. This neighbourhood is bound by an interest in food, chefs, and eating out. Celebrity chefs come to be representative figures of this economy. Consumption of the chef economy is predicated on the specific knowledges of the chefs and the potential experiences that certain chefs can offer.

Celebrity chefs can be examined as "a site of power" (Marshall 1997, p. ix). This power comes from being constructed by "a very elaborate and powerful media culture" (Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 38). Celebrity chefs retain power because it is "activated only through cultural "investment" in the construction of the celebrity sign" (Marshall 1997, p. 57). Food critics and food media invest in celebrity chefs. Their access to mainstream media, such as television and weekly pull-outs in the city's major broadsheet, add to their agency and authority. The increased media attention given to chefs produces celebrity figures. Chefs actively communicate to audiences about their work in cooking demonstrations on programs like *MasterChef*, and are known predominantly for their professional work. This places chefs in positions as representative of their industry, and representatives of what is valued by the

industry. Celebrity chefs have the capacity to operate as "signs" (Marshall 1997, p. 57) of the restaurant and service industry in general, but the specific way celebrity chefs have been constructed – that is, through food criticism and food-oriented media – and chefs' capacities to construct themselves as celebrities, have implications on who is likely to become a successful celebrity chef, or how a chef can succeed in the industry.

Celebrity culture and celebrity power have come to determine the level of success a chef can experience. In understanding the different kinds of celebrity chefs and the different ways they are valued, it is useful to note, "Celebrity culture is a certain representation of individuality, and this kind of individuality plays differently in different cultural configurations" (Marshall 2006a, p. 800). It is necessary to recognise the plurality of celebrity, and the fact that celebrities are valued differently by different audiences (Marshall 2006c, Rojek 2012, Turner 2004, 2013), but the authority of celebrity is an enduring factor in diverse situations.

We recognise

> *certain individuals as possessing higher status, and society rewards them with privileges that are not given to the majority. We call these figures celebrities. We like to think that they have risen by merit from the ranks of ordinary mortals. But it is not so. Celebrities are constructed* (Rojek 2012, p. 7).

All chefs engage in manual labour at some point of their careers, and undergo similar training regimes in order to be able to work in commercial kitchens. It is significant that a small sector of the industry is exalted, and as a result of exaltation, these chefs is given higher status and offered more opportunities for agency and power than other chefs. It is therefore important to examine the process of the celebritisation of chefs in the context of existing celebrity cultures in order to understand the consequences of celebrity culture on the chef industry.

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Chefs have become commodities as a result of their celebritisation. As Rojek notes, "Celebrities humanize the process of commodity consumption" (2001, p. 14). To say that people willingly pay one thousand krone to eat still-alive prawns at Noma because it is served by a celebrity chef is too simple – the figure of the celebrity chef is a result of complex representational labour and performance. But chefs have become celebrity figures, and their engagement with audiences through various media humanises the consumption of their cooking and their knowledges. In the next section I consider the chef in the context of celebrity culture.

The production of celebrity chefs

The phenomenon of celebrity chefs is a rich area of study. Collins (2012), Davis (2009), Hollows (2003), and Rousseau (2012a) have written on celebrity chefs, their work focusing on healthy eating, audience participation, masculinity, and food criticism respectively. In response to the contemporary popular interest in chefs, Australian chefs Tony Bilson[9] and Luke Mangan[10] have written memoirs reflecting on their substantial time in the industry. Bilson's *Insatiable* (2009) is a detailed history of the Sydney industry itself, while Mangan's *The Making of a Chef* (2011) is a close look at how a boy from a working class background went on to build an internationally successful hospitality business. American celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain's memoirs *Kitchen Confidential* (2000) and its follow-up *Medium Rare* (2010) are popular among aspiring chefs and portray the life of chefing as hedonistic and glamorous. Certainly, academic work has been written on celebrity chefs and their empires in a business context (see Jones 2009). My own research on chefs emphasises the consequences

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[9] Tony Bilson is considered one of the founding fathers of Australian fine dining, having opened and run the successful Berowra Waters Inn with his wife Gay in the 1980s. In 2011 his flagship fine diner, Bilson's, closed after going into receivership.

[10] Mangan found success in Sydney in the mid-90s with his restaurant Salt. He has since opened several Salt restaurants including in Singapore, Tokyo, and on P&O cruise liners. His Sydney restaurant glass brasserie is situated in Hilton Sydney.

of celebrity culture on chefs' work, taking Rousseau, Collins, Hollows, and Davis as useful preliminary frameworks with which to understand the process of constructing celebrity chefs.

Rousseau's examination of chefs' "everyday interference" (2012a, p. 59) with what we eat and how we cook reinforces the authority required to be a celebrity chef, while Collins's concept of "architectures of participation" (2012, p. 3) in light of the reconfiguration of the relationship between "haute cuisine and home cookin'" (2012, p. 1) relies on the increasing number of media platforms being occupied by chefs. Rousseau's and Collins' work provide a starting point from which I conduct my empirical research, working with the idea of representative celebrity, or celebrity as sign (Marshall 1997, p. 52). Hollows' examination of masculinities and Jamie Oliver and Davis's study of food criticism in *The New York Times* position celebrity chefs as a significant site of inquiry in order to consider how gender and class operate in particular contexts. Again, we see the representative nature of celebrity through an ethnography of the chef.

One important factor of chefs' work is interaction through social media. Chefs with media profiles maintain a presence on Twitter, and Instagram, a photo-sharing app optimised for smartphones. While Rousseau covers food and social media substantially in her book *Food and social media* (2012b), with a particular emphasis on Twitter and recipe blogs, I extend Marshall, Turner, and Rojek's ideas by highlighting the substantial role played by social media, a phenomenon that has gained traction in popular media in the last few years[11]. The landscape of contemporary media has transformed the ways we understand celebrity, and the ways the media produce celebrity figures. Turner, Bonner and Marshall (2000) documented major changes in the Australian media sphere related to the changed "industrial practices around the construction and promotions of public personalities" such as

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[11] Twitter was founded in 2006, Instagram launched in 2010.

entertainment sections in newspapers (p. 160). Turner, Bonner and Marshall (2000) focus primarily on the publicity arm of celebrity culture and suggest:

> *the publicity machine certainly offers a kind of intimacy with the celebrity-as-commodity… The consumption of publicity is most often distracted, diluted and so deeply embedded in the everyday that it is to all intents and purposes invisible, rather than generating a moment of focused and conscious identity formation* (Turner Bonner & Marshall 2000, p. 169).

In referring to the "publicity machine", Turner, Bonner and Marshall mean magazines, public relations and talent agencies actively working to promote their celebrity clients. Social media, more recently, has become incorporated into this "publicity machine" and in many ways has become a significant platform on which "focused and constant identity formation" occurs.

Celebrity on social media has changed the ways we understand celebrity, as well as the methods of celebrity production. Social media is an important site on which Turner, Bonner and Marshall's ideas of 'intimacy' are facilitated, and on which celebrities can actively construct their identities. Marshall has explored the facility of social media in his work on "presentational media" (2010, p. 38). While social media is useful as a way to keep up to date with news and current affairs, it is a significant platform on which celebrity is practiced (Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 141). Celebrity power is continuously cultivated by the "publicity machine" (Turner, Marshall & Bonner 2000, p. 169), but to a certain extent, also by the work of the celebrity in question. Marwick & boyd (2010, 2011), along with Marshall (2010) and Turner (2013) consider the popular use of social media, primarily of Twitter (though Marshall (2010) also includes Facebook, massive multi-player online games, and MySpace).

Twitter is often singled out for attention because, in addition to its usefulness as a broadcasting medium, "the dialogic nature of Twitter and its ability to facilitate conversation has contributed substantially to its popularity" (Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 142). Users of Twitter are encouraged to find and contribute information – the website's sign-in page implores you to "Start a conversation, explore your interests, and be in the know" (Twitter 2014). Marwick & boyd (2011) conduct a case study on three different Twitter celebrities and their interactions with fans and other celebrities. They argue, "celebrity is successfully practiced when it provides the illusion of 'backstage', giving the impression of uncensored glimpses into the lives of the very famous" (p. 140). In order to extend the literature on social media and celebrity culture examined in this study, I analyse the role of Instagram in the construction of celebrity.

Instagram is able to visually provide the illusion of 'backstage' – chefs post photos of food being prepared for service, and photos of staff meals shared before the restaurant opens to diners. As a marketing tool, photos of restaurant food presented in an appetising way are a clever and free way for chefs to advertise to potential diners. Marshall notes,

> *The symbiotic relationship between media and celebrity has been ruptured somewhat in the last decade through the development of new media. The discrete and carefully controlled and distributed structure of the culture industries, where cultural commodities and their promotional extensions are a tightly interwoven tapestry, have been elasticized by the different flows of information that have developed via the Internet* (2006b, p. 634).

While food criticism still carries currency in the chef economy (as I will explore in chapter four), increasingly, chefs are able to take promotion into their own hands and let diners judge visually.

The chefs in this study all maintain Twitter profiles, but for its simplicity, Instagram is more frequently used, and its emphasis on the visual makes it more suited to exhibiting chefs' work. Rousseau considers the consequences of "digital narcissism" as a result of social media self-presentation (2012b) but the pervasiveness of celebrity culture has made this kind of labour necessary for many chefs. Instagram is owned by Facebook (Swisher 2013) but photos can be linked to the user's Twitter feed, allowing their Twitter followers to view their Instagram posts.

Marshall notes, "Twitter is a construction of character for a kind of ritual of the performance of the self. It is highly conscious of a potential audience as much as it is a careful preening and production of the self" (2010, p. 40). This is also true of Instagram − the application's various 'filters' allow the user to present their photo in the best light − gesturing toward specific aesthetic profiles as 'sepia' or high-colour saturation. In the guise of self-expression, Instagram is an exercise in the production of the self. Chefs see the value of self-presentation on Instagram, using it to showcase their work. As well as their own cooking, chefs post photos of food that is not their own, putting their day-to-day labour of learning on display. Long photo-streams of dinners at renowned restaurants overseas feature on the profiles of some of Sydney's most popular chefs including Neil Perry (@neilperryrockpool, more than 6000 followers), Dan Hong[12] (@dan_hong, more than 5000 followers), and Colin Fassnidge, a chef in this study (@cfassnidge, around 4000 followers). Five of the seven chefs who participated in this study regularly maintain accounts on Instagram; all seven engage on Twitter.

Turner suggests that the recent convergence in media platforms has resulted in a "demotic turn" (2010a, p. 6). Turner uses the demotic turn "as a means of examining what I

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[12] Hong is the executive chef of three restaurants run by one of Sydney's biggest hospitality groups, Merivale.

argue is a significant new development in how the media participate in the production of culture" (p. 6). The increased diversity in media – including social media and blogs – result in "opportunities for participation that are so widespread and various that they constitute a form of democratization – an opening up of the media on a scale that invites us to think of it as a new form of political enfranchisement" (2010, p. 1). In the contemporary media sphere, audiences are encouraged to be producers as well as consumers (Collins 2012, Jenkins 2006, Rosen 2006). Turner clarifies that his emphasis is on demotic rather than democratic: "There is no necessary connection between the widening of opportunities for participation we are now witnessing and a democratic politics" (2013, p. 91). There has been no explicit argument that widened media participation equates to democratic participation, but "there is a degree of theoretical slippage as the notion of semiotic self-determination through consumer choices within a liberalising market mutates into a more explicitly political version of self-determination" (2013, p. 91). It is necessary to point this out because the increased media participation and resultant convergence shows that there is a significant demand for popular media and the avenues through which it can be consumed.

Henry Jenkins' book *Convergence Culture* (2006) examines convergence culture in greater detail; the book informs much of my chapter on social media and the way it has been integrated into chefs' labour as a result of celebrity culture. Jenkins argues,

> *convergence culture represents a shift in the way we think about our relations to the media, that we are making that shift first through our relations with popular culture, but that the skills we acquire through play may have implications for how we learn, work, participate in the political process, and connect with other people around the world* (2006, p. 23).

Both chefs and their audiences interact in specific ways on Twitter and Instagram, with the common objective of appreciating good food and good eating.

Convergence on social media has created Appadurai's neighbourhoods (1996), formed around mutual interest and participation in the chef economy. Social media provides a site for these neighbourhoods to exist. As Jenkins suggests, "the current moment of media change is reaffirming the right of everyday people to actively contribute to their culture" (2006, p. 132). Celebrity chef culture encourages participation on social media because chefs actively engage on social media in order to attract new audiences. Chefs actively self-promote and share images of their work since social media has become integrated into their daily labour. As Marwick and boyd argue, "social media can be used to maintain celebrity status" (2011, p. 155). Celebrity culture among chefs has necessitated the maintenance of social media profiles in order to support chefs' professional profiles in a competitive market. Celebrity chef culture has produced the need for chefs' labours to evolve in order to remain in an illustrious sector of the industry, and social media has facilitated this cultural and labour shift.

A "genre of representation"

Marshall suggests, "celebrity culture as a discourse is a focus on individualism and identity. Second, it is a discourse of identification or implied identification by an audience" (2006b, p. 635). This thesis takes this theory of identification and considers the representational labour carried out by chefs, whether they do so consciously or not. In terms of food and chefs, contemporary media has encouraged a state in which "the food press and then food television, cultivated the chef as auteur and serious food fanatics had to be able to toss around names of chefs like they were New Wave directors" (Collins 2012, p. 4). Knowing about certain chefs and certain restaurants endow the consumer with a certain kind of cultural

capital (Bourdieu 1984) – which I discuss further through the work of Bourdieu and Beverley Skeggs (2004) in chapters four and six.

Celebrity chefs act as ambassadors of the restaurant industry. Turner, Bonner and Marshall suggest, "the individual persona provides a powerful condensation of meaning which can be attached to commodities and issues; similarly, celebrities can act as prisms through which social complexity is brought back to the human level" (2000, p. 166). Joshua Gamson adds, "Celebrities are manufactured as attention-getting bodies, a process complicated but not negated by the fact that celebrities are human beings. Knownness itself is commodified within them" (2006, p. 718). Celebrity chefs' accessibility and their efforts to share their knowledge of food preparation and better eating adds to the commodity of their "knownness". For example, Colin Fassnidge is a chef in this study with two well-known restaurants to his name. He has cultivated a persona of self-described "leery Irish, a chef's chef" (personal communication, 8 November 2012), or a kind of Irish rogue, from his time as a judge on *My Kitchen Rules*. Fassnidge has signed on as a judge in 2014, and is described on the program's website as "the cheeky and outspoken Irishman" with a "straight-talking approach that drew the ire of some contestants last season" (*My Kitchen Rules*: The Judges n.d., para. 1). In addition to his TV work, Fassnidge was also named Chef of the Year by *GQ* (Gentleman's Quarterly) magazine, further adding to his public profile. As is explored throughout this thesis, Fassnidge's profile has been carefully cultivated, with the chef emphasising that he is mindful of staying true to his cooking roots. His performance of no-nonsense and outspoken chef on television is part of his "knownness" and part of the perceived intimacy developed on his Twitter and Instagram accounts. The labours of creating a public persona have become necessary since the integration of celebrity culture into chefs' work.

The celebrity chef is called upon to represent better eating and better cooking. In her book *Food Media: Celebrity chefs and the politics of everyday interference* (2012a), Rousseau profiles several international celebrity chefs including Nigella Lawson, Jamie Oliver, and Heston Blumenthal. Their interactions on social media add to their authority, at the same time cultivating an accessible persona (2012a, p. 52). The combination of their authority and accessibility make chefs an effective celebrity sign in service of eating well. Marwick and boyd note, "Twitter creates a new expectation of intimacy" (2011, p. 156). Similarly, Rousseau argues that the constant online community-building – namely through Twitter and popular food blogs – "helps to generate an even greater sense of immediacy and proximity" (2012b, p. 9). Celebrity culture evolves and grows on social media, and chefs have taken up this platform in various ways to diversify and promote their own labour, in the process creating their own celebrity profiles.

The subjects of eating and cooking are not the only things chefs communicate ideas about – ideas of class and gender can be "humanized" (Rojek 2001, p. 14) and therefore distilled through an analysis of chefs' labour. Journalist Gwen Hyman explores gender and class through considering American celebrity chefs. She argues, "… American chefs are classmakers in the most literal sense. […] celebrity automatically confers class and desirability, the diner who basks in the reflected glory of a superstar chef, who shares a glass with a Food Network star, gains a little bit of that glory for himself" (2008, p. 47). Bourdieu's idea that taste constructs class (1984) and Skeggs' (2004) feminist positioning of these ideas highlight some of the consequences of food criticism. Food criticism and mass media present celebrity chefs as individuals with cultural and social capital with which diners can associate by eating or cooking these chefs' recipes. Being knowledgeable of chefs' careers can also communicate cultural capital as this knowledge is a product of engaging with critically acclaimed, celebrity chefs. Diners incorporate the capital consumed into their self-

conception of their social class: "A class is defined as much by its *being perceived* as by its *being,* by its own consumption – which need not be conspicuous in order to be symbolic – as much as by its position in the relations of production" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 485, original emphasis).

While Bourdieu argues that consumption may not need to be conspicuous in order to classify the consumer, social media has created different ways to consume conspicuously, most notably on Instagram. Instagram users frequently post photos of food they eat, whether at a restaurant or something home-cooked – usually something elaborate[13]. In communicating their enthusiasm and food appreciation on social media, users self-identify through representations of their taste. Chefs post photos of their own food, or of food they eat at their colleagues' restaurants. Their involvement gives the practice more social and cultural import; chefs' authority on food legitimises sharing an engagement with food culture on social media. In the next section I explore how the culture of food appreciation has been expanded and made popular in the mainstream through the television program *MasterChef*.

MasterChef Australia: Laying the foundations of celebrity chef culture in Australia

Chefs on mainstream television programs like *MasterChef Australia* provide accessible representations of the chefing industry and by extension, fine dining. Food criticism and social media engagement position chefs as legitimising figures of food and dining culture. Marshall argues that celebrities can be used to "make sense" of the world around us (1997, p. 51). Celebrities are produced by the cultural industry and are figures of cultural legitimisation. Celebrity chefs, then, are figures legitimising the act of dining out as a cultural form. Chefs as legitimising figures of dining out and eating well have become popularised most recently (and most widely) on the Australian television program, *MasterChef*. In it,

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[13] Some users post 'ironic' food posts of very simple dishes, such as a can of baked beans, as a parody of the subculture of food photos on social media.

amateur cooks compete for the chance to win their 'food dream' – a cash prize to further their ambitions in the food industry and experience working in some of the country's best professional kitchens.

No other program has cemented the celebrity chef in the nation's consciousness quite like *MasterChef Australia*[14] (Lewis 2011). The program has made chefs like Peter Gilmore[15] and Matt Moran[16] household names; certainly it has given the program's three judges, Melbourne chefs George Calombaris, Gary Mehigan[17] and food critic Matt Preston, public identities in the media. Marshall argues, "the celebrity is centrally involved in the social construction of division between the individual and the collective" (1997, p. 25). However, *MasterChef* emphasises the mentor role of chefs, cultivating an inclusive environment in which contestants can learn and continue to improve, at the same time encouraging the audience to participate in the learning experience. Rather than using professional chefs' authority to alienate contestants and viewers, the program invites its audience to aspire to embody the knowledge shared by its chefs. An example of this is through the 'master class' episodes aired once a week – the contestants take a break from 'competing' and watch professional chefs cook, taking note of techniques and information about produce.

Turner comments, "[celebrities'] private lives will attract greater public interest than their professional lives" (2004, p. 3). While this applies to Hollywood film stars and

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[14] *MasterChef* has enjoyed consistently exceptional ratings, though after four years its popularity is waning (Kalina 2010, Meade 2010, Idato 2010, 'Not so tasty…' 2011, Mathieson 2012). This study uses *MasterChef* as a jump-off point to examine celebrity chef culture that was produced as a consequence of the program's popularity.

[15] Gilmore is the executive chef of Quay, an internationally-renowned Sydney restaurant.

[16] Moran is executive chef of Aria in Sydney, and oversees several restaurants around Australia. In 2011 he was a regular judge on *MasterChef Australia*. He has published several cook books and in 2013 the chef hosted his first television program, *Paddock to Plate* which screened on the Lifestyle Channel on Foxtel.

[17] Both Calombaris and Mehigan were head chefs at popular Melbourne restaurants before being regular judges (and then hosts) on *MasterChef*.

musicians, chefs' professional work is the key to the media attention they receive. Sports stars, on the other hand, are "articulated to discourses of achievement, excellence, transcendence" (Turner 2004, p. 19). Redzepi[18] writes about the effects of international success in his book, *A Work in Progress: Journal, recipes and snapshots* (2013b), which records a year in the life of the award-winning chef. Redzepi admits, "I was burned out. Success is a marvellous thing, but it can also be dangerous and limiting" (Redzepi 2013a, p. 8). The chef invites the reader to understand the work of chefing as mentally, physically, and emotionally draining in order to achieve and remain within the discourses of excellence and transcendence. Chefs' professional work is key to their celebrity status.

Turner notes, "not only are […] celebrities produced through different systems, but the meanings they generate also privilege different groups of discourses" (2004, p. 20). Chefs on *MasterChef Australia* have introduced a particular discourse of food culture and food appreciation that fits with the reality television theme of "commodification of self-renovation", as Turner suggests (2010, p. 172). On *MasterChef*, the chef represents an "image of possibility" (Marshall 1997, p. 9) not only to contestants but also to viewers. Marshall suggests, "The power of the celebrity, then, is to represent the active construction of identity in the social world" (1997, p. xi). We see contestants follow through on this aspiration for self-renovation in the ways contestants claim to want to 'change their lives' through cooking, and their clear admiration for the mentoring professional chefs who come through the program.

Season two *MasterChef* winner Adam Liaw worked as a lawyer (Clifford-Smith 2013, para. 1) before his life changed after winning the 2010 season of *MasterChef*. He currently

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[18] Redzepi is currently the head chef of Noma, voted Best Restaurant in the world by the San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list three years in a row.

hosts food program *Destination Flavour* on SBS[19] and has published two cook books – *Two Asian Kitchens* (2011) and *Asian After Work* (2013). While Liaw is a celebrity figure produced by reality television, his professional life in food maintains audience interest in his work, rather than his private life – much like the celebrity chefs he admires. *MasterChef's* emphasis on the specialised skills chefs possess has produced a particular kind of celebrity – media attention has certainly contributed to the factor of 'celebrity', but the interest is primarily in the food chefs cook, and in being associated with their food and restaurants.

Skeggs and Wood examine the effects and reception of reality television on different audiences (2008, 2012, Wood & Skeggs 2011). They argue, "'Reality' television relies upon attaching signs of value, making good and bad behaviour specific to practices, bodies and people (2008, p. 560). On a program like *MasterChef*, certain practices are attached to chefs' expertise, and this translates to the audience to position chefs as figures of authoritative celebrity. Su Holmes argues that "in order to claim a privileged access to reality, the media must also be invoked as a shared space" (2006, p. 48). Skeggs and Wood add, "reality television [is] a site through which personhood is 'made' in the interests of capital" (2012, p. 4). *MasterChef* relies on its contestants – people with no professional experience in food but with aspirations to succeed in the food industry – to produce the program as a shared space. Chefs on *MasterChef*, then, can be seen as simultaneously accessible and authoritative, adding to their celebrity appeal.

Frances Bonner's *Ordinary Television* (2003) considers celebrities produced from reality television programs like *Big Brother*; and in some respects chefs may consider themselves part of this cohort. In Australia in particular the celebrity chef has become a prominent figure since the success of *MasterChef* – like Marshall (1997) and Turner (2004) argue, celebrity status is a result of intense media attention; however, the focus on their work

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[19] SBS is one of Australia's national broadcasters.

reinforces and reproduces a certain kind of discourse around food, rather than the chefs themselves. Chefs' celebrity status on *MasterChef* is used to encourage audiences to value the quality of food, and eating and cooking well. Reading *MasterChef* and the economy of celebrity chefs through the various works of Bonner (2003), Marshall (1997, 2006c) and Turner (2004, 2013) might mean focusing on the contestants who find fame from their time on the program. Rather, I am more interested in the working chefs who step out of their comfort zones in order to contribute to the conversation about food appreciation in popular media. In this case, chefs can still be considered 'ordinary' people turned into celebrities, but their skills and their jobs make them "more usefully ordinary than others" (Bonner 2003, p. 53).

Bonner notes that 'presenters' may be more likely to be female than male (p. 75); in its first season *MasterChef Australia* was indeed presented by a female ex-food writer, while the three judges were male. The guest chefs (chefs who are invited on the program to either 'challenge' or mentor the contestants) are also predominantly male, emphasising the gender inequality among celebrity chefs. I address the gendered nature of celebrity chef culture in chapter three. Bonner notes that on cooking shows in particular, the cooks and chefs who carry the program are already "outside the ordinary" due to their advanced and specialised skills (2003, p. 76). However, compared to celebrity actors and musicians who enter their industry possibly hoping for celebrity, chefs don't tend to expect to have to manage the additional labour that accompanies celebrity. Shaping the ways chefs' labours are understood in mass media and on social media has become part of being a chef and celebrity culture is constantly changing the nature of chefs' work. We are seeing a particular kind of authoritative, skilled celebrity figure emerge from *MasterChef*. While the program is not the sole producer of celebrity chefs, chefs in this study agree that the program has had the biggest impact on their work. As a result of the popularity of *MasterChef Australia*, people see

chefing as a legitimate and admirable career path, and realise that chefs possess specialised skills. Indeed, being a chef is increasingly seen as a viable path to celebrity.

Celebrity chef culture on *MasterChef* is emphasised through the contestants' reactions to chefs. Often, guest chefs join the program as mentors or challengers, reinforcing their authority and skill. While already well-known within the industry, appearances of guest chefs elicit excited and awed reactions from contestants. *MasterChef* contestants are expected to demonstrate an engagement with the food industry in order to pass through audition rounds to participate in the program. Their reactions to chefs on the program legitimise the chefs as a kind of celebrity, which in turn is then translated to audiences at home.

The audience's positive reception of celebrity chefs gives the chefs the power to continue to present their personas. Rojek suggests that the para-social relations[20] formed with celebrities can evolve into a form of "lifestyle coaching that is directly transferable to everyday life", and "used practically to enhance the presentation of personality, refine lifestyle skills and expand social appeal" (2012, p. 139). Chefs are the ideal vehicle for this kind of "lifestyle coaching" described by Rojek; chefs' active distribution of specialised knowledges reinforces their role as a lifestyle coach – or, as Tania Lewis suggests, "lifestyle expert" (2010). Consuming celebrity chefs – that is, demonstrating knowledge of the chef economy and its cultural practices – can be parlayed into a form of cultural capital signifying a cultural fluency in the chef industry.

On *MasterChef*, the contestants' enthusiasm and admiration of these chefs, while not completely transferrable to everyone at home, imparts a celebrity status onto the chefs through engagement with mass media. Turner states, "The media have entered a phase in which they now operate as the authors or translators of cultural identities … reality TV must

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[20] The one-sided relationship between fans and celebrities.

be right at the forefront of that trend" (2010, p. 66). *MasterChef* has brought celebrity chef culture to the mainstream, where it has been adopted on social media platforms. It is necessary to note celebrity construction on social media is occurring at a time when social media engagement is at a peak – both Twitter and Facebook have made IPOs[21] (Rusli, Demos & Koh 2013), for example – a testament to the growing cultural and capital power of the social media economy. It is in response to this emerging cultural power that I situate my study, and consider the implications of the social media economy on the celebrity chef economy in Sydney.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have highlighted the core texts and theories to which my analysis responds, and the ideas that form the framework of the celebrity chef economy. My characterisation of the rise of the celebrity chef, through the very specific configurations of authority, knowledge, and skill, contributes to the burgeoning field of celebrity studies and builds on the individual and combined work of Marshall, Rojek, and Turner. Marshall argues, "Celebrity as a cultural phenomenon has become a component of many other activities" (2006c, p. 800). Certainly, the chef industry must be included in considerations of celebrity if the last ten years of media attention is taken into account. As Marshall also suggests, celebrity is connected "to an understanding of a newly mediated cultural economy, and to a complex representation of individuality – celebrity culture is a discursive satellite of other constitutions of cultural activity" (2006c, p. 799). Celebrity culture is useful as a discursive satellite of the cultural activity of chefs.

Understanding celebrity culture allows me to illustrate the significance and consequences of the changing labour of chefs, and can allow chefs to understand and

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[21] Initial public offerings to the stock market.

anticipate the mechanisms behind different aspects of their work with the media. In talking about reality television (a category under which *MasterChef* and *My Kitchen Rules* might fall), Turner notes,

> *celebrity is not a field of representation to which we might respond as if to a body of texts; rather, it is a mode of intervention into the social which must be understood in terms that acknowledge the nature of its participation in the production of everyday life* (2013, p. 146).

Indeed, the chefs I speak to acknowledge the intervention celebrity culture has made in their day-to-day lives; navigating celebrity culture is to some extent part of their daily labour.

Rojek argues,

> *Celebrification has not simply resulted in the extension of the styles of embodiment and self-presentation developed in celebrity culture throughout the wider culture. It has also produced recognition and celebration of lifestyles, beliefs and forms of life previously unrecognized or repressed* (2001, p. 191).

Chefs produce a particular lifestyle aesthetic – that is, the kind of food they cook and eat – and encourage their audiences to aspire to that lifestyle aesthetic. "Indeed, the growth of celebrity culture is closely bound up with the aestheticization of everyday life" (Rojek 2001, p. 102). The celebrity chef economy is successful because celebrity culture is "partly the expression of a cultural axis organized around abstract desire" (Rojek 2001, p. 187) and "Celebrity culture is one of the most important mechanisms for mobilizing abstract desire" (Rojek 2001, p. 189). Celebrity chefs represent cultural capital, and consuming them transfers that capital to the consumer. Celebrity culture has created incentives for chefs to produce

particular personas and to engage in particular labours, while at the same time it encourages consumers to consume particular chefs.

An examination of the literature in celebrity culture used in this study highlights areas that can benefit from further investigation. Rojek claims, "Celebrity culture is, in fact, overwhelmingly a culture of surface relations" (2001, p. 46). My research meliorates this problem by delving further into the lived experience of celebrity. The insight from chefs who have experienced intense scrutiny from the media and its audiences goes some way to providing a deeper understanding of the celebrity culture that has become so pervasive. My empirical research is the hallmark of this thesis; my lines of inquiry have been influenced by chefs' responses and experiences, and my engagement with the media platforms with which chefs are expected to engage.

Media convergence has played no small part in the growing pervasiveness of celebrity culture. Marshall suggests that "there needs to be much further research on the changing subjectivity that new media has engendered and how that is shifting our representational/presentational regimes of meaning" (2006c, p. 801). Marshall has responded to this with his own research, describing a shift from representational culture to presentational culture (Marshall 2010; Turner 2013, p. 145) – this shift has occurred primarily within social media. My thesis contributes further with an ethnography of social media and a close examination of its uses in the context of celebrity chef culture.

During the lifetime of this thesis, the literature has seen a heavy emphasis on Twitter, its constantly evolving nature and immense popularity making it a rich area for research. However, the rapidly increasing social use of Instagram leads me to suggest that the photo-sharing platform is gaining traction (along with the instantaneous photo-sharing app SnapChat), so I spend a little more time on Instagram in chapter five. The key aspects of

celebrity practice on social media are perceptions and expectations of intimacy (Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 156); Instagram delivers this in an innovative and entertaining way with a focus on visual aesthetics that is shared in chefs' work. Marwick and boyd also note, "Twitter does, to some extent, bring famous people and fans 'closer' together, but it does not equalize their status" (2011, p. 156). The line between celebrity and fan (or spectator) is always drawn; the visibility of this line depends on our understandings of celebrity culture. Instagram and Twitter highlight the various ways celebrity culture operates. Both are significant platforms that contribute to the current formation of celebrity culture, making them key aspects of my empirical research into the integration of celebrity culture with chefs' labours.

My conception of the celebrity chef is built on the convergence of print, television and social media to produce an inviting, inclusive and accessible forum on which chefs can build their identity as 'chef' while simultaneously contributing to the food culture of Sydney. Collins' architectures of participation (2012) are enacted through this media convergence, creating the participant diner and spectator dining. Streams of participation and interaction can also be considered through the context of Jenkins' (2006) 'convergence culture'. Jenkins' work allows us to consider the combination of the ideas of participation and fandom, a practice that is essentially at the core of Sydney's robust chef economy. The institution of print media, particularly the *Good Food Guide*, plays no small part in supporting the chef economy, through its contribution to changing discourses about food and its authoritative voice in promoting Sydney's dining industry. Such discourses and practices are maintained, and in many ways contained by Appadurai's neighbourhood (1996) of food culture and food appreciation.

Davis's PhD dissertation demonstrates that a culinary destination is built firstly on the foundation of authoritative and influential food criticism. I expand this by considering the

consequences of such cultural production through examining the activities of participant diners and the social and class identity construction through consumption of chefs. The consumption of chefs as celebrity is documented in the social media context of the chef economy. Social media makes the chef economy a fluid, but significant, area of study to be considered in the field of celebrity and media culture. The celebrity chef is not confined to the kitchen, but instead must possess a unique skill set demanded by the chef economy and its media constituents.

Turner argues the "exorbitance of celebrity's contemporary cultural visibility is unprecedented, and the role that celebrity plays across many aspects of the cultural field has certainly expanded and multiplied in recent years" (2013, p. 4). Chefs must be included in these cultural fields, as seen in the work of Collins (2012), Davis (2009), Hollows (2003), Jones (2009), and Rousseau (2012a), to name but a very small sample of academic literature. In popular media, sites like eater.com and consumer-produced content on Yelp and Zagat indicate that celebrity chef culture (and the food culture that reinforces celebrity chefs) is a robust, mediatised cultural field, ripe for further contemplation. Celebrity is a "cultural formation that has a social function we can better understand" (Turner 2013, p. 10). This thesis offers a deeper understanding of celebrity culture, building on existing literature that offers different pathways of investigation, through an ethnographic study of the celebrity chef. The next chapter will detail the methodology implemented in order to produce an analysis of the chef economy and participant diners, informed by the foundational literature of this chapter.

I haven't had breakfast. But if I was working like, a day as a chef, then yeah – I just wake up, have coffee, eat chocolate bars throughout the day and have a bowl of rice and stuff. That's it, yeah. So I don't think chefs should be a great model of how one should eat. It's really ironic that way. You know, we feed all these people around us, but most of the time chefs barely have time to feed themselves. – Jowett Yu, personal communication, 12 November 2012

Chapter two

Social media and participatory celebrity culture: A multimedia ethnography

Celebrity chefs authoritatively share knowledge about what to eat and how to cook. This form of representational labour is a core part of their celebrity. A key objective of this study is to understand the lived experience of celebrity, and chefing, in order to comprehend how celebrity operates among chefs. I do so through empirical research. Drawing on George Marcus's "multi-sited ethnography" (1995), I bring together a combination of media contexts that produce celebrity, and discuss the production of celebrity chefs through what I call a multi-sited 'multimedia ethnography'. Such an ethnography can involve "strategies of quite literally following connections, associations, and putative relationships" (Marcus 1995, p. 96), and this best describes the approach I have taken in my empirical work. According to Michael Burawoy, the key techniques in empirical research are interviews and participant observation (1998, p. 6). Both of these techniques are used in this study, and respond to Ferris (2010), Turner (2013) and Marshall's (2006c) calls for a deeper understanding of lived

celebrity, in addition to textual analysis. In this chapter, I outline my methodologies in gathering data and the motivations behind my analysis.

As part of my participant observation I engage with Twitter, Instagram, the Sydney dining industry and the international dining industry – a process of cultural immersion which involves dining at many restaurants and also staying abreast of the local print-based food media. Together, these sites produce a system in which the labours of the celebrity chef are visible as being continuously changing and, in turn, can be seen to be changing the expectations of what it means to be a successful chef. As a result of these continually evolving labours, the celebrity chef is produced. By analysing these sites in the context of celebrity chef culture, along with one-on-one interviews with chefs who have first-hand experience of the effects and demands of celebrity chef culture, my methodology allows me to interrogate particular aspects of celebrity culture and the chef's place in the literature. This chapter will be broken into sections in which I outline each methodology and my approach to them: that is, interviews, and participant observation within social media. In order to do that, I must first explain my approach to the study overall, and reflect on my role as ethnographer.

Growing up in kitchens

Jill Singer describes ethnography as "studying people within their own cultural environment through intensive fieldwork" (2009, p. 191). Burawoy argues that participant observation is the "paradigmatic way of studying the social world" (1991a). In an area such as celebrity culture, participant observation can illuminate patterns of behaviour within the culture; in the case of celebrity chef culture, these behaviours can be considered in relation to information relayed by chefs about their own experiences. As an ethnographer, my approach to this research is informed by my background of growing up in restaurants.

Being the daughter of Chinese immigrant parents endowed me with a specific kind of background knowledge. My parents and most of my extended family work in the hospitality industry, which lead my awareness of the Sydney industry in my early teens. Back then, my interest in reading the newspaper was sporadic, but every Tuesday I would pull out *Good Living* to read the weekly restaurant review. Matthew Evans was the major food critic for *The Sydney Morning Herald* at the time, and reading his reviews taught me that eating could be quite adventurous, if you wanted to be. While I was unable to go out and experience the culture of food in Sydney as a 15-year-old living on the central coast[22] of New South Wales, my knowledge of food and the meanings attributed to it were impressed upon me from a very young age. In my family, food was about sharing and love. Extended family gatherings were conducted around big dinners. Visiting relatives were treated to mum's best slow-cooked duck, steamed whole fish or (if we were lucky) a giant platter of crab. Visitors brought gifts of preserved seafood and fruit; mum regularly raided her abundant Chinese vegetable garden for gifts of melons, chillies and herbs before she popped around to a friend's or aunt's for some tea and a chat. From a young age, I was taught that presenting someone with food was one way to show that you cared. Far from being simply fuel for survival, food was a symbol of affection and method for nurturing. My own experiences with food and dining influence the ways I analyse Sydney chefs' relationships with food in their work.

My mother is always the cook; Dad only ever cooks on the barbeque or helps out by putting something in the oven as per mum's instructions. My family is known for our big feasts. All of my uncles and aunts on my mother's side are restaurateurs so at every extended-family gathering, we congregate at one restaurant and cook together in the kitchen. The kids set the table and organise drinks while the adults debate the best way to cook the fish and share notes on where to source the best produce. My life is punctuated with these family

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[22] The central coast of the state of New South Wales, Australia, is a regional area located about 90 minutes to two hours north of Sydney.

feasts, during which we all acknowledge the significant role restaurants and food have played in our lives. I write from the perspective of someone who has, for many years, been aware of and intrigued by the burgeoning dining culture in Sydney. I read restaurant reviews for pleasure and I make a point to follow the careers of certain chefs whose food I enjoy. For me, dining out is an event; there does not necessarily need to be an occasion for it. From a young age, I watched my mother cook at home, and then over the pass in our family restaurant[23].

To me, food is and has always been a bonding agent, whether between family or between friends. My friends are well aware of my investment in food and dining out; I am often the go-to when new restaurants open in Sydney or recommendations are required. When my friends saved their money for summer musical festivals, I would be saving for a trip to Sydney's most talked about new restaurant. It should be noted here that the kind of cultural capital I was aiming to reflect was not linked to wealth (I worked as a retail assistant for six years and paid board to my parents; my food outings were self-funded through retail work) but that of being knowledgeable about Sydney's burgeoning dining community. Burawoy suggests that "the *reflexive* model of science" is "a model of science that embraces not detachment but engagement" in what is being studied (1998, p. 5, original emphasis). Indeed, "ethnography also emphasises reflexivity, the process of reflecting, which involves an ongoing examination of what one knows and how one knows it" (Singer 2009, p. 192). My background in hospitality and active involvement in the industry affords me an insider's perspective of the industry in which celebrity chefs are embedded.

While chefs posit that their work is fuelled by a passion and love of good food, I have seen what decades of continuous manual labour has done to my mother's body, and I understand that the work of chefs is not solely a pursuit of passion but sometimes of

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[23] Jean Duruz writes about cooking, kitchens, and affect (2004, 2010); the kitchen as "haunted" (2004, p.57) describes why I draw on my own experiences in this study.

necessity. Considering that the chefs I interview have all fielded various levels of media attention and are used to speaking about their work in a certain media-friendly way, their interactions with me, an academic observer, certainly require a kind of performance to some degree. It must be noted that the transcripts in this study, then, should be taken with some degree of awareness of this performance. Even so, certain responses were more candid than expected; chefs' responses and opinions have shaped the trajectory of this study and an alertness to their media-savvy informs my analysis.

Cities like New York and London are major dining destinations with well-established celebrity chefs, but Sydney has only recently experienced a resurgence. Neil Perry and Tony Bilson made names for themselves in the 1980s, when the industry was enjoying a level of prominence similar to the levels of today; the *Good Food Guide* also launched in 1984, with popular and respected lifestyle writer Leo Schofield as editor. In the inaugural edition, Schofield writes, "Sydney has always been a moveable feast where restaurants are concerned and its dining public fairly fickle" (cited by Thomsen & Savill 2009, para. 3). On Sydney's status as a dining destination, Savill and Durack suggest, "Sydney continues to rate highly as a global dining destination, with Quay, Marque and Tetsuya's three of the four Australian restaurants on the S. Pellegrino World's Best Restaurants list" (2011, p. 2). What makes Sydney an interesting and worthy site of inquiry now is that the city's status as a major dining destination has been years in the making, and its international reputation is growing, resulting in more international media coverage as a result[24]. Programs like *MasterChef* and *My Kitchen Rules* popularised adventurous and thoughtful eating and cooking (though the two programs are vastly different in nature), as well as introducing some of the industry's most respected chefs to mainstream audiences.

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[24] See Williams 2014, DeJesus 2014, McKeever 2013, 'Sydney named third best food destination in the world', *Time Out Sydney* 2012, no author; Woodgate 2011.

The advent of celebrity chef culture in Sydney has led to a cultural shift in the way chefs work. As Turner argues, cultural shifts have broader implications and "celebrity, structurally embedded within the media industries as it is, plays a key role" (Turner 2013, p. 145). Celebrity chefs in Sydney engage with various forms of media – print, television, and social media – and these are the key sites of my multimedia, multi-sited ethnography. Media aside, chefs in my study agree that this is a prolific time in the Sydney dining scene. Compared to some cities in Europe, such as those visited by chef Colin Fassnidge (introduced in the next section), Sydney is

> *way ahead, actually. Cos I went back to Europe in the summer. I went to Dublin which was an absolute disaster. You either get shitty cheap food, lots of it, or you had to spend like a week's wages and go to* [inaudible]. *There was nowhere in between.* [Of] *which Sydney has a lot of.* […] *And then I went to London and everyone's doing the same thing. Everyone has sea bass, everyone has foie gras, everyone has morrels. It's the same dishes, just at different restaurants. Like great chefs, but they're very structured and rarely let themselves go. Whereas here you've got so many different nationalities and you can do what you want, you can do fucking Irish food with Korean influence, Japanese, and no one bats an eyelid because... we're all a mix* (personal communication, 8 November 2012).

Sydney's growing profile as an eating city and the growing profiles of its chefs provides a unique context in which to examine the simultaneously growing celebrity chef culture.

Appadurai suggests that "neighborhoods both are contexts and at the same time require and produce contexts" (Appadurai 1996, p. 184). In this instance, Appadurai's use of the term neighbourhood refers to geographical neighbourhoods as cultural environments. I

apply the same concept to Sydney's restaurants: I consider the Sydney food industry as a neighbourhood and analyse the community that has been created. Sydney is increasingly known for being a food city, as more than 25 years of the *Good Food Guide* will attest. Ian Cook and Philip Crang discuss the function of food in globalisation (Cook & Crang 1996, p. 131). Food, they argue, is a part of "contemporary material cultural geographies" (1996, p. 132). When internationally acclaimed chefs like René Redzepi, Anthony Bourdain, and David Chang visit (variously and most recently in 2011, 2012, and 2013), the cultural capital these chefs possess is imparted to the city. Internationally successful chefs like Chang and Jamie Oliver have opened restaurants in Sydney, and chefs who have worked in Sydney have gone on to succeed overseas (e.g. Analiese Gregory from this study, and see Keenan 2005). Sydney as a city is given credibility as a dining destination when internationally celebrated chefs visit. The success of Sydney chefs reflects upon the city as a dining destination. Chefs' contributions to Sydney dining reflect on the chefs themselves and on Sydney as a community. Subsequent chapters offer more details about each chef I interviewed, but in the next section I introduce each of the chefs who participated in this study.

The chefs

Perhaps I should start by talking about the chefs I was *unable* to speak to, due to immensely busy schedules and demand for their time by various media outlets. In some cases I was treated as a member of the media in the fielding of my requests and queries. This gestures to the pervasiveness of celebrity chef culture; several chefs I approached had their own public relations or personal assistants. Neil Perry's personal assistant, for instance, responded to my requests for an interview stating that the chef had too many media and business commitments

and was unable to help. Maggie Beer[25] also had her personal assistant respond with a similar explanation. That I was unable to secure some of the more famous celebrity chefs certainly attests to the major effects of celebrity chef culture – chefs are increasingly busier and moving out of the kitchen, or moving into multiple kitchens, thanks to the repute of their names. Their experience with media attention also meant that they were happy to be named in the study (only one chef elected anonymity). Many of the careers of the chefs who participated have evolved substantially in the duration of this study; in this section I outline their career trajectories both before and during their engagement with my research.

Colin Fassnidge

Fassnidge, briefly introduced in the previous chapter as a "chef's chef", completed his apprenticeship with French chef Raymond Blanc at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons in the UK, after which he immigrated to Australia and worked at Banc during the mid to late 1990s. At the time, Banc was one of the most cutting-edge restaurants in Sydney, producing some of Sydney's most influential chefs (Keenan 2005). Of these chefs, one went on to open a two-*Michelin*-starred restaurant in London, and several others opened their own 'hatted'[26] restaurants in Sydney. Fassnidge is head chef and co-owner of the Four in Hand Dining Room and casual eatery 4Fourteen. In the course of writing this thesis, Four in Hand Dining Room has retained its two-hat rating in the *Good Food Guide,* while 4Fourteen, which opened in 2012, was awarded a hat in 2012 but not in 2013. Prior to his contract as a judge on *My Kitchen Rules*, Fassnidge appeared as a guest chef on *MasterChef Australia*, which airs on a rival station. Fassnidge has signed on for a second season of *My Kitchen Rules* and his first cook book, *Four Kitchens*, will be published in March 2014.

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[25] Maggie Beer ran her own restaurant, Pheasant Farm, with her partner in South Australia from 1978 to 1993. She produces a range of condiments, ice creams, and pate, sold in some supermarkets and gourmet delis. She was named a Senior Australian of the year in 2012 (Wilkinson & Pengelly 2012).

[26] The Good Food Guide is an annual restaurant guide published in Sydney. Each year the Guide awards 'hats' to restaurants that are considered exceptional – the highest rating is three hats.

Analiese Gregory

A New Zealander, Gregory started working at one of Sydney's most acclaimed restaurants, Quay, in 2008, shortly after moving to Sydney. She began her career helping her father in hotel restaurants in New Zealand, and worked at several high profile restaurants in Europe and the United Kingdom, including two-*Michelin*-starred restaurant The Ledbury. Gregory was executive *sous* chef at Quay until she was offered a position at Bras, in Laguiole, France. Bras is an acclaimed three-*Michelin*-star restaurant; Gregory has submitted a job application to work at Bras every year for twelve years. Quay has featured on *MasterChef* since its first season in 2009, though Gregory herself has never appeared on the program. Gregory was featured by TOYS (Taste of Young Sydney, now defunct), a collective of young chefs who held various events in Sydney to showcase the work of those up-and-coming in the industry. After working a season at Bras, Gregory has accepted an offer to work at Mugaritz, another *Michelin*-starred restaurant, in Spain. She starts work there in 2014.

Hamish Ingham

In 2004 Ingham was awarded the title of *Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide* 'Young Chef of the Year'. As a result, Ingham travelled to the United States to gain experience in the kitchen of New York City's Gramercy Tavern and Craft, and San Francisco's Chez Panisse, among others. Ingham was the head chef at Billy Kwong, one of Sydney's most popular and acclaimed casual restaurants, for several years before opening his own restaurant Bar H in 2010. Ingham became accustomed to media attention as a result of his time at Billy Kwong, due to the popularity of its owner-chef, Kylie Kwong. Bar H was awarded a hat in the 2012 *Good Food Guide* awards. Also during that year, Ingham was consulting chef to the Four Seasons Hotel's two new ventures, a restaurant called The Woods

(which earned a hat during Ingham's time there), and hotel bar Grain. Ingham has since left this position in order to concentrate on Bar H.

Jonny Lake

Lake, from Ontario, Canada, has been the head chef of internationally acclaimed UK restaurant, The Fat Duck, since 2005. He studied physics and chemistry at university in Montréal, which informs his work at The Fat Duck, known for its pioneering experimentation of molecular gastronomy[27]. The Fat Duck is a three-*Michelin*-starred restaurant and in 2005 was named the best restaurant in the world by the judges of the San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list, published annually by *Restaurant* magazine. It has featured on the list for ten years, and is currently ranked 33rd.

Felicity Martin[28]

Martin comes from a family of artists – sculptors and painters – but studied nursing at university and worked as a nurse for three years before transferring into a science degree. After a year of this, Martin decided to pursue a career as a chef, something she had wanted to do since she was ten years old. She has worked in some of Sydney's most acclaimed kitchens, including *sous* chef at three-hat MG Garage, one of the first restaurants in Sydney suburb Surry Hills which has been popularly credited with having a role in turning the area into a popular dining district. Before MG Garage, she began her apprenticeship at Rockpool, worked in pastry with renowned Australian pastry chef Lorraine Godsmark, and completed her training at Concourse Restaurant (situated at the Sydney Opera House, the establishment is now known as Opera Bar). Martin has also worked in private catering, and spent several

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[27] Molecular gastronomy is the manipulation of food physically or chemically in the cooking process. It results in unusual textures and can enhance flavours, and was a common 'trend' in restaurants in the mid- to-late 2000s.

[28] Name has been changed. The chef elected to remain anonymous.

years working in kitchens of a hospitality corporation before deciding to 'downsize' to a popular suburban pub outside the city.

James Parry

Parry is another 'Young Chef of the Year' winner (awarded in 2008 for the 2009 edition of the *Good Food Guide*) and spent time in Canadian restaurants before using the prize money from his award to work in Europe. Parry worked at Mugaritz (Spain) and Noma (Denmark); both restaurants are ranked in the top 10 in the 'World's 50 Best Restaurants'. Before opening his own fine-diner, Sixpenny, in the quiet suburb of Stanmore (about 20 minutes outside Sydney city), Parry worked at some iconic Sydney restaurants including Icebergs at Bondi and Billy Kwong. Sixpenny was awarded its first *Good Food Guide* hat in 2012, the year the restaurant opened, and was featured in the Global Selection series as part of the 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list.

Jowett Yu

Yu has a B.A. in History and began his career working in kitchens in his home town of Vancouver, Canada. In Sydney, Yu has extensive experience in fine dining (as do most of the chefs in this study), having worked in internationally-acclaimed Tetsuya's before partnering up with another ex-Tetsuya's chef, Dan Hong, to open a restaurant with Sydney hospitality giant Merivale. Hong and Yu were head chefs at Merivale's Ms G's (awarded two hats in 2012) and partnered again on another Merivale venture, Mr Wong (also awarded two hats in 2012). Yu has appeared on *MasterChef*. The *(sydney) magazine*, a now-defunct monthly lifestyle pull-out in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, ran a feature-length profile on Mr Wong months after its opening. Queues for a table at Mr Wong can be up to two hours long during peak periods. Yu currently has plans to move to Hong Kong to open a restaurant in Hong Kong Island's Central district.

In interviews over a period of eight to 12 months, I gave the chefs involved in this study the opportunity to make their own contributions to the research: each chapter is structured around themes and issues highlighted by our conversations. Initially, I set out to research masculinities in the chef industry. As the interviews continued, it became clear that celebrity culture was the most significant aspect of their work and it had changed the industry in at least the last decade. As such, interviews were geared towards exploring the ways celebrity culture and media intersect with their day-to-day work. The group of chefs I spoke to are part of an elite group within the industry: they are, as previously mentioned, accustomed to media attention and the pressure of living up to critical acclaim. In the initial stages of this study, I approached chefs who worked in pubs, RSL (Returned and Services League) clubs, and neighbourhood restaurants. I did not hear back from any. In addition to the chefs' experiences, their familiarity with media attention is also an object of study here. That these particular chefs were willing and available to contribute to this study speaks to the kind of cultural capital cultivated when a chef experiences celebrity culture – speaking to outsiders, sharing knowledge about the industry, becomes part of their labour. Participation in this study is, in part, a result of celebrity culture.

Career history, food culture, and the food media were some of the subjects broached in interviews. The chefs were able to follow the evolution of my research and offer feedback from their perspective in the industry. Their involvement shaped the project – while there is academic work on chefs, food and identity (see Cook & Crang 1996; Hollows 2003; Rousseau 2008, 2012a, 2012b), my research focuses on the chefs' point of view and media's effects on the chef. Burawoy emphasises that participant observation allows us to see how people understand and experience the way they act, and also to "juxtapose what people say they are up to against what they actually do" (1991a, p. 2). My history of growing up in restaurant kitchens and my own engagement with the Sydney dining scene equipped me with

a background knowledge and awareness that couldn't have been replaced with research. As an eager participant in the Sydney industry and on social media, I had an awareness of certain relationships and the 'type' of chefs the media liked to write about. I spent two years interning at *Australian Gourmet Traveller* under the tutelage of Pat Nourse (then features editor, now deputy editor and chief critic) and freelanced for the Food & Drink section of *Time Out Sydney*. I also contributed to an edition of *Gourmet Traveller*'s annual restaurant guide as a restaurant reviewer. These experiences inform my role as an ethnographer, and are also points of departure for reflection on the research process.

"Ethnographic work is … a feat of empathy in which we immerse ourselves in the community we study" (Burawoy 1991a, p. 4). My background experience allows me to empathise with my subject, but because this empathy is always present, it also reminds me to remember my role as an ethnographer. Burawoy suggests that academia is a key marker of difference between the observer and the observed (1991a, p. 5) but as the interviews continued over a period of a year, the chefs came to understand my personal investment in the world I was researching, and this helped the dynamic between us during interviews. I engaged in online exchanges via Twitter about food or chef news; Yu in particular was interested in my area of research (gender and cultural studies) and often shared links to articles on issues relating to gender. While I cannot discount the factor of performance by these chefs, I believe the cultivation of familiarity with them enhanced our conversations, and made the overall research process more fruitful.

Contributing to the research was another method of the chefs' self-production. As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, these chefs all have various levels of media experience; their involvement with this study is to some extent a calculated decision based on an awareness of their own self-presentation. This does not detract from their contributions, if anything their

self-awareness serves to emphasise some of the effects of celebrity culture on what chefs regard as part of their labour. This form of self-presentation is a direct enactment of the expectations that Sydney food media pushes on chefs. As Marshall suggests, "celebrity culture is intriguingly poised between these two cultures – representational and presentational – because of its power to express cultural desire and will in significant ways" (2010, p. 45). These interviews involve both representation and presentation: certain chefs have attained their media profiles because they represent a particular elite sector of the industry. Once this profile has been gained, presentational labour is required to ensure an agreeable persona is communicated to audiences. In later chapters I discuss the ways that cultural capital operates as currency in celebrity chef culture; the conscious labour of contributing to an academic project hints at the way cultural capital works in the lives of chefs. Their participation can also be seen as an indicator of the effects of celebrity culture and part of the different labours in which chefs are now constantly engaged. The next section outlines the methods I employ to observe and understand these different labours through ethnography.

Multimedia, multi-sited ethnography

My ethnography is primarily Sydney-based, in order to focus on the effects of celebrity culture in one particular city. Ethnography can allow us to examine the specific in order to extrapolate to the general (Gille & ÓRiain 2002, p. 271; Marcus 1995, p. 111), but Turner also draws attention to the value of a focused study, rather than global (though in parts I do consider the global context in order to provide some general perspective): "it is unhelpful to go for the global explanation while we still have the option of paying close attention to the specific power relations in play at particular historical conjunctures" (2013, p. 157). While this study closely examines the power relations at play in Sydney among Sydney chefs and Sydney media, it would be an oversight not to consider the idea of globalisation and its

effects on the industry. After all, Sydney is a tourist destination, and the most acclaimed of its restaurants operate with a view to appealing to overseas audiences. So, in this sense, a global perspective in terms of analysis is necessary.

Zsuzsa Gille and Seán ÓRiain consider the changing definitions of globalisation in their conceptualisation of global ethnography. They summarise that in terms of ethnography, globalisation can be considered as a "decentering of national societies" (2002, p. 273). The authors also note that "Giddens (1991) argues that under conditions of globalization social relations are disembedded from the local and can operate in contexts where space no longer matters because shared systems of symbols and knowledge circulate globally" (Gille & ÓRiain 2002, p. 274). The authors suggest, "Global ethnographers must begin their analysis by seeking out "place-making projects" that seek to define new kinds of places, with new definitions of social relations and their boundaries" (2002, p. 271). I use this as a departure point to position social media as a site for ethnography. Social media platforms like Twitter and Instagram do not have physical 'space'; they are not sites with necessarily anchored locations. Their mobility makes them a valuable resource in the evolving culture of the Sydney dining scene. The fact that these applications are accessible through the internet – that is, almost anywhere in the world with open access to the internet, and on portable devices with access to the internet – makes them valuable resources in a fluid system like the chef economy.

Gille and ÓRiain suggest that "Ethnography is uniquely well placed to deal with the challenges of studying social life under globalization because it does not rely on fixed and comparable units of analysis" (2002, p. 273). Participant observation that takes place in ethnography is reflexive (Burawoy 1991a, 1998; Singer 2009), therefore the analysis that takes place must also acknowledge the context of globalisation. By incorporating Twitter and

Instagram in my conception of ethnography I maintain a global perspective within the Sydney context. Following chefs from the UK and the USA, along with chefs in Sydney (and around Australia) allow me to see these different cultures side by side. Social media highlights the parallels with other cultures of celebrity chefs, most notably of those in New York City, or London, two cities the chefs in this study cite as possible templates for the Sydney industry.

It is beyond the scope of this study to consider in great detail the culture of celebrity chefs of those cities in addition to Sydney, but the parallels that can be drawn indicate that celebrity chef culture has a global context and is part of a global phenomenon (see Collins 2012; Davis 2009; Rousseau 2012a, 2012b). I draw on the principles of global ethnography to develop a multimedia ethnography, treating Twitter and Instagram as part of a collection of "place-making projects" (Gille & ÓRiain 2002, p. 271) in the chef economy. "Ethnography is an especially suitable methodology with which to investigate social structures that are constituted across multiple scales and sites" (Gille & ÓRiain 2002, p. 279). The chef economy and its accompanying celebrity culture are articulated not only in restaurants, but across Twitter, Instagram, and the print-based food media. As an ethnographer, I consider the chef economy as a combination of these sites and engage with them as both researcher and participant. As Gille and ÓRiain suggest, "the site… is historically produced in interaction with a variety of external connections" (2002, p. 277). The chef economy does not exist without the connections formed across these sites. Chefs connect with each other on Twitter and Instagram, with other diners and food media, and these connections produce and sustain the chef economy.

Appadurai's concept of locality is a tool that informs my discussion of the chef economy through my ethnographical approach. I position Sydney's dining scene as an

instance of "locality in the global cultural flow" (Appadurai 1996, p. 178). Appadurai conceptualises "locality as a phenomenological property of social life, a structure of feeling that is produced by particular forms of intentional activity and that yields particular sorts of material effects" (1996, p. 182). He adds, "neighborhoods are inherently what they are because they are opposed to something else and derive from other, already produced neighborhoods" (1996, p. 183). This idea can help us understand the chef economy and its interconnecting groups of chef, diner, and media across the diverse platforms of place (restaurant), social media, print media, and television[29]. Understanding these connections is the first step to illuminating the operation of celebrity culture in the chef economy.

Appadurai appropriates Benedict Anderson's (1991) concept of "imagined community" (1996, p. 28) in his concept of the "neighborhood" (1996, p. 183). Appadurai notes Anderson's description of mass media as "print capitalism" (1996, p. 28), resulting in "the power of mass literacy and its attendant large-scale production of projects of ethnic affinity that were remarkably free of the need for face-to-face communication" (Appadurai 1996, p. 28). This description can be used to highlight the relationships that are formed in the chef economy. Print and television media, as I argue variously in chapters four and five, provide the framework from which ideas of taste, class, and gender are constructed. The role of the chef is 'performed' on mass media, and deconstructed on interactive social media. Chefs – and by extension, Sydney diners – produce and participate in a neighbourhood which produces and commodifies a celebrity culture among chefs in Sydney. In this context, I draw on "a global ethnography that still locates itself firmly in places but which conceives of these places as themselves globalised with multiple external connections" (Gilles & ÓRiain 2002, p. 279). Drawing on concepts of global ethnography provides the best tools for inquiry into the construction and maintenance of this neighbourhood.

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[29] I examine these interconnections in greater detail in chapter five.

My approach to ethnography is adopted with an awareness that it is also a "multi-sited ethnography" (Marcus 1995, p. 95). Marcus proposes a more complex methodology in multi-sited ethnography, suggesting that "mobile ethnography takes unexpected trajectories in tracing a cultural formation across and within multiple sites of activity" (1995, p. 96). In examining sites across different media, ideas that inform multi-sited ethnography help refine my approach to the objects and sites of analysis. Marcus argues,

> *Although multi-sited ethnography is an exercise in mapping terrain, its goal is not holistic presentation, an ethnographic portrayal of the world system as a totality. Rather, it claims that any ethnography of a cultural formation in the world system is also an ethnography of the system* (1995, p. 99).

My purpose in analysing the relationships through the interactions between audience, media, and chef across different media is to highlight the operation of the chef economy, and thus the effects of celebrity culture. A multi-sited ethnography allows me to examine several different sites within the same context. The current media environment makes it necessary, to an extent, to take a multi-sited approach. In looking at print media, social media, and television I take a multimedia, multi-sited approach. Marcus notes, "what is not lost but remains essential to multi-sited research is the function of translation from one cultural idiom or language to another" (1995, p. 100). Each medium (or site) has its own processes and idioms. In the next section I outline the sites I observe in my ethnography, their idioms and functions, and consider their contributions to the chef economy.

Popular media: print and television

As a participant of the Sydney dining industry, I have consumed its related media since I was a teenager. The world I read about in *Good Living* was very far removed from the world I

knew; my parents' restaurant is a small suburban Chinese restaurant, and nothing at all like the multiple-cutlery-set restaurants I visited in the newspaper each week. I learned about what is expected in a degustation through reading about them – unusual flavours that might not all hit the mark; a long, protracted meal during which it helps to be quite fond of your companions – before I sat down for my first. I've learned to avoid restaurants in the first two months after they're reviewed favourably in *Good Living* because it's unlikely I will be able to get a table. It is not only my history of growing up in a restaurant that informs my analysis, but also the romanticised notions I learned from many years of reading about exciting new restaurants and up-and-coming chefs. "Ethnography is predicated upon attention to the everyday, an intimate knowledge of face-to-face communities and groups" (Marcus 1995, p. 99). I have cultivated my own intimate knowledge of the Sydney industry through prolonged engagement with the media that built it; this intimate knowledge serves to inform my judgements about the analysis I offer throughout this study.

Sydney has no shortage of food media: two major broadsheets, a tabloid, independent media, several monthly publications and several online blogs and online magazines, not to mention consumer-produced content on sites like Yelp and Urban Spoon. For the purposes of this study, I focus primarily on *Good Living*[30] and its annual *Good Food Guide.* While at times controversial[31], the publication's history and experience make it a valuable text. *Good Living*'s rich history in chronicling the city's major figures in the world of food is the reason

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[30] *Good Living* was changed to *Good Food* in 2012, part way through the writing of this thesis. The publication's history and currency with the media for the last 25 years is what makes it a valuable text for this study. For ease of reference, I refer to *Good Living* in this thesis.

[31] When industry stalwart Terry Durack returned to the editorship in 2011, he shocked the city's chefs by docking a hat from Tetsuya's, a world-renowned fine diner (Greenwood 2010, Olding 2010, Wood 2010). Younger chefs also claim that Durack doesn't understand their casual approach to food, claiming that Durack is unrealistically attached to the out-dated rituals of fine dining. I write about Durack in more detail in chapter four.

for its continuing currency in the industry. In a demotic media[32] environment (Turner 2010a) such as we are experiencing now, there are certainly going to be audiences who discount the value of a critic. I contend, however, that at the core of celebrity chef culture are the critics who have taught us to aspire to particular tastes but also to understand the work of a chef.

Matthew Evans[33], the food critic who was chief critic at the time I started reading *Good Living*, previously worked as a chef. His writing empathised with the chef's perspective while still being critical, earning him respect within the industry. Fassnidge declares, "A lot of people haven't got a fucking clue what goes on, or [about] how much time and effort or flavours... or you know, […] those few *good* critics realise, and have been chefs, have travelled the world, so they know and respect what you do" (personal communication, 8 April 2011). Food critics produce content, but they also contribute to the industry about which they write. The symbiotic relationship between chef and critic forms a base on which the chef economy is built. However, the increasingly pervasive culture of social media and its demotic environment have skewed this relationship.

In chapter four I argue that the critic-chef relationship is necessary in the celebrity chef economy. Critics have access to the platforms that allow them to project "The aestheticization of everyday life" (Rojek 2001, p. 101) onto chefs, who are then able to communicate or reproduce this to mass audiences. Their promotion of certain chefs inevitably elevate the chefs to a kind of celebrity status, opening up access to different forms of power through the class mobility presented by celebrity. I go into more detail about this in chapter six. Critics guide our expectations of chefs and the food we eat. A publication like

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[32] Turner uses the term 'demotic turn' to describe "a significant new development in how the media participate in the production of culture" (2010, p. 6). Demotic media describes the state of the media in this kind of environment.

[33] He recently hosted the series *Gourmet Farmer*, which looks at the produce and daily life on his farm in Tasmania, Australia. See 'Gourmet Farmer: presenter' n.d.

Good Living, with its extensive history and proven influence in the careers of generations of chefs, is a major contributor to celebrity chef culture in Sydney. This is further reflected in the popular television program, *MasterChef Australia.*

Consistently throughout my interviews with Sydney chefs, the one factor they cite as having the most impact on their work is *MasterChef Australia*[34]. The program gained fast popularity, attracting more than a million viewers per night in its second year to air − at the time, *MasterChef* screened six nights a week (Meade 2010). Its popularity has waned over time, but its role in catapulting the chef into the mainstream has endured in the form of celebrity chef culture[35]. Celebrity chefs are by no means a new phenomenon in Australia; 2014 saw the launch of postal stamps bearing the faces of Maggie Beer, Margaret Fulton, Stephanie Alexander[36], Kylie Kwong, and Neil Perry (Harden 2014). Kwong runs the popular Billy Kwong Tea House in Surry Hills, while Perry oversees several restaurants around the country. Chefs who appeared on *MasterChef* were equally popular. Throughout this thesis, I frequently use *MasterChef* as a popularity filter − that is, ideas and chefs that have appeared on the program are ideas that will almost certainly gain mainstream attention. *MasterChef* emphasises the authoritative role chefs play, positioning them as judges, teachers, and mentors.

Quay is a three-hatted restaurant with expansive views of Sydney harbour. The executive chef, Peter Gilmore, is renowned for his delicate work with seafood and unusual

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[34] *My Kitchen Rules* is also a popular cooking program, but while *MasterChef* focuses on contestants with aspirations to be chefs, and features a substantial number of acclaimed working chefs throughout the program, *My Kitchen Rules* pits home cooks against each other in a state-versus-state competition. The judges on *My Kitchen Rules* are chefs, sometimes with guest food critics on the panel.

[35] At the height of its popularity, academic work analysed its impact on popular culture, including Adams 2010, Khamis 2010, Lewis 2011, Wishart 2010.

[36] Fulton and Alexander are renowned for revolutionising Australian cuisine through their cook books in the 1970s and 80s. Fulton's *The Margaret Fulton Cook Book* was published in 1968. See margaretfulton.com.au. Alexander's first book, *Stephanie's Menus For Food Lovers* was published in 1985, but her most popular, *The Cook's Companion*, was first published in 1996. See stephaniealexander.com.au.

deployment of texture and flavour. He appeared in the season finale of *MasterChef* and in subsequent series. His former executive *sous* chef Gregory tells me,

> *One of the biggest changes at Quay actually is we get loads of kids now, like asking their parents if they can take them to Quay. Especially after* MasterChef. *Because apparently, the viewers of* MasterChef – *they were telling me, something like 20%* [of the viewers] *were between* [the ages of] *like seven and twelve. Which is why they wanted to do* MasterChef Kids ['Junior MasterChef'; the Australian version aired in 2010 and 2011]. *Yeah, so we had loads of kids in the kitchen and they're like, 'Wow! Can I have a photo with Peter Gilmore?' Yeah, it's really cute* (personal communication, 5 September 2012).

The reach and popularity of *MasterChef* was such that the program was transforming the clientele of one of Sydney's most acclaimed restaurants. *MasterChef* translates some of the cultural capital communicated by food critics to mainstream audiences, positioning chefs as authoritative and celebrity figures. I explore the ways that *MasterChef* constructs celebrity throughout this thesis; the program is a key site in my ethnography.

The way *MasterChef* constructs celebrity is important to this study, but I am more interested in chefs' reactions to the ways they are represented in the program. Gille and ÓRiain argue that "we must develop our understanding of how places and networks constitute one another, rather than seeing them as opposing principles of social life" (2002, p. 275). In the current media environment, it would be an oversight to think that something like *MasterChef*, so removed from the everyday labour of being in a kitchen, has not factored into the work of chefs with media experience. In fact, all of the Sydney-based chefs involved in this study have either been approached by or involved with the program in some way. While

MasterChef cannot entirely explain celebrity chef culture, it is a useful filter through which to understand and illuminate the process. Television can be a straightforward way to interact with audiences, but social media has changed the nature of the media landscape completely. In the next section I discuss Twitter and Instagram and their role in the chef economy.

Twitter

The advent of social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram have given people the means to communicate online with those they may not know personally. Twitter, in particular, allows users to 'follow' each other in cyberspace and read what others are saying (or 'tweeting'). At the end of 2013, Twitter reported to have 232 million monthly active users (Benwell 2013, para. 6). This doesn't take into account the number of users who have registered accounts, but are no longer active on the platform, a figure which is estimated to be 680 million (Benwell 2013, para. 7). While these figures can be considered significant, my approach to Twitter does not necessarily focus on the *reach* of Twitter (though this certainly does matter), but more so on its participatory nature.

Twitter is a space on which users can form their own neighbourhoods, and I consider it significant for this purpose. Twitter is not as personal as Facebook, through which people tend to connect only with people they know. Twitter is a platform used to share news and communicate with people with similar interests. Marshall (2010) and Turner (2013) acknowledge social media's effect in changing practices and understandings of celebrity; Marwick and boyd (2011) examine practices of celebrity on Twitter in detail, as discussed in my previous chapter. I utilise a Twitter account in order to observe the communication between chefs, many of whom are frequent users of Twitter. Twitter and Instagram form significant aspects of my ethnography as I use them to follow the connections made in the chef economy. "The ethnographer is less a chronicler of self-evident places than an

interrogator of a variety of place-making projects" (Gille & ÓRiain 2002, p. 278). My methodology highlights social media as a place in which celebrity culture is negotiated and maintained. Drawing on the work of Marshall (2010), Turner (2010a, 2013), and Marwick and boyd (2011) on social media and celebrity, I provide a close examination of social media and celebrity culture through examining the celebrity chef, using my own participation as part of the methodology.

A user's profile page includes an image above their 'handle' (Twitter username, preceded by the @ symbol) and if the user chooses, a brief description of themselves. Twitter accounts can be set to private, but the accounts I have quoted from throughout this thesis are public. Once a profile is set up, the website invites the user to 'follow' other accounts. Once accounts are followed, a stream of tweets appear in reverse chronological order. The 'home' page (or screen if on a phone) is known as your 'Twitter feed.' News outlets, companies, and government bodies are among the groups that maintain Twitter accounts, along with private individuals. Celebrities, or other significant public figures, may have 'verified' accounts[37] – Twitter checks user credentials and applies a 'blue tick' symbol next to the user's handle to signify that the account is genuine. Users can 'tweet' their own streams of consciousness, or share other users' tweets by 'retweeting', which publishes the tweet on their own feed. As well as chefs tweeting to each other, Sydney chefs and prominent Sydney food writers catch up and share news on Twitter. Academic literature on Twitter, some of which I discuss below, positions the site as a forum for community. Indeed, such a site can be considered a global community for those who have access to the internet. Twitter is a popular forum among chefs for communication and sharing their work. It's convenient and efficient. Chefs are able to engage in the chef economy on Twitter in view of their colleagues, the media, and

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[37] Users can apply for verification from the website; if the user has a significant public profile the website will sometimes verify without notification.

diners. In this way, chefs display their cultural capital through knowledge of the industry and the public display of their social and collegial networks.

Twitter's tagline recently changed from, "Twitter is for staying in touch and keeping up with friends no matter where you are or what you're doing" to "Share and discover what's happening right now, anywhere in the world" (Bruns, Burgess, Highfield, Kirchhoff & Nicolai 2010, p. 7, 8). The tagline has changed again, and is currently: "Start a conversation, explore your interests, and be in the know". The website also encourages users to "Take Twitter with you" with a link to download the free smartphone app. Twitter is not only a tool for keeping in touch but is also a channel through which news happens. It provides "new contexts of social visibility and connection" (Bruns *et al*. 2010, p. 8). In this way, Twitter articulates a version of Appadurai's idea of neighbourhood in a global context (Appadurai 1996). Twitter offers space for community, through which people can contribute to a greater conversation – "a structure for them to act together as if in an organised way, for example through the use of hashtags – the # symbol – and keywords to signpost topics and issues" (Hermida 2010, 'A distributed conversation', para. 6). Twitter then becomes both a neighbourhood and a context in which a large part of the Sydney (and global) food community participates.

Social connection also becomes themed through Twitter. For example, topics on Twitter can be 'tagged' with hashtags – in order to find tweets about a certain subject or Twitter movement, one simply needs to search the hashtag[38]. The site also displays the most popular subjects of tweets, also known as 'trending topics', which may or may not be a hashtag. An example of a trending topic that has come about through chefs is the hashtag #staffmeals, which refers to the meals chefs eat together before service. This is also a stand-

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[38] For example, a Twitter-wide conversation about cooking with truffle oil might be tagged as #cookingwithtruffleoil, or #truffleoil

alone Twitter account, @staffmeals. The concept of staff meals, both on Twitter and in restaurant kitchens all around the world, is a ritual that builds community. These rituals are specific to the act of chefing and form a commonality between chefs. When such rituals are reflected on Twitter, they present an "illusion of 'backstage" (Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 140), inviting the audience into chefs' lives.

With the advent of Twitter, some argue that public debate and discussion has started to move away from more 'formalised' platforms such as print media (Bruns *et al.* 2010, p. 9). However, an inevitable consequence of forums as such Twitter is what Bruns *et al.* term "affective and emergent *publics*" (p. 9, original emphasis). With the Habermasian idea of the 'public sphere' (cited in Bruns *et al.* 2010, p. 9) in mind, Bruns *et al.* argue that social platforms form these publics which "have obvious applications in researching the ephemeral and multiple discursive interactions that take place online" (Bruns *et al.* 2010, p. 9). Twitter is a popular channel through which chefs can communicate with each other as well as with existing and potential diners. Many prominent food writers have Twitter accounts, and regularly communicate with chefs.

The food community of Sydney is reinforced and facilitated by Twitter. Celebrity chef culture is cultivated on Twitter through the display of cultural capital online, whether it is in the tweets themselves or the cultural capital and authority reflected by the number of followers a user possesses. I explore this in greater detail in chapter five. I utilise Twitter to observe the operation and participatory nature of the chef economy, through Sydney chefs' presentation of themselves in and through the community built on Twitter, and their projections of self onto a global stage. Twitter is a global context through which chefs are observed and observe. Appadurai's notion of the collective imagination unfolds on Twitter through interaction and creates a community online (1996, p.7). On Twitter, chefs are

engaging in "production, representation and reproduction" (1996, p.185) of the chefing culture, reproducing their neighbourhood and producing new contexts (1996, p.185) which include multi-sited and multimedia forms of interaction and self-production.

Twitter is also real-time gauge of the perceived cultural capital of chefs. A chef is on Twitter in order to take advantage of the access to a significantly-sized audience. For the most part, chefs use Twitter strategically – to promote their business and to boost their own profiles. This form of self-presentation contributes to the construction of celebrity (Marshall 2010, p. 35). To a certain degree, chefs are doing this by choice. However, their self-presentation is also in response to the media. There is a constant acknowledgement of media expectations and the discourse employed by the media in the self-presentation of ambitious chefs, which I will explore throughout the thesis. Twitter provides real-time, constant and varied updates about the state of the Sydney restaurant industry. It is a tool to track trends among chefs and be a part of their community.

To provide an example of the impact of Twitter on chefs, in January 2011 the state of Queensland experienced catastrophic flooding. Entire townships washed away and the floods resulted in a death toll of 22 ('SE Queensland flood death toll…' 2011). The Australian nation was moved by this natural disaster, with more than $100 million raised by big businesses and the public, according to the Queensland Labor website ('Over $100 million raised…' 2011). In addition to this, Sydney chefs organised fundraising dinners to contribute to the relief appeal. On the 13th of January 2011, Fassnidge announced on Twitter that he was organising a charity dinner:

> *Doing a Queensland dinner who's in ie* [sic] *meat , fish , veg , wine ,* [sic]
>
> *waiters and chefs.......put your hand up now! And PR to get the word out !* [sic]

Almost immediately, other chefs on Twitter offered to cook, suppliers offered produce and media offered publicity. While Sydney chefs are connected through their career choice and understandings of the nature of the job, social media connects them more tangibly on a day-to-day basis. On Twitter, chefs adopt certain personalities to present to their followers, who are made up of diners, friends and other chefs. They network with each other and the media and are able to converse with diners. Through their tweets, chefs play a role in the construction of their audience – tweeting what interests them in order to attract like-minded people. Although each chef's Twitter account provides individual updates from chefs, Twitter engenders a communal forum for the chef community of Sydney. The chef community on Twitter is a platform that not only promotes the interests of chefs, but also reinforces the parameters and expectations of the media *through the chefs themselves*. These parameters and expectations continue to construct celebrity when they are incorporated into chefs' labours of self-presentation, which I explore more comprehensively in chapter six.

When I began writing this thesis, Twitter was the social media platform du jour – academic work on Twitter was emerging (Bruns *et al*. 2010; Burgess & Bruns 2012; Hermida 2010; Marwick & boyd 2011; Rousseau 2012b, etc.) but it was difficult to find literature on Instagram (e.g. Geissler 2010; Hochman & Manovich 2013; Hochman & Schwartz 2012). This study positions Instagram as a social media platform that contributes significantly to practices of celebrity, and is a key platform on which celebrity culture is cultivated among chefs in particular.

Instagram

Instagram is a social networking platform that publishes a stream of photos in reverse chronological order, appearing as they are posted – much like Twitter, with a focus on images rather than text. Users can then 'like' photos posted by those they follow, and/or comment on

the photos. Initially only available as a (free) smartphone app, Instagram allowed users to take photos, apply filters if desired, and post to their account with a caption. Users are encouraged to follow other users and the option of a private account is also available. Since becoming acquired by Facebook (Swisher 2013), Instagram has added a website (instagram.com) which allows users to 'like' photos but not post them. Recent developments to the app include 'tagging' other users in photos (which appear as a notification on the tagged user's account) and Instagram video.

Being a visual medium, Instagram is ideal for chefs' use: chefs enthusiastically post photos of food they are preparing, cooking, or about to eat. In this way, they are letting their audience 'backstage', at the same time promoting their work and presenting themselves through a self-constructed profile. Visual images, much more than a stream of words, can be seen as 'personal', allowing the audience a glimpse of the 'true' self behind the photo. Certainly, chefs do not only post photos of food. Fassnidge often posts photos of his two daughters, which can be seen to be part of his construction of an accessible, personable chef. The sharing of these intimate photos (even behind-the-scenes glimpses can be construed as being intimate, as admittance to spaces one would usually not be able to enter) encourages the audience to feel invited and welcome. Lauren Berlant argues that the "spreading" of intimacy generates an "aesthetic, an aesthetic of attachment" (Berlant 1998a, p. 285) and this is taking place on Instagram. Instagram, in a different way to Twitter, facilitates intimacy and reinforces the communities that are built online in the Sydney chef economy. These allow deeper connections between members of the community, building a strong foundation on which celebrity culture is continuously produced and maintained among chefs and their audiences.

According to Instagram, the platform has 150 million monthly active users worldwide. Its emphasis on the visual makes it useful for chefs to share their work but has also created a subculture in which people post photos of food – whether it be at a restaurant or not. Such is Instagram's reputation for being home to food photos, on the rare occasion that the app is malfunctioning, a visual 'meme'[39] is circulated after its recovery. The image is of a male on his phone, looking distraught. The caption reads: "Instagram is down. Describe your lunch to me". Users self-reference their penchant for posting food photos with several popular hashtags like #foodporn, #instayum, or #food. Food photos – especially in my Instagram feed, because of the users I follow – contribute significantly to the content posted on Instagram.

Appadurai considers the "ways in which electronic mediation transforms pre-existing worlds of communication and conduct" and argues that "these media nevertheless compel the transformation of everyday discourse" (Appadurai 1996, p. 3). Twitter and Instagram's neighbourhoods transform everyday discourses of chefs and food media in Sydney and positions the Sydney food industry in particular ways on a global stage. Twitter changes the way chefs and diners view their roles within the food community, by encouraging interaction with both diners and food critics. Twitter and Instagram provide direct links between chef and diner, making the figure of the chef accessible and relatable. Chefs present themselves as accessible – tweet-able, interesting to follow on Instagram – personalities to the public. By doing so they invite the public to engage with them and their work, and they consciously bring the public into how they construct themselves through the number of online 'followers' they are able to acquire. Life as a contemporary chef now involves building a profile on social media in addition to their role in the kitchen. Online social media is a key site in mediating and producing celebrity culture among chefs.

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[39] Online memes are circulated jokes, sometimes attached to an image or pop cultural reference. The term originated with Richard Dawkins, as a way to explain how cultural information circulates.

Conclusion

Restaurants in Sydney, and the food served by the restaurants, become "objectified" and "constructed as social forms" (Cook & Crang 1996, p. 132). This requires the restaurants and food to be understood in the social context by which they are produced (Cook & Crang 1996, p. 132). Sydney's food industry has produced and encouraged a culture that continues to evolve and, over time, has drawn in more observers and expanded its cultural audience to the global stage. I am a part of this audience, even without the necessity of researching for this thesis.

While I have not detailed each and every meal I have experienced in pursuit of understanding the myriad factors that contribute to making celebrity chef culture, my time as an enthusiastic consumer of the products of this culture inform my approach to this study. This may translate to some forms of bias: I grew up in a family of cooks, so have a tendency to empathise with their work. My mother instilled in me a great appreciation for food, so I tend to place more cultural emphasis on sharing a meal with friends and family than on other activities. With these points in mind, a multimedia, multi-sited ethnography provides multiple sites of inquiry and multiple pathways through these inquiries, and necessitates constant reflection. "The aim of ethnographic research is to probe for meaning, to understand what is going on in the lives of the people being studied" (Singer 2009, p. 192). The focus of this study is primarily that of chefs, and the construction of celebrity in chefs' labour; however, their audience plays no small part in the celebrity culture that has been constructed for them. I count myself as part of that audience; parts of this study are also auto-ethnography.

"Ethnography is both a process and a product" (Singer 2009, p. 120). With such a multi-faceted approach to ethnography as my primary lens of inquiry, I bring together a unique combination of ideas and contexts to form a multimedia ethnography, creating a

methodology which allows me to investigate the construction of celebrity culture in the industry of Sydney chefs. Multimedia sites promoting celebrity chef culture contribute to this economy, constructing the type of figure that other chefs reproduce and to which they aspire. Food critics promote certain standards a chef must meet. Television gives the chef a platform from which to reach a mainstream audience and with which to build a media profile in order to promote his or her restaurant and work. The print media romanticises the figure of the chef, elevating them to a publicly known persona. Restaurant reviews and television shows about food and cooking are texts that produce (and are resources with which to consider) the contemporary dining culture that exists in Sydney. On social media, chefs engage with the chef economy that has been produced by their media profiles. By acknowledging media commentary and criticism, chefs are presenting themselves as improving their work through taking on feedback. As critics are positioned to be writing for the benefit of the diner, a chef who incorporates criticism into his or her work is seen to be doing more to please diners and therefore, stands to gain more in popularity.

Chefs' awareness of this heightened interest in their line of work impacts on how they work in the kitchen, how they observe and interact with the media, how they perceive their colleagues, and how they present themselves on television and social media. For the chef, social media platforms Twitter and Instagram allow self-presentation and a forum through which to share thoughts about food and dining. In addition to this, they facilitate "aesthetics of attachment" (Berlant 1998a, p. 285) between chef and audience, creating a sense of being invited behind-the-scenes. Such constructions of intimacy promote celebrity culture and the chef as a figure to be admired. Multimedia-constructed celebrity keeps the chef economy ticking in the contemporary media environment. "Ethnographic research is explicitly interpretive" (Singer 2009, p. 9). While I have conducted numerous in-depth interviews with chefs who seem to be willingly candid, I am aware that there is an inherent level of

performance occurring, particularly since the chefs I speak to have had experience with media and media exposure. My analysis reflects this; however in many instances the interest lies in what a chef does not say, and I have endeavoured to read between the lines when I can.

My methodology shows how chefs' understandings of the media and cultural performance work to build their own communities, both online and offline. Through multimedia ethnography I illustrate how celebrity culture among chefs is produced through cultural discourses of food criticism and consumption in the media. These discourses are taken up by chefs and used to create the chef economy. The media produce chefs who are consumed by diners. Marcus argues, "For ethnographers interested in contemporary local changes in culture and society, single-sited research can no longer be easily located in a world system perspective" (1995, p. 98). This is certainly true of celebrity chef culture in Sydney. Gille and ÓRiain argue, "ethnography can strategically locate itself at critical points of intersection of scales and units of analysis" (2002, p. 279). The methodology I have outlined allows me to experience and interrogate the many aspects of the life of a chef at different critical intersecting points of print media, television media, and social media, analysed alongside comprehensive interviews with chefs who have experienced celebrity chef culture first-hand. In the next chapter I consider how gender is constructed among chefs, and chefs' representation of gender as celebrity figures.

Mains

[T]he thing is, the kitchen is a team battle. I

cannot do it alone. You can be the best chef in the world –

like, you can't cook all this food by yourself. It's just not

possible. So you need your team behind you. Each station

has a little commander, which is what you call chef de

partie. *And they work together to rally, and then there's*

the commis *chef, the apprentice chef or whatever. These*

single units make up different parts of the kitchen, and

then they fight a team battle.

And so the people that you fight alongside with, you have

a strong camaraderie. Because at the end of the day, you

know, neither one [sic] *of us can do it alone. We have to*

work together to get through the day, to get through

service. – Jowett Yu, personal communication, 11 July

2011

Chapter three

The Brigade: Institutionalised homosocial masculinities

Busy professional kitchens consist of groups of chefs working in what are called 'brigades' (Keppler 2011; Maguire & Howard 2010). As Yu suggests in the above quote, the labour of chefing requires constant team work, resulting in a reliance on the relationships formed between chefs. As well as being an order of operation in a bustling kitchen, the brigade is also a hierarchical structure that reflects hierarchies of masculinities. The concept of the brigade, drawn from military culture, is built on a foundation of homosociality

(Sedgwick 1985) and institutionalises certain practices of masculinity. The labour of chefing requires a particular embodiment of masculinity; this required masculinity is consistently mapped out in the kitchen brigade hierarchy, which reinforces and rewards homosocial behaviour.

In order to understand the brigade as a space of institutionalised homosociality, and the kitchen as a place which institutionalises practices of masculinities, in this chapter I draw on Raewyn Connell's *Masculinities* (2005), Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick's *Between Men* (1985) and Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Undoing Gender* (2004). I employ these works in this chapter to consider my empirical research with chefs and to undertake a textual analysis of *MasterChef Australia.* Turner describes celebrity as a "genre of representation" (2013, p. 10) and adds, "Celebrity is playing an increasingly important role, I would argue, in these new modes of production of cultural identity" (Turner 2013, p.93). *MasterChef* is a useful text for understanding how 'chef masculinity' is produced through representations of celebrity chefs.

Connell states, "Masculinities are defined collectively in culture, and are sustained in institutions" (2000, p. 11). Connell notes that institutions do not maintain themselves, but rather that "someone has to practise power in order for power effects to occur" (2005, p. 215). In commercial kitchens, these effects of power come from the homosocial brigade. Sedgwick argues that homosocial bonds between men require an "obligatory heterosexuality" (1985, p. 3). In order to communicate within a brigade, repetition of rituals and acts of masculinity are required (Butler 1990, p. xv), producing a power dynamic and hierarchy that is necessary for the brigade to work smoothly, and in turn producing the brigade as an institutionalised space. Doreen Massey suggests that "space, place and gender are interrelated: that is, in their very construction as culturally specific ideas" (1994, p. 2). The

dynamics of the professional kitchen produce homosocial relations, and the masculinised professional kitchen space itself, reproduced in restaurants globally, contributes to the institutionalisation of these relations.

In speaking to a number of chefs in my research, it is clear that particular gender identities are formed which are results of a system that privileges certain performances of masculinity. Chefs speak of working in 'hard kitchens' in which they were often abused, or witnessed abuse (physical and verbal) and were required to display masculine stoicism in their work, as well as confirming a distinct gender imbalance in the professional industry. Male chefs far outnumber women chefs[40], reinforcing the requirement of a particular gender in order to succeed. Interviews with chefs are peppered with stories of abuse, working with aggressive, egotistical head chefs, and recollections of the intense pressure to succeed in a highly masculine environment. In these interviews, chefs suggest that the physicality of the work is a key factor that excludes women (and certainly some men), but celebrity chef culture and its representations of chefs in popular media portray male and female chefs in a way that emphasises and privileges masculinity. The masculinities valued in professional kitchens reflect Connell's ideas of hegemonic masculinities characterised as dominant, aggressive and rational (2005, p. 67).

The homosocial brigade and professional kitchen as institutions

Connell's *Masculinity* (2005) suggests hegemonic masculinity is negotiable and not static (p. 37). Hegemony, Connell explains, is negotiated from within and has the capacity to "disrupt itself" (p. 37). Within the brigade, hegemony is by default attributed to the head chef, who realigns expectations of hegemonic masculinity in the group by example. The professional

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[40] The state's vocational training provider TAFE (Technical and Further Education) offers an initiative to chefs in training called 'Tasting Success'. The program targets women chefs, and assists in their training by pairing them up with acclaimed chefs as mentors.

chef is characterised by the media through masculine norms of physical endurance, command of authority, ambition and sometimes aggression (Connell 1992, p. 736; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, p. 832; Connell & Wood 2005, p. 359). Yu characterises a head chef he previously worked with in terms of these qualities, saying,

> [H]*e's a great leader. He's a natural born leader. And also he's very organised. He's quite possibly the most organised chef I've ever worked with. [...] Even now if I ever see him, I am still afraid of him. His presence makes me nervous; he's got the ability to do that"* (personal communication, 11 July 2011).

Such ideas of hegemonic masculinity are positively valued in the chef industry – these chefs are considered 'leaders' – and are necessary in kitchen brigades.

> *There's a lot of, how do you say this, testosterone flying around as well. Not just, not cos it's by default, really. If you spend a day in the kitchen with a lot of dudes, really, you just get a lot of bantering against each other, you know, there's always a fight to be the alpha male. You know – you can get a pack of dogs together, there's always gonna be one that's trying to be the alpha male, then the beta male and so forth* (Yu, personal communication, 18 April 2011).

Negotiations of hegemony are constant in kitchens, and as Yu describes, they are a conscious interaction between chefs.

Connell's *Masculinities* also examines the institutionalisation of gender. Connell's work considers schools and governing bodies as institutions (2005, p. 36); in the chefing industry, the commercial kitchen operates as, and can be considered, an institutional space. In interviews with chefs, frequent references to 'hard kitchens' shaping their careers clearly

position the commercial kitchen as an institution within the context of Connell's work. Connell reminds us that "the social construction of masculinities is a systematic process" and a "collective practice" (2005, p. 38, 106). Working together in the same high pressure space day in, day out, it is necessary for chefs to negotiate their identity and their place in the hierarchy of their work place. The brigade is the structure that unifies what would otherwise be disparate professional kitchens, thus making them institutionalised spaces.

Professional kitchens are based on a common template, much in the way schools are, for example. Connell argues, "When we speak of masculinity or femininity we are naming configurations of gender practice" (2005, p. 73). Gender practices are contextual; Connell notes the significance of institutions in the construction and maintenance of particular gender configurations – "gender is organised in symbolic practices that may continue much longer than the individual life" (p. 72). Connell also notes that historically, forms of masculinity are organised around "direct domination" (corporate management, military, etc.) or around "technical knowledges" (p. 165). Contemporary restaurant cooking is a highly specialised skill, requiring years of training. In kitchen brigades, forms of masculinity are organised around the technical skills of cooking. To consider the commercial kitchen as a space that institutionalises practices of masculinities extends Connell's important work on collective practices and the institutionalisation of masculinities.

Sedgwick's *Between Men* (1985) considers the homosocial bonds –"social bonds between persons of the same sex" (p. 1) – between heterosexual males as a socially compulsory form of misogyny. Homosociality is differentiated from homoeroticism and homosociality through the "sexual continuum" (p. 2) on which 'love' and 'desire' sit at separate points. Desire, Sedgwick argues, is a better term through which to understand these relations as a "structure" (p. 2) and similarly can be used in order to understand the structure

of chefs' relationships in the brigade. It is clear from my empirical research that homosocial bonds are evident and to some degree necessary in professional kitchen brigades. When describing the intensity of chefing, Yu comments, "there's a strong sense of camaraderie that is developed. It's like soldiers going to battle" (personal communication, 11 July 2011). In contextualising the work of chefing as the production of masculinity through collective practices of performativity and hierarchised relations between males, we can see the institutionalisation of a particular masculinised, homosocial mindset in the kitchen.

Fassnidge recalls his time at Banc[41], one of Sydney's most acclaimed restaurants in the late 1990s: "For a kitchen like that to work – cos it was like European hours, they did so many hours. And then partied after it. And for a kitchen like that to work they've [the chefs] gotta be friends. Cos if you don't get on, it's not gonna work. It'd be a nightmare" (personal communication, 17 May 2011). Getting along in kitchens makes the work easier, but also solidifies the bonds between chefs. Drawing on Sedgwick and Connell's work, we can understand the brigade as producing practices of masculinities through homosocial bonds. The brigade requires homosociality between chefs; homosociality is the social code through which the production and institutionalisation of masculinities in commercial kitchens occurs. This institutionalisation is reflected in celebrity chef figures, primarily through programs like *MasterChef*.

In addition to Connell's work on masculinity, Butler's concept of gender performativity is a useful way of understanding what chefs do with the relationships they engage with in the kitchen brigade. She refines the concept of gender performativity across her work in *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Undoing Gender* (2004) and I draw on these texts in order to understand the relations that occur in Sydney kitchens. Butler argues that "coherent

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[41] Banc was an acclaimed Sydney CBD restaurant in the 1990s and has since folded. The restaurant produced some of the most successful chefs working in Sydney (and overseas) today.

gender" exists when we recognise certain norms that are present in the body of another (2004, p. 58). Performativity, then, is a "construction of coherence" (1990, p. 185) that reinforces what we understand about our gender based on what occurs around us. "It is clear that coherence is desired, wished for, idealized, and that this idealization is an effect of corporeal signification" (1990, p. 185). Chefs working in a kitchen brigade are constantly in the company of their peers (usually male) and consequently, due to the combination of homosocial relations and their own personal ideas about masculinity, will construct a certain norm of masculinity that is performed in the kitchen.

In order to work well, the brigade wants to be a cohesive unit, and as such, those within will want to conform to a certain degree of masculine coherency among their peers – that is, to ensure that they fit in with the brigade. Fassnidge talks about one of his first jobs in Sydney, and the importance of competitive, hierarchical relationships within the brigade in shaping the chef he became:

> *Usually, you're friends with someone who's of your... calibre. So, if you're a good chef, you're not gonna hang around with a bad chef. You know. So we, say at Banc, we all grew up together, and came through Sydney through ten years and we're all sort of the same level and you know, you appreciate what they do. And if they're your friends, we're not competing against each other. We talk, when we go out, we have a beer and talk about suppliers. Women, suppliers, rock'n'roll, motorbikes* (personal communication, 17 May 2011).

Fassnidge utilises his relationships with other chefs in order to learn more about chefing, but also to reinforce his own masculinity among peers – they talk about signifiers of hegemonic masculinity: women and motorbikes while drinking beer, all acts which affirm masculinity (Connell 1992, p. 736; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005, p. 832). His mention of 'women' as a

topic of conversation reinforces Sedgwick's argument that male bonds cannot be understood outside of relations to "women and the gender system as a whole"; women mediate bonds between men (1985, p. 1; see also Flood 2007). Their relationship with food – talking about suppliers and their work – is the key in bringing these men together, forming René Girard's "erotic triangle" (cited in Sedgwick 1985, p. 21) in which food is the facilitator of male bonding, and around which their masculinities are "organised" (Connell 2005, p. 165). Through these bonds, the brigade constructs masculinities that are institutionalised in the space of the professional kitchen.

I bring together the work of Connell, Sedgwick, and Butler to consider the kitchen brigade as a body that institutionalises and produces masculinity as a set of homosocial relations between chefs. The dynamics of group labour within the brigade are integral to the ways gender identities are formed and subsequently institutionalised in kitchens and reinforced in popular media by celebrity chefs.

The Brigade

Pioneered by French chef Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935), the brigade system is used in professional kitchens around the world. The historical and contextual significance of the brigade system among chefs is key to the brigade's effectiveness and influence in the "process of configuring practice[s]" of masculinity (Connell 2005, p. 72). Homosocial bonds are key in forming a successful brigade and to surviving kitchen service, as Yu explains: "We have to work together to get through the day, to get through service. So these strong bonds really develop" (Yu, personal communication, 11 July 2011). Chefs work in teams and learn from each other, producing and maintaining particular gender norms in the kitchen.

Professional kitchens are spaces of high pressure, intense activity and long hours. In an ordinary day chefs start early in the morning, preparing ingredients for dinner service that night. There are two shifts – the prep shift, which can include lunch service if the restaurant offers it, and the dinner shift, which also includes cleaning the kitchen. Apart from the skills needed to create menus and to constantly serve up food, being a chef is a highly physical and draining job. The strenuous labour is managed and streamlined through a system of hierarchy. This hierarchy is referred to as the 'brigade' because it resembles a military brigade system (Bourdain 2000, p. 120). The brigade is the most influential factor affecting chefs' lives – Sydney chefs are a tight-knit group and relationships between chefs have significant impact on careers. Fassnidge's time in the Banc brigade paved the way for his successful career.

> [Y]*ou just attract good people. Like, this guy's from The Square, this guy's from Raymond Blanc, this guy's from Marco. So they like had a pool of good people to choose from, they weren't choosing idiots. So as I said,* […] *nine chefs in a row, who could all cook. Never seen that before. Like, of all the same ability.* [The] *chefs* [were] *all progressing at the same rate.*

> *But I think Banc was just a place and time where you had all these guys who were really good, but hadn't – didn't want to do their own thing yet. But when it closed they went, 'Right, I'll do it myself.' So probably going bust was the best thing that happened for Banc* (personal communication, 17 May 2011).

Chefs learn their trade in brigades, moving from kitchen to kitchen. Their relationships with other chefs help them find jobs, and it is not uncommon for people in hospitality to be in romantic or sexual relationships with colleagues.

Ingham says, "I mean it's almost like a mini-relationship [with your co-workers], cos you're so… you know – I spend more time with some of the chefs than I do with Rebecca [his wife]" (personal communication, 5 July 2011). In saying "you're so, you know…", Ingham hints at the often intimate spaces in which chefs work, compounded by the high level of activity and constant heat of service periods, which invariably contribute to the intimate bonds formed between chefs. Homosocial relationships between chefs are the foundation of the brigade. Chefs' relationships with the chefs they work with produce collective practices of masculinity, and also "fend off women's intrusion into masculine social space, but draw in a whole technology as part of the definition of masculinity" (Connell 2000, p. 13). The brigade is also a reflection of the hierarchy of masculinities (Connell 2005, p.78).

Working as a hierarchy, the brigade consists of several levels of chefs – head chef (chef *de cuisine*), *sous* chef, and chef *de partie* (chef who manages a particular section). Other chefs in the system include *patissiere*, *saucier*, *garde manger* (manages the pantry and prepares salads and cold sides) and line cooks (assembles dishes in their respective sections)[42]. The brigade system organises the kitchen so that service runs smoothly and everyone is aware of their role. It also directly reflects the operational hierarchy of the kitchen. The head chef is in charge of the entire kitchen, while *sous* chef is the second-in-charge. They both oversee the chefs *de partie*, who manage the line cooks in the sections they work. Usually in restaurant kitchens each section prepares specific dishes on the menu that require similar cooking techniques. The head chef works with the *sous* chef to write the menu

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[42] My knowledge of the brigade system has accumulated from many years of following the restaurant industry and reading a variety of magazine articles and books on chefs. I have also spent years in the kitchen of my family's restaurant – while it is not on the same level of the chefs I speak to in this study, my time working on the pass has given me significant appreciation for chefs' work. What I know about the way a professional kitchen runs does not come from one source; my knowledge has been garnered over the years anecdotally. My conversations with chefs in researching this thesis have confirmed the general operation of the brigade system and its rationale (see also Keppler 2011; Maguire & Howard 2010).

and manage the kitchen budget. Often the *sous* chef will be in charge in the absence of the head chef.

The head chef holds authority by default – his *sous* chef and line cooks are subordinate to him and he is set up as a role model in the kitchen. As such, the head chef is compelled to perform and embody the hegemonic position (Connell 2005, p. 77). 'Chef' in French translates to chief; more than just managing the food produced, the head chef is responsible for leading his charges into battle – or into a successful service. This requires a strong sense of leadership, and certainly ambition. The head chef's responsibility is emphasised by Yu: "Because you're the leader of the ship. You're the captain of the ship, […] and they [the other chefs] rely on you to steer" (personal communication, 11 July 2011).

It is worth noting that for some head chefs, there is almost no cooking involved in their work. Often, the head chef creates the menu with his *sous* chef, trains his kitchen in producing the menu, then spends service running the pass[43] and inspecting each plate before it goes into the dining room. In some bigger restaurants, the position of executive chef is also required, or sometimes, created[44]. Connell suggests "It is the successful claim to authority […] that is the mark of hegemony" (2005, p. 77). In the position of executive or head chef, that chef holds the hegemonic position and subsequently his performances of masculinity are interpreted by other chefs as hegemonic. As has been mentioned by chefs in interviews

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[43] Calling the pass involves reading out each docket as it comes in and managing the delivery of food. The head chef manages the timing of each table's meals, making sure that each section is working together so that all entrees are ready at the same time, then all mains, etc. Once a table is finished, the head chef will call for wait staff to take the food. The pass is the counter on which food is placed for inspection before being taken out to the dining room.

[44] The title of executive chef means that the chef is involved in a consulting capacity and does not necessarily contribute to the day-to-day running of the kitchen. An executive chef indicates that the restaurant is trying to construct itself as high-end and has a strict hierarchy in place. The necessity of an executive chef also depends on the size of the restaurant or kitchen; it is reasonable to delegate more sparsely in a bigger business.

I consider the classed meaning of executive/head chef and its associated classed labours in chapter six; this chapter considers the role in the context of Connell's hegemonic masculinity. The valuation of abstract knowledge as more important than practical know-how can be read as a valuing of the masculine over the feminine.

outlined so far, leadership qualities, aggression, and superior technical skills constitute hegemonic masculinity among chefs. Hegemonic masculinity is therefore valued in the brigade and reproduced in attempts to emulate successful executive and head chefs.

Connell emphasises that "terms such as 'hegemonic masculinity' and 'marginalized masculinities' do not name fixed character types but configurations of practice generated in particular situations in a changing structure of relationships" (2005, p. 81). Hegemonic masculinities are not only valued among chefs but this value system is continuously reflected and reinforced in popular media. Viewers consistently see different hegemonic masculinities produced through different homosocial structures in the popular Australian television program, *MasterChef.*

Hysteria, hugs, and hero-worship: The idea of the chef on *MasterChef*

MasterChef has brought food, cooking, and chefs to the forefront of popular culture – or at least water cooler conversation (Lewis 2011). I analyse *MasterChef* for different purposes and through different lenses throughout this thesis; in this section I consider the role of the brigade in shaping the figure of the chef through mass mediated gender performativity. We see a rendition of the brigade formed by the four judges and the contestants, in which the judges hold hegemonic positions and the contestants learn under them. The judges, George Calombaris, Gary Mehigan, Matt Moran[45], and Matt Preston, are successful chefs (and in Preston's case, a successful food critic). Calombaris runs three Melbourne restaurants, one of which is a two hat fine diner (Apelgren 2012). Mehigan oversees two Melbourne restaurants, while Matt Moran runs several high profile restaurants in New South Wales and Queensland. Preston is an award-winning food critic (mattpreston.com).

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[45] Moran originally appeared on *MasterChef* as a guest chef, then signed on as a regular judge in the 2011 season. His role became less prominent in the 2012 season, but he remained a regular judge. Moran oversees the running of more than three restaurants in Australia and a catering business.

In the context of the brigade – both on *MasterChef* and in their fields of work – the judges take up hegemonic positions. They are able to translate their hegemonic positions from the kitchen to their judging roles on the program through their authority and superior knowledges. Because the contestants acknowledge and accept that the judges have more experience and knowledge, they are assigned authority and thus hegemony (Connell 2005, pp. 46, 77). The judges' abstract knowledges are emphasised and valued over their embodied labour.

They perform their roles as mentor/judge engagingly – Calombaris is known to come to the rescue whenever contestants' tears begin to spill, and Mehigan's comforting fatherly demeanour makes for pleasant viewing as he encourages contestants. The judges, being chefs (and Preston a food critic) know what they're talking about, the contestants do not (or do not know as well as the judges). The concept of the brigade constructed by the judges is also highlighted through their relationships with each other.

There is a deep familiarity between the judges (particularly Calombaris, Mehigan and Preston, who have been working together on *MasterChef* the longest). Calombaris was trained by Mehigan early in his career and Mehigan often refers to Calombaris fondly as 'Georgie-boy', pretending to snatch food from him in jest (e.g. season 4 episode 68, 2012). Their easy banter on the program demonstrates their close homosocial bond and is a template for contestants, reflecting the intimacies that develop between chefs working together. Their warm mentorship can, however, give way to a tough-love approach: their successes and authority form part of their performance of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2005, p. 46) and they encourage contestants to aspire to similar success. "You either want it [success] or you don't, it's your choice" booms Calombaris (season 4 episode 67, 2012). As mentors and judges, they continuously demonstrate their hegemonic masculinities through a clear

subordination of the contestants (Connell 2005, p. 78), reflecting the head chef/subordinate chef hierarchy of the brigade.

The reputations of the judges are at stake when contestants compete in off-campus 'challenges' (as well as the reputation of the venue itself, often a well-known restaurant). Judges give pep talks to prevent melt-downs, run in to help with food preparation if the contestants are beginning to fall behind – perhaps it is just a performance for the cameras, but through these challenges, viewers get a glimpse of how a professional, experienced chef can take command of a kitchen and push service through. Viewers are encouraged to see chefs as people with authority who are capable of particular labours in the kitchen. When contestants become uncertain, the judges intervene, exemplifying the authority and know-how required to be a successful chef, and simultaneously reinforcing that brigade's hierarchical structure of judge/contestant. When the contestants are split into two teams and challenged to run their own 'pop-up' restaurants, feeding 50 guests, the blue team is thrown into disarray when their team captain Audra becomes frazzled (season 4 episode 52, 2012). Mehigan talks to Audra, suggesting, "Why don't you start over there, and work this way… and just start like a little production line? This is *your* pass. This is your point of control."

Mehigan's advice reinforces the head chef's position as the hegemon of the brigade. His calm authority asserts his hegemonic masculinity, further highlighted through contrast with Audra's emotional turmoil. Mehigan's rational masculinity is clearly linked to his professionalism as a chef, while Audra's anxiety is linked to her femininity. The judge's performances reflect what occurs in a professional kitchen brigade because it's these experiences they draw from and as a result, the chefs perform their hegemonic identities through their relation to the brigade. Indeed, the brigade is the context that affords these chefs

hegemonic status. *MasterChef* reinforces the judge's or head chef's 'expert' knowledges and 'expert' identities as successful, linking success as a chef to hegemonic masculinity.

As celebrity figures, the judges have a platform to represent the kind of masculinity required of chefs in order to succeed. Particular skills are required to constitute hegemonic masculinity among chefs – namely authority, ambition, and leadership (Connell 2005, p. 46). The concept of the brigade can be extended when we consider the guest chefs who appear throughout different series. The chefs who appear on *MasterChef* occupy different positions in the hierarchy of the chef industry, but they are all head chefs and reflect the top-down structure of the brigade.

Chefs like Peter Gilmore and Matt Moran became household names after appearing on *MasterChef*; their roles as executive chefs in fine dining restaurants would otherwise have kept their identities in the realm of fine diners and the restaurant industry. *MasterChef* allowed them the stage on which to present themselves as affable and accessible figures, albeit possessing specialised skills and knowledges of chefing – superior to yours and mine. A roll call of successful internationally renowned chefs – Heston Blumenthal, René Redzepi, Thomas Keller[46], Jamie Oliver, Marco Pierre White (a UK chef I discuss later in the chapter) and Rick Stein[47] (to name a few) have also featured over the seasons of *MasterChef*. Appearing on a mainstream popular program like *MasterChef* can bring a chef and his restaurant substantial publicity[48], but seasoned chefs who appear on the show impart credibility to the program.

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[46] Thomas Keller runs two of the United States' most critically lauded restaurants – three-*Michelin*-starred Per Se in New York City, and French Laundry in Napa Valley, California.

[47] Rick Stein, perhaps best known as a popular food television presenter, was head chef and owner of a popular seafood restaurant in the UK. In 2009 he opened up a seafood restaurant on the South Coast of New South Wales, Australia. He is also the author of several cook books.

[48] Peter Gilmore's restaurant Quay was inundated with requests for his signature dessert, the Snow Egg, after appearing on the inaugural 2009 season finale.

Marshall argues, "The "celebrity-function" is as important as Foucault's "author-function" in its power to organize the legitimate and illegitimate domains of the personal and the individual within the social" (1997, p. 57). Chefs' celebrity status – an accumulation of critical acclaim and the resulting media attention – possess a particular cultural capital that can be transferred to *MasterChef*. At the same time, chefs' celebrity capital is maintained and expanded through appearances on the program. *MasterChef* simultaneously constructs authority for and imbibes authority from professional chefs who appear on the program. The program constructs and presents to its viewers the chef as skilled, authoritative, more knowledgeable and better at cooking than us. Connell argues that gender is "organized in symbolic practices" (2005, p. 72) and in the popular discourse of *MasterChef*, constructions of chefs rely on practices of masculinity. The contestants, as amateur cooks with a keen interest in the food and restaurant industry, are well aware of the chef hierarchy from their own engagement with the culture. Their reactions to the guest chef judges who appear on the program guide the audience to see chefs as stars, as awesome figures worthy of over-the-top admiration. *MasterChef* makes heroes out of chefs, but they are gendered figures and admired for the most part as successful homosocial, hegemonic men.

The brigade and performativity on *MasterChef*

I draw on Connell's idea of institutionalised gender in tandem with Butler's gender performativity (1990, 2004) to read *MasterChef*. Among the chefs I interview, many have worked in kitchens with 'reputations' for being rough, aggressive, male dominated spaces. The contemporary business of being a chef in Sydney – cooking for food critics and dealing with sometimes intense media scrutiny – is used as a reason to explain 'hard kitchens'. "I understand... I can understand like if it was a two-star *Michelin*, top restaurant in the world, the pressure and the expectations, and I don't know how you run a kitchen with 30 chefs

[without resorting to anger and aggression]" (Fassnidge, personal communication, 17 May 2011). Using the pressure of food criticism as a reason that legitimises the masculine brigade furthers the idea of the kitchen institutionalising particular configurations of masculinity.

The chefs who appear on *MasterChef* perform a stoic kind of hegemonic masculinity but are also gendered through the contestants' reactions to them, based on internalised, historicised ideas of gender (Sedgwick 1985, p. 2). Contestants' reactions further reinforce the legitimacy of chefs' gendered identities – tough, masculine chefs receive quiet, reverent awe while gentle, feminine chefs inspire joyful, giggly admiration. Contestants' (and the audience's) acceptance of particular gender identities support the idea of the kitchen as an institutional space that perpetuates particular configurations of gender.

In her essay on the gender disparity in professional kitchens, Charlotte Druckman comments, "It's as though the only way to gain legitimacy as a food force is by hiding all traces of femininity" (2010, p. 29). The masculinity of the brigade is highlighted when Maggie Beer appears on the program. Beer is a well-known Australian celebrity cook. She produces a line of condiments, ice cream, and pâté and has been a frequent guest on *MasterChef*. She is often depicted as a warm, maternal figure, despite the fact that she has run her own successful restaurant, Pheasant Farm, in South Australia (1978-1993). When she appeared in the 2011 season of *MasterChef*, her maternal persona was emphasised through emotion by focusing on contestants expressing their excitement at seeing her (season 3 episode 80, 2011). "Whenever Maggie walks into the kitchen, everyone is happy," says one contestant. "I *love* Maggie! I can't believe she's here again!" enthuses another. The challenge for the episode is to cook one of Beer's terrines – a difficult dish to master and quite daunting for any cook – but when they see her the contestants jump up and down and Beer rushes forward for hugs. This expression of affection does not occur when the contestants encounter

a male chef, Marco Pierre White, which I examine in the next section of this chapter. In season 4, episode 20 (2012), Beer appears with an upside down grape cake as part of an elimination challenge. In this episode, Matt Preston describes her as "a much-loved member of the *MasterChef* family". As soon as this is said, the camera zooms in on the female contestants, who are scrunching up their noses in glee and clasping their hands together.

On paper, Beer is as formidable and successful as any of the male chefs who have appeared, but her femininity is formed through the repetition of publicly recognisable discourses and Beer's embodiment of the older, maternal woman is reinscribed through the emphasis on emotion on the program (Butler 1990, p. 12). Beer's femininity is inscribed on her by the reaction of the contestants and judges. Butler reminds us, "The distinction between expression and performativeness is crucial" (1990, p. 192). The characterisation of Beer is "an expectation that ends up producing the very phenomenon that it anticipates" (1990, p. xv) – in Beer's case, maternal femininity. Our collective understanding of gender laws (or stereotypes), Butler argues, means that in some ways, gender production is fixed (1990, p. 13).

Rather than regarding Beer as a source of authority or knowledge (qualities that are characterised as masculine by *MasterChef*) in the same way they regard the male judges, the contestants receive Beer with relief and affection. Beer does not exhibit the hegemonic masculine qualities that are seen in the judges or other guest chefs; rather the program constructs for her a maternal, nurturing femininity that would be at odds with a professional brigade, simultaneously shoring up the masculinity that *MasterChef* privileges. Beer's gentle maternal persona distances her from the brigade, and therefore the associated prestige and successes of professional chefing. Through this distancing, Beer reinforces the necessity of

the homosocial bonds that are required to produce the brigade and access professionalism and success.

Despite the sombre mood of the elimination challenge[49] in which she appears, squeals break out and some contestants jump up and down on the spot in excitement. A contestant Julia explains that, "When Maggie came through those doors into the kitchen it was like… a ray of sunshine in a bit of a dungeon." Beer is all smiles and overwhelmed by the contestants' squealy reception. "Gee, what a pop star, hey? […] that nearly popped an eardrum!" jokes Mehigan. He asks Julia why she is such a fan of Beer: "Oh, just… it's food from the home and the heart…"

The room is filled with quiet giggles and the atmosphere – previously tense and subdued – has completely relaxed in the presence of Beer. Beer's maternal side is played up and the contestants appear genuinely at ease with her. Their comfort comes from the recognition of "coherent gender" (Butler 2004, p. 58). Beer's characterisation as warm and maternal has informed contestants' reactions to her arrival. Rather than knowing her as an authoritative, successful businesswoman and chef (which Beer is) they celebrate her feminine maternal persona. This is completely opposite to the kind of identity to which they are encouraged to aspire in order to be part of a professional, homosocial brigade. We are shown that professional success comes from the hegemonic masculinity of the brigade, whereas kindness and excitement are feminised. Beer's exclusion from the brigade highlights its homosocial nature, and emphasises its requirement of masculinity. Feminised characteristics, like emotion, are expelled from the brigade as they are seen to detract from the professionalism produced by male homosocial masculinity.

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[49] In an elimination challenge, the poorest performing contestants from the previous episode are pitted against each other to survive a cooking task, with the loser leaving the competition at the end of the day.

The contestant Julia is known for her steely determination and so-called 'lack of emotion'. Mehigan asks her, "Are you almost becoming emotional, Julia?" This emphasis on Julia's lack of open emotional display is, of course, not directed at any of the male contestants. Through Julia we can see the operation of Butler's gender laws – the judges are imposing gender upon her (Butler 1990, p. 11) through an equation of emotionality with femininity. "How about a Maggie hug?" Mehigan suggests. Amid laughs and smiles, Julia and Beer embrace. Julia does not cry. The brigade structure emphasises a clear hierarchy and assigned roles; emotions do not come into play. As mentioned in a previous example of running the pass, the judges demonstrate the cool, calm authority required to succeed in the kitchen; their performances as judges also reflect ideas of hegemonic masculinity in the kitchen (Connell 2005, pp. 46, 77). The rendition of the kitchen brigade constituted by the judges highlights the fact that the feminised Beer and her career exist outside this institutionalised, masculine space.

Beer is a successful and highly regarded businesswoman, exporting her products internationally (The Cook & the Chef n.d.). She was appointed a member of the Order of Australia on Australia Day 2012 "for her services to the tourism and hospitality industries as a cook, restaurateur and author, as well as for her promotion of Australian produce and cuisine" (Wilkinson & Pengelly 2012, para. 5). That her professional success is not emphasised on *MasterChef* to the same degree as her warmth and maternal traits is indicative of the gendered characterisation of her as feminine and gentle. It is not the appreciation of her warmth and effusive personality alone that feminises her, but the lack of attention to her remarkable successes as a chef and businesswoman. Wendy Brown's *States of Injury* (1995) examines the masculinisation of public space, and the role of masculinised public space in mediating women's access to power (and therefore claim to professionalism). "Male predominance in public life" (Brown 1995, p. 173) can be linked to male dominance in

general, while femininity and women are relegated to private/domestic (e.g. Brown 1995, p. 178). This is clearly illustrated by the reception of Beer.

Though women do work as chefs in professional kitchens[50], the male-dominated brigades of Sydney mean they are often viewed as outsiders. Massey argues, "Particular ways of thinking about space and place are tied up with, both directly and indirectly, particular social constructions of gender relations" (1994, p. 2). The professional kitchen is a space built on masculine homosocial relations, and is one that can be seen to exclude women. On the subject of women in kitchens, Lake, the head chef at *Michelin*-starred The Fat Duck, says,

> *There's not as many women to start with. There's still some places that are really old in their mentality and you know, as soon as a woman chef walks in they're gonna shout.* […] *I mean even in a kitchen that's not overly aggressive and stuff like that, you know, they're still gonna probably have to double take, you know – like think twice every time they do something. 'How should I play this? Should I play it as the girl? Or should I play it as the tough…', you know?* (personal communication, 16 February 2012)

Exclusion from professional kitchens has consequences of more than lack of employment opportunities – it reduces women chefs' access to further training, to higher promotions, and to media exposure, which in the celebrity chef economy is a valuable currency. That is not to say all women aspire to be celebrity chefs, but the continuation of such a structural gender inequality is part of the institutionalisation of masculine privilege in kitchens.

Women chefs are expected to conform to certain expectations of femininity, and therefore are alienated by homosocial brigades. This is reflected in popular media, with the

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[50] In 2013, *Time* magazine's feature on 'The gods of food' excluded women, prompting many responses from women in the industry. See Hamilton 2013, Dixler 2013, Moskin 2014.

celebrity status of some chefs underscoring the legitimacy of such gender relations. Gregory, ex-executive *sous* chef at Quay, laments the media coverage of women chefs in contrast to the tough, aggressive, skilled characterisation of male chefs. "Women aren't competitive and we just don't want to do that. We just want to mother and teach you to cook," she says, with extreme sarcasm (personal communication, 29 November 2012). Gregory's acknowledgement of the popular media's use of gender tropes, in addition to the maternal construction of Beer and the reality of the male-dominated professional kitchen, highlights the concept of the brigade being a highly masculinised space, a space which institutionalises and privileges masculinities through its exclusion of women.

The reception of Beer is entirely in contrast with the contestants' reactions to working with celebrity chef Marco Pierre White (season 3 episode 58, 2011). White is the exemplary hegemonic masculine figure in brigade; he is often referred to as the 'godfather' of modern cooking (season 3 episode 58, 2011). His hegemonic masculinity is constituted through aggression, technical skill, and leadership (Connell 2005, p. 46). Contrasted with Beer, White's reception perfectly illustrates Connell's point that "Masculinity is, in effect, defined as not-femininity" (2005, p. 70). The challenge to the contestants in this episode is to run lunch service, overseen by White, in two teams. The losing team is sent to an elimination challenge. When the contestants step into the kitchen and see White, they all stop short. Jaws drop open and quiet gasps are heard. The contestants start giggling nervously; their awe for the British chef is obvious. "Oh my God! I can't believe he's here. And he's here for us!" Another contestant explains, "Marco Pierre White pioneered [British] cuisine in the UK and he's gone against the norm. He's a rebel, and you know, a real rock star sort of cook" (season 3 episode 58, 2011). The contestants' reactions revolve around White's reputation as a formidable chef. "Everybody in this room is star-struck. He holds God-knows how many *Michelin* stars…" Mehigan asks, "Are you happy, or terrified?" and the contestants laugh

nervously – their terror at having to cook with such an intimidating figure of the industry seems to outweigh any excitement. While Beer was encouraging and approachable, White remains behind the counter prepping for service, regarding the contestants coolly. The only greeting he offers, while methodically gutting a fish, is a short "Morning." Tall with scraggly brown hair and a deep, gravelly voice, White is an imposing figure even without his numerous accolades.

White is aware of his own reputation and plays it up for the cameras. If gender is, as Butler suggests, both "intentional and performative, where "*performative*" suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning" (Butler 1990, p. 190, original emphasis), then White is consistently reiterating or repeating a set of performances that are popularly coded as masculine. The way in which White performs masculinity through his command of authority and subordination of the contestants and judges reasserts homosociality through misogyny – a rejection of the feminine (Sedgwick 1985, p. 20). With his purposefully intimidating presence, White performs what is commonly understood to be hegemonic, "exemplary masculinity" (e.g. Connell 2005, p. 64) – we see this in both his behaviour and his reputation. As a figure who is idolised in the industry, White contributes to the institutionalisation of masculinities in kitchen brigades through his reputation – younger generations of chefs aspire to emulate his success, which is closely linked to hegemonic masculinity. White also emphasises the necessity of hegemonic masculinity in his advice to chefs. In this episode, White says in voiceover, "To be a great head chef you have to set the standard, you have to set the pace. You have to have the abilities to be a great teacher. Because if you expect people to follow you for 16, 18 hours a day, you have to lead from the front." Here, White clearly suggests that the idea of Connell's hegemonic masculinity is necessary in order to be a successful chef.

These gender stereotypes are further reinforced by the fact that White was involved in a team challenge and is seen in his element as a chef, while Beer presents what the contestants will be cooking. Beer is encouraging at the beginning of the challenge and comforting when the contestants present the final product. White, on the other hand, is shown in the thick of it, directing the contestants while they prepare for lunch and then running the pass while they work through service. During prep, a contestant describes White as "quiet and gentle, like a spiritual leader." During service, however, is a different story. His booming voice yells, "I need eight pig eight pig eight pig eight pig! Yes Marco?" "Yes, Marco!" the contestants call back. "It's all about communication, we have to communicate!" yells the chef. A contestant recalls, "Marco will just yell and yell and yell. You have to say, 'Yes Marco!' And then he stops." White's hegemonic masculinity is reinforced during the labour of chefing – he once again is at the head of his brigade, calling orders and performing the hegemonic masculinity he insists is necessary to succeed as a chef.

In the flurry of activity, viewers see White perform the role of head chef, effectively demonstrating his authority, knowledge and skill during a real lunch service. He epitomises the commanding authority of a head chef and is a leading example of the masculine figure of the chef with his aggressiveness and assertiveness. The depiction of Beer, though in a different episode, shores up representations of masculinity, and strictly demarcates 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. Connell states that "Roles are defined by expectations and norms, sex roles by expectations attaching to biological status" (2005, p. 25). In *MasterChef*, the two are conflated and we learn to associate particular configurations with particular gender identities; for example, nurturing with female/feminine, aggression with male/masculine. Both their celebrity statuses work to exemplify the gendered nature of the brigade. White's career achievements are emphasised far more clearly, while Beer is a celebrated maternal figure. In this case, White's persona as a feared and admired, globally

renowned chef exemplifies the hegemonic masculinity required to succeed as a chef. White himself is an institution in the industry, and as such the qualities he represents continue to be reproduced by new generations.

Through his performance on *MasterChef* as a head chef, White contextualises the work of chefs as serious and as a job that comes with significant responsibility. Even the judges become giddy in his presence – Moran says, "It brings back memories of 25 years ago, when I was just starting out in this industry, you know. Marco Pierre White – that's who I wanted to be" (season 3 episode 58, 2011). Moran's quote encapsulates the influence White has in institutionalising masculinities through the brigade. Moran himself is a successful chef, one who has admired White and aspired to be like him. Connell discusses the capacity of institutions to "organize practice at a collective level" (2005, p. 172). Though it has been two decades since White was at the height of his career, the chef still has the capacity to inspire younger generations, and thus the capacity to organise practice at a collective level. Of White, Yu tells me,

> *No, I never worked for him. But I know, like, his bollocking is inspirational for other head chefs. Like the bollocking style and what he actually says to people – it's very effective. He's striking fear into people* (personal communication, 5 November 2012).

Even without meeting him, White's performances of hegemonic masculinity inspire other chefs – though not necessarily all chefs – to want to be like him. As a source of inspiration in both chefing and hegemonic masculinity, White influences younger chefs' performances of gender. Certainly, his celebrity status reinforces the legitimacy of his masculinity. Younger chefs' continuous emulation of White and their collective admiration of

him ensures that collective, institutionalised practices of masculinities within kitchen brigades will continue long after White leaves the industry.

The brigade is reiterated or reinstitutionalised on *MasterChef* in different ways – through the homosocial relations between the four judges and the contestants as their subordinates; through the reception of different guest chefs and their positions within the industry's hierarchy; through the reception of different gendered chefs, highlighting the necessity and value of masculinity in the brigade. Its structure is highlighted through the leadership of Marco Pierre White (subordinating the judges as well as the contestants), who is a textbook example of a successful, inspirational head chef and who personifies Connell's conception of hegemonic masculinity. Considering the brigade in Connell's terms, it can be understood as part of the "process of configuring practice" (2005, p. 72) in professional kitchens. In Connell's conception of institutionalised gender, "Actions are configured in larger units" (p. 72). In this case, practices of gender in the kitchen are reflected in popular media as a 'larger unit'. Butler adds, "the action of gender requires a performance that is *repeated*" (1990, p. 191, original emphasis).

Brigades are recreated in kitchens all around the world, providing a space in which to repeat the same collective actions: actions that are reflected in popular media, and emphasised by celebrity figures. Of course, being on television can mean that there is an extra layer of performance added for the cameras, but even so, it is clear from my empirical research that these performances draw on experiences from the kitchen. The kitchen is an institutional space in which configurations of masculinities as a set of homosocial practices occur and endure. The brigade as an institutionalised space does not only occur in Sydney, but in professional kitchens internationally. These are readily reflected and glorified in popular media, and their legitimacy reinforced by chefs' celebrity.

The Boys' Club

The homosocial relations in kitchen brigades are established through performances of hyper

hegemonic masculinities – characterised by physical endurance, aggression, and ambition

(Connell 2005, p. 77). Intimacy between hegemonic men is mediated through the production

of an erotic triangle, consisting of the relations between the chefs and food. Sedgwick draws

on Girard's model of the erotic triangle (cited in Sedgwick 1985, p. 21) in which Girard

argues men form a 'rivalry' over a woman in order to facilitate an intimate bond with another

man. Girard suggests that the bonds between the two men are "equally powerful and in many

senses equivalent" to the bonds with women (Sedgwick 1985, p. 21), and so it is with food.

Of chefs' relationships to food, Fassnidge explains:

> *They've* [highly acclaimed restaurants with 'hard kitchens'] *got so much*
>
> *expectation, they've got reviewers coming in, they've got their reputation and*
>
> *they don't need some idiot kid like me down the back who's too tired today, or*
>
> *doesn't really give a shit today, like fucking it up for those other 25 chefs that*
>
> *are there. If you don't want to do it, like, you're not here with an ankle brace,*
>
> *it's not ...like, fuck off. That's what I say.*
>
> […] *I don't need someone miserable in my kitchen. Because it affects*
>
> *everybody. It affects the food* (personal communication, 8 April 2011).

Aggression and ego in the kitchen are excused as they occur for the sake of the food. I

suggest to Yu that surely in such an intimate work environment there must be mutual respect.

He agrees, but clarifies:

> [Respect] *towards cooking! Even though, you know, amongst each other*
>
> *there's a lot of bantering and just shit that we talk to each other about, but ...*

the food is the most important thing. […] We're bound by this common

passion, for this art (personal communication, 18 April 2011).

Food acts as the conduit to homosocial bonds in the brigade, but food also legitimises

performances of aggressive, overbearing hegemonic masculinity – chefs can 'misbehave' or

indulge in ego because it is the only way to push the other chefs in line in order to produce

good food. The constant cyclic relationship in brigades institutionalises these specific

configurations of masculinity. At the same time, those masculinities that do not conform to

the hyper hegemonic masculinity of the brigade are alienated.

In popular media, chefs are depicted as crass, overtly sexual and rebellious figures

(Bourdain 2000). American journalist Tracie McMillan went undercover in American

kitchens to research for her book, *The American Way of Eating* (2012). Her experience was

reminiscent of celebrity chef and author Anthony Bourdain's bawdy accounts of kitchen life

in *Kitchen Confidential* (2000) – rife with sexually explicit banter and macho posturing

among her male co-workers. Bourdain's memoir set the tone for other glorified, rock'n'roll

versions of the industry. Such depictions of the brigade romanticise and dismiss genuine

concerns about gender politics in professional kitchens. It is clear, then, that popular media

also plays a part in constructing the brigade as an institutional space. McMillan writes,

> *There are men of all classes, colors, and professions who drug and assault*
>
> *women, of course. But what happened to me was reflective of the industry in*
>
> *which I was working, because it's the nastiest corner—an unspoken flipside, if*
>
> *you will—of the emerging genre of kitchen-pulp docudrama. These modern*
>
> *adventure stories traffic heavily in tales of kitchens as a boys-gone-wild world*
>
> *of sex, drugs, rock and food, where you'd best get a thick skin and learn to roll*
>
> *with the punches* (McMillan 2012, para. 8).

McMillan reports that New York celebrity chef Mario Batali had complaints made to him by one of his female employees about the rampant sexism in one of his kitchens. His response, according to McMillan, was: "This is New York. Get used to it" (McMillan 2012, para. 8).

McMillan's experiences are illustrative of the endemic sexism that still exists in many workplaces. But her example is notable because of the romanticism of the so-called 'Boys' Club' of professional restaurant kitchens – that women should already be aware and even expect that this kind of behaviour is likely to occur. Batali's dismissive response is evidence of kitchen brigades being profoundly institutionalised spaces of masculinity. But as I now go on to show, this example is also about homosociality – the bonds of which are reinforced and mediated by a rejection of the feminine. As McMillan observes:

> *The raunchiness of cooks has always been legendary, but kitchen lit* [sic] *and reality TV have given it a glamorous sheen. I had a hankering to prove that I could hold my own. My co-workers tested me nonstop. When Geoff, a dark-skinned Caribbean cook asked me if I liked chocolate, and said he preferred vanilla, I rolled my eyes* (McMillan 2012, para. 3).

The author acknowledges that she is outside the brigade: "My co-workers tested me non-stop" – she did not belong. The antagonistic behaviour of her co-workers was to ensure maintenance of the homosocial, misogynist nature of the brigade. McMillan was "molested, not raped" (2012, para. 7) at a staff party, just as she believed she had been accepted by her male colleagues. An arrest was made, but there was not enough evidence to pursue the case in court. McMillan's assault further illustrates the misogynist ideas embodied in homosociality. As Gayle Rubin suggests, women are "exchangeable, perhaps symbolic, property for the primary purpose of cementing the bonds of men with men" (cited in Sedgwick 1985, pp. 25-26). Such interactions reinforce the "obligatory heterosexuality" required in homosocial

relations (Sedgwick 1985, p. 3) while being sexually aggressive is analogous with hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2005, p. 146).

McMillan's account is another example of Girard's erotic triangle in the brigade – in which men's bonds are mediated through "rivalry" between men over women (cited by Sedgwick 1985, p. 23). This example is not 'rivalry'; rather, McMillan is the female figure through which the male chefs attempt to legitimise and reinforce their masculinity in the brigade. Again we see homosociality is the foundation on which the brigade is built. The chefs' collective treatment of McMillan is a method of defending and reinforcing the masculine institution of the brigade. In considering the conscious performance of gender, Butler asks, "Can 'construction'…be reduced to a form of choice?" (1990, p. 11). Butler suggests that we are "under a cultural compulsion to become" the gender expected of us (1990, p. 191). Such is the case in brigades. Surrounded by colleagues who all want to work well and fit in, chefs are called to perform what is necessary for "coherent gender" (Butler 2004, p. 58) in their environment. Sedgwick argues that homosocial relations delineate power and meaning (1985, p. 27). In the brigade, the bonds between men legitimise and encourage the masculinities constructed by chefs; their actions in prohibiting women from the brigade reinforce each other's masculinities and the homosocial power of the brigade. The collective performance of subordinating hegemonic masculinities in kitchen brigades occurs through homosocial bonds and are a form of "configuring practice… in larger units" (Connell 2005, p. 72). The brigade's universality in professional kitchens across the world makes the brigade a 'larger', indeed, global unit' and therefore ensures that such practices of masculinity are repeated and institutionalised.

The chefs interviewed for this study suggest that Australian – certainly Sydney – kitchens are different. *Most* Sydney kitchens foster environments in which both men and

women are respected for their skills and professionalism. The chefs I speak to in my research largely come from a generation of having worked in 'hard kitchens' – the kind of kitchen where violence and aggression was regarded a standard occurrence. These performances of hegemonic masculinity occur in kitchens all over the world and are considered the norm. Fassnidge tells me:

> *I started as a pot-washer, because my relatives had a restaurant. That's probably where I seen* [sic] *and I thought chefs were cool, it was like the Anthony Bourdain sort of chefs, you know.*

> *I thought I was good, when I was young. But then as my first wake up call, to be in this small kitchen with four chefs and he got a* Michelin *star in six months. It was, that's when it starts messing with your head, and it was hard, it was just hard. But it taught me a lot of discipline and then he got me a job with Raymond Blanc, and that was another step up again, cos I thought I'd mastered this. One-star-*Michelin *and then I went to Raymond Blanc – two-star-*Michelin*. So, that was just... an education.*

> *My first day I started with nine chefs. Two weeks later I was the only one left. They just hired them in bulk and whittled through them. […] You would just… it was like, I suppose, the army* (personal communication, 8 April 2011).

The high standards expected and high pressure environment of a *Michelin*-starred restaurant were "messing with" Fassnidge's head. His struggle to master his new job is akin to Connell and Messerschmidt's "pursuit of hegemony" (2005, p. 834). In the kitchen, striving to be competent as a chef is the equivalent of attaining a form of hegemonic masculinity. Fassnidge's observation that some chefs failed while others managed to survive creates the kitchen as an arena in which hegemony is negotiated through cooking skills and stamina. I

asked Fassnidge to explain what a 'hard kitchen' entails. His voice becomes quiet as he recalls:

> *They show you, you do it, they show you again. They show you, you do it wrong, they show you again. You do it wrong, you get punished.*
>
> *So, you don't do it wrong the next time* [taps boning knife to emphasise each syllable]. *Because a lot of these kitchens are like, they're the top of the top* (personal communication, 8 April 2011).

Chefs in these 'hard kitchens' must be able to perform their duties competently in order to avoid being subordinated by their peers. Their identities and place within the homosocial hierarchy of the brigade are constantly being negotiated.

When asked why he put up with such treatment, he tells me:

> *I didn't want to stay in Dublin, I wanted to travel the world. So it was my chance to travel the world. I didn't want to go back with my tail between my legs and then end up in Dublin in ten years' time going fuck, what could have been? But it was hard, like I had terrine stuffed down my apron, I had pans thrown at me, you know. They'd work you 16 hours a day, and then they'd cancel your days off so you'd work like 12 days in a row, and you're just like... they just broke you. And then... I'd just seen* [sic] *so many people get broken and destroyed and never cook again* (personal communication, 17 May 2011).

Such behaviour between men – kinds of initiation rituals – form part of the reinforcement of heterosexual homosociality and hierarchies of power (Flood 2007, p. 342).

Similarly, Ingham recounts his experiences as an apprentice:

117

When I was an apprentice, I cut my hand and the boss took me to the doctor to stitch me up and he was waiting in the car park, screaming at me in the car, 'Don't effing spill that on my seat,' straight back to service, straight back into it. It is really like that.

[…] I think it's changed a little bit, it's not so much like that, but I did my apprenticeship at the start of 1990, so in the 90s. And it was still quite hard, there was lots of screaming and carrying on. I guess that happens in some kitchens now but I would never do that. I was treated badly and, you know, it doesn't really get you anywhere (personal communication, 29 March 2011).

These experiences are common among the generation of chefs now making their mark in Sydney restaurants. Their experiences, though in different kitchens all over the world, can be considered "collective configurations of practice" (Connell 2005, p. 72) and testament to the institutionalisation of the brigade. There is a masculine traditionalism of an aggressive, ambitious figure of the chef. The chefs coming through the industry have been institutionalised by hard European kitchens, or chefs who have worked in them.

Connell describes hegemony as a "historically mobile relation" (2005, p. 77). As generations of chefs pass through numerous brigades over time, they are beginning to see things differently compared to their previous experiences. Acknowledging the hegemonic male dominance in brigades allows chefs to begin to consider different ways in which to negotiate the brigade. On women chefs, Fassnidge suggests:

I think that maybe they put in a little bit more care. A little bit more … love into it. They're not as brutal sometimes, as the men. Men just wanna get in there. Especially young boys, cos they're, you know. Like, a chef needs to have

a feminine touch, and they've already got that cos they're girls so, they're already way ahead!

But I think... yeah I think they're better cooks than men. Just cos they've got that bit more finesse. Some of them don't, some of them are bulls in china shops, but usually they're okay. Cos... and they'll work, they're striving harder to be better and they've already got that woman's intellect. And they're a bit calmer. They haven't got a penis telling them what to do [smirks] *and you know, it gets in the way in a kitchen sometimes* (personal communication, 17 May 2011).

Initially, I considered the terms 'cook' and 'chef' as gendered, where 'cook' equated to being domestic and feminine, while 'chef' was linked to professionalism and therefore masculinity. However, in conversation with several chefs, I learned that it is a term of endearment for all working chefs, and partly a way to distance themselves from the overly authoritative term 'chef'. Parry explains, "Well, everyone's a cook. […] I like to think of myself more as a cook. […] I never wanted to be like the head chef. No one likes the head chef! He's a wanker!" (personal communication, 27 November 2013) In this way, the term 'cook' maintains the bonds in the kitchen – everyone working as equals, despite the clear hierarchy[51]. Of course, Parry is able to think this way because he is a head chef, and occupies the highest position in his own kitchen. "I like to think of us as a bunch of cooks, we like what we do" (Parry, personal communication, 27 November 2013). Even so, the gender stereotypes cited by Fassnidge are clear: women are expected to be "calmer" and work with "finesse". Fassnidge continues:

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[51] There are aspects of class and mobility in chefs' understanding of their titles and jobs, and I explore this further in chapter six.

I think men can go longer, cos you don't really get to be head chef until you've done a lot of years, and then by that time women are getting married. And a lot of husbands wouldn't expect their wife to work 15 hour days and just coming home battered. And then trying to have children, and then if you do have a child, like, how hard is it, as a woman? Like, I see what my wife has to do at home. I'm like, fuck. It's a lot easier to run a kitchen.

Women don't want to be doing 15 hours a day when they're in their 40s or late... you know. They want to have children and settle down. I think that's the biggest thing. Plus I think a lot of them just burn out. You know what I mean? I don't know, maybe men can go a little bit longer cos they're more stupider. You know, they can keep going and then they hit 40 and they go, what have I done? (personal communication, 17 May 2011)

In saying men can "go a bit longer" draws a parallel between hegemonic masculinity and sexual performance. Fassnidge also invokes Connell's idea of the hegemonic male as mindlessly ambitious, chasing after success before realising there is more to life and it is too late. Hegemonic masculinity is still necessary to be a chef, and not something a woman can embody. Connell describes "complicit masculinity" as that which is not necessarily hegemonic, but still benefits from the "patriarchal dividend" won through hegemonic masculinity's "overall domination" (Connell 2005, p. 79). Linking hegemonic masculinity and homosociality to professionalism produces complicit masculinities that benefit from patriarchal dividends.

While Fassnidge acknowledges the gender disparity in the industry, the necessity of masculinity in kitchen brigades is reinforced by the brigade itself. That women have to "work harder" illustrates again the institutionalised masculinities in the brigade; women need to

make more of an effort to either fit in or overcome the gender dynamics in the kitchen. Connell argues that gender has no fixity but is "constructed in interaction" (2005, p.35). In the brigade, interactions between men (and between men and women) mediated through food strengthen and embed performances of masculinities. It is beyond the scope of this study to fully address the gender disparity in professional kitchens, but it would be remiss not to address the reality of the gender politics of the kitchen. The brigade hierarchy privileges hegemonic masculinity in the form of aggression, ambition, and leadership; these are the qualities needed to succeed in the kitchen. The dichotomy drawn here results in male and female chefs being valued differently for the same work – men succeed because they are supposed to, women succeed *in spite* of what they must overcome. Masculinity is clearly linked to success in the kitchen; the brigade is more likely to flourish when composed of male chefs.

Martin shares with me her experiences of working in widely acclaimed professional kitchens. She ran the kitchen at one of Sydney's busiest and biggest brasseries in the CBD. Perhaps it is important to note that this brasserie is owned by one of Sydney's biggest and most successful hospitality companies, which provides a significant safety net in terms of support – both financial and professional. In May 2012, she left this position to travel and work out what she would like to do next. She doesn't want to make a big deal of the fact that she is a woman and a head chef. She describes her time in an all-female brigade compared to the usual male brigade:

> *When I was at MG, three hats, one night it was ALL female, the whole restaurant was female chefs. Which is never – I'm not like pro-female, you know,* [a] *women's rights kind of person... I'm just... just female, and every now and then it was all female chefs and it was actually quite nice.*

I have worked at a restaurant that was quite aggressive. I didn't last very long at... it was quite a male-dominated kitchen. Um... there's a couple of people working here.... that have come from those kinds of kitchens. And I do find I have a bit of a challenge with that. Cos they come from really 'boys-ey' kitchens and really, like, people screaming at each other. I'm just not that kind of person, I'm not – I've worked with a lot of female chefs and gay male chefs and things and didn't have that hard, you know, male thing going on (personal communication, 14 May 2011).

Again, the sexual theme is drawn into discussions of working as a chef – Martin refers to "that hard… male thing" as men's aggressive behaviour but hardness could also refer to sexual prowess and the part it plays in hegemonic masculinity. Martin is an outsider to the masculine brigade; her experiences highlight the brigade as an institutionalised and masculinised space. Her inability (and reluctance) to embody the hyper-hegemonic masculinity means that she cannot fully participate in the kind of brigade described.

Sedgwick cites Heidi Hartmann in arguing that the subordination of women by men is "dependent on the power relationships between men and men" (Sedgwick 1985, p.25). Through this perspective, we can see the homosocial brigade both alienating women chefs and constructing a particular set of relations between men. This is shown through my empirical research and reflected through celebrity chefs on *MasterChef* Australia. Turner argues that celebrity can be considered "a discursive effect, […] even as a form of social relations" (2013, p. 157). Among chefs (and aspiring chefs), celebrity culture plays a significant part in maintaining these gender structures through representations of chefs in mass media. The privileging of hegemonic masculinity is supported collectively by the brigade – both through domination by hegemonic masculinities and acceptance by complicit

masculinities (Connell 2005, p. 79), ensuring that the brigade continues as a space that institutionalises masculinities.

Conclusion

"Institutions may construct multiple masculinities and define relationships between them" (Connell 2000, p. 11). In the brigade, multiple masculinities are constructed and defined by the homosocial hierarchy. Connell's work on institutionalised gender and Sedgwick's on homosociality allows us to understand the brigade as a structure that both constructs and reproduces certain masculine practices that occur in kitchens. The kitchen brigade is a space that produces configurations of masculinities through "larger units" (Connell 2005, p. 72). The universality of the kitchen brigade system in professional kitchens around the world positions the brigade as a space that should be considered in Connell's terms of institutionalisation.

Homosocial relations in the brigade strengthen and support the kitchen brigade as an institutionalised space. Connell considers hierarchies in workplaces (2005) but this study provides a detailed analysis of the specific context of the kitchen brigade and the power structure created through homosocial masculinities. The brigade – much like educational institutions and state systems, institutionalises practices of masculinities. The effects of the brigade as a homosocial institution and the kitchen as a space that institutionalises these particular gender practices are clear throughout chefs' recollections of their experiences in the industry. Their awareness of these performances of gender are reflected in the narratives we see crafted in popular media.

Popular media features numerous renditions of the brigade and its performances of masculinities, particularly on *MasterChef*. Rojek argues, "issues of articulation in class and

race are based on collective experience" (2012, p. 100) – gender can be included in these identity factors, and gender is collectively experienced and represented by celebrity chefs on *MasterChef*. Butler's ideas of performativity inform these representations and allow closer analysis. Butler argues that gender is "an ongoing discursive practice" that is "open to intervention and resignification" (Butler 1990, p. 45). In popular media these interventions occur through the representation of the homosocial brigade, buoyed by representative celebrity culture.

Turner argues celebrity can be "a location for the interrogation and elaboration of cultural identity" (2013, p. 27). Gender is a significant factor in the cultural identity of chefs, and is represented in a certain way by celebrity chefs on *MasterChef*. The judges and contestants are constructed as participants of the brigade; the hierarchy of the brigade and respective masculinities are clearly mapped out through gender performativity and through the ways the chefs are received by the audience. Femininity is positioned in a way that shores up hegemonic masculinities, as seen through the example of Maggie Beer. That we see such masculinities reproduced and discussed by chefs in my empirical research is evidence of the institutionalised gender practices that occur. The chef industry continues to be male-dominated, and masculinity is privileged in the kitchen.

The institutionalisation of the brigade system compels chefs to construct masculine coherence (Butler 1990, pp. 191, 185) in order to succeed both as a collective unit and as individuals within a specific hierarchy. "That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality" (Butler 1990, p. 185). The collective homosocial labours of chefs contribute to the 'reality' of brigade masculinities, both in the kitchen and on television. The brigade, with its foundation of homosociality, produces enduring ideas of successful, hegemonic masculinities that are

constituted through intense forms of intimacy that are mediated by food, which acts as a conduit for male desire.

"Forms of masculinity" are organised "around technical knowledge" (Connell 2005, p. 165); through Connell, then, the brigade demonstrates that technical knowledges of food can also organise forms of masculinities. The combination of the brigade's strict hierarchy and widely followed terms of operation situate the professional kitchen clearly within Connell's conception of an institutional space. It is in this space that sustained practices of hegemonic masculinities continue to be reproduced by new generations of brigades. Celebrity chefs play a role in reinforcing these representations of homosocial masculinity through their exposure in mainstream media. Their authority, as celebrity figures, legitimise the gender relations that continue to exist in commercial kitchens (Marshall 1997, p. 57). In the next chapter I examine the source of celebrity chefs' authority, the construction of celebrity chefs, and cultural capital in the chef economy through a close analysis of food criticism.

When I first moved here five years ago, the only things I knew about Sydney were Tetsuya's and Rockpool. Don't hate me for that, I'd been living in England, they were the only restaurants I knew! So [I applied] *at Tetsuya's and Rockpool. At that stage Rockpool was Rockpool (fish), so everyone I met was like, maybe don't go there. So yeah, I just got the* Good Food Guide *and I applied at all the three hat restaurants.* – Analiese Gregory, personal communication, 5 September 2012

Chapter four

Make or break: Food criticism and cultural capital

Print media has shaped dining in Sydney and continues to interact with social media discourses on Sydney dining. Food critics are integral to the Sydney food industry and the celebrity chef economy. With the addition or loss of a hat in *The Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide*, patronage at restaurants can increase or decline significantly. Sydney food critics provide potential diners with ideas of what to expect and in so doing, shape the ways in which the industry evolves. In the above quote, New Zealand expat Gregory relied solely on the *Guide* to build her career shortly after her arrival in Sydney. This is illustrative of its influence on chefs, and demonstrates its authority in shaping the Sydney industry. Sydney is a significant site of the global chef community; its *Good Food Guide* is a reflection of the cultural capital constructed in capital cities all around the world.

126

This chapter considers the *Good Food Guide* as a cultural agent of great force in the Sydney dining industry, and argues that professional food criticism is important in celebrity culture, producing a chef economy that trades on cultural capital. Rojek suggests, "One might posit that celebrities are, in part, the projection and articulation of unconscious and subconscious desire" (2001, p. 110). Critical acclaim constructs cultural capital for chefs, producing them as celebrity figures within (and sometimes outside) the industry and as desirable commodities for consumption. I focus primarily on food critics, their audience (consumers of the chef economy), and their relations to Bourdieu's cultural capital and to a lesser extent, class mobility[52]. In order to do so, I read the *Good Food Guide* in the context of cultural criticism as an example of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital (1984, p. xvi) and Beverley Skeggs' work on making class (2004). Bourdieu's cultural capital is a useful resource with which to analyse the effects of food criticism on both chefs' working lives and on media and patrons' consumption of chefs. Bourdieu states, "A work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded" (Bourdieu 1984, p. xxv). The food media produce chefs as authority figures as well as its audience's 'cultural competence' to appreciate and accept their authority. 'Cultural competence' is constructed with the information provided by the publications – such as the *Guide* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*'s weekly food pull out, *Good Living* – about which food trends are the most popular and which chefs are the most talented. In turn, chefs' skills and knowledges translate to cultural capital in the eyes of their audiences and the media. These skills and knowledges form the foundation of chefs' celebrity, making food critics an important part of celebrity chef culture.

Consumption has long been encouraged by ideas of cultural capital (e.g. Veblen's conspicuous consumption, 1973), but the multimedia processes behind the consumption of

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[52]Chapter six examines chefs' relationships to class mobility more closely.

chefs and chefs as objects of conspicuous consumption are relatively recent developments. In his 2012 'The Cook, The Chef and the Food Network,'[53] James Collins appropriates film theory in his analysis of celebrity chefs, describing chefs as "auteurs" (2012, p. 3). Collins argues that the increased presence of celebrity chefs on TV and in magazines changes "architectures of participation" (2012, p. 3). Collins considers new architectures of participation to be purchasing celebrity chef cook books or watching cooking programs as a way of emulating celebrity chefs (p. 3, 4). I extend this idea through considering additional forms of participation as pursuit of cultural capital, such as dining at celebrity chefs' restaurants or interacting with them on social media[54].

New architectures of participation in the Sydney restaurant industry are motivated by ideas of Bourdieu's cultural capital. Cultural capital, in turn, is produced by the traditional media through food criticism. Print media[55], the platform on which well-regarded food criticism is produced, has inherent cultural capital due to its long history and authority. While the chefs in this study have differing opinions on the reliability of the *Guide*'s diverse stable of critics, they agree on the text's influence and historical significance in the Sydney industry. Chefs are produced as celebrity figures through media acclaim[56], and this creates a culture of chef consumption. The consumption of chefs and their capital is mediated through

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[53]Presented at Notre Dame University, Indiana, as part of the Gender and Food Networks conference in January 2012.

[54] This will be considered further in the next chapter.

[55] Some of the references I use in this chapter come from online sources, but were first published in print. My argument for the importance of print media is for the history it represents and the authority this history endows. Though much of the material is republished online – which is necessary in this contemporary media environment – the content continues to be produced in print first. As further confirmation of the importance of print media in the food community, 2011 and 2012 saw the launch of the publications *Lucky Peach* and *Fool*, respectively. *Lucky Peach* is a quarterly hardcopy journal founded by New York chef David Chang. It publishes themed issues and long-form features on food trends, food-related ideas, and chefs. *Fool* is a bi-annual magazine with a focus on photography and long-form profiles on chefs.

[56] While this chapter focuses on food criticism, chefs have long been featured in print media, further reinforcing their cultural capital and their celebrity status. See Adrià 2012; Barrowclough 2010; Dennis 2011; Lethlean 2012; McKeever 2013; Meares 2012; McKeever 2013; Vettel & Pang 2011; Webb 2011; Ulla 2012a.

multimedia platforms; however for this to occur, chefs are also produced as commodities. Food critics produce chefs as commodities, and celebrity culture augments their commodification.

Sydney's critics

This chapter situates food criticism – specifically the *Good Food Guide* – as the framework for the chef economy. The *Good Food Guide* is a key arbiter of taste in Sydney and is built on a template created by other international food criticism texts, such as the *Michelin Guide* and the San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list. It is important to recognise that Sydney chefs are part of the global community of chefs; an analysis of domestic food criticism demonstrates that Sydney's industry is partaking in the global production of cultural capital through consuming chefs, and positions the city as a significant site for research in this global context. Appadurai notes, "the modern world… is now an interactive system" (1996, p. 27). Appadurai's ideas of neighbourhoods and "global cultural flows" (1996, p. 178) forms a framework for my idea of chefs' global community. Appadurai's notion of the globalised, delocalised world allows for a global chef community, and therefore makes it necessary to consider international practices. My examination of key international food criticism texts highlights the existence of a global template of food criticism on which Sydney bases its own. The Sydney industry's food criticism texts operate in parallel to that of the global chef community's to produce a celebrity chef economy that trades on symbolic cultural capital.

Food critics can be seen as occupying a position that enables them to evaluate quality, service and value for money in restaurants, even as providing a "public service" (Sietsema 2010, para. 36). In order to do this, an important criterion is anonymity when dining. As ex-*Good Living* editor Sue Bennett explains, this is the method used in the United States of

America, but Sydney's media take a more relaxed approach[57]. "[M]any Australian publications, including the *Herald*, and their British counterparts, publish reviewers' photographs alongside their work" (Bennett 2011a, para. 5). Bennett argues there are ways to counterbalance any special treatment that may be given to known critics:

> *Booking in a different name is a given. Many critics will also arrive later than their dining partner. That way, the restaurant cannot offer a superior table - something that's easy to arrange if a critic is seen looming at the door. [...] If the neighbouring tables are sat waiting... and waiting... for their food while the reviewer's meal arrives quick smart, that doesn't go unnoticed. [...]*
> *But most of all, a kitchen that doesn't cook well cannot suddenly have a miracle of three-hat genius at the shake of a salt cellar, however much a chef may wish. Even if a kitchen pulls it off against the odds on one occasion, most reputable publications will visit more than once if there are any lingering doubts about a venue* (Bennett 2011a, para. 6).

The best-known critics in Sydney are Terry Durack, Pat Nourse (deputy editor and chief critic at *Gourmet Traveller Australia)*, Myffy Rigby (Food & Drink editor at *Time Out Sydney*), Simon Thomsen (formerly of *The Daily Telegraph*, now writing for businessinsider.com.au) and John Lethlean[58] (*The Australian*). Their profiles in the chef economy make them celebrities themselves, further demonstrating the impact of celebrity culture in the chef economy. While chefs' opinions of these critics vary, there is no doubting their influence on how chefs work and their influence on the Sydney industry. Arguably, the most powerful publication in the Sydney restaurant industry is *The Sydney Morning Herald*

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[57] To some degree, critics themselves are celebrity figures. But critics, unlike bloggers, are beholden to certain ethical guidelines, which add to their authority and cultural capital (see Brion 2010; Fairfax Code of Conduct n.d.; News Limited Code of Conduct n.d; Sietsema 2010).

[58] In 2012 *The Australian* announced the new 'Hot 50 Restaurants' list. See Middap 2012.

Good Food Guide. The editor(s) of the annual guide tend to be the most powerful food critic(s) in Sydney at the time. A score of 15/20 will gain a restaurant a 'hat', which is a symbolic token indicating the quality of the restaurant. Not all restaurants that appear in the *Guide* necessarily have a hat, but generally have a minimum score of 12/20. The highest rating given by the *Guide* is three hats, similar to the *Michelin Guide*'s three stars.

An annual award ceremony is held to coincide with the release of the Guide. In the most recent awards, five Sydney restaurants were awarded three hats each ('The Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide 2014: The hats' 2013). The *Good Food Guide* is not the only restaurant guide published in Sydney − *Australian Gourmet Traveller* publishes an annual restaurant guide that mostly covers Australia's main capital cities. However, the *Good Food Guide* has more influence, due to wide coverage enabled by its mother publication, the daily broadsheet *Sydney Morning Herald.* The *Good Food Guide*'s reviewers receive substantial exposure in the weekly *Good Living,* and also appear in the monthly *(sydney) magazine*[59]. The publicity and cultural import attached to the *Guide* mean that its effects on the industry are significantly greater than other similar publications.

As Bourdieu suggests, capital takes time to "accumulate" (1997, p. 46) and food critics build up experiences and knowledges over time, which enable them to offer informed critique. Hatted chef Fassnidge believes that food critics in Sydney have a part to play in furthering the industry.

> [Y]*ou need food critics I think, just to keep the bar and keep people on their*
>
> *toes.* [...] *Well,* good *food critics, there's a lot of bad food critics. Simon*
>
> *Thomsen's good, Terry Durack's good… there's a few mediocre ones. I mean,*
>
> *bloggers on top of that,* [...] *you know, it's so easy to talk about food, or you'd*

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[59] *(sydney)* was a free glossy monthly pull-out in *The Sydney Morning Herald* with a focus on food and arts culture. The publication folded in late 2013.

*like to think it is, but a lot of people haven't got a fucking clue what goes on,
or how much time and effort or flavours that have to* [...] *those few good
critics realise and have been chefs, have travelled the world, so they know and
respect what you do* (personal communication, 8 April 2011).

"The production of social capital presupposes an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous
series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed" (Bourdieu
1997, p. 52). Social capital is exchanged between chef and critic − Fassnidge legitimises the
work of food critics through his authority as an accomplished and successful chef. Though
arguably critics were part of what propelled him to his current position, this mutual respect
works to legitimise the economy of social capital.

The *Good Food Guide* presents Sydney dining culture as an integral aspect of Sydney
lifestyle. Its release each year is accompanied by a special edition pull-out in the *Sydney
Morning Herald*; for more than 25 years the *Guide* has been a staple in the Sydney restaurant
industry. On the impact of the *Guide* and its sister publication, *Good Living*, Ingham
explains:

The general public might read [a particular review] *and you know, they won't
see it as* [a] *bad* [review]. *Like* [when Bar H was reviewed], *I saw it as bad,
but everyone I talked to was like, 'Oh that was a great review, fantastic!' So I
guess people read into it differently. Cos I'm an industry person, I know
exactly what is going on there. But yeah, I guess it does have a big influence.
The people who get 14, 15, they'll get flocked with people for quite a long
time, a good period. But like,* [...] *11 out of 20, people would avoid that. Like,
I would − it's like, maybe I won't go there* (personal communication, 2 May
2011).

Ingham suggests that food critics are read differently depending on the perspective from which reviews are read; they have loaded meanings for someone in the industry. Bourdieu suggests, "Thus the tastes actually realized depend on the state of the system of goods offered; every change in the system of goods induces changes in tastes" (1984, p. 228). Here, food critics construct taste, and the way it is negotiated – through assessment in traditional media – forms the system of goods offered. Food critics' assessments of particular restaurants influence the system of goods. Chefs are called upon to reshape their product in response to the critique (or to acknowledge the critique in some way). This changes the system of goods as an additional aspect of labour is required, and as Bourdieu suggests, reshaping product induces changes in tastes. Such changes are reflected in the creation and consumption of the contemporary celebrity chef.

Bourdieu argues, "The science of taste and of cultural consumption begins with a transgression that is in no way aesthetic: it has to abolish the sacred frontier which makes legitimate culture a separate universe, in order to discover the intelligible reasons which unite apparently incommensurable 'choices', such as preferences in music and food, painting and sport, literature and hairstyle" (1984, p. xxix). The creation of celebrity chefs has abolished the boundary that makes dining and food culture "a separate universe" – celebrity chefs frequently appear on our TV screens and write cook books that can be used by home cooks. While celebrity chefs have diverse working backgrounds (from casual to fine dining), their common goal in promoting good food unites their 'incommensurability' with audiences at home, who want to learn how to cook and eat better. These audiences are addressed as people who want to belong to particular communities of taste and consumption; practices of consuming celebrity chefs enable them to feel that they belong to these communities. Print food media in Sydney contributes to maintaining the presence of celebrity chefs in popular discourse. Food criticism is fundamental in maintaining this presence.

Taste in the chef economy

The *Good Food Guide* is one aspect of the production of cultural capital, articulated through its hat rating system. Similar to the *Guide* is the dining section of *The New York Times*, of which the restaurant reviews section was examined closely by Mitchell Davis (2009). Davis suggests, "The underlying model is that reviews disseminate socially coded information about food and restaurants that informs a discourse in which our collected tastes are constructed" (2009, p. 4). As such, the *Guide*'s reviews produce collective consumption (which chapter five discusses in more detail) and collective understandings of cultural capital.

The *Guide*'s longevity in print form represents the place of history in considering the labour of chefs and chefs' contemporary roles as celebrity figures. "The pure gaze is a historical invention linked to the emergence of an autonomous field of artistic production, that is, a field capable of imposing its own norms on both the production and the consumption of [chefs'] products" (Bourdieu 1984, p. xxvi). The food critics' gaze is a form of governance. As cultural gatekeepers, food critics impose norms – that is, standards – on chefs' work, and they assert these standards in their reviews.

Bourdieu argues, this gaze of critics and diners alike is not unbiased and pure, but loaded in terms of cultural capital in the form of potential critical approval. By giving chefs attention and accolades, food critics are simultaneously guiding audiences into having certain expectations of their dining experiences. These experiences and the food consumed become objectified as forms of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1997, p. 47), and impart celebrity status onto the chef.

The effects of food criticism are seen in dining rooms not only in numbers, but at the table. Parry tells me he can always tell when diners have chosen his restaurant because of a review[60]:

> *So if it's just post-review season, there are a lot of… sort of… I don't know what you'd call them. But they're basically people who've read the review, and they come in, and they're basically, 'I've read the review. I want what the reviewer had.' And they don't engage each other, they just wait for you and your magic show, you know. They're very hard. You've got a dining room full of these people, it's very hard, it's very flat, and you have to work super hard to get warmed up, you know? Cos the dining room, the energy's from the people, you know? And we can bring some of it, but it's our job to stoke the fire, I guess, is a way of putting it. And you get a lot of them. They've read the review, 'Oh that's what he talked about, I've seen this before' kind of thing. It's really challenging but you have those… it's great because some of them come back, some of them warm up. Some tick the box. You know? There's a lot of box-ticking these days* (personal communication, 27 November 2013).

Diners articulate taste at Sixpenny by drawing attention to their awareness of the cultural import of Sixpenny as constructed by food critics. The notion of 'ticking the box' is clearly a bid by diners to associate themselves with particular cultural capital – that is, the cultural capital that comes with dining at (and being seen to be knowledgeable of) restaurants that have been reviewed favourably by critics.

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[60] At Parry's restaurant Sixpenny, the chefs serve diners instead of waitstaff – an experience similar to dining at Noma. In terms of engagement and interaction with diners, Parry has had considerably more experience than most of the chefs in this study.

Parry's description of these kinds of diners as "flat" indicates that they are not at Sixpenny necessarily to enjoy the food, but rather to consume cultural capital that has been marked out for them by critics. On the other side, the pressure is felt by chefs when cooking for critics, knowing their work is constantly being judged:

> *Oh you know, you've just got to… you know you're going to get stressed but you just have to make sure… you double-check, triple-check. You double-check everything and you kind of go, really look at it and go, 'That's exactly how it should be, it's fine.' That's what you should do with every plate* (Martin, personal communication, 14 May 2011).

Cooking to a particular standard is expected in the food-criticism-produced chef economy. Davis argues, "Restaurant reviews enrich our cultural capital" (2009, p. 2). To this I would add that reviews reinforce and validate cultural capital; it is the authority that consumers assign to the print media (what Davis calls the "elite media", p. 10) that is translated to cultural capital for consumers of that media.

Print media represents the place of history in food culture, particularly in cities like New York and Sydney, whose food cultures continue to be robust due to a foundation of promotion by the print media. The critical work of the *Guide* constructs cultural capital for the chefs who are critiqued, and for the diners who consume the chefs reviewed by the *Guide*. Print food media is both a resource and site for chefs' self-production and a major contributor to chefs' celebrity status. As such, a culture of chef consumption is produced, creating a chef economy in which chefs are commodities, in which their skills are measured and valued in critical acclaim.

Patronising certain restaurants is a form of class mobility (Bourdieu 1984, p. 127). Skeggs adds, "Class is a form of inscription that shapes bodies in the making of strata and

behaviour" (2004, p. 12). Such consumption is aspirational – motivated by a desire to participate in what is perceived to be a certain practice linked to cultural capital and a particular social class. Class is constituted through "the accrual of cultural resources to oneself, be they commodity objects or cultural practices" (Skeggs 2004, p. 15). The cultural practice of dining out is part of cultivating taste for oneself, legitimised by food critics' writing in authoritative outlets, and chefs' celebrity statuses.

To engage in the practice of dining out and with critics' opinions is to align oneself with the critics' construction of cultural capital. I do not want to claim that everyone in Sydney sees the *Good Food Guide* and Sydney chefs as arbiters of taste and possessed of cultural cache. My analysis explores consumption as a form of aspiration, and I speak specifically from this perspective. Bourdieu defines class as "the structure of the symbolic space marked out by the whole set of […] structured practices, all the distinct and distinctive lifestyles which are defined objectively and sometimes subjectively in and through their mutual relationships" (1984, p. 95). Using this definition, class is a kind of social identity in relation to the practices undertaken on a day-to-day basis and in relation to possessions and power (1984, p. 95). It is also related to economical capital – consisting of what Bourdieu describes as the dominant or middle class (p. 127).

Practices of consumption are changing in response to food critics' production of cultural capital. Consumption of particular chefs is a form of cultural practice, and should be considered in the construction of class identity. Celebrity chef culture legitimises this as a cultural practice. "[C]elebrity culture is complicit with producing a much broader notion of value than is generally recognized by the laws of economics" (Rojek 2012, p. 94-95). Further, by acknowledging the important role of critics, chefs indirectly endorse the standards set by them.

According to Bourdieu, class mobility is to appear to belong to different parts of the class structure (1984, p. 127). In the context of the chef economy, diners engage in food discourse produced by food critics in order to attain class mobility through cultivating taste. Bourdieu also notes that class identity is governed by a relation to practices of production (1984, p. 96); with this in mind, chefs' close proximity to the process of production would classify them as working class. However, the commodification of chefs, the increase in their intellectual labour and allocation of cultural capital by the print media has significantly changed this, a phenomenon I will discuss in greater detail in chapter six. Class is intrinsically tied to symbolic cultural capital, the value of which is governed and legitimised by the print media.

Forms of cultural capital

As the principal critic for *The Sydney Morning Herald,* Durack currently writes the weekly review in the pull-out *Good Living*. The pull-out also features weekly recipes using seasonal produce, which are provided variously by food writers and chefs. *Good Living* is a well-respected publication, and many in the industry believe Durack to be informed and fair (Taffel 2009). Durack previously wrote for the *Herald* before leaving for London in the late 90s. There, he wrote restaurant reviews for *The Independent* and won food writing awards like the Glenfiddich restaurant critic of the year and best restaurant critic at Le Cordon Bleu Food media awards (Taffel, 2009). Upon his return to *Good Living* in 2010, the number of three hat restaurants in Sydney immediately halved, signalling a changed and possibly tougher judging system from the *Guide*. As well, more recognition has been given to smaller, more casual establishments, hinting at the changing ideas of what is considered quality dining. "Goods are converted into distinctive signs" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 485). In this instance we can consider the 'goods' to be the food cooked by chefs, which are converted to

distinctive signs by food criticism. Food critics articulate signs of cultural capital through their critique of chefs' work.

While well-regarded, Durack's critique does come under the scrutiny of chefs, with some believing that his older age prevents him from appreciating the more 'out there' efforts of young chefs. On appeasing the older critic, previous head chef of funky, youthful Ms G's restaurant, Yu says, "Terry, the stuff he really likes, the stuff he really gives 15 out of 20[61] are the 'Frenglish' [French-English] gear [sic]. You know, the *assiette*[62] of rabbit three ways, that's what he really likes" (personal communication, 11 April 2011). Of Ms G's, Durack writes:

> *Ms G's looks like an out-and-out winner; full of wit, humour and fresh ideas pinched from the worlds of music, fashion, design and food.*
>
> *If you have zero tolerance on issues such as no reservations, pitch dark dining rooms, high noise levels, drinking out of plastic and watching gaggles of bright young things having fun, it's probably best to go early or stay away. If not, you're in for a good year* (Durack 2010a, para. 10).

Ms G's scored 14 out of 20. In this review, Durack constructs a very particular kind of capital for the restaurant: of cutting edge youthfulness inspired by music, fashion, and design. Dining here will transfer this cultural capital to patrons. Ms G's executive chef Dan Hong and his head chef Yu are part of a group of younger chefs who Durack (and Fassnidge and Ingham) seems to call 'those young guys'. Those young chefs are now coming into prominence. A self-confessed campaigner for the new generation of chefs (Taffel 2009),

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[61] A long-running joke in the industry is to rate everything 14/20, referencing Durack's oft-rewarded 'fence sitting' score.
[62] French for 'plate'.

Durack attempts to write and judge for all audiences. In his review of Duke Bistro, a funky, low-lit restaurant previously run by a group of Gen-Y chefs, Durack concedes,

> *This is a kitchen cooking for its peers, knowingly having fun with food for a generation bored silly with old-fogey establishments and the status quo. In one sense, it's tribal. In another, it's just timely. You don't have to be a cosmic dude to tire of conventional mainstream restaurants or to be engaged and interested in the evolution of dining* (Durack 2010c, para. 14).

His use of the terms 'old fogey' and 'cosmic dude' highlight his position outside Duke's targeted audience. Durack positions himself as an outsider to the 'dude' mentality of the younger chefs, but nevertheless is encouraging of what they are trying to achieve. In that same review, Durack describes the location of the restaurant cheekily, as though its very location was in defiance of older baby-boomers: "Not only that, it's on the first floor of a pub, up a steep flight of stairs. With no inclinator. How loud a message do you want, boomers?" (Durack 2010c, para. 3). Whether or not it was the intention of Duke to chase younger diners and subsequently alienate older diners, Durack, through his review, has created an audience for the restaurant. The audience to whom Durack writes are those who have the disposal income and leisure time to dine out in Sydney regularly. Durack's reviews, and subsequently Sydney's restaurants, construct a particular class of audience.

According to Bourdieu,

> *It is always forgotten that the universe of products offered by each field of production tends in fact to limit the universe of the forms of experience (aesthetic, ethical, political, etc.) that are objectively possible at any given moment. It follows from this […] that the distinction recognized in all dominant classes and in all their properties takes different forms depending on*

140

the state of the distinctive signs of 'class' that are affectively available (1984,

p. 228).

The discourse of food criticism in *Good Living* (and the *Guide*) has the potential to "limit" experience because of the ways in which dining is written about. The discourse of food writing depends on the audience's prior knowledge of the food industry, which comes from frequently dining out. Thus, by hailing readers who dine out often, social and cultural capital is constructed through food criticism, and experiences of such are limited to a specific audience. Distinction is constructed by the *Guide* through an elevated discourse of Sydney dining and through the *Guide*'s signs of hats. In Sydney, *Good Food Guide* hats have become a sign of distinction, both for the restaurant and the diners who consume them. This economy of cultural capital is enhanced through celebrity culture. Marshall suggests, "In terms of the industry itself, celebrities embody the power of the audience members: the audience's power – their economic clout – is represented by the celebrity and their capacity to deliver that audience for the industry" (2006b, p. 636). By engaging in the economy of hats, whether through attending awards ceremonies or advertising their critical acclaim in their work, chefs invite their audiences to invest in the cultural capital economy.

"In the case of the production of cultural goods at least, the relation between supply and demand takes a particular form: the supply always exerts an effect of symbolic imposition. A cultural product […] is a constituted taste" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 228). In Sydney food criticism, the supply of hats is artificially limited in order to maintain the status of distinction. A three hat score is described in terms of "exceptional" (scored 18/20), "extraordinary" (19/20) and "perfection" (20/20) (Durack & Savill 2011, p. viii). The restaurants (i.e. cultural products of the media) vie for validation and prestige in the form of hats. The *Good Food Guide* is an arbiter of taste in Sydney; its significance within the

141

industry has created a symbiotic relationship between chefs and traditional media. The production of cultural capital by the print media produces a chef economy that relies on these media forms in order to continue to exist.

In addition to constructing distinctive intermediaries of taste in the Sydney dining industry, the *Guide* and *Good Living* constantly make and legitimise the discourses of dining culture, which produce new architectures of participation (Collins 2012, p. 3). These include seeking to dine at those restaurants positively reviewed in the *Guide* and *Good Living*, and interacting with chefs through online social media. Diners are no longer eating out for entertainment but rather are doing so in order to fulfil a certain aspiration suggested by the *Guide,* and in so doing, cultivate taste. When suggesting that Duke is part of the "evolution of dining" (Durack 2010c, para. 14), Durack positions dining culture as a significant aspect of Sydney life, and diners as participants in this particular culture.

Davis argues, "Taste… can be viewed as the product of cultural variables that include class, education, economic and symbolic capital, and the resulting positions and position-takings these variables produce in the field of cultural production" (2009, p. 5). Food criticism produces the dining industry as a legitimate field in which social and cultural capital are articulated. Durack's review of Duke is by no means negative, but it is part of the process of constructing a specific audience for Duke, thereby an audience for the restaurant's chefs. Print food media in Sydney frames the labour of chefs as an anchor of the industry by constantly acknowledging the skill and authority required to succeed in the industry, in turn producing celebrity.

Chefs are written about in terms that professionalise their labour. In a profile on TOYS[63] in the 4 May 2011 edition of *(sydney) magazine*, Durack comments,

> *Cooking is still grounded in technique and if you don't have that under control – through sheer repetition and hard yakka – then the shit hits the fan when the pressure's on. I've eaten some great things cooked by these chefs* [TOYS] *but I've also experienced octopus that's so tough I had to remove it from my mouth, massive over-salting and one rogue flavour run amok like a mad elephant* (Bolles 2011, p. 43).

Durack implies that younger chefs lack the experience, and therefore the authority, of older chefs. His description of the "flavour run amok" positions the younger chefs outside the cultural capital he is constructing – that of an experienced chef with refined technique. In response, Dan Hong offers, "I just don't think Terry got it. Even the noise. I don't think he understands our customers like it loud." (Bolles 2011, p. 45). When asked if he and Hong had tried to appeal to a certain audience, Yu responds that Ms G's aims to fill a generational gap.

> *Generation Y are now moving along in their life, getting jobs, you know, having a stable income. Moving out of being a student and getting a stable job* [sic]. *So these are the people that are just coming out, drinking and eating more. That's the demographic that's shifting in Sydney. But of course there's always gonna be room for the top end of dining, for the generation X-ers, but we see this gap. We just jumped in there. Like Duke as well, which is probably something like what we do as well* (personal communication, 18 April 2011).

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[63] Taste of Young Sydney is a collective of young chefs. Sydney's food industry has evolved to the point that chefs need some measure of media exposure in order to succeed, so these young chefs (including Jowett Yu and Analiese Gregory, who are both participants in this study) hold special events through which to showcase their talents. See http://www.toyscollective.com/.

"A class is defined as much by its *being perceived* as by its *being*, by its consumption – which need not be conspicuous in order to be symbolic" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 485). Based on Durack's descriptions of Ms G's and Duke, and Yu and Hong's responses to the review, it is clear that a particular audience is being hailed, and that this audience – the ones who "like it loud" – are classed by how they are perceived as well as their participation at the forefront of Sydney dining.

Through Durack's critique, chefs' labour is framed as a structured practice rather than a mode of production (1984, p. 95) . Chefs' cooking is considered and artistic, their labours are professionalised and acknowledged as specialised. Their careers are a choice rather than simply a means to an end. Working class is defined as a proximity to mode of production (Bourdieu 1984, p. 96), but the way food criticism frames chefs' labour enables a class mobility (Bourdieu 1984, p. 127). The act of dining out itself represents a certain kind of cultural capital, and thus a particular social class: restaurant reviews hail the kind of audience who want to be part of the "evolution" (Durack 2010c, para. 14) through socially coded language and allusions to taste. For example, Durack & Savill (2011, p. 115) describe the menu at Quay as "thoughtful yet extraordinary"; dining there is "a seamless experience" (Durack & Savill 2011, p. 115). Such vocabulary elevates going out to dinner to an "experience", something worthy of an investment of time and money.

Venues like Ms G's and Duke are perceived to be establishments aimed at well-to-do 20-somethings, shunning "old fogeys" such as Durack. Durack positions himself as outside this target audience, though as a food critic he asserts his authority in judging the chefs' skills. In doing so, Durack significantly contributes to the classed construction of Sydney dining – a culture in which consumers should be and are discerning of the establishments they visit, based on the perceived symbolic capital different venues represent.

You can leave your hat on

Bourdieu argues, "the social conditions of its [cultural capital] transmission and acquisition are more disguised than those of economic capital, it is predisposed to function as symbolic capital, i.e., to be recognized as capital and recognized as legitimate competence" (1997, p. 49). Food criticism in Sydney's traditional media form the framework for the exchange of symbolic capital; restaurants' ratings and awards mark them as offering consumable symbolic capital. On the rewarding of one hat to his casual Surry Hills restaurant, 4Fourteen, head chef and co-owner Fassnidge tells me:

> *It always affects you. You get a horrible week, because you get all the people who want to eat there,* [but] *then you* [also] *get the fucktards who come in with the newspaper under their arm.*
>
> *It was like when we got two hats here* [at Four in Hand]*, it was the same. This, 'Oh my god it's not two hats, and the room's not two hats…', you know. I got upset for a week and then I was like, you know what – fuck off* (personal communication, 8 November 2012).

The chef can see that some of his diners are eating at his restaurant in order to participate in the symbolic cultural capital it represents, and claims to resent this[64].

The restaurant possesses this capital because the media supplies it through its approval. Though he is baffled by the effects of *Good Food Guide* hats, Fassnidge concedes it is necessary to play the game.

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[64] Greg Doyle, head chef of acclaimed Sydney restaurant Pier, 'returned' his three hats in 2010, claiming that the prestige associated with the three hat rating alienated customers. Durack responded with a blog, claiming that Doyle's announcement "implies that it is his decision whether he keeps his three hats or not, which of course it isn't" (Durack 2010b, para. 1). Pier has since been converted to a casual fish and chips café.

I don't know what … I know hats are… I don't know, I don't really care. Like, I don't want to lose them, obviously. I didn't want to lose two here and one [at 4Fourteen] *but… if you lose it, it's bad for a week. You lick your wounds and then you just fucking do what you do* (personal communication, 8 November 2012).

Fassnidge doesn't think hats influence his work creatively. But clearly the act of keeping up appearances, of maintaining the symbolic capital that hats represent, is incorporated into the labour of chefs.

Cultural and class boundaries are prevalent in Sydney's restaurant industry. While Durack sees the loud noise at Ms G's and Duke as something that is potentially a deterrent to diners, Gen-Y chef Hong sees it as an appealing aspect of his restaurant. While diners see hatted restaurants as capital to be accumulated, chefs see hats and the print media system of hatting as a nuisance that must be indulged. Chefs are now required to produce food that not only must impress diners, but also knowing that others have a say in their success and that their work is publicly judged. Food media informs the way quality dining is perceived and valued by its audience. The discourse of food criticism operates as a cultural code and Sydney restaurants participate in an economy of symbolic capital. The hat system is a temporally, culturally specific articulation of the roles taste and opinion play in shaping consumption practices and the production of celebrity chefs.

Ingham, who runs Bar H in the youthful suburb of Surry Hills[65], is on good terms with one of Sydney food's 'power couples', Nourse and Rigby.

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[65] Located minutes away from Central train station, Surry Hills was once a working class suburb of Sydney. The area gentrified from the mid-90s and has become a suburb full of trendy cafes and restaurants and is a popular area for young professionals and 'hipsters'.

I mean I probably wouldn't ring them up or send messages or whatever [...] *I guess* [...] *people like Pat Nourse and Myffy* [Rigby]*, they come in here quite often and I can chat freely and they give me feedback. So it's nice* (personal communication, 29 March 2011).

They come here and we chat together and come up with ideas about doing dinners and that, so I think, like, I really like Pat and Myffy, cos they sort of come and talk and get involved and you know – what's going on? What's new? (personal communication, 2 May 2011)

Ingham tends to favour a collaborative relationship with food critics, in order to push Sydney dining into something diners will enjoy. He continues, "I think it will make the industry stronger and even if Pat doesn't like me or whatever, you know, that's fine, that's okay. But I think it's nice to talk about it with them. You know, why didn't you like that?" (personal communication, 2 May 2011.) Rather than seeing critics as an obstacle in the restaurant industry, Ingham argues for greater involvement. In this way, the role of the critic is vindicated as one which has a hand in the improvement and growth of the industry, at the same time reinforcing the economy of social capital that it perpetuates.

Yu also appreciates the relationship between critics and chefs. "[I]t's a symbiotic relationship [...] Because with a good review, a restaurant is made. Simple as that. It's a simple formula. A good review can make a restaurant. A bad review can break a restaurant [...] it's natural. So, we need each other, really" (personal communication, 18 April 2011). From these chefs' comments, it is clear that they have accepted the necessity of the food media in order to grow within the industry. Food media gets their content, and from this, restaurants get their patrons. However, as we can see from understanding the industry through Bourdieu, it is more than cultural commentary that is conducted by the media – the

147

media participate in an economy of cultural capital (symbolised by their allocation of hats) and through their critique. "The structure of the field, i.e. the unequal distribution of capital, is the source of the specific effects of capital" (Bourdieu 1997, p. 49). Recognition of chefs and restaurants is unequally distributed; while Fairfax is a large publishing company it cannot cover every single working chef. The *Guide* and *Good Living* construct specific ideas for what constitutes talented chefs and exciting restaurants, and this is in turn consumed as symbolic capital.

Martin has worked at several highly acclaimed hatted restaurants, and is close friends with food critics. She muses:

> *I was actually friends with these people before I became head chef. Like I've known Franz* [Scheurer, of online Australian Gourmet Pages] *for 12 years or something. And Roberta* [Muir, freelance food writer and manager of Sydney Seafood School] *for longer than that. Um, Simon* [Thomsen] *not so much, Pat and Myffy probably same amount of time. So I was actually friends with them before I became a head chef. So it's hard to sort of separate the line of, now you're judging me, and before we were friends so... I dunno. It's a blurry line but for me it was always one that was blurry before it became this kind of thing* [...] *I don't know how it's going to work, because eventually there'll be some time when they go, your cooking sucks, you know? And someone's gonna get upset* (personal communication, 14 May 2011).

The power structure within this economy of social capital is made clear here, and chefs are aware of critics' influence. Ingham distinguishes the line between the pressure of critical scrutiny and being able to cook the way he wants.

I'm not trying to get two hats or anything. I think if you're not striving for that one or two hat, it's a lot easier. There's less expectation. I think once you get into that territory it's much harder to uphold. There's a lot more pressure (personal communication, 2 May 2011).

Again we see the effect of hats on a chef's perception of his work and how it is received. The very notion of getting a hat signifies a certain level that chefs believe is difficult to maintain. This could mean that the nature of a 'hatted' dining experience is fleeting, perhaps, and relies on many factors in order to be successful. While the scoring system for hats seems clear to critics, for chefs it is much harder to define and produce.

When revered Sydney restaurant Tetsuya's, run and owned by Tetsuya Wakuda[66], lost its third hat in the 2011, industry insiders were shocked. It was significant, however, that Durack, the deciding critic, spoke personally to Wakuda about the *Guide*'s decision – such was Wakuda's celebrity and status. This level of communication demonstrated respect for the chef, but at the same time reinforces the *Guide*'s position as a significant producer of cultural capital – such decisions are not taken lightly, and when they are, they are read as legitimate. Yu is one of the many chefs who respects and admires Wakuda, one of the great chefs who helped propel Sydney dining to the international stage:

It reverberated, it was big news. Because he was the 'untouchable'. He [...] represented, even at this point in his career, the best of Australia. The best, the finest example of what this country, in its cooking, represents. He's a man who's dedicated his life, his marriages, his – the possibility of having children, a family... he pretty much gave up his entire life for his restaurant. And he's

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[66] Wakuda is an internationally-acclaimed Japanese chef who oversees the running of Sydney fine dining restaurant Tetsuya's and Waku Ghin at Marina Bay Sands hotel in Singapore.

the pinnacle of what one's career can reach. You know. And to do something like that [take away the third hat] *to a man of that stature, it was* 'woah.' [...]

[W]*hen Terry took away Tets' three hats last year, he repeatedly had meetings with Tets, giving him the heads up. So he already knew he was going to have a hat taken away, you know. That's because he's a man that deserves a lot of respect, you know, has been in the game for so long, um, that when he was going to do what Terry was going to do to him, he had to really just break it to the man. But I – I'm pretty sure he* [Durack] *wouldn't be the same with anybody else, only cos it's Tets. But that's just the mutual respect from chef to critic, or critic to chef* (personal communication, 18 April 2011).

While the *Guide* produces symbolic cultural capital for its audience to consume through the discourse of food criticism, it simultaneously does this for chefs as well. Wakuda is described as "a man that deserves a lot of respect" by Yu, and in great part this respect comes from being continuously lauded by food critics. Tetsuya's celebrity status earned him a softened blow. The construction of celebrities by celebrity media has been closely examined (e.g. Gamson 1994; Rein *et al.* 1999; Turner, Marshall & Bonner 2000), but this example from the restaurant industry shows that the line between chef and food media is blurred.

The economy of symbolic capital is successful because both diners and chefs participate in the consumption of capital. As Skeggs puts it, "valuing always works in the interests of those who can name it as such. Their perspective on what counts as legitimate puts valuation in effect" (2004, p. 14). Food critics' perspectives are what counts as legitimate in the chef economy, creating celebrity figures of chefs and symbols of cultural capital of their restaurants. The participants of the chef economy work in complementary ways.

What getting a hat means

In Sydney, dining enthusiasts will more than likely consult a copy of the *Guide* for the best places to eat in Sydney. Hats, to diners, signify a superior dining experience. In the *Guide's* terms, one hat means the restaurant is "very good" (Durack & Savill, 2010, p. viii). To chefs, scoring a hat in the guide means they feel compelled to do their jobs differently, at least initially. Fassnidge's Four in Hand Dining Room scored 16 out of 20, resulting in two hats. He saw the award of two hats as having the power to change the nature of his restaurant.

> *When I got two chefs' hats, I wasn't very happy for a few weeks, just because I was... there's a lot more expectation, well I put on myself. And is this good enough for... then I realised it's more our whole feeling of what we do, not just what's on the plate – it's everything. And we're sorta not aiming to be fine dining or, our whole philosophy goes onto the floor as well, you should be relaxed, and I think we tried to get a little bit stiff for a while, cos we got a shock* (personal communication, 8 April 2011).

Certainly, Fassnidge is happy with what he does now, but tells of his trepidation of times earlier in his career as a young chef. "Years ago, food critics… I was like... you'd tremble when they came in?" (personal communication, 8 April 2011.) As his career has progressed, so has his ease in cooking for food critics:

> *I'm... happy within myself with what I do. So, if they like it they like it. And I think I have a very good product so, well years ago when you're trying to find out, trying to find your feet and you don't know if you should be following this trend, that trend. I didn't follow a trend, I just did my own. But it's a long time before you realise, that's you, and there's no point trying to… so… we do*

what we do well, and I think they realise that (personal communication, 8 April 2011).

There seems to be a preconceived expectation that comes with hats, a reputation that has been built steadily over the lifetime of the *Guide*. Chefs have no involvement in the awarding of hats – they do not pay to appear in the *Guide*, nor are they given any information about their final review in the book prior to the book's launch. It is not a stretch to say that the *Good Food Guide* hats are coveted, yet some chefs may be apprehensive of the consequences that result from being 'hatted'. Martin suggests there is a balance that can be struck, provided you attain a desirable score:

> *I think I'm quite happy to stay at 15. I don't want to be 14, I don't want to be 16. 15 is for me, well as far as I know, is the money-maker. It's like, it's good quality but doesn't have to be up there so you* [customers] *can kind of go there all the time. Um yeah I think price and bit more casual so you can go all the time but you know you're going to get quality, I think is what people want* (personal communication, 14 May 2011).

The *Guide* seems to have created a desirable middle ground for chefs; that is, a score to which they may aspire but that does not come with heavy expectations. The perception of the chef and restaurant, however, is constructed as separate to the restaurant. Fassnidge tells me about an apprentice chef who told him straight up:

> *"I only want* [to work in] *two hat."*

Fassnidge's response:

> *I'm like mate, what's two hat? Like… I don't get it. Like Tetsuya's* [a] *two hat, which would be a lot different to what I do* […] *I didn't hire him, I said I think you're chasing the wrong* [goals], *you should want to do my style of food or*

152

want to learn what I know, rather than chasing hats. Like you can't discount all the other restaurants. Maybe a restaurant that hasn't even got a hat is good. Like, are you telling me you're better than them? (personal communication, 8 April 2011)

Indeed, the influence of the *Guide* goes far such that even apprentices feel they should aspire to working in restaurants with a certain number of hats rather than choosing restaurants in terms of cuisine or style. Hats work as a branding symbol signifying which restaurants, and therefore which chefs, possess cultural capital and in some cases, celebrity status. The *Good Food Guide* has become the main measurement of the quality of a restaurant in Sydney. The *Guide* is an arbiter of taste but it is also the key publication in the Sydney chef economy, producing an economy of social capital that requires both chefs and print media to participate in certain ways in order to sustain itself.

It is difficult to compare hatted restaurants. As Fassnidge points out, his two-hat rated restaurant is totally different to Tetsuya's. While Four in Hand Dining Room is a small, elegant restaurant attached to a popular suburban pub, Tetsuya's is a large, city restaurant divided into several small dining rooms, much like a ryokan (Japanese inn). Four in Hand serves rustic, homely food – Colin is described in the 2011 *Guide* as having an "almost housewifely way with bones, cheeks and feet that feels surprisingly modern, like a grandmother in a mini skirt" (Durack & Savill 2010, p. 60), while Tetsuya's 12-plus course degustations are described as "reverent journeys" and Tetsuya's once considered "the most acclaimed Australian restaurant in the world" (Durack & Savill 2010, p. 137). From this comparison, clearly the two restaurants provide completely different experiences, yet are grouped together with the same hat score.

Yu has worked in three-hatted fine diners as well as casual restaurants. He does not put too much stock in hats, but acknowledges what they represent in Sydney. When asked what getting a hat means, he replies:

> *There's a sense of achievement. But with great achievement comes great responsibility, of course. At the same time, you know, as a chef you open a restaurant. What is the purpose? You gotta ask yourself that, you know, if the purpose of my restaurant is to put everything that I have in this restaurant just to get a hat, is it worth it? […] Cos at the end of the day, a restaurant is just another business. You know, it has to be viable, economically viable somehow. And is it worth sacrificing your life over?* (personal communication, 11 July 2011)

Yu tells me about a chef he knows who put everything into his restaurant:

> [H]*e's put everything in* [his restaurant]*, but… failed marriage, he's still driving a fucking beat-box car, he's still in rental housing. But he's got a hat. He's put everything he's got in a restaurant, you know. So it depends on what you want. You can achieve greatness but… a business is a business. Like any other business* (personal communication, 11 July 2011).

In the economy of symbolic capital, at least, a business is not just a business – chefs are called upon to become "enterprising [selves]" (Skeggs 2004, p. 73) in order to access professional success in response to greater demands placed on them by food critics and, in turn, celebrity chef culture. The labour involved in securing hats and maintaining reasonable profit margins involve much more than running your average restaurant. Food criticism employs distinctive signs and specific knowledges, codified into symbolic cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984, p. 485).

This cultural capital affords chefs class mobility: the work of chefs is no longer a working class pursuit but rather constructed as in parts artistic and other parts intellectual. The contemporary culture of food in Sydney, however, hails and is acknowledged only by a particular audience who seek to engage in particular taste communities and be counted among a particular social class, characterised by the consumption of critically-acclaimed chefs. Class is a significant factor in how we interpret the economy of Sydney food and its chefs. The *Guide* is a canvas on which the Sydney food culture is mapped according to the media, and draws on international templates.

Sydney in a global context

Food criticism is the primary constructor of cultural capital in the restaurant industry, creating and feeding cultural capital into the celebrity chef culture that is constructed by critics' characterisations of skilled, authoritative chefs. The *Good Food Guide* is one aspect of the cultural capital economy which is connected to, and emulates processes found in, the global community of chefs and food media. Appadurai argues that "locality is materially produced" (1996, p. 180). The materiality of print media produces locality for the global community of chefs: their experiences as chefs are united in one way by their experience of being evaluated by food critics.

One of the biggest restaurant guides in the world is the *Michelin Guide*. The maximum numbers of stars a restaurant can score is three. Restaurants as well as hotels are rated in this international guide by anonymous inspectors. In Europe particularly, the *Michelin* has a huge following; however, it is in danger of being seen as stubborn and un-progressive. Fassnidge comments, "*Michelin Guide* is a little bit stale sometimes" (personal communication, 17 May 2011). Conceived by the tyre company Michelin in 1900 ('Michelin Travel' n.d.) as a way to encourage more travelling (and thus more tyre sales), the *Michelin*

Guide has a long print history. The influences of this well-regarded, if old-fashioned restaurant guide can be seen in the way diners and chefs alike value the *Good Food Guide*. *Michelin*-starred restaurants are highly regarded the world over, despite the perception of *Michelin* being a little bit behind with emerging food trends[67]. It is not known what determines the awarding of *Michelin* stars – the guide prefers to keep the scoring system secret, and *Michelin* 'inspectors' are completely anonymous. They are not allowed to disclose to anyone, outside or inside the industry, that they write for the *Michelin Guide*. While not as influential in Australia, the *Michelin Guide* serves as a template for how the *Good Food Guide* is constructed as well as how it is received by the industry and by diners.

The San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list is released annually. Australian restaurants have appeared on the list since its inception in 2002. The 'world' is divided into 26 'geographical regions', with each region headed up by a chairperson who oversees a group of voters. These voters and chair-people comprise the San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best Academy': chefs, restaurateurs and food media. Each voter has seven votes, with the requirement that three votes are for restaurants outside their own region. Its credibility is wobbly (Ulla 2012b), considering the geographical factors of voting, and the notion of ranking restaurants is abstract and problematic seeing as there is no way every single restaurant in the world can be accounted for. Gregory can attest to the influence of the list (Quay was ranked 48th in 2013):

> *I think that now it's like the biggest thing at the moment. I don't even know*
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> *how it became that way.* […] *it was just this thing that* Restaurant *magazine*
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> *used to do every year and they put out this little book and we'd sort of read it*

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[67] The *Michelin Guide* is published annually in most major capital cities, but because of the rigorous reviewing process and the nature of annual publishing, *Michelin* are not always able to cover the latest trends in the industry, hence being regarded as sometimes behind the times.

and go, 'Oh, that's interesting.' But now it's like this thing that people strive for and base restaurants on.

Probably MasterChef *was bigger, and then the next biggest thing that's changed Quay over the last 4 years was* ['World's 50 Best']. *It's more like, website-based to begin with. Like at work, they normally say after the* ['World's 50 Best'] *is released they get like, you know, 50 000 more hits than they do normally. And then online bookings and stuff like that.* […] *Like, people in Australia care and will come eat there because of that, but I think it really brings the international business, that's the big thing. So it's all put you on* [the] *world stage* (personal communication, 29 November 2012).

Diners clearly aspire to consume symbolic cultural capital when they decide to dine at Quay – Gregory's suggestion that online bookings increase in the tens of thousands is illustrative of this. While it may be clever marketing, there is a reason it works so well. The 'World's 50 Best' produces easily translated capital – rankings, while simplistic and flawed, translate to symbolic cultural capital. While this cultural capital is primarily possessed by the restaurants, it is also transferred to diners who consume there.

Appadurai suggests that "local subjects engage in the social activities of production, representation, and reproduction (as in the work of culture) […] they contribute… to the creation of contexts that might exceed the existing material and conceptual boundaries of the neighborhood" (1996, p. 185). Both chefs and food critics engage in the production and reproduction of culture. Chefs' responses to and engagement with food criticism legitimises the role of food critics.

The construction of cultural capital through criticism and chef consumption takes place in major cities around the world, as illustrated by the three key food criticism texts

examined in this chapter. The resulting economy of symbolic cultural capital results in new architectures of participation: for print media, which continues to construct standards of capital; for chefs, who must adapt their labour in order to be seen as authoritative, skilled figures deserving of celebritisation and media acclaim; and for diners, who consume particular chefs in order to associate with their cultural capital. The effects of the *Michelin* guides and 'World's 50 Best' list reflect these practices of consumption; they provide a framework for the *Good Food Guide* and reinforce the significance of food critics as cultural gatekeepers in Sydney dining and their role in the celebritisation of chefs.

Conclusion

Cultural capital constructed through food criticism produces celebrity and affects practices of consumption. As well as commodifying chefs, food criticism underscores aspirational consumption by diners who seek to engage in, and consume, particular aspects of the dining industry in pursuit of class mobility. Across three major food criticism texts – *Good Food Guide*, *Michelin Guide* and the 'World's 50 Best' – the value of restaurants are condensed to a simplistic score (hats or stars) or ranking ('World's 50 Best'). This suggests that cultural capital has a measureable value and this value can be translated to an audience. Bourdieu argues: "The field of production, which clearly could not function if it could not count on already existing tastes, […] enables taste to be realised by offering it" (1984, p.227). Chefs' field of production would not nearly be as imbued with cultural capital if not for food critics. Food criticism lays the ground for constructing aspirational taste for diners that chefs can fill. Consumers are more interested in consuming chefs with cultural capital; that is, celebrity chefs who have been in part created by food critics.

The *Good Food Guide* uses a similar template as *Michelin*; both these guides and the 'World's Best 50' condense the overall value of a restaurant into easily digested markers like

hats, stars and rankings. This model of food criticism contributes to the rendering of cultural capital among chefs, making cultural capital easier to recognise and pursue. Subsequently, this system affects the ways in which diners perceive chefs, and in turn, the ways in which chefs are consumed. Food criticism builds the foundation for media interest in chefs, and therefore is also the foundation of celebrity chef culture.

The three publications form Appadurai's global "mediascape" in the food community, described as "the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information… and… the images of the world created by these media" (1996, p. 35). The food community is unified by similar modes of evaluation; these major food criticism publications are significant in making the chef economy global. The chef economy and its associated cultural capital put in place a certain "architecture of participation" (Collins 2012, p. 3). For example, hatted restaurants are perceived a certain way, by both diners and chefs. Lake, the head chef at three-*Michelin*-starred restaurant The Fat Duck, knows this better than most:

> *Media tends to group restaurants together a lot. For years we were always grouped – it was always El Bulli* [formerly 'World's Best 50' top ranked restaurant until 2010, when it closed] *and The Fat Duck, but we were always two completely different restaurants.* Completely *different. You know, there was nothing* [the two restaurants had in common]*…! But we were always put together.*

> *When you become number one that's huge media, you know. When this restaurant was given three* [Michelin] *stars in 2004, it was kind of like… there wasn't much media about that. The very next year when it was voted the number one restaurant in the world by this weird, like, board, and this tiny publication at the time, a tiny thing. That just went* world*wide. So, way more*

interest came from that at the time, you know. […] *all of a sudden you go from*

being busy some nights, you know, for sure Fridays and Saturdays you're busy

but maybe in the middle of the week, you know, lunches aren't so busy. To like,

FULL. Like, instantly (personal communication, 16 February 2012).

The Fat Duck was not mobbed by diners *purely* for the quality of food communicated by the

Michelin Guide or their top world ranking. The cultural capital imparted by this appreciation

inspired people to travel and dine at the restaurant. The point is not the quality of the food,

but dining here indicates that you have the *capacity* to be able to appreciate the food on a

high-class cultural level.

Bourdieu considers taste and distinction through the various activities people

undertake in their day-to-day lives. This chapter has examined significant practices of

consumption and the mediatised creation of a chef economy through key aspects of his work,

and the ways taste is incorporated in producing the celebrity chef. Bourdieu's ideas of

distinction, taste, and cultural capital can be clearly seen and are clearly consumed in the chef

economy. Food critics construct cultural capital to inspire these practices of consumption.

The chef economy trades on cultural capital and in turn changes practices of

consumption, creating a culture of spectatorship and consumption of celebrity chefs. The

media creates ideas of cultural capital, and chefs step up to embody them – in turn creating

celebrity chefs and an economy that requires constant production and reinforcement of

cultural capital to sustain itself. Food criticism in print media provides the framework to

produce chefs as celebrity figures – figures of authority and specialised knowledges and

skills. But engagement and consumption of cultural capital is not limited to dining at

restaurants; using Collins' "architectures of participation" (2012, p. 3), interactions with chefs

and food discourses on social media are another way of consuming and participating in the

chef economy. In the next chapter, I examine the role social media plays in celebrity chef culture and participation in the chef economy.

> [Twitter is] *to talk, to see what you're eating, to see what everyone else is eating. I guess* [...] *Facebook is more like a personal thing, and like, Twitter is more like* [...] *for my job. It's kind of halfway between, it's like a personal thing but it's also professional.* – Analiese Gregory, personal communication, 29 November 2012

Chapter five

Cooking with *Convergence Culture*: Twitter, Instagram, and multimedia celebrity chefs

The flow of information through social media has changed practices of consumption. Social media is becoming increasingly important in interactions within the chef economy, diversifying modes of engagement in the food community. Print media provides the framework for a cultural capital economy in the restaurant industry, and celebrity chef culture built by print media compels chefs to engage on different platforms. In this chapter I consider two major social media platforms, Twitter and Instagram, and their roles in the chef economy.

Appadurai's 1996 *Modernity at Large* provides a foundation for understanding social media as a platform on which food culture can be constructed. He argues, "This is a world where electronic media are transforming the relationships between information and mediation" (1996, p. 189). Appadurai predicts the significant affect the Internet has on communication and the community:

> *These new forms of electronically mediated communications are beginning to create* virtual neighborhoods*, no longer bounded by territory, passports, taxes, elections, and other conventional political diacritics, but by access to both the software and hardware that are required to connect to these large international computer networks* (1996, p. 195, original emphasis).

I have spoken of the 'global community' of chefs in previous chapters; Appadurai's ideas can be applied to the ways in which we understand social media to produce what he calls neighbourhoods.

The global chef community is tied together by social media. Through social media, a chef in Sydney can see what chefs are doing in the USA, Europe, and Asia. A relatively new popular media form, online social media is vital for building on and maintaining a robust chef economy. This chapter considers the connections[68] made within the Sydney community on social media as a result of celebrity chef culture, while keeping in mind that it is part of a bigger international community. On social media, Sydney is able to participate in the global chef economy and community.

In developing a deeper understanding of the ways social media contributes to food culture and the chef economy, Henry Jenkins' 2006 *Convergence Culture* can be of use because it highlights a contemporary, deeply integrated relationship with social media. Turner's *Ordinary People and the Media* (2010a) reflects on media's participation in the production of culture. Turner describes the proliferation of ways to engage with the media and the media's involvement in the production of culture as the "demotic turn" (2010a, p. 6). This chapter argues that social media is a significant part of the current convergence and demotic media and examines its integration into chefs' daily labour as key sites of the global

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[68] Food has been noted as a global 'pop' phenomenon; *Time* magazine tracks the rising popularity of food culture in a gallery of images ('Bam! How culinary culture became a pop phenomenon' n.d.).

chef and food community. I argue that convergence culture and demotic media work as the 'glue' or binding agent for Appadurai's global neighbourhood. Twitter and Instagram are significant sites of cultural production, facilitating subcultures of food appreciation and with it, an economy of cultural capital through food culture knowledges displayed online. As Yu notes,

> *When I was working in restaurants five years ago, no one was taking pictures of food. But now… everyone has access to a camera. Everyone has a phone and has a decent camera on their phone. Everything is very instant* (personal communication, 5 November 2012).

The culture of participation is a key characteristic of the chef economy; social media facilitates various participatory practices such as sharing photos of and tweeting about restaurant experiences online. These practices have the capacity to reach wide audiences on social media, allowing users to connect to their 'neighbourhoods' of mutual interest. Jenkins argues contemporary media culture is no longer about "spectatorship" and is, rather, a "participatory culture" (2006, p. 3). He explains,

> *This circulation of media content – across different media systems, competing media economies, and national borders – depends heavily on consumers' active participation. I argue against the idea that convergence should be understood primarily as a technological process bringing together multiple media functions within the same devices. Instead, convergence represents a cultural shift as consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content* (2006, p. 3).

Jenkins' analysis responds to observations of fan cultures and their appropriation of primary materials (2006, p. 22). The participatory culture that occurs in the chef economy is similar to

what Jenkins describes in his fan cultures; however, primary materials (food cooked by chefs) are directly reproduced instead of appropriated. Fans reproduce chefs' food through photographs or using chefs' cook books, for example. While Jenkins speaks of media consumption in general – news, entertainment, popular culture, etc., – I extend his ideas to consider consumers of the chef economy. With the turn to the chef economy comes an attention to processes of constant construction and re-construction, as consumers comment on, and affect, the industry.

Print media provides the framework for establishing the cultural capital of food culture – through food criticism in texts like the *Good Food Guide*, consumers seek out information about new restaurants and chefs and share this on social media, making connections with chefs as well as other consumers. Turner draws on Rojek's (2012) discussion of 'para-social' relationships with celebrities to consider the impact of social media on celebrity culture (Turner 2013, p. 102). Para-social relationships describe the relationship between fans and celebrities (Turner 2013, p. 102). A para-social relationship is the (one-sided) 'relationship' a fan constructs with a celebrity, mediated by celebrity culture. Rojek refers to the relationship as "second order intimacy", as they are "relations of intimacy constructed through the mass media rather than direct experience and face-to-face meetings" (2001, p. 52). The para-social relationship can be modified on social media. Twitter and Instagram allow fans and consumers to interact directly with celebrities on Twitter. Some celebrities willingly respond, and this is certainly the case with celebrity chefs, as it is another means through which to promote their work[69].

While not everyone has access to social media technology or the devices on which they operate, the participatory cultures in the chef economy are robust enough to warrant

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[69] Workshops on how to utilise Twitter effectively are offered to businesses, with some specifically targeting the hospitality industry. See Khoo (2010).

close examination. 'Participatory culture' can be seen when photos of food are taken at restaurants and shared on Instagram, or when diners tweet about their meal at a restaurant. This occurs with both chefs and their diners. Participatory culture informs consumption in the chef economy and is significant in the construction of the global chef community. Through online social media, the rigid constructs of cultural capital put in place by print media – for example, hats or rankings – are made more fluid as consumers produce and reproduce ideas of social and cultural capital through participation. While print media succeeds as a cultural gatekeeper because of its history and accumulated authority, Twitter and Instagram modulate ideas of cultural capital collectively through users' consumption and participation, making them significant forces in the chef economy. In 2012, Fassnidge tweeted, "Dinner @Sixpenny………Go.....boys doing good things!!!! [sic]" (8 March). Chefs have the common experience of being judged by critics, but social media gives them the opportunity to support and interact with colleagues and diners and the means to negotiate the economy of cultural capital online. Similarly, diners can tweet about meals or chefs, contributing to the economy of cultural capital through participation.

This chapter examines the ways convergence culture is integrated into chefs' work in Sydney through engagement with Twitter and Instagram. Jenkins' *Convergence Culture* (2006) provides the larger framework for thinking through the effects of social media and celebrity chef culture. Marwick and boyd suggest, "Participants [on social media] have a sense of audience in every mediated conversation" (2010, p. 115). Chefs' engagement on social media platforms Twitter and Instagram suggest they are aware of, or actively constructing, their audience of food enthusiasts. "Twitter flattens multiple platforms into one" (Marwick & boyd 2010, p. 122) – this also occurs on Instagram; the two social media platforms form a global community through mutual interests and participation in food culture.

I draw on Marshall's ideas of "promotion and presentation of the self" using social media (2010, p. 35) and ideas of social media celebrity practice highlighted by Marwick and boyd, who also suggest, "there is a need for research of the daily practice of celebrity by non-famous individuals" (2011, p. 141). Responding to this suggestion, this chapter engages in empirical research with chefs and their daily practice of celebrity on social media. The phenomenon of convergence culture in the Sydney chef economy is key in creating celebrity culture among Sydney chefs, and subsequently maintains chefs' celebrity status. Convergence culture also plays a part in situating Sydney chefs in the global community of chefs. Jenkins' ideas of convergence culture, together with Appadurai's notion of the global neighbourhood, allow us to better understand the expansive nature of the chef economy and the practices of consumption that take place within.

Print media and the architecture of food social and cultural capital

New York University professor of journalism Jay Rosen argues there has been a power shift with the arrival of online media. In a 2006 post for his blog *PressThink: Ghost of Democracy in the Media Machine*, Rosen argues that there has been "a shift in power that goes with the platform shift" (para. 1). The blog post, titled 'The people formerly known as the audience' argues that power has shifted from what Rosen calls 'the press' (i.e. professional journalists) to the users, resulting in a division of professional and amateur press, who now have the means and tools available to them to produce their own media products. In a later post addressed to journalists, Rosen defines authority as "being there" (2010, para. 7); being present to relay information constitutes media authority. Turner adds, "Among the prime casualties of the demotic turn is the professional production of journalism" (2010, p. 71).

While the restaurant industry benefits from diverse opinions, food blogs contribute to cultural appreciation rather than shape the industry[70]. Yu comments, "You have a lot of people who just think they know everything […] That's how I feel about blogs as well, about bloggers" (personal communication, 18 April 2011). A certain level of authority is required in order to comment on the industry; this authority is, whether fairly or not, allocated to professional food critics. As I argued in the previous chapter, food critics in print media form the broader architecture of cultural capital in the chef economy; their contributions demonstrate the relevance of print in celebrity chef culture. Unlike blogs, critics must adhere to professional codes of conduct which stipulate that any conflict of interest[71] must be declared, among other requirements. Food blogs contribute to general conversation, while food critics form the framework and foundation for the chef economy in which cultural capital is constantly traded. It is primarily food critics (in Sydney, the *Good Food Guide*) who allocate chefs with cultural capital and in turn produce celebrity figures.

While Appadurai (1996), Jenkins (2006), and Rosen (2006, 2010) argue that digital media is significant for democratising the dispersion of information and news, it is clear that print media still holds a place of importance within the chef economy. As outlined in the previous chapter, the *Good Food Guide*, the *Michelin Guide*, and the 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list all have roots in print media. Chefs acknowledge bloggers, but stress the importance of professional criticism in the industry. Gregory comments:

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[70] Some of the more popular bloggers are asked to write for the *Good Food Guide*, building its authoritative voice further by drawing on diverse knowledges.

[71] In July 2013, a restaurant review by *The Courier Mail* in Queensland was questioned by *Media Watch*, a media analysis program presented by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Australia's public broadcaster). The segment discussed the ethical integrity of a restaurant critic reviewing a chef with whom she had a "less than friendly history" (see 'The cook, the critic, and that review', 2013. For detailed codes of conduct for two of Australia's major media outlets, see 'Fairfax code of conduct' n.d. and 'News Limited code of conduct' n.d.). After some Sydney bloggers requested free meals in return for a review, popular blogger Fooderati posted some suggestions of ethical guidelines for bloggers (Leong 2012).

> *I think that they're* [food critics] *really important because, you know, chefs*
>
> *talk a lot of shizz and everyone has their own opinion. But they give everyone*
>
> *like a base, or like an outside perspective from someone who doesn't cook for*
>
> *a living, which I think is sometimes really refreshing* (personal
>
> communication, 5 September 2012).

In Sydney, the influence of the *Guide*, as discussed by chefs, demonstrates that online/democratised media will never acquire cultural capital, authority, or permanence in the same way as print media. Celebrity chef culture provides a framework to understand a particular sector of social media and demotic media discourses, and a reason for print media to maintain its relevance. Even so, the economy of cultural and social capital constructed by print media has clear limits – food critics are the key authorities. On online social media, however, the economy of social and cultural capital is more fluid, with capital being produced collectively through mutual participation for a unifying effect on the community.

Twitter and Instagram: New architectures of participation

Collins refers to architectures of participation when he cites several American cooking programs as methods of encouraging American audiences to cook, and therefore eat better (Collins 2012, p. 3). In Australia, the same can be said for the popularity of *MasterChef:* the program has produced several cook books, and hosts 'pop-up' restaurants in Australian capital cities. One episode of *MasterChef* a week is devoted to teaching the contestants and the audience specific cooking techniques, rather than continuing the program's competition in every episode. In addition to this, social media facilitates architectures of participation. Twitter and Instagram are key platforms connecting the global food neighbourhood – including chefs, restaurateurs, and diners – in an unprecedented way, and have created different modes of engagement with food culture on a global scale.

While plenty of people use social media sites for everyday kinds of documentation, a subculture has emerged that concentrates particularly on food. For example, following the opening of much-anticipated restaurant, popular chefs Instagram (verb) their meals. Sydney restaurant Rockpool[72] was relocated to a much bigger and more glamorous venue in late 2013. The restaurant's signature dish, egg net with caviar, became ubiquitous on Instagram for a few months – to the extent that it no longer needed a caption. As free advertising for chefs, Instagram is one of the most effective subcultural knowledge networks – a contemporary variation on word-of-mouth. The uses of Twitter and Instagram differ but both can be considered in terms of consumer participation. Twitter and Instagram affect consumption practices and modulate our perceptions of chefs.

Instagram is free to download onto any device and free to use, although it requires an internet connection. Users take photos with their camera phone and post images directly to the app. The app allows users to include a caption and/or hashtags. Users can follow other users of interest, or pick from a contact list provided by Facebook[73]. Instagram is primarily used on smartphones (though it also has web accessibility); this encourages more personal and intimate photographs. Chefs can photograph scenes in their kitchens or of what they are cooking. Instagram's mobility allows the "performance of backstage access" (Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 139). Such intimate glimpses draw the audience in and make them feel included, as an almost personal acquaintance of the Instagram user they are following. This perception of intimacy can also be appropriated by chefs as in the previous example of Rockpool, highlighting Instagram's role in connecting the food community through participation.

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[72] Rockpool is Neil Perry's flagship restaurant in Sydney. In 2014 it celebrates 25 years.

[73] Facebook, another popular social media site, acquired Instagram in early 2012; the two social media sites incorporate linked usability.

I wrote about Twitter in detail in chapter two, so will briefly explain it in terms of Instagram here, as the two are often used in tandem. Users can opt to link their Instagram images to Facebook and/or Twitter, in addition to the image appearing in their Instagram feed. So, chefs are able to tweet Instagram photos that their followers will see even if their followers do not have an Instagram account. Twitter is a principal social media platform on which chefs can extend their media interactions – in addition to tweeting back to diners individually, they can also share Instagram photos of their work en masse. Cynara Geissler suggests that the contemporary mobile phone (particularly the ubiquitous iPhone) user's "impulse to digitally diarize is powerfully present in many (if not the majority) of our social interactions" (Geissler 2010, para. 4). Mobile phones are "a wearable shareable multimedia data record of events and communication" (Reading, cited in Geissler 2010, para. 5). While the focus of recent research on mobile social media has been on diarising and personal biography (Arthur 2009, Hoskins 2009, Reading 2009, as cited in Geissler 2010), sites such as Instagram and Twitter are significant in building communities in order to share common interests – these communities can be found via popular hashtags like #instafood, #instayum, #nomnomnom, or #food. Instagram also allows users to 'tag' their location, providing information on the location of the photographer. Diners take photos of restaurant food and upload these to Instagram for their friends and followers to see.

Instagram produces symbols of cultural capital: by posting the photo, the diner is displaying his or her involvement in the chef economy. Social media not only facilitates and encourages interaction with food culture, but provides a platform on which to make consumption conspicuous. On Instagram, users are not merely taking photos of chefs' cooking – they are producing an economy of cultural capital. Turner discusses engagement on social media as reflecting "the extent to which the fan's mode of consumption has moved from 'the cult' to the mainstream as increased levels of personalisation and interactivity have

171

become routine components of the processes of consumption in the digital era" (2013, p. 124). Social media interaction bolsters celebrity chef culture; in this case, by putting in place incentives to consume in the form of cultural capital. The number of 'likes' on a post reflects the social capital of the user; the post itself symbolises cultural capital. Both chefs and diners engage in this participatory culture, with chefs benefiting in different ways.

Marshall suggests, "The reading of the 'true' public self through celebrity is now linked to an audience/user pedagogic function of constructing and producing the self, as well as the continuing celebrity effect of producing emulative desire in an audience" (2010, p. 44). The subculture of 'food posts' is acknowledged on Instagram through a proliferation of hashtags; both consumers and chefs encourage emulative desire in their audiences (followers) through their posts and commentary. Celebrity chef culture has produced particular types of food and chefs as commodities, and Instagram interaction demonstrates this commodification through its construction of an economy of cultural capital. Instagram is a form of social participation – taking the photos of food before eating it – but it also works as promotional material for the establishments at which diners eat. Photos can be re-posted or retweeted by chefs or other people interested in the image. Chefs' media profiles acquire a public following; the public's appreciation for their work allows chefs' audiences to promote their work. Instagram and Twitter reach significant audiences with affective images, at the same time creating a sense of community among people with similar interests.

Hashtag food porn: Cultural capital and collective consumption

With the advent of the smartphone, Geissler suggests "It is easy and intuitive – maybe even irresistible – to digitally narrate the story of our lives as they occur" (2010, para. 5). Instagram has an intuitive interface; it is easy to fill in time waiting in a queue or waiting for

friends by scrolling through an Instagram feed. The app also has a romantic or nostalgic[74]

quality – users can edit their images through several different filters, including high-colour

saturation, sepia tones, and black and white: the user can manipulate the image into an

idealised version of its original form. Marwick and boyd argue that celebrity on social media

"necessitates viewing followers as *fans*" (2011, p. 144, original emphasis). Practicing

celebrity on Instagram means maintaining "unequal power differentials" (Marwick & boyd

2011, p. 144) to some degree, and this can be done through posting aspirational images to

encourage emulative desire. Instagram filters (though #nofilter is a popular hashtag in order

to highlight the extraordinariness of what can be captured on Instagram) contribute to an

"aestheticization of everyday life" (Rojek 2001, p. 102).

Within the boundaries of Instagram, aestheticisation can include composition and

object photographed – for example, several posts of intricate-looking dishes can seem more

aspirational than one photo of a big plate of food. Rojek adds, "perception and judgement

regarding beauty and desire become generalized in the course of habitual exchange" (Rojek

2001, p. 102). This habitual exchange on Instagram is folded into the everyday labour of

chefing as a result of celebrity culture. The app is designed to document what might

otherwise be mundane moments in our everyday lives; certainly it is designed to share

spontaneous moments. Geissler notes that with such media, there is "the feeling that every

moment is performed (for digital distribution and consumption) as much as it is lived" (2010,

para. 6). The performance of consumption is evident on Instagram. Jenkins adds, "Each of us

constructs our own personal mythology from bits and fragments of information extracted

from the media flow and transformed into resources through which we make sense of our

everyday lives" (2006, pp. 3-4). On Instagram, personal mythology is constructed through

articulation of taste.

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[74] The name Instagram comes from 'instant' and 'telegram', drawing on the historical use of telegrams to convey exciting or important news (Swisher 2013).

While Instagram allows us to document and share our everyday lives, it is also a platform on which taste is cultivated. "Taste becomes one of the important means by which social distinctions are maintained and class identities are forged." (Jenkins 1992, p. 16). Instagram facilitates different modes of engagement within the cultural capital economy of food culture, and contributes to the changing practices of consumption influenced by celebrity chef culture. Participation on platforms like Twitter and Instagram provide "a new way to conceptualize what is new about consumerism after the advent of electronic media" (Appadurai 1996, p. 66). Electronic media, by way of Instagram and Twitter, facilitate an interactive, participatory form of consumption. Acts of consumption are shared with communities united by mutual interest, and operate as a kind of cultural capital signifying consumers' proximity to food culture, and in many cases, celebrity chef culture.

Talking about Instagram, Yu smiles and suggests it is a tool primarily for "The new upwardly-mobile young professional who's able to afford this stuff [popular, trendy restaurants]" (personal communication, 5 November 2012). He continues:

> *You know, it's a cultural capital that you can be proud of. It's like going to, say, 200 years ago you're going to watch theatre because that's the only form of entertainment. […] The foremost form of entertainment in European society was the theatre. Going to the theatre was a part of the cultural elite. But now, with all the great restaurants around, the culture of eating that has evolved with it – and to be able to eat at great restaurants also tells the world that you are cultured and in the know with this eating culture* (personal communication, 5 November 2012).

His use of the phrase 'in the know' demonstrates the utility of social media as a reliable, fast, and current source of information – diners actively seek information about restaurants in

order to demonstrate and embody a particular kind of cultural capital. That specific knowledges are required adds to the legitimisation of such a culture. This form of participation relies on mutual knowledge of the culture, so that the cultural capital being displayed can be recognised. Users then, are aware of, or actively producing content for a particular audience, something Marwick and boyd refer to as "strategic audiences" (2010, p. 120). Ingham observes:

> *You notice more and more customers are taking photos on their phone. It might not be a review, it's more sort of just… an Instagram thing – 'I'm out and about, and this is what I'm doing.' 'I'm at Bar H. And then I'm… down at Tio's* [a cocktail bar near Bar H]', *or whatever. So it's more* […] *You know where people are all the time* (personal communication, 5 November 2012).

Even if the photographs are not particularly impressive, the location function on Instagram (which is optional) is enough to communicate the cultural capital that is linked to whatever venue the user is visiting (like a new bar or well-known restaurant). Instagram is a simple way to document memories and share them with friends, but it also catalogues a user's taste profile – or what taste profile the user wants to be perceived as having. Scott Lash and John Urry (1994) suggest that cultural objects (in this case, food) circulate as "branded intellectual property" (p. 113). Through this practice of consumption and participation in the chef economy, diners using Instagram can engage with the creative economy of chefing and participate in a broader economy of cultural capital that articulates around social spaces, consumption and the "aestheticization of everyday life" (Rojek 2001, p. 102).

Chefs may have personal uses for social media but it is a powerful platform on which they can extend their professional profiles by documenting their everyday lives to audiences. Yu's co-head chef Hong tweeted, "Lol [laugh out loud] I posted a bowl of broccoli on

Instagram and it has over 80 likes" (25 June 2013). The tweet not only demonstrates the pull of chefs on Instagram – users can 'like' photos posted by chefs to display social capital and to be included – but also demonstrates the chef's awareness of his position as a celebrity chef. While there is a sense of incredulity in his tweet, the chef also acknowledges the role of Instagram in producing cultural and social capital and facilitating practices of celebrity through active engagement. By forming a sense of community among people who enjoy their food, chefs are able to demonstrate their authority and knowledge on a wider scale, outside their restaurants (and away from television). This added layer of participation by the audience and chef reinforces the chef as a figure of authority legitimising food culture. The presence of chefs on social media adds to their authority and effectiveness with a wider audience.

Celebrity chefs use their media profiles to encourage people to think more about what they eat, and have brought food quality to the forefront of dining out. But increasingly, the cultural capital possessed by chefs contributes to changing consumption practices. Instagram contributes to this change, because it is a platform that has cultivated a subculture of sharing food photos, and therefore sharing images representing cultural capital[75]. Fassnidge considers the phenomenon of diners taking photos of the food in his restaurants:

> *I think it's a bit rude. But I don't stop them. There's a lot of people who go, "You can't take photos of the food." Like you paid for it, you do what you want with it. You can take it for a walk if you want, I don't care. Like it's… you paid for it. But I just think, we've spent all this time making something for you, and you've spent half an hour fucking taking a picture of it, and then you write a blog and it probably goes cold.*

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[75] Instagramming meals is particularly common in well-known restaurants headed up by celebrity chefs. At some restaurants it has become so distracting to other diners that photography is banned (Stapinski 2013).

What shits me is the desserts are ice creams or sorbets and they leave them there a long time and they're gone. And I'm like, what a fucking waste of time. Like I've just caned the guy in pastry to get everything ready and right, and then it's… it's defeated the point. And then… now you notice people taking pictures of chefs more. Which is a bit… I sort of just… you can see them trying to take snaps, and you're just like… 'What are you doing'? (personal communication, 8 November 2012)

Resisting the role of celebrity chef, Fassnidge thinks it is silly for diners to want photographs of chefs. As I have discussed previously, chefs' presence in mass media has contributed to the construction of their own cultural capital as celebrity figures. Print and television media have constructed the chef as an authoritative figure legitimising food cultures and discourses. The cultural capital associated with this image of the chef motivates consumption practices in the chef economy: to consume the chef's work – by eating at his or her restaurant, tweeting about it, taking photos of the food – confers this cultural capital to the diner.

Jenkins suggests, "Consumption has become a collective process" (2006, p. 4). Collective consumption can also be cultivated on Instagram as photos of restaurant food are shared and fellow Instagram-ers are implicitly encouraged to consume the same. The latest, trendiest restaurant benefits from free advertising when appealing photographs of their food are uploaded onto social media, sometimes accompanied by positive comments. Gratuitous photographs of food (food that is styled, or indulgent-looking in some way) are sometimes tagged #foodporn. In July 2013 chef Haru Inukai, formerly a chef and owner of a fine dining restaurant, opened a ramen outlet in a food court in Sydney's Chinatown ('Ramen Ikkyu' 2013). This opening had been anticipated for some time, given the chef's professional

pedigree[76]. The food-loving community on social media spread the word by tweeting and posting photos on Instagram. Yu, while on a three month-long trip in Europe, tweeted, "Ramen ikkyu is trending on all my friends feed. Fuck my life [sic]" (4 July 2013). The ubiquitous, enticing ramen photos from Ramen Ikkyu made him disappointed to not be able to visit the venue himself. As well as broadcasting their knowledge of the potential 'next big thing', posting photos of ramen (or whatever trending venue or food item) help users of social media feel part of the community they themselves are constructing.

Figure 1.   Figure 2.
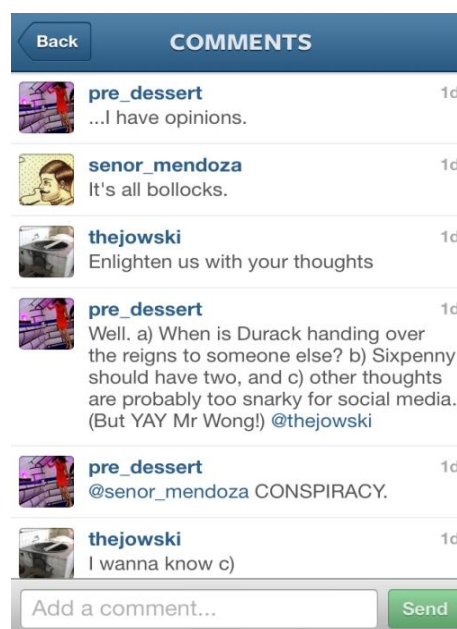
Figures 1 and 2 are part of an Instagram post about the *Good Food Guide* awards night held in September 2013 for the 2014 publication. I posted a photo of that week's *Good Food*[77] with the caption "…I have opinions." The photo attracted several 'likes' and many comments, only some of which I have included in figure 2. This post is an example of the ways Instagram forms 'neighbourhoods' through mutual interests, generates conversations on social media that stem from and influence practices of consumption. In this post specifically,

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[76] Inukai's fine dining restaurant featured ramen during lunch services. Bowls were limited and his ramen had a cult following among the Sydney food community.

[77] Previously *Good Living*.

users commented on the validity of the *Good Food Guide* hats after a particularly controversial awards night in which two restaurants lost their third hats (Hornery 2013). Engagement by users demonstrates the importance of belonging to particular communities, and Instagram makes these communities, and the sense of belonging, visible.

Figure 3.   Figure 4.
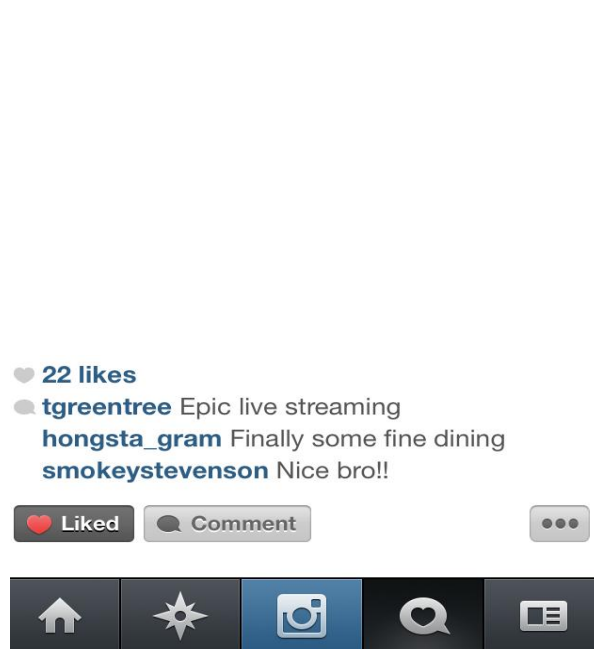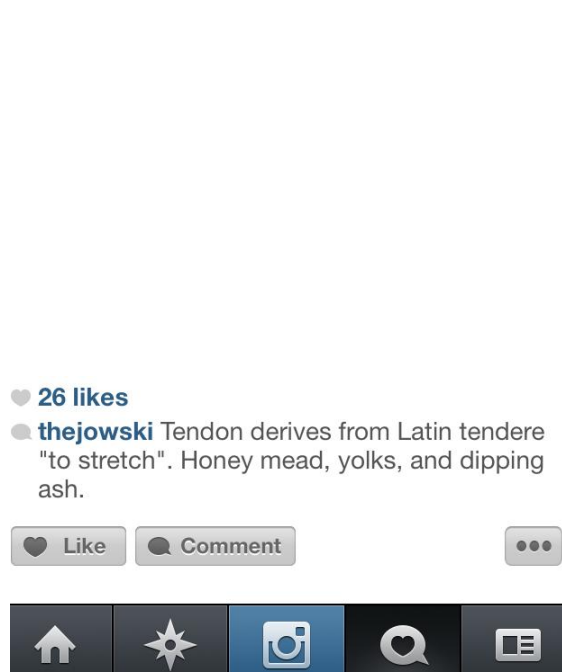

Figure 5.   Figure 6.

Figures 3 to 6 are screenshots of Yu's Instagram account during his European travels in 2013. Yu visited world-renowned Spanish restaurant Mugaritz and Instagrammed the complete degustation – only one of the courses have been included here. Figures 4 and 6 show some of the initial comments he received, all from other chefs. A photo of the menu (figure 3) is posted in order to signal the start of the photo series, and he has also location-tagged the photo (top left corner). This is an example of the display of cultural capital, but as Yu is a chef, it can be seen as part of his own cultural exchange process and education: dining at many different restaurants can, after all, help a chef become better at his job.

The level of cultural capital attached to these images is assigned by Yu's followers, depending on the value they place on dining somewhere like Mugaritz. We see this in the first three comments on the photo – all expressing enthusiasm for Mugaritz and anticipation for their colleague's posts to come. At the same time, Yu is self-presenting cultural capital that comes with the critical acclaim Mugaritz received – three *Michelin* stars and a top ten ranking in the 'World's 50 Best Restaurants' list. Celebrity chef culture is self-reflexively exhibited here, as Yu's post hails a particular audience of the chef economy that is familiar with Mugaritz. Again, we see Instagram being utilised as a sort of 'meeting space' and 'neighbourhood' where like-minded users engage with each other over particular forms of consumption – that is, fine dining. Instagram is a global platform on which the international food community can congregate, participate, and produce intimacy (which I turn to later in the chapter). Such capacity for global and instantaneous engagement is unprecedented; Instagram shows that the global food community actively forges connections and highlights the constant production of cultural and social capital between consumers.

Bloggers often take photos of food and post their own reviews of restaurants. While this is an important sector of the chef economy and food bloggers constitute a significant

aspect of food culture (Rousseau 2012b, p. 9), my focus is primarily on universal platforms that are common among communities. Blogs (short for Weblog), as Jenkins describes, are a form of "personal and subcultural grassroots expression involving summarising and linking to other sites" (Jenkins 2006, p. 226). Blogs are hosted by numerous sites such as Tumblr, WordPress, and Blogspot, to name a few. Twitter and Instagram are mini blogs – they are personalised and link to other sites. The key difference is that rather than having a dispersed number of sites from which to find information, Twitter and Instagram group users in one website[78], with uniform rituals (e.g. hashtags) and interfaces. The uniform nature of communities converging and connecting on Twitter and Instagram and their respective experiences create "neighborhoods", which then "produce contexts and subjects" (Appadurai 1996, p. 187). The contexts produced on social media are communities of food enthusiasts, users who enjoy talking about the latest restaurant or taking photos of food. Mutual interests encourage the community to continue 'sharing'. In this environment, produced by celebrity chef culture, ideas of cultural capital are encouraged and reproduced on social media, in turn promoting collective consumption. Instagram adds a new dimension of engagement to the framework of social and cultural capital established by print media and extends Appadurai's idea of the global neighbourhood – not only are communities of mutual interest being produced, but collective construction and consumption of cultural capital as well. These practices also occur on Twitter through the act of 'live-tweeting'.

Following me, following you: Social media capital

Twitter is an agent for the collective process of consumption, through its 'live-tweeting' and 'trending' functions. 'Live-tweeting' occurs when users tweet summaries of what is happening at a particular event and illustrates the intimacy that is possible on social media.

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[78] Twitter can be accessed from other web applications (known as Twitter clients) such as Tweet Deck or Hoot Suite, but the content remains the same and the interface changes very little.

Audiences can be a part of industry-only events through their Twitter accounts, as the event is live-tweeted. In 2013 the annual *Good Food Guide* awards night was live-tweeted with the hashtag #goodfoodguide; both chefs and media contributed to tweeting the event. On the night of the 2013 awards Fassnidge tweeted, "Here we go into the valley of death!" (2 September 2013). Twitter users within the food community empathised with his trepidation, and responded with messages of encouragement. In order for users to follow the event, tweets are grouped with a hashtag, so that users can search or follow the relevant hashtag in order to stay up-to-date[79]. Below in figure 7 (a screenshot) is an example of how hashtagged tweets (in this case, #goodfoodguide) are grouped together; users can choose to follow the hashtag feed exclusively for bigger events, and key words are also searchable.

Figure 7.

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[79] Sometimes hashtags can differ as they are generated spontaneously by users. Usually, this is rectified by the users themselves (see Burgess & Bruns 2012).

The formation of the neighbourhood is illustrated in this screenshot – users are 'tagged' in tweets (by typing in another user's Twitter name preceded by the @ symbol, known as an @mention), post photos of the event to their Twitter feed, and link to Instagram photos. The bigger the event, the more likely the hashtag will become a trending topic, encouraging more conversations[80]. Popular programs like *MasterChef* are live-tweeted by viewers using the hashtags #masterchef or #masterchefau. At its peak, the program was often a trending topic, thus maintaining chefs' presence in social media. Twitter records trends in real-time; the snowball effect that occurs when users see and respond to tweets about trending topics ensures that Twitter is an authority on the most talked-about topic at any given moment. Twitter is key to the collective process of consumption, which makes it key in the trading of cultural capital in the chef economy.

Jenkins suggests "audiences are gaining greater power and autonomy as they enter into the new knowledge culture" (2002, cited in Deller 2011, p. 217). On social media, users are not necessarily consuming explicit advertising material generated by marketing agencies. As a result of their interest, participation, and knowledge of the industry, Instagram and Twitter users themselves can generate 'trending' topics, driving more users to consume or interact with that same product or person. As Jenkins explains, collective consumption leads to "collective intelligence", which consumers use to inform future consumption (2006, p. 4). Subsequently, "collective intelligence can be seen as an alternative source of media power" (2006, p. 4). Consumers have the power and the means with which to direct their consumption within the social media sphere. Maintaining interest on what is 'trending' creates cultural capital; cultural capital is implicit in users' knowledge of the industry and its

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[80] During the controversial 2010 *Good Food Guide* awards, critics and chefs alike were tweeting their shock at Tetsuya's loss of a third hat, which the restaurant had held for more than a decade. There was also controversy over Sydney fine diner Bilson's losing its third hat (the restaurant has since closed down). See Fassnidge 2010; Knox 2010; Orr 2010; Plane 2010; Rigby 2010. It is also a space in which chefs support and encourage their colleagues (e.g. Fassnidge 2012; Hong 2010). Users share their opinions and engage in different conversations on Twitter, emphasising Twitter's role as a unifying space, or meeting place for the food community.

products. The 'audience' in social media is key to the construction of collective consumption. The audience takes what it knows to be cultural capital and circulates it within the relevant communities of taste, thus producing chefs as commodified objects available for consumption.

Turner notes that with the pervasiveness of celebrity culture comes "the convergence of market strategies – with television, print and the internet, in particular, milking the market opportunities available to them through the production, distribution and marketing of celebrity in one form or another" (2013, p. 91). While this is indeed the case, in the chef economy there are agreed upon ideas of what is desirable and consumers themselves can promote certain products or chefs. This, as Turner describes, is "the consumer securing increased control over the production and distribution of media content" (2010a, p. 127). Chefs capitalise on the emergent cultural capital economy on social media, but it requires them to engage in different labours and develop specific skills. Chefs can utilise their substantial follower numbers for their own advertising – posting photos of their cooking, while the mobile nature of Instagram enables a feeling of intimacy between photographer and 'follower'. Social media is significant in celebrity chef culture because it uses intimacy to alter the para-social relationship between celebrity chef and consumer, creating an environment conducive to collective consumption and bolstering the economy of cultural capital.

Intimate publics on social media

Marwick and boyd argue that interactions with celebrity figures on Twitter "creates a new expectation of intimacy" (2011, p. 156). As the most prominent medium in contemporary social media (Burgess & Bruns 2012, p. 803), Twitter encourages perceptions and experiences of intimacy between diners and chefs, making it significant in the maintenance of

the chef economy and chefs' celebrity capital. While Instagram is a stream of images, Twitter allows users to share what they are thinking or doing in 140 characters. As mentioned earlier, Twitter is a microblog (Deller 2011, p. 217), reflecting the personal thoughts of the user (though many commercial entities have Twitter accounts, too). The key difference between Twitter and blogs (besides the fact that Twitter is a single platform for multitudes of microblogs) is that the platform can also operate as a constant stream of consciousness, or as Ruth Deller describes, "rolling news" (2011, p. 217). Both Deller (2011) and Burgess and Bruns (2012) note Twitter's significance as a news source: Twitter is used for "first-hand reporting of events as they occur" (Burgess & Bruns 2012, p. 801); and "It is *through* the social network that news and information spreads" (Burgess & Bruns 2012, p. 803, original emphasis). However, in the context of the chef economy, Twitter's most important utility is as an "ambient stream" (Burgess & Bruns 2012, p. 802; Hermida 2010). The 'always-on' nature of Twitter encourages users to contribute to the stream, constantly generating content.

Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner (1998) consider institutions of intimacy and critique ideas of what count as public discourse. They suggest that intimacy is publicly mediated: through a separation of 'personal life' from work, or politics, or the public sphere. "Intimate life is the endlessly cited *elsewhere* of political public discourse, a promised haven that distracts citizens from the unequal conditions of their political and economic lives" (1998, p. 553). Twitter's (and Instagram's) ambient stream and immediacy intervenes and produces a constant stream of intimacy. If we want, we can log in to see what our favourite celebrity is thinking, or photos posted of where they have been. Berlant suggests, "intimacy [can act] as a public mode of identification" (1998, p. 283). Intimacy is produced on Twitter when chefs engage with their diners, or share their opinions. The access granted to the private lives of public personalities is significant in the construction of the chef economy because "intimacy builds worlds" (Berlant 1998, p. 282). Adds Rojek, "The notion of presumed

intimacy between strangers is enormously fruitful for understanding modern celebrity culture. We live in an era of para-social relationships" (2012, p. 124) – the pervasiveness of celebrity culture has led to more iterations of relationships, or at least engagement, with celebrities. Social media illuminates how we interact with celebrity and how celebrity figures engage with and practice their celebrity, and alters the para-social relationship. In the case of chefs, it's a practice that privileges presentation of the self (Marshall 2010, p. 35) and the exchange of cultural capital. Both practices serve to enhance celebrity profiles.

Twitter functions as an "always-on, always-in-the-background medium akin to ambient background music" (Crawford 2009, cited in Burgess & Bruns 2012, p. 802). Similar to Instagram, Twitter is also available on smartphones (Deller 2011, p. 244) which compounds the ambient nature of the platform because it is constantly accessible. This allows users to tweet information but also to tweet day-to-day, mundane information that is unrelated to the day's news and current affairs. Letting followers see personal thoughts (albeit edited thoughts) on social media produces "processes of attachment", provoking feelings of intimacy (Berlant 1998, p. 284). Using Twitter in this way allows for intimate or familiar exchanges with people users follow, or their followers. Twitter users can converse with their followers or followees (Burgess & Bruns 2012, p. 803) by using @mentions. The @mention function allows for a direct and instant method of communication, like a mobile phone text message, fostering the idea of intimacy[81]. While perceived intimacy makes celebrity chefs appear more approachable and accessible, the forms of intimacy produced on social media highlight the broader framework of cultural capital in the chef economy – chefs share what they believe their followers want to see, and what will align with the idea of their own persona.

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[81] Private messages can also be sent between users who follow each other, which are not seen on users' main feeds.

Chefs are aware of the power of Twitter as a marketing device. While Twitter is not used by all potential diners, chefs position the social media platform as an important channel of their own self-marketing, acknowledging the platform's global reach. Tania Lewis suggests "broader celebrity …enables [personalities] to move across a range of television formats and other media sites" (Lewis 2010, p. 584). Twitter is an extension of 'other media sites', increasingly gaining traction since its launch in 2006. Chef Analiese Gregory muses, "The world's so much smaller now with the internet and everything. Everyone just wants to show people what they're doing and be connected in some way […] I think Twitter PR is a valid thing" (personal communication, 29 November 2012). In the chef economy, Twitter is significant because it is personalised, and intimacy is structured around cultural capital. For some, it is a form of personal branding[82]. For example, Fassnidge's account is known for being boisterous and straightforward.

After being cast as a judge on the Seven Network's *My Kitchen Rules*, the network assigned Fassnidge someone to keep an eye on his tweets. He jokes that he represents two brands – the culinary brand, epitomised by his restaurants, and, as he puts it, "The leery Irish[man]. A chef's chef" (personal communication, 8 November 2012). The combined media pull of *My Kitchen Rules* and his Twitter account has produced a persona that resonates with his audience, and Fassnidge capitalises on the brand he has created. On Twitter, this brand can be commodified and merchandised (Lewis 2010, p. 580) and chefs become 'living brands' (Lury 2004, cited in Lewis 2010, p. 581). While this phenomenon is not new (Martha Stewart is considered one of the first 'living brands' in Lury 2004, cited in Lewis 2010, p. 580), the ways in which the commodification and merchandising process occurs are extending past print and television media and into social media. Celebrity culture necessitates a shift towards social media; engaging with social media becomes a core part of

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[82] The idea of personal branding can also be linked to or elaborated through Marshall's work on persona. See Marshall 2014 and Barbour & Marshall 2012.

chefs' work in a media-saturated chef economy. Celebrity culture requires chefs to invest in additional labour across diverse contexts. Social media is a key platform on which their additional labours are performed, and on which chefs' celebrity is maintained.

Subcultures of participation and the neighbourhood

Appadurai suggests,

> *Electronic media give a new twist to the environment within which the modern and global often appear as flip sides of the same coin. Always carrying the sense of distance between viewer and event, these media nevertheless compel the transformation of everyday discourse* (1996, p. 3).

On Twitter, users of the same interests (such as eating out, or cooking) can 'find' each other online[83], forming "neighborhoods" (Appadurai 1996, p. 183). These neighbourhoods are not discrete groups[84] but the medium allows connections to occur – these connections are the basis of Appadurai's neighbourhood. Parry comments that Twitter is a space to interact

> *...with people who want to engage with the chefs. It's easier for them* [diners] *and they can talk and ask questions and all that, that's why I like it. And you know, you do get some good, interesting insights into the customers as well, which is like I said, what we like to do. It's about an experience, more than just a meal* (personal communication, 12 September 2013).

Twitter users actively seek out particular information, or people with whom to interact, forming neighbourhoods around similar interests. The types of followers an account attracts

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[83] Twitter regularly suggests accounts to follow based on an analysis of the accounts you are following.

[84] Users can curate 'lists' of other users for their own personal use, based on mutual interest. For example, a user can group journalists they follow on Twitter into a list and name it "journalists". Subsequently, clicking on this list will bring up only the tweets of the accounts in that list.

reflects and defines the user just as much as the accounts followed. In accumulating a list of accounts to follow, Twitter users begin to construct their Twitter identity, and will attract other like-minded followers[85]. Within these neighbourhoods operate different economies – economies of knowledge, or consumption – that frame celebrity chef culture.

Neighbourhoods on Twitter are formed actively – Twitter gives users space for a short biography on their home page in order for other users to decide if they would like to follow. As Deller notes, there is a certain degree of "performance" on Twitter (2011, p. 236) – tweets are a conscious self-representation; the people you follow are a reflection of your interests and thus potentially a form of cultural and social capital[86]. An account's followees can be considered as a form of "self-presentation" (Marshall 2010, p. 35); who you follow can count just as much as your tweets – this is also the case on Instagram[87]. The self-representation of the tweeter is significant to the social capital of the Twitter account. Twitter is a platform that allows the user to present a particular version of himself or herself to the world online. Twitter users' act of following is another form of self-representation incorporated into their cultivation of taste and cultural capital – Twitter 'followees' reflect a follower's interests. In order to be a successful chef in the ever-growing media landscape of the chef economy, chefs themselves must engage in participatory practices in social media.

Someone'll say something to you and you can start an argument with them just

for fun. And people like to see all this, you know what I mean? […] *customers*

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[85] For example, the majority of my Twitter followers are chefs and other food professionals.

[86] Twitter followers can be purchased in order to make an account look popular and influential. Generally, these fake followers are spam accounts. Fake followers are typically sold in batches of 1000 to one million, averaging at $18 per thousand followers (Perlroth, 2013). To a regular Twitter user, fake followers are easy to spot by considering the number of tweets, number of accounts being followed, and followers, in proportion. While some accounts are an anomaly (for example, former US first lady Hillary Clinton amassed more than 600 000 followers after only seven tweets), Twitter attempts to address this by verifying the accounts of celebrities and public figures.

[87] Instagram has a tab that shows what images users you follow have 'liked'. In this way, taste is also displayed through interaction on Instagram.

read this and know a little bit more about the chef. It's [the chef] *not some guy you never see. Yeah, he does this and he likes to do this and you can actually see him out sourcing stuff or, we show our dishes, like a whole   pig – we take a photo and put it on Twitter. It's great for PR. You can't just sit in your restaurant and wait for people to come, you've gotta always push them in* (Fassnidge, personal communication, 17 May 2011).

Fassnidge acknowledges that there is media interest in chefs, and the ways the media produces the chef as a figure of interest. Lewis's term "lifestyle expert" (Lewis 2010, p. 580) – figures of expertise offering advice in the context of the family home – is fitting to consider the emergence of celebrity chef cook books, for example, but chefs' expertise is necessarily extended beyond the domestic realm via social media. Social media provides an avenue through which chefs present their personas and interests, with the aim to engage with potential customers.

Appadurai's neighbourhood gives perspective to exactly how Twitter and Instagram users simultaneously participate in and cultivate taste communities: "It is the imagination, in its collective forms, that creates ideas of neighbourhood" (Appadurai 1996, p. 7). Posts about food, chefs, and restaurants lead like-minded users to follow each other, making up their Twitter/Instagram "neighbourhood". Following other food-oriented users contributes to the collective formation of the food "neighbourhood", or taste community. Twitter and Instagram produce the globalised food community by facilitating different modes of engagement on a globalised platform – food enthusiasts living in Sydney can interact with food enthusiasts living in New York City; a chef in London can see what a chef is cooking in Copenhagen. Social media has changed the industry in its role as the binding agent of a diverse and global community, a community to which Sydney contributes substantially.

On social media, we can see "the branded lifestyle expert [as] a product of the growing and insidious convergence of information and consumption" (Lewis 2010, p. 596). The nature of the ways we consume are changing constantly on social media, allowing consumers more access to producers, cultivating different ways of imagining intimacy and the public sphere. Chefs contribute to this by tweeting about their work and Instagramming personal moments. Jenkins argues, "Convergence occurs within the brains of individual consumers and through their social interactions with others" (2002, p. 3). To an extent, consumers dictate what is to be consumed – in the chef economy this can include food, the dining experience, cultural capital, or the chefs and their lives.

To consider the chef economy in the context of social media produces social media users and diners as "active producers and manipulators of meanings" and as "spectators who transform the experience of [consumption] into a rich and complex participatory culture" (Jenkins 1992, p. 23). While Jenkins speaks specifically of television viewing, the same way of thinking about participatory culture can be applied to dining out. The participatory culture of dining out can be seen on Twitter and Instagram as diners tweet about and post photos of the meals on social media. This is not only to connect with like-minded social media users, but chefs as well. Social media mediates the labour of chefs, producing a requirement and cycle of particular cultural capital online. Tweeting or Instagramming particular items or at particular locations (e.g. a new restaurant, or an exciting meal) endows a user with cultural capital, at the same time compelling others to consume the same.

Chefs become personalities on social media as a result of the cultural capital constructed for them by food critics in the print media. Social media in the chef economy relies on the framework provided by print media – the two platforms work in tandem to produce the chef economy. While social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram

operate outside and independent of print media, the content and economy of cultural capital that exists on social media is a product of the print media consumed. Diners read restaurant reviews, watch TV programs such as *MasterChef* and seek out chefs to follow and connect with on Twitter. Fassnidge encounters plenty of diners who are eager to meet him after seeing him online or on television:

> *It's a bit weird, because you know them as a little picture* [display photo on Twitter profile]. *And a lot of times it's not even a face. And, they're like, 'Hi I'm Sally62,' or something, and you're like, 'Who the fuck is Sally62?'*
>
> *They're like, 'Twitter!' and you're like, 'Oh ok, nice to meet you.' And a lot of the time, you expect, like someone will be talking to you... like we've met people who tweet all the time about food, and you're like, this person knows a lot, and you've got a picture of them in your head. And then you meet them and you're like, 'Oh my god. Proper loon.'* (personal communication, 17 May 2011)

Diners who seek out chefs to say hello can be considered fans of the chef. Jenkins argues, "To speak as a fan is to accept what has been labelled a subordinated position within the cultural hierarchy […]. Yet it is also to speak from a position of collective identity, to forge an alliance with a community of others in defence of tastes which, as a result, cannot be read as totally aberrant or idiosyncratic" (1992, p. 23). Jenkins notes the lower position of fans in the "cultural hierarchy", in which chefs occupy higher positions (and food critics higher still). While Twitter and Instagram open up more opportunities for fans to interact with celebrities, "it does not equalize their status" (Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 156). But the chef economy is not a top-down hierarchical conception; rather, social media shows it to be a cyclic economy that relies on the consumption and production of cultural capital. While diners may be

considered fans due to their admiration of chefs' work, they are also participants and therefore party to cultural shifts within the industry.

The participatory culture of the chef economy relies on "convergence culture" (Jenkins 2006, p. 2). Through various media and its consumption through participatory culture and collective intelligence, it becomes necessary for chefs' labour to adapt in response to media demands. Twitter and Instagram take the concept of 'word-of-mouth' and extend it beyond an individual's personal circles. Social media users actively make connections through the act of 'following' other users on different platforms. As a result, users have access to what amounts to a database of information on their topics of interest from all around the world – in the case of the chef economy, international chefs, restaurants, and food critics. This is a fundamental change that has occurred in the industry – bringing the global community of chefs closer to each other and to their diners in an environment of imagined intimacy on social media. Sydney chefs and diners are a part of this global community.

Twitter and Instagram are paramount in the maintenance of a global chef community. In a globalised world, these sites provide locality; an anchor for the wide-reaching and wide-ranging participants of food culture. Appadurai argues, "locality [is] a phenomenological property of social life, a structure of feeling that is produced by particular forms of intentional activity and that yields particular sorts of material effects" (2006, p. 182). By providing platforms for participants of the chef economy to come together with constant access to the most current and important information (determined by participants), social media – in particular Twitter and Instagram – has irrevocably changed practices of consumption in food culture.

Conclusion

"The proliferation of blogging sites and social network platforms supports the accumulation of fame in ways that the publicity seekers of yore could scarcely imagine" (Rojek 2012, p. 11). With the emergence of celebrity chef culture, practices of consumption are continuously changing. This is due to the popularity and ubiquity of online social media, and in the case of the chef economy, Twitter and Instagram. Social media provides locality for the chef economy, and more importantly, gives the Sydney industry the opportunity to situate itself in the context of a global chef community. It allows chefs to share their work with diners and create particular personas for themselves. By cultivating a sense of intimacy with their followers through engaging in collectively produced cultural and social capital, chefs are able to springboard from the kitchen and into the mainstream through the use of social media and its ambient qualities. As Marshall suggests, "celebrity culture articulates a way of thinking about individuality and producing the individual self through the public world" (2010, p. 46). Social media places chefs in the spotlight, but also maintains the constant presence of chefs in our media consumption. In light of social media and convergence culture, Jenkins asserts:

> *If old consumers were assumed to be passive, the new consumers are active. If old consumers were predictable and stayed where you told them to stay, then new consumers are migratory, showing a declining loyalty to networks or media. If old consumers were isolated individuals, the new consumers are more socially connected. If the work of media consumers was once silent and invisible, the new consumers are now noisy and public* (2006, p. 19).

A key characteristic in the chef economy is its participatory nature – in consumption, in production of information, and in the process of seeking information. Participants of the chef economy actively seek to identify with food culture, consequently producing a

community *through* convergence culture. Our consumption of social media is incorporated into our consumption of television and print media. This is illustrated through the function of Instagram photos as part of collective consumption, and the ambient nature of Twitter and trending topics which often feature popular analysis of television and print media.

Chefs in the chef economy participate in convergence culture; their day-to-day labours have changed significantly from previous generations of chefs. The industry has evolved in response to media saturation that comes with social media – on social media, chefs produce more than food, they are part of producing cultural capital. Social media is also integral in facilitating Sydney chefs' (and diners') participation in the global community of food and restaurant subcultures. Appadurai (1996) considers changes in the global cultural economy and proposes the idea of different 'scapes' to "stress different streams or flows along which cultural material may be seen to be moving across national boundaries" (p. 46). Twitter and Instagram allow information to flow and people to bond across national boundaries – in this case, people united by a common interest in chefs and food. The role of chefs has been elevated to one requiring authority and specialised knowledges; another level of such knowledge comes from an understanding of how the media works – including mainstream print, television and social media. On Twitter and Instagram we see chefs becoming commodities in Appadurai's "global cultural flow" (1996, p. 46), based on the many ways we can be connected, usually on something as small and simple as a mobile phone. Such an intimate device facilitates a feeling of personal connection – when social media users tweet at or post Instagram photos of chefs' food (and tag the chef in the photos), there is a sense of community and inclusion being fostered. More than just enacting fandom, diners who use social media contribute to building the chef's profile and legitimising their work through a certain form of appreciation that is produced on social media. Celebrity culture allows (and requires) this interaction to be maintained.

Chefs are expected to take on different forms of labour (apart from cooking) in order to be considered successful. These labours, along with exposure to the mainstream, produce a celebrity chef. Class mobility is a consequence of understanding the chef through theories of celebrity, and ultimately changes the landscape of the hospitality industry in significant ways. In the next chapter, I consider the class mobility that has resulted from the emergence of celebrity chef culture.

When I learnt at Raymond Blanc, it was about learning a career. And learning it properly. There was no shortcut. Now they want to [work] *a year, and then go on telly.* […] *It's changed. People's goals have changed; they don't want to be just a great chef, they want to be a fucking good chef and then go sell fucking frypans somewhere on telly.* […]

It's evolved into something else. It's like instead of evolving into a man, they're growing wings and suddenly going off someplace else. – Colin Fassnidge, personal communication, 8 November 2012

Chapter six

The chef economy: Class mobility and labour

Chefs' constant presence in the media across the last decade has significantly changed the industry, both in the way it operates and the ways it is perceived. In this chapter, I consider how chefs' labour has changed significantly, affecting ideas of class and particular aspects of the industry. My analysis responds to research interviews with chefs and shows how class is reconfigured through the labours of chefs. As I have suggested in previous chapters, the media construct chefs as figures with cultural capital. The capital accumulated by chefs has necessitated changes in labour, most significantly the change from exclusively manual labour to intellectual labours ranging from media management to writing cook books. The recent emphasis and expectation of intellectual labour from chefs comes with class mobility (Bourdieu 1984, p. 127; Skeggs 2004, p. 47). In order to develop theoretical tools

that contextualise and unpack these changes, this chapter considers the labours of chefing in terms of Bourdieu's ideas of class mobility (1984) and Skeggs' work in *Class, Self, Culture* (2004). Bourdieu and Skeggs provide the framework to show the ways that chefs' labours are making class.

Skeggs' work highlights the understandings of value that are constructed within the chef economy. Changing ideas of celebrity can be seen through examining chefs' labours using Turner's *Understanding Celebrity* (2004, 2013) and Lewis's work on celebrity intellectuals and lifestyle experts (2010, see also 2001 and 2008). Understanding chefs' work through these theorists illuminates the process of change the industry has undergone – from valuing the manual labour of cooking and other physical work required when working with food, to the intellectual labour of writing recipes, being able to communicate in print, television, and social media, and in some cases, intellectualising and branding the international chef community in different ways.

In previous chapters, I have written about the ways chefs have been commodified and represented as legitimising figures of dining and food culture. Not only are chefs commodified, but their work is also commodified, particularly by food critics and through rating systems like hats, stars, and rankings. This commodification of chefs and their work produces different ideas of value: Bourdieu's ideas of cultural and symbolic capital (1984) highlight the extent to which the chef economy relies on reproduced and reinforced ideas of cultural capital among chefs and their diners. With chefs' commodification comes social and class mobility. Skeggs argues that there is a shifting emphasis on 'culture' as a "source of economic value" (2004, p. 174) and emphasises the importance of "relationships that enable exchange" (2004, p. 3). In the chef economy, the power relations between chefs and the media are integral in the representation of chefs, and consequently influence the degree of

their mobility and success. This chapter considers the class and social mobility of chefs as a result of the ways their work is represented in popular media and food criticism.

Towards intellectual labour

The title of 'chef' may bring to mind a man in chefs' whites, standing in a kitchen. Among some of the industry's elite, chefs are moving away from the kitchen and onto our television screens, into our cook books, and in some cases, onto the stage. The MAD symposium is held annually in Copenhagen, Denmark – an initiative of René Redzepi. Since its inaugural session in 2011, chefs and food media from around the world gather to hear their peers speak on food: on ingredients, sustainability and ways of eating, among others. For "insiders only" (Savill 2012, para. 3), it is akin to an academic conference, with speakers given the stage along with a projector screen in order to illustrate – and give a certain kind of authority to – what they have to say. While television appearances aim to appeal to a general audience, the MAD symposium attempts to intellectualise the work of chefs for other chefs; the core audience consists of chefs and food journalists who understand chefing as something beyond the kitchen. The international standing of the MAD symposium is evidence of a major cultural shift within the chef industry; this section examines the consequences of this shift in terms of class and cultural capital as a result of the context of celebrity culture.

Named for the Danish word for 'food', the symposium is reflective of the constantly evolving role of chefs in public life. Redzepi writes:

> *When I turned fifteen, I left school having failed to make the minimum grade. With little direction I enlisted at the neighbourhood culinary school. Here the academic demands were less rigorous. For instance, one of the more challenging questions on my final exam was to name 'soft-boiled egg' in*

several languages (for the record, I came up with three and passed). Kitchen work at that time was considered menial labour; perhaps if a cook became skilled enough he might be called a craftsman, but he would never be valued for his contribution in the same way as a lawyer or an architect is. We were merely the ones that fed them.

Nineteen years later, I'm still a chef, but the public perspective of our profession is very different. No longer are we thought of as simple labourers chopping carrots in sweaty, dangerous kitchens, never seeing the light of day. The traditional distinctions that define and dictate what we do and our place in society have become blurred. We chefs now have responsibilities that transcend our knife skills.

Chefs have a new opportunity – and perhaps even an obligation – to inform the public about what is good to eat, and why. But we ourselves need to learn much more about issues that are critical to our world: culinary history, native flora, the relationship between food and food supply systems, sustainability and the social significance of how we eat (Redzepi 2011, para. 2-3, 6).

Redzepi's statements highlight the changes that have occurred in the contemporary culture of chefing. Redzepi highlights the shift from "menial labour" to having particular responsibilities. He argues that chefs possess critical skills and knowledges, enabling them to offer more enduring contributions to the world than meals at restaurants. Chefs' knowledges lead them to being "valued" for contributions produced from different labours (Skeggs 2004, p. 62; Bourdieu 1984, p. 247) such as the communication of food knowledge and commentary on the social implications of what and how people eat.

Chefs, along with their media commentators, are aware of the ways their work is changing. While not all chefs may feel the need to stretch beyond providing a meal for customers, some chefs – particularly in the group of high achieving, media acclaimed subset I have discussed in this thesis – embrace these new roles both among their peers and through the media. The labours of the chef outside the kitchen contribute to boosting and enriching the credibility and success of the chef economy; for example, through appearances on the popular television program, *MasterChef Australia*. On *MasterChef*, chefs become ambassadors of the industry and encourage viewers to be more discerning about what they eat. As chefs extend their work outside the kitchen, the culture of food appreciation extends through different discourses and labours. In the previous chapter, I examined the different ways social media contributes to forming the global community of chefs. I argued that social media should be considered a global platform on which Appadurai's neighbourhoods are formed and maintained. Chefs make use of their social media profiles not only through engagement with their diners, but also through engagement with other chefs, sharing their knowledges and trading tips on produce or techniques. Martin tells me,

> *I must say Twitter's played a big part in* [connecting the chef community]*! Definitely. Like I didn't know Colin* [Fassnidge] *that well before Twitter. But definitely, social media has made a big difference in the last couple of years. With everyone connecting a lot more.*
>
> […] *Definitely it's more instant, it brings people together a lot more. I think* [so] *anyway. Well that's what I've noticed. A lot of people I wouldn't have known at all* [if not for Twitter] (personal communication, 14 May 2011).

As well as bringing chefs together, social media assists chefs in their daily labour of service preparation and cooking, with Fassnidge explaining that social media is

a good way to find ingredients, cos I talk to some foragers and [ask] *can you find me this? And that night they can be at the door. Like, it opens up a whole world. Like, if I want to find stuff or ingredients,* […] *where would I get this, how would you cook that? I just go to Twitter – within two minutes, it's there. I don't have to go onto the Internet or* [use] *encyclopaedias – it's there. And someone's already used it, and has saved me a whole day of research. Recently I was looking for wild garlic, to buy it. And a guy told me where to find it in a park. I now have it on the menu and I get it for free* (personal communication, 17 May 2011).

Social media has become integrated into the working lives of chefs, in some cases forming a part of their daily labour. Chefs' involvement with social media calls them to perform a kind of celebrity culture. Social media connections between chefs form a foundation for the global community of chefs, but also a platform from which chefs can explore ways of understanding and enacting particular intellectual, non-manual labours. These include labours of self-promotion, marketing, and also sharing new knowledges about the food chefs work with and the businesses chefs run. The cultural and social capital acquired on social media (in terms of the number of followers) reinforces and legitimises a chefs' standing in the chef and food community. Chefs are reconceptualising their own work in newly recognised positions of authority and as a result, changing understandings of what it means to be a 'celebrity' chef. In the next section, I examine how new positions of authority are constructed through an emphasis on intellectual labour in the MAD symposium, and how class is articulated in this event.

MAD food symposium

Bourdieu suggests that class mobility is closely connected to education (1984, p. 127). The more education one can access, the more socially mobile, because education enables qualifications for more jobs. Class takes into account "social structure resulting from the new relationship between qualifications and jobs" and education has become a key marker of the middle classes (Bourdieu 1984, p. 127). While chefs are not clamouring to enter educational institutions, the industry has come to highly value particular knowledges and the articulation of knowledges, resulting in a knowledge economy (Bullen, Fahey & Kenway 2006, p. 53) in the chef economy. These skills are emphasised and encouraged by food media, with events like MAD symposium encouraging celebrity chefs to share knowledges, while at the same time cultivating an audience that consumes celebrity chefs and their knowledges. People who are moving into the industry too increasingly come with tertiary education:

> *These days, like at Quay for instance, we have like, four chefs that have left university to become chefs. You know, as a* choice. *More people that have like… that are educated, have done degrees, that are doing it as a second career because they've realised the passion – all of these sorts of things* (Gregory, personal communication, 29 November 2012).

A career as a chef has increasingly moved away from being seen as something one does "because you can't do anything else" (Gregory, personal communication, 29 November 2012). Ingham argues cooking has always required a certain level of creativity:

> *Oh I think it's always been a creative role. Definitely. But now you've gotta be almost an entrepreneur, a businessman, everything at once. Media personality – the role has grown. Before, you were locked away in the back of the kitchen, and now everyone wants to see you, see who they* [the chefs] *are. It has*

changed a lot, that's for sure. I remember when I first started, no one really

wanted to be a chef. You know, my parents were like, 'Why would you want to

be a chef?' And they tried to talk me out of it (personal communication, 5

November 2012).

While media has played a part in this shift in perception, chefs contribute to the class

mobility that can be effected through their work by developing certain discourses within the

industry. MAD symposium, for example, is less about cooking skills and more about

inspiration in the kitchen, and pushing boundaries (MAD symposium n.d.). Food events such

as MAD produce and perpetuate a discourse which privileges intellectual labour, such as

communicating information and knowledge, over the manual labour of cooking. The middle

class can also be conceptualised through the "expression of 'taste'" (Skeggs 2004, p. 37);

among chefs, the cultivation of taste can be seen through intellectual labours of

communicating particular ideas and knowledges. Gregory joined the brigade at Bras, a highly

acclaimed three-Michelin-star fine diner in Laguiole, France, in 2013. She talks about the

contributions of intellectual labour and its effect on the manual labour of cooking, realised on

her first visit to MAD:

It was better because there was no cooking. And actually, you know, if you're

going to see Wiley Dufresne from WD50 [Michelin-starred restaurant in New

York City] *and you see him make um, you know, the fried hollandaise or*

something, yeah – you'll see him make one of his signature dishes. But if you hear

him talk for an hour about why he started his restaurant, how hard it was, why

they chose to do molecular [gastronomy] *and all of this, you learn so much more*

about it than just seeing him make one dish (personal communication, 29

November 2012).

Gregory's comment – "It was better because there was no cooking" – emphasises the value of what was learnt through intellectual labour rather than physical. The MAD symposium in Copenhagen is a significant event in the chef world. Gregory attended MAD in 2012 and describes it as one of the best events she's been to.

> *I read* [about] *it but before they had the first one they just had a single-page text document* [of information about the symposium] *and it sounded a bit too, like, highbrow, like it was a symposium about the philosophy* [of food/cooking]*, blah blah blah. I don't like things that sort of make cooking too wanky and sort of take it away from what it actually is* (personal communication, 29 November 2012).

Gregory's description of the concept of "philosophy" being "too highbrow" indicates that she finds an intrinsic value in what being a chef "actually is" – that is, the manual work of cooking and working with good food. Gregory's use of the term "wanky" is an acknowledgment that sometimes certain chefs can be perceived as unnecessarily pretentious, due to their emphasis on high quality (often expensive) produce and that some chefs like to develop different techniques in cooking rather than cook simple, familiar food.

Heston Blumenthal is renowned for his quirky concoctions that experiment with unusual textures and flavours, for example. My visit to his world-renowned restaurant, The Fat Duck[88], in 2012 involved two courses that arrived smoking with liquid nitrogen. One course, 'Sounds of the Sea', required us to listen to tracks on an iPod playing sounds of the sea. Gregory acknowledges that flourishes such as those employed by Blumenthal can seem alienating and pretentious, preferring to stay as grounded as possible while still making good food. Gregory's reluctance to equate her work with something "wanky" or to something that

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[88] The Fat Duck is located in Bray, in the UK.

could be considered unfavourably "highbrow" in contemporary terms underscores the cultural and class shift that has taken place in chefing. Skeggs argues that "some cultural characteristics fix some groups and enable others to be mobile" (2004, p. 1), emphasising that some groups have better access to particular tools and ways of being than others (p. 60). The group of chefs I write about enjoy positive media coverage and encouragement to engage with the media as a result of their celebrity status, compelling them to learn the different ways they can use the media to advance their own careers.

Engagement with the media and other chefs who enjoy the same standing requires chefs to invest in diverse labours in order to maintain their status in the industry. This is where class mobility occurs: from being seen as merely a labourer in the kitchen, to being a chef who has more than cooking to contribute. Celebrity culture among chefs produces class and social mobility. Skeggs emphasises that "it is not the object of exchange but rather the relationships that enable exchange (hence power) that are important" (2004, p. 3). Chefs' relationships with the media enable them to be represented in a position of authority and allow class and social mobility. Their changing labours, as a result of celebrity culture, enable these relationships with the media to form.

Gregory tells me about her move from cooking in hotels to restaurants:

> *I'm not a hotel chef. It's like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, or something like that, it just doesn't fit.* […] *I came to Sydney and ate at Bentley and Marque and I was just blown away by the food scene. I was like wow* […] *it's just such a different level* (personal communication, 5 September 2012).

For Gregory, there is a clear difference between cooking in a hotel and cooking in a restaurant – certainly a restaurant that prides itself on reputation, as do Bentley and Marque[89]. Her description of the food as being on "a different level" also points towards qualitative difference between hotels and restaurants, in terms of the work and food produced. "A bit of it is like the quality of the food," she explains, "And the number of covers [the term used for number of diners] you do and things like that" (personal communication, 5 September 2012). The quality of the food, the ability to pick and choose produce, as well as the time and capacity a chef has to cook for a limited number of people contribute to the class mobility of chefs' work. For example, the kind of chefing in which Gregory has been trained does not involve mass production. It is a style of cooking that requires a high level of attention to detail and the luxury of time to refine what is produced.

While still manual labour, the additional expectation of creativity and pride required from chefs enables class mobility. While class mobility can occur through relations formed, class is also articulated through taste: "choosing according to one's tastes is a matter of identifying goods that are objectively attuned to one's position" (Bourdieu 1984, p. 229). Gregory's preference for working in fine dining is the articulation of her own class position; her career is cultivated from more work in fine dining which she distances from the perception of mundane manual labour in hotels; that is, from working class to the intellectual middle class. The luxury and exclusiveness associated with fine dining reflects that cultural capital onto chefs.

The type of cultural capital articulated by celebrity chefs is contingent on their engagement in diverse labours. A key part of chefs' labour is creativity – chefs are often rewarded by food critics for being exploratory and experimental (e.g. Durack & Savill 2010,

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[89] Bentley and Marque are two highly acclaimed, hatted restaurants in the Sydney CBD and trendy, gentrified suburb Surry Hills, respectively.

2011, Durack 2013a, 2013b). Chefs' creativity is important in cultivating their cultural capital with food critics, and in turn, their standing within the restaurant industry. Whether or not chefs are successful depends on the economy in which they work – this economy is composed of food critics and diners aware of their own construction of taste. A chef's reputation is increasingly dependent on creative labour as much as manual labour, positioning them as a part of the creative industries.

The creative industries are a field of inquiry which has been understood in terms of "the creative nature of inputs and the intellectual property nature of outputs" (Potts, Cunningham, Hartley & Ormerod 2008, p. 167). Potts *et al.* (2008) redefine the term to include consideration of "complex social networks" (p. 167), arguing that products in creative industries are socially produced and consumed, and as such, the social network in which such industries operate are key to defining and maintaining them (p. 171).

The success of celebrity chefs is contingent on talent and skill, but, as outlined in previous chapters, food criticism and popular media are important in constructing the celebrity chef as an authoritative figure. Chefs, as in Potts *et al.*'s (2008) definition of creative industries, work in an environment that is "essentially constituted by complex social networks" (p. 169) of media, critics, and consumers' own social networks. Specifically, Potts *et al.* argue, "The creative industries are the set of economic activities that involve the creation and maintenance of social networks and the generation of value through production and consumption of network-valorized choices in these networks" (2008, p. 174). While the goods produced by chefs result in economic gain, the added factors of social and cultural capital that come with consuming chefs' products emphasises the social networks operating in the creative industry of chefs. Potts *et al.* (2008) use an analytical foundation of market economy in order to take the significance of social networks into account (p. 169), and thus

lean towards an economic model rather than an industry model, which they argue is a derived concept and less stable (p. 168). The market economy perspective emphasises the importance the "economics of networks" (2008, p. 171). Increasingly, chefs' work shifts towards this model of labour in the creative industries and consciously engages with the idea of social networks, in particular between chefs, at events like MAD symposium.

Gregory is one of the few Australians who have attended the MAD symposium. It is notoriously difficult to purchase tickets and is pitched mainly to people working in the industry, as well as some media.

> [I]*t's all organised by chefs and people who work in restaurants – so it's like making cooking more rock'n'roll if that makes sense? So it's like, um, chef conference meets music festival, if that makes sense? So you know, it's in the field and middle of the harbour and there's long grass and everyone's using port-a-loos and stuff like that.*

> [...] *And like all of the barriers between the levels of chef are broken down. If I was an apprentice, like if you were really serious about cooking I would say really definitely go. Because you go there and there's like* [Ferran] *Adrià's just sitting next to you, and there's Alex Atala*[90] *and there's all of these guys around. And like there's not a lot of the public there annoying them and asking for photos so everyone's really relaxed and you can just go and talk to them and like, ask them questions.*

> *It's just incredibly inspiring. Really inspiring. So they just find people with amazing stories and they just tell them to you. And I was just like, how is this*

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[90] Adrià and Atala are both world renowned chefs, working in Spain and Brazil respectively. Adrià's restaurant El Bulli was ranked first in the San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best' five times from 2002. The restaurant closed in 2011 but will reopen as a 'creativity centre' in 2014 ('El Bulli, 'world's best restaurant', closes' 2011).

going to be a food festival with no cooking? That's really weird, like I want to see their recipes and learn their tricks and their secrets, you know? […] which is what most food festivals are like (personal communication, 29 November 2012).

Gregory uses comparisons to music festivals to describe the MAD symposium, drawing parallels to creative labour. She describes the dynamic environment as similar to music festivals, rubbing shoulders with a community of international chefs in a laidback outdoor setting. The shift to intellectual labour is emphasised again when Gregory comments that it seemed surprising at first that there were no cooking demonstrations at a chef symposium. The emphasis was on philosophy of cooking and oral communication of knowledge. That she calls the symposium "really inspiring" and believes that anyone who is "serious" about cooking should go indicates that the cultural changes occurring in the chefing industry will influence the industry in the long term. Her acknowledgement of the hierarchy of chefs also gestures towards a universal, even institutionalised structure of the industry – but the sharing of knowledge and skills at MAD is important for the industry as a whole.

The quarterly food journal *Lucky Peach*, which was involved with putting together the 2013 symposium program, published a "mini-magazine" highlighting a selection of presentations at MAD: "MAD asks the insular restaurant world to engage with broader concerns, to think beyond dinner service" (Ying 2013, p. 1). The chef community's self-aware cultural shift makes MAD an event that encourages significant contributions to the evolution and class mobility of the industry, seen most clearly in the shift in labour. Skeggs argues that "class is being constituted through the use of *culture as a property* and/or as a *spatialized relation*" (Featherstone 1991; Lury 1997; Savage *et al*. 1992; Strathern 1992, cited in Skeggs 2004, p. 15, original emphasis). Chef culture is explored in cultural events

such as MAD; at MAD, chefs produce themselves as intellectuals on food, eating, and cooking. In their changing practice of labour, chefs move from the working class to being part of the middle class – which can be defined as being constituted in terms of education, and by being *outside of* the "urban poor…made homogenous through the concept of working class" (Finch 1993, cited in Skeggs 2004, p. 18). In chef culture particularly, labour is increasingly focused on creativity.

The creative industries have been somewhat ambiguously defined because of field overlaps and competing definitions (Markusen, Wassall, DeNatale, Cohen 2008; Potts *et al*. 2008). The debates about the creative industries are broad (Caves 2000; Potts *et al*. 2008); however, the creative industries are acknowledged to contribute significantly to the knowledge economy (Bullen, Robb & Kenway 2004, p. 12) which, in turn, converts knowledge to commodity (Bullen, Robb & Kenway 2004, p. 3). For chefs, their specialised knowledges operate as cultural capital and enable class mobility. Chefs use their creative work with food to communicate knowledges about better eating and sustainability (Adrià, Blumenthal, Keller & McGee 2006; Bittman 2011; Bruni 2011; Durrant 2010; Redzepi 2011, 2013b) and in this way they continue to contribute to the knowledge economy. A focus on the creative industries allows us to consider labour that is self-identified as creative; as Bourdieu argues, self-classification is important in class articulation (1989, cited in Skeggs 2004, p. 18; Bourdieu 1984, p. 229). Chefs' creativity and their creative work operate as class signifiers – their intellectual labours produce a shift to middle class status, though they still perform manual labour. Increasingly, however, successful and acclaimed chefs produced by celebrity culture within the food industry are becoming less involved in the day-to-day labour. Parry echoes the sentiments of many of the chefs in this study when he says:

I don't cook that much at the moment, when someone's off I have to cook. […]
Cos I don't have anything against doing that, but I feel that having done that
for a long period of time that I still… I think there's so much more to running a
restaurant, and there's so much more that I … I don't want my whole life to be
defined by what I do in the kitchen. […] I think there's so much opportunity,
it's so much easier to move around (personal communication, 27 November
2013).

Parry's many years in the kitchen has allowed him to gradually move away from the
manual labour of cooking, and invest more time in the creative and intellectual labour of
running a restaurant. At the time of interviewing Parry was in the process of enrolling for
tertiary study, commenting that he considered pursuing higher education as "unfinished
business" and to "prove to myself that I wasn't silly" (personal communication, 27 November
2013). Skeggs argues, "Respectability is one of the most ubiquitous signifiers of class" (1997,
p. 1). Not wanting to appear "silly" and pursuing higher education is part of Parry's quest for
respectability. The class mobility here is explicit; Parry's self-deprecation indicates an
awareness of his own working class roots and aspiration for the tertiary-educated middle
class. Running Sixpenny, however, along with the critical acclaim that came with it, has
made it "easier to move around", in Parry's words. Celebrity culture in the chef economy has
allowed for different forms of mobility, through an emphasis on intellectual and creative
labour. Certainly, the prospect of critical acclaim leading to business success is incentive for
chefs to invest in their own creativity.

Yu describes MAD as the product of

[T]*he up and coming sort of… the new guard. Overthrowing the old, forming*
their own crew, forming their own symposium. Which is good, you know.

> *That's the nature of the industry, you know* (personal communication 5
> November 2012).

Again, the significant cultural shift in chefing is flagged and seen as part of the evolution of
the industry. The cultural shift is clearly linked to an emphasis on intellectual and creative
labour. Being run by such prominent chefs as Redzepi and David Chang (Chang 'curated' the
2013 instalment of the symposium), MAD is well-positioned to receive substantial media
coverage. As an event, it creates a space for chefs to share with each other their creative
processes. Events like MAD intellectualise and legitimise the work of chefs, producing a
culture that values and nurtures the development of aesthetic systems and knowledges of food
production that extend beyond food appreciation. When this is acknowledged among chefs,
there is an emphasis on intellectual and creative labours over manual. Social media places
expectations on chefs to actively engage in intellectual labour in order to maintain or be able
to reach success. Celebrity culture is the key condition motivating the shift to diverse labours
other than manual.

> *There's always been a fascination with celebrity chefs. I mean, this dates back
> to like, Marco Pierre White. He's like the great celebrity chef, you know. But
> these days, yeah. There's more, there's a lot more of this celebrity chef
> emphasis. And a lot of the chefs, like, not even necessarily great chefs, but*
> [they] *also have to have a profile. Building a profile is as* [important] *as
> building a restaurant* (Yu, personal communication, 5 November 2012).

An ability to engage in creative and intellectual labours – such as participating in social
media and popular media – is also required in order to be seen as successful. Success and
media attention elevates a chef from being seen (and perceiving themselves) as a working
class manual labourer – or, as Fassnidge puts it – a "drop-kick" (personal communication, 8

November 2012) to being classified as creative or as an intellectual. Media acclaim from food critics is valued and imparts cultural capital, but can also be actively sought through intellectual labour. In the next section I consider the Josephine Pignolet Young Chef of the Year (awarded to promising young Australian chefs) and its influences in shaping new generations of professional chefs.

Josephine Pignolet Young Chef of the Year

In chapter four, I discussed the cultural capital attributed to chefs through food criticism and the *Good Food Guide.* Each year, the *Guide* presents awards in several categories, including Restaurant of the Year, Chef of the Year, and Diners' Choice, among others. These are major accolades in comparison to the annual hat rating system. The Josephine Pignolet Young Chef of the Year award[91] is one of the most illustrious awards in the Australian industry. Previous winners of the award have gone on to lead very successful careers, often owning and running their own restaurants. In the chef economy, the Young Chef of the Year award is an important symbol of cultural capital, signifying great promise and talent.

Parry won the Young Chef of the Year award in the 2009 edition of the *Guide* and is currently co-head chef and co-owner of small fine diner Sixpenny (his co-head chef and business partner is Daniel Puskas, 2006 recipient of the Pignolet award). Unlike the other awards in the *Good Food Guide*, the Young Chef of the Year award is self-nominated, and the winner selected by a panel of experienced chefs.

> *You write a one-page food philosophy. That's all it is, it's one page, 600 words, depending on what font you want to use. You* [give them] *your CV and that's it. They shortlist, like, I don't know how many people – like six or ten*

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[91] The award is named for a highly influential and acclaimed chef and restaurateur. Pignolet died in a car accident in 1987. Her husband and business partner, chef Damien Pignolet, serves on the judging panel each year.

people. And then you get into a panel with Damien Pignolet [and other chefs on the judging panel].

I didn't enter until I was 28 [the cut off is age 30] *and I got rejected. So I was angry;* [afterwards] *I spent the whole year writing one page – can you imagine writing one page over a whole year?! I was just sitting there writing notes, writing notes. And when the thing came out for it to go… ah, for you to send it in, I was ready. Everyone else was sending theirs in by Express Post the day before and I was like…* [twiddling thumbs]. *I spent like – I guess I thought about it cos like, it was something that was really important, and I thought long and hard. I did a lot of reading to help me… most chefs aren't very literate and probably don't write… when it comes to writing. So I spent a lot of time trying to find ways to articulate what I wanted to say. So I did a lot of reading, travelled a bit, ate a lot of food and found a way to get it on paper and stuff. And it worked* (personal communication, 14 November 2012).

The Pignolet award clearly emphasises intellectual labour, and suggests that intellectual labour should go hand in hand with physical labour in a great and promising chef. The professional and critical capital that comes with winning the award is substantial, but this is also due to what the award entails.

The winner is awarded a cash prize of up to AUD20 000, a set of professional grade knives, and a return airfare for the winner to spend a substantial amount of time gaining experience in international kitchens of their choice[92]. These work experience opportunities (referred to as *stages*, and the intern chef as *stagiaire*) are negotiated through the professional networks of chefs who serve on the judging panel. The material dividends of the award are

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[92] These prizes are all donated through sponsorship deals with various hospitality establishments and airlines, which is testament to the prestige attached to the award.

understandably highly coveted by young chefs. But in order to access the invaluable experience of working at some of the world's renowned restaurants, chefs are required to perform intellectual labour – writing a one-page philosophy and then fielding questions about their philosophy from a panel of established chefs.

For Parry, learning the ability to articulate his ideas clearly to a judging panel was just as important as winning the award. He took the time to read and practise his written communication; Parry notes that written literacy is not a skill that is immediately linked to chefing. Journalist Gwen Hyman argues,

> *The chef does not leave working-class labor behind when he becomes a kitchen star: instead, he threatens to erase the invisible boundaries between classes that we at once ignore and reify. The chef, after all, is about high and low all at once* (2008, p. 46).

In the chef economy, these boundaries are drawn or blurred by the media – food critics writing about chefs in a particular way. Calling food "thoughtful" and emphasising intellectual labour, for example (Durack & Savill 2011, p. 115) pushes us away from the perception of chefs as being working class. Skeggs argues that class is "formed through the domain of 'exchange'. […] We can only engage in exchange if we share a basic understanding of the terms of social exchange" (2004, p. 28). Food critics influence the success of chefs. Their relationships with chefs form the basis of the exchange of cultural capital in the chef economy and as such, are part of articulating class in the chef economy.

Food critics co-create successful celebrity chefs; they also make class through approving or disapproving taste. Quay is described as "a seamless experience" (Durack & Savill 2011, p. 115), while the Four in Hand is "a lesson in restraint" (Durack & Savill 2011, p. 62), indicating that there are boundaries within which tastefulness exists. Skeggs suggests

that classifications are "forms of inscription that are performative; they bring the perspective of the classifier into effect in two ways: first, to confirm the perspective of the classifier and, second, to capture the classified within discourse" (2004, p. 18). By investing in maintaining the standards of the classified (chefs), food critics clearly also classify themselves as discerning cultural gatekeepers, and produce chefs as objects of cultural capital. Class is articulated through an appreciation of the additional labours required of chefs – creative and intellectual labour. The incorporation of, and emphasis on intellectual labour is a result of the demands of media – in this case, of the *Good Food Guide*. This cultural shift has resulted in a class shift, from working class to middle class, understood in terms of the creative and intellectual labours undertaken by chefs. Again we see the print media's place in the framework of the contemporary chef economy, blurring the class lines in chefs' labour.

Tania Lewis considers the importance of "celebrity intellectuals" in light of the "shifting nature of the relationship between contemporary intellectuals and the mediatized public sphere" (2001, p. 234). With social media giving users more power (Rosen 2006, 2010, Lewis 2010), the figure of the public intellectual has evolved to include what Lewis describes as the "more pragmatic figure of the celebrity intellectual" (2001, p. 235). Lewis argues that celebrity intellectuals may be "more useful for thinking through the changing status of the intellectual in a postmodern public sphere" (2001, p. 235). Increasingly, the knowledges and authority of chefs sees them being judged in relation to the 'intellectual' nature of their labour. Chefs' popularity also contributes to what Lewis describes as "a model of intellectual practice that foregrounds rather than disavows the dialectic of *elitism* versus democratisation that inevitably underpins the status of the intellectual" (2001, p. 236, original emphasis). Chefs position themselves as sharing knowledge[93] with everyday audiences; they emphasise the importance of good food for families and people with busy lifestyles, serving

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[93] On chefs sharing written philosophies of their work, see also Adrià, Blumenthal, Keller & McGee 2006, McGrath 2012 and Bruni 2011.

what Gramsci calls the "social function" of an intellectual (Gramsci 1983, cited in Lewis 2001, p. 237).

Chefs also share their knowledge with other chefs, the most significant instance of this pedagogical process being purely intellectual is the MAD symposium. However, "intellectuals are traditionally the product of *dominant* class formations" (Lewis 2001, p. 237, original emphasis) and it is the same within the industry of chefs; the 'intellectual' subset of chefs exists in particular groups within the industry – those who benefit from media exposure. The changes in their labour are acknowledged by chefs:

> *It's about being genuine as well; they ask you – there's a question they ask: what would you cook if the ten best chefs in the world come around. If you answer an eight course deg* [degustation]*, you're not gonna win, you know. They want you to say roast chicken. Something honest, you know. That's what sums it up, knowing what to cook when and why you cook it. But I've read essays from entrants after me […] and generally there's a common theme, but there are different approaches for how to get there as well* (Parry, personal communication, 14 November 2012).

Parry's commentary on the genuineness of the work positions the manual labour of chefing as still being the anchor of chefing, and this places chefs in a complex position of needing to traverse the manual and intellectual labours bound to differently classed positions. While chefs can learn about different techniques and different ways to use ingredients, it is the "honest" work of providing a nice meal that will always underpin the work of chefs, no matter their station in the industry. A straddling of classes can be seen in Parry's juxtaposition of the intellectual degustation with the humble roast chicken. The ability to move between class distinctions characterises the contemporary celebrity chef.

As Hyman suggests, the celebrity chef "is all about work. His fame, in fact, is predicated on labor, and his success does not obviate the need for him to do real work: the diner, the fan, expects him to go to the restaurant every day, to sweat in the kitchen, and to craft the food with his own hands" (2008 p. 46). Though Parry's suggestion of roast chicken (as compared to an eight course degustation) serves as a metonym for manual labour, Hyman's use of the term "craft" in the labour of food production firmly keeps the nature of certain chefs' labour in the realm of creativity and intellectualism. Parry certainly engages these concepts of labour:

> *One thing I remember I did really well was I'd spent so much time writing that essay I knew it back to front, everything had been condensed into paragraphs, but I knew, like, pages and pages more info. So when they asked me about something I would just, like, go crazy. So I was just like* [to other chefs who had self-nominated for the prize]*, 'Make sure to elaborate on that. Make sure it's really tight and gets your point across but be ready to answer.' If you turn up it could be anyone who wrote that, and that's not going to get you anywhere. […] But if you don't have it inside you, you're not going to win* (personal communication, 14 November 2012).

Drawing parallels to studying as if in school, Parry demonstrates that the process of learning is very much a constant part of being a successful chef, also linking the Pignolet award as a marker of success. His obvious effort in applying for the award demonstrates the award's capacity to produce successful chefs; five years after receiving it, Parry is co-owner of a critically acclaimed, one-hat fine dining restaurant. The Pignolet award is associated with long-term success; it unsurprisingly attracts a particular kind of chef, eager to display his or her knowledge. As Parry recollects, he had accumulated "pages and pages of info"; the

intellectual labour of his chefing continues to complement the manual labour, constructing an intellectual figure of the chef that traverses class boundaries.

Parry talks about his work and the trajectory of his career. As a young man he enjoyed travelling and working in the kitchens of South America and Canada; back in Sydney he worked in some of the most popular and critically renowned kitchens from the late 90s until he partnered up with Dan Puskas to run Sixpenny in 2012. He had reasons for spending years in different kitchens:

> *I was looking to go somewhere else to be challenged a bit more, and then when I headed to Oscillate* [Wildly, a small fine dining restaurant in Sydney], *I was looking to see… I was more looking to see personally where I stood in the industry, my ability and all the rest of it. So I was doing a stage here and there to see how I feel, how I fit in, how I adjusted and how well I cooked and stuff* (personal communication 14 November 2012).

Clearly, the 'challenge' to which Parry refers is both intellectual and creative. His desire to be measured against other chefs in different restaurants is an invested method of professional development on his part, particularly when paired with his application for a prestigious award. Parry's conception of his work is far removed from the day-to-day pragmatic, tangible process of manual labour – Parry has made efforts to apply abstract values to his work in addition to that of material production.

The combination of abstract and material value in chefing enables the blurring of class and social boundaries among chefs because the abstract can be, and is, learnt in accompaniment to the practical. Parry's pursuit of cultural exchange in his work overseas is evidence of a conscious move towards changing his own position in the chef economy. Skeggs argues, "The self is part of a system of inscription, exchange, perspective and value

attribution" (2004, p. 19). By actively challenging himself, Parry is inscribing and attributing value and taste upon his own labours. These inscriptions can be read by others in the chef economy as reifying and reproducing ideas of value in the chef community – in this case, wider cultural experiences and broader culinary techniques – which are emphasised through their connection to a prestigious award. The chef economy produces relations of power between chefs and the media. The media encourages and rewards chefs who push the boundaries of their work, and who pursue different experiences. These experiences assume a certain level of intellectual labour and investment, thus rewarding and encouraging the changing labours of chefs.

The intellectual labour in which some chefs engage in order to change is distinctively constructed as not being working class. I emphasise Bourdieu again in saying, "A class is defined as much by its *being perceived* as by its *being,* by its consumption – which need not be conspicuous in order to be symbolic – as much as by its position in the relations of production (even if it is true that the latter governs the former)" (1984, p. 485). While this quote refers primarily to taste constructing class, the nature of labour also classifies class in the context of chefing.

Chefs are in close proximity to the process of production – their manual labour in the kitchen is key to their association with the working class – but in engaging in intellectual labour and communicating their know-how in the mainstream media, certain chefs are perceived as socially upwardly mobile due to the changing nature of their labour. Skeggs considers Savage *et al*. (1992) in the construction of the self – "an emphasis on appearance, display and the management of impressions, is key for membership and constitutive of the new middle-classes" (cited in Skeggs 2004, p. 75). Class positions are consolidated through cultural practices (Skeggs 2004); chefs' changing labours put in place different rituals of

cultural practice, leading to class mobility. In addition to their manual work in the kitchen, many chefs also catalogue or document and communicate knowledge, pursue cultural exchange, engage with media publics and in some cases, extend beyond the kitchen and into tertiary education. Celebrity culture and its accompanying media attention has resulted in chefs pursuing and enabling mobility. Mainstream media opens up this mobility and the cultural shifts that have created mobility to a wider audience.

Changing labours, changing celebrity

MasterChef Australia has given chefs a platform on television to share their skills and knowledges with mainstream audiences. TV chefs' roles as authoritative mentors are emphasised through their interactions with the contestants, and guest chefs are constantly shown being calm under pressure in various kitchens. These depictions of chefs cement the idea of the chef as a commanding, authoritative figure for mainstream audiences. Chefs get an opportunity to 'play' the chef on television, something that is a recent development in popular media. Quite apart from instructional programs involving a chef or cook speaking to the camera and providing step-by-step instructions, *MasterChef* often places a chef in his or her 'natural habitat' – that is, a busy kitchen – for the audience to watch them working. Chefs' manual work is constantly reinforced this way. With the rise of *MasterChef*, more chefs have found it necessary – or certainly advantageous – to appear in the media, both television and print.

The contemporary media landscape in Australia is conducive to producing what Turner, Bonner, and Marshall (2000) call "promotional culture" (p. 160). Indeed, there have been "major changes and shifts in media and cultural production in Australia… as a result of transformed industrial practices around the construction and promotion of public personalities" (p. 160). As I have shown in the previous chapter, these transformed practices

include social media, namely Twitter and Instagram. Chefs use social media to build their brand, and can in some instances be perceived by their audiences as a celebrity figure. While social media maintains chefs' personas on a regular, more intimate basis by welcoming audiences into chefs' "private spheres" (Berlant 1998, p. 283), *MasterChef Australia* has built these personas and propelled them into the mainstream. Lewis describes MasterChef as "a vehicle for transnational trends around identity and citizenship" (Lewis 2011, p. 105). It is also a site on which chefs can cement their celebrity capital and celebrity identities. Once their presence is known in the Australian mainstream, chefs have more of an incentive to articulate their personalities on social media.

Social media articulates processes of globalisation, and its effects on the chef industry make it important to unpack the ways social media has changed our ideas of celebrity and of chefs. On Twitter and Instagram, Appadurai's neighbourhoods sustain celebrity chef culture and provide an audience to whom chefs knowledges are broadcast. It is precisely this relationship with the audience and the food media that compel the changing of chefs' labours. After signing on as a guest judge on *My Kitchen Rules*, a program which pits contestants against each other to produce a successful three-course dinner party in their own homes, Fassnidge had to learn and be prepared for the expectations that come with working for a major television network. As mentioned in chapter five, Fassnidge's Twitter account began to be monitored by someone from the network, and he acquired a talent manager.

> *And contracts, and cos you know, you gotta have contracts for… it's pretty big, once you go into Channel 7, the contracts are huge and it's a lot of money. When you get locked in, you're locked in. Like there's someone now that watches my Twitter feed all day. I now have my own nanny. I was talking to her yesterday – she goes, 'Oh you said fuck. But – but you used charac…*

[sic] *you didn't use the word, you used* [symbols]*' – and she goes, 'That's very good, you're getting better.'* (personal communication, 8 November 2012)

During his time appearing on television as a regular guest, Fassnidge was subjected to several contract clauses that were incorporated into his day-to-day labour. Apart from being more conscious of his Twitter feed, he spent several days of the week on set filming. Fassnidge recalls,

> *Yeah, you start at eight in the morning, finish at ten at night.*
>
> *It's a lot of waiting around. Like I bring menus and books and… I did get a lot of work done when I* [was] *there. It's stuff I'd normally be doing in the office fucking around or… I've got to do it* (personal communication, 8 November 2012).

Television work is a different kind of labour for chefs – it is physically draining in a different way but contributes in other ways to their profile, most significantly in building their brand identity. Fassnidge is acutely aware of this; his time on television has given his business access to commercial advantages:

> *So, 4Fourteen gets a lot of press,* [it has] *an open kitchen. The manager* [Fassnidge's talent manager] […]*, he goes, 'Right, what do you want out of this? What do you not want to do, what do you want to do?' So you can get your whole kitchen fitted out, you know. Clever. You don't realise what you can get. Because you're a chef, and you earn minimal wages and you work fucking hard for what you get. And then you can get stuff for nothing. What is this? So that's… you know, like chefs can do anything now. We'll be going into politics soon!* (personal communication, 8 November 2012)

224

Fassnidge's comments illustrate the significance of the change of status for chefs – some have profiles that are significant enough to secure kitchen fit-outs; others have long term contracts advertising condiments (Marco Pierre White advertises for domestic stock cubes; see Bennett 2011b and 'Knorr stock pots' 2008) or airlines (Neil Perry has long been associated with Australia's national carrier, QANTAS).

Chefs have commercial appeal as 'lifestyle experts' (Lewis 2010), and as such have the choice to be associated with particular ideas or products, enabling them to continue to strengthen their profiles. Lewis suggests popular lifestyle experts are "figures whose advice, in contrast to more traditional modes of expertise, is often grounded in and focused upon the ordinary, the domestic and the everyday" (2010, p. 580). The idea of expertise, even if mundane expertise, allows for mobility. In light of this, Hyman argues, "[American] chefs are classmakers in the most literal sense. The convergence of the unprecedented popularity of dining out and the advent of the star chef has led to more than just a sense that chefs are more important: it has transformed culinary professionals into creators of culture, capable of bestowing knowledge and coolness on those who dine in their restaurants" (2008, p. 47).

What Hyman describes is happening to chefs all around the world – Sydney chefs interviewed demonstrate that Sydney is a part of this global phenomenon. The exaltation of successful chefs is emphasised with the [Australian] 2014 Culinary Legends stamp collection – the public are invited to vote for chefs and cooks who have defined several decades of Australian food culture to appear on postage stamps to be sold in 2014 (Harden 2014). While some chefs are happy to take advantage of opportunities available through their media profiles, others are less sure. Parry is a little more wary about engaging with the media, preferring to focus on the management of his restaurant.

Parry and his restaurant, Sixpenny, have Twitter and Instagram accounts but he is more reserved in his use of social media than other of my ethnographic participants. He is reluctant to do very much outside his restaurant kitchen, preferring to work on new dishes or fixing up the restaurant's backyard garden. He is conscious of maintaining what he thinks of as his 'standards' of being a chef and avoiding getting caught up in the media hype about chefs.

> *Well, we're pretty particular about what we do and don't do. You're constantly getting people that are going, 'Oh, we're thinking about doing this story', or there's an appearance that they want you to do. We say no to most things unless like, well, I could have done Seafood School* [cooking school at the Sydney Fish Markets]*, and we're doing* [a] *dinner in a few weeks but um, otherwise it's just not... Like,* this *is what we do. Sixpenny. I'm always... like things for charity I'm always interested in, like I ran the City to Surf* [annual fun run in Sydney] *to raise money for the Cancer Council, and that's a charity that's pretty dear to me. But I don't like being taken away from this* (personal communication, 14 November 2012).

Parry's wariness of media involvement is also strategic in terms of his personal and restaurant brand. They do not want to appear to chase media, nor do they want to associate with anything that falls too far outside of what they consider to be their primary job – running a restaurant. Parry finds the idea of the celebrity chef amusing but uncomfortable, saying,

> *Your grandma isn't famous for the nice meal she cooked you, is she?*
> *It's* [media attention is] *not comfortable, it's kind of like – I don't really... I don't sometimes see the value in it, like, I think I mentioned that we do things that I think everybody should do. Okay, like, not everyone should run a*

226

restaurant but the way we run the restaurant, the way we look at how we grow

things, and all the water tanks… is kind of, it's just a way, you know… I don't

think there are things you should be famous for. […]

You know, for me, yesterday I was at the farm. Dan [Puskas] *was there in the*

morning and then left, I was there for the rest of the day just pottering around,

fixing irrigation, digging holes[94]*, whatever I was doing. I love that, you know.*

As much as that is work, it's also relaxing and time out, and that's what I'd

prefer to be spending my time doing than going off and getting my make-up

done (personal communication, 14 November 2012).

Here, the manual labour of chefing – including that of valuing and using good produce – is emphasised as more important than media engagement. Even with the emphasis on intellectual labour, the chefs I spoke to still pride themselves on being 'cooks' rather than chefs. As I mentioned in chapter three, this is partly in the spirit of camaraderie, and partly to distance themselves from the 'stuffy' title of 'chef'. Parry comments, "I like to think of myself more as a cook. […] So you know, I really always never wanted to lose that relationship with the guys, so in that respect I like to think of us as a bunch of cooks; we like what we do" (personal communication, 27 November 2013).

Parry is in a privileged position, and as such his status as a critically acclaimed chef allows him to appreciate manual labour. This position is a result of celebrity culture and the ways it represents chefs as lifestyle experts. Parry notes the intellectual labour needed in order to articulate a particular style of food and the kind of business run, and is particular

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[94] Sixpenny maintains its own garden at the back of the restaurant, as well as a farm off-site. The restaurant grows as much of its own produce as it can, and built its own circulated water system, in keeping with their philosophy of sustainability.

about the kind of 'extracurricular' activities he feels is suitable to fit his idea of his own brand.

> *I think that just having a fine dining restaurant these days is like having all your eggs in one basket. The garden was something I've always wanted to do. I think that more of my interests were in the outdoors part of the business* (personal communication, 27 November 2013).

Turner, Marshall & Bonner suggest, "Celebrities are called on (and do) carry meaning in situations far beyond what might reasonably be seen to be their professional expertise, to audiences far exceeding those who might be supposed to be interested in the products they represent" (2000, p. 164). As such, Parry can be considered a celebrity who has meaning in areas that extend well beyond his own kitchen to include the Sydney food industry and discussions of sustainability.

Certainly, Parry and many of the chefs in this study do not self-identify as 'celebrities'. Their work places them in a very particular category of celebrity, one that relies more on the communication of their authority and specialised skills through the cultural capital of media. However, chefs at this level are accustomed to a certain level of media scrutiny, and this in turn compels them to be conscious of managing their brand and the ways they are perceived by the public. In addition to their skills as chefs and entrepreneurs, chefs have had to accumulate skills with which to manage their presence in the media – whether it be through social media outlets or involvement with media events. It is a cultural shift that not only impacts the chef, but also the chef's audience.

Class and audience

Social and class mobility are made possible for chefs because their work moves between manual and intellectual labours and either has a global profile or at least exists within a globalised industry. As a result of their diverse labours, chefs are constructed by food critics as members of the creative and intellectual classes, a discursive positioning that emphasises their work as a "skilled marriage of technique, produce and ingredients" and produces food that demonstrates "grace and subtlety" (Durack & Savill 2011, p. 122, p. 127), for example. In turn, consumption of these chefs transfers a similar mobility to consumers. Bourdieu argues that luxury goods are "emblems of 'class'" (1984, p. 229), and so too are chefs and restaurants of critical and media acclaim. This perception may dissuade or prevent some audiences from consuming particular chefs and particular styles of food. Fassnidge notes,

> *I think the people who watch these shows* ['MasterChef' and 'My Kitchen Rules'] *ain't going to come to my restaurants anyway. It's like* MasterChef, *you get more of a ... you're known on the street, or you might do* MasterChef Live *or these cookery shows, whatever. It's a bit more, 'Oh that's that guy on the telly.' They're not really interested in what I cook. And they're usually from outer suburbs that haven't got a high income to come to the Four in Hand. Like, I understand that, you know what I mean? You're just someone on the telly* (personal communication, 8 November 2012).

Ruling residents of the "outer suburbs" out of his establishment, Fassnidge is aware that while some diners may aspire to class and social mobility, not all can afford to visit the restaurants that appear on television. Instead, social and class mobility for these audiences comes from recognising or having knowledge about particular chefs from seeing their appearances on television, and perhaps being aware of their reputations. Again, class is

constructed through taste – the audience choosing to consume celebrity chefs identifies them with certain tastes that come with the associated cultural capital. Ingham speaks of his appearance on *MasterChef* in 2012:

> *The episode I was on, I was working – that was a Tuesday. As soon as the episode started, the phone did not stop ringing, for at least a week or more. And as soon as the show was on, the phone would stop. As soon as the ads came on, the phone would not stop.*
>
> *We had people trying to book, everything. There was at least two months, I would say, of solid, just* [inaudible] *busy. And then it slowly tailed off* (personal communication, 5 November 2012).

Ingham experienced an influx of diners interested in visiting his restaurant and consuming his food, clearly as a result of his appearance on television. The sudden and extreme reaction to his television appearance strongly reinforces *MasterChef* as a tastemaker and cultural producer, as well as highlighting its capacity to produce celebrity chefs. However, Ingham notes that this interest eventually trailed off; this points to the necessity of food criticism in the print media to maintain authority and cultural capital in the chef industry in order to sustain the chef economy.

Quay has enjoyed a reputation as a critically acclaimed restaurant for many years, earning its three-hat status in 2002 and maintaining it for 12 consecutive years[95]. Gregory muses on the evolution of the restaurant from when it first won the *Guide*'s Restaurant of the Year[96] when she first started in 2008, to the restaurant it is now:

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[95] See quay.com.au

[96] Quay won this title in 2003, 2005, 2009, and 2010 editions of the *Good Food Guide*.

Even after that [winning Restaurant of the Year]*, when I first started we were probably… maybe two thirds as busy as we are now? Like some lunches you might do 20 covers, especially like the first winter I was there. To be honest, I hate to say it, but I think the thing that has had the most biggest effect on the business is actually* MasterChef.

I think after we win things, you get a gradual increase in covers, but with MasterChef *it's instant, and it's the next day. The next day you will just be full. And it will just continue* […] (personal communication, 5 September 2012).

Sydney's three-hat Quay restaurant is synonymous with luxury and refinement described as "world class" (Durack & Savill 2011, p. 115) and consistently appearing in international publications as a 'must-visit' dining destination (e.g. San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best', 2008-2013). Dining at this restaurant reflects values of prestige and luxury onto the diner. The effect and popularity of *MasterChef* has enabled both chefs and audience social and class mobility – the audience is encouraged to consume and align themselves with products (chefs) that will associate them with the class or social position to which they aspire.

While chefs have different motivations for actively getting involved with the media, for highly successful chefs media attention is necessary. The food media – particularly print media – have stakes in the restaurant industry that require the promotion of the chef economy. Food critics "turn advertising into news" (Turner, Marshall & Bonner 2000, p. 31); the publication of the annual *Good Food Guide* appears in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as a news item each year. Reactions and responses of chefs may vary, but the net result is the media's construction of the chef as authority figure, a discursive positioning which in turn positions the print media as authoritative when writing about chefs.

The chef economy requires mutual participation from both chefs and the media in order to operate. This mutual relationship operates on a heightened level in the era of social media and celebrity chef culture. The media and mediatised processes of celebritisation co-produce chefs' celebrity power. "Class is not a given but is in continual production" (Skeggs 2004, p. 3). The changing of chefs' labours form part of the continual production of class among chefs, in part produced by their relationship with the media and their celebrity status. We see class inscribed in chefs' work through the language used in food criticism and in the shift to intellectual labour. Fassnidge sums up the class mobility with an anecdotal example:

> *When we left school it was like, 'What are you going to be?'*
>
> *'A chef.'*
>
> *'Well, you're a fucking drop-kick.' Like it was just… chefs were not… it was not a good job, you were looked down on, especially at my school. And then suddenly all the guys who were going to be accountants or whatever in school, they're still all on Facebook. They're all living in these shitty little houses in Dublin, no money, their lives terrible, they're all depressed and they're like, 'Oh my god, you're doing well – you're on television…' Yeah, the 'drop-kicks'? Yeah. So I mean, it's opened a lot of doors (personal communication, 8 November 2012).*

There has clearly been a significant lifestyle change that accompanied Fassnidge's celebrity status. In November 2013, Fassnidge won the title of *GQ Magazine*'s[97] Chef of the Year at their annual Men of the Year awards. The award came with a double-page profile spread in the December issue of the magazine; Fassnidge posted photos of himself at the awards, dressed in a tuxedo, with his wife. The following day the chef posted a photo of himself in his

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[97] *GQ* markets itself as a high-end men's magazine, with a focus on luxury men's fashion.

chef whites and apron, highlighting the contrast between being celebrated at a black-tie event and being back in the kitchen and back at work.

Figure 8. "Boooooom winner :)"   Figure 9. "Last night was a tux at GQ

Today it's an apron at 4 HQ"

[sic]

The juxtaposition of the two images mirrors Fassnidge's summary of how his life has changed, from being "looked down on," to enjoying the acknowledgement of his success. Celebrity has "opened a lot of doors" because celebrity results in class and social mobility; celebrity is produced when chefs' labours shift from manual to intellectual, from working class to middle class through the creative industries.

Conclusion

The focus on chefs' work is not limited to their labours in the kitchen. As public interest has increased, so too has the media space dedicated to chefs. Appearances on television have

become almost de rigueur, cook books make reliable sales[98] (Fassnidge's first cook book will be released in 2014). Chefs constantly demonstrate their know-how through abstract means and communicate their knowledges through diverse channels. The pervasiveness of their celebrity (Turner 2013, p. 18) – or of celebrity culture in their industry – highlights the process of changing tastes, changing labour, and therefore class mobility. Their engagement with intellectual labour enables chefs and chefs' work to traverse class and social boundaries: in addition to the perception of chefs' work, university-educated people training as chefs also contribute to the class blurring currently taking place in the chef industry. These changes are highlighted against the backdrop of celebrity culture.

Food festivals like the MAD symposium are significant in changing the ways chefs understand their own work and relate to other chefs. The vocation of chefing is evolving as events similar to MAD encourage chefs to think about their work differently, at the same time legitimising their work as an intellectual and artistic pursuit. Cooking has always had a creative element to it, but mainstream media is aiding a widespread appreciation for this creativity.

Chefs' work produces objects and ideas of cultural capital that can be consumed by diners aspiring to particular class groups. Bourdieu argues, "Taste is a match-maker; it marries colours and also people, who make 'well-matched couples', initially in regard to taste" (1984, p. 239). Diners actively, aspirationally and/or curiously 'match' their self-conception of their own class or social group to their consumption of particular chefs or restaurants. These, as I have outlined in a previous chapter, are displayed conspicuously on social media such as Instagram and Twitter. At the same time, chefs manage their consumption and output of media according to their self-perception of their own work, or the

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[98] Jamie Oliver's cook books, for example, consistently make monthly top ten non-fiction bestseller lists (Nielsen Bookscan, online).

ways they would like to be perceived by their diners. Chefs' celebrity status comes partly from food criticism; once particular ideas of chefs are constructed through food criticism, chefs either strive to maintain them, or forge different ways of being understood. Class is constituted in chefs through the "use of culture as property" (Skeggs 2004, p. 15). Celebrity chefs are cultural property; they embody values and ideas communicated by food critics to be understood as desirable and of the elite.

Chefs enact class through their labour, but are also called upon to traverse class positions through mastering different forms of labour, labours which are increasingly emphasised as intellectual and creative. In the interviews I have discussed in this chapter, we see chefs moving from the working class to the middle class as a result of an investment in their intellectual labour. Celebrity culture celebrates this shift in labour; food critics encourage chefs to 'think outside the square' and reward the active pursuit of intellectual and creative labour with prestigious awards such as the Josephine Pignolet Young Chef of the Year Award. Celebrity culture follows professional success, but at the same time, celebrity culture is party to the production of these successes, emphasising the changing nature of chefs' work, pushing chefs outside the kitchen. The chef, the media, and the diner all contribute critically and actively to the chef economy – an economy in which celebrity culture, cultural capital, and diverse forms of labour are redefining chefs' work, and in which chefs are redefining ways of understanding celebrity culture and class.

Dessert
&
Cheeses

Yeah, there was a girl sitting like, right here [gestures at the bar, which overlooks the kitchen] *and I was cooking, and she was tweeting hello. And I happened just to have a look* [at my phone]*, and I'm like – and I sort of recognised* [the photo on her Twitter profile]. *Two and two came together and I'm like, why don't you just say hello? Cos it just seems so stupid.*

Like, I'm standing there, and you probably know who I am, you know, and I sort of recognised the photo and you know, if you want to have a chat, you're in the prime spot! So that was quite strange. – Hamish Ingham, personal communication, 5 July 2011

[T]*he emergence of any celebrity depends on the various technologies of dissemination for its connection to a massive audience.* – Marshall 1997, p. 198-199

Conclusion:

Mobility, media, and masculinity

Contemporary celebrity culture is pervasive (Turner 2013, p. 3), and the definition of 'celebrity' ambiguous (Marwick & boyd 2011; Turner 2013). Celebrity is found across diverse media and in different cultural forms (Marshall 2006c, p. 799; Turner 2004, p. 17). Among chefs, celebrity culture is not new, but as Turner suggests, "simply the extension of a long-standing condition" (2013, p. 4) which has intensified in light of new media cultures

(Turner 2013, p. 9). This thesis has undertaken an examination of celebrity chef culture in its contemporary form through ethnographic analysis of the different media platforms that construct celebrity chefs, and empirical research on the ways chefs are active in making their own celebrity. I have used celebrity culture as an analytical lens in my empirical research on celebrity chefs to show the different effects of celebrity on gender, class, and labour.

Celebrity chef culture is of academic interest (Collins 2012; Hollows 2003; Rousseau 2012a) because of the significant media attention received by chefs (Collins 2012, p. 1; Rousseau 2012a). The continuously changing media environment calls for further inquiry into the changing effects and changing nature of the culture – I have responded by utilising diverse media platforms in my investigation. By formulating a methodology that responds to the demands of the contemporary media milieu, I was able to examine the different, complex ways celebrity works in the lives of chefs, and understand the economies at play in the industry. In response to celebrity culture, my research made clear that chefs have taken on additional labours applied across diverse contexts. My emphasis on empirical research allowed me to examine how chefs articulate celebrity and its interventions into their everyday lives. I have argued that celebrity has changed what it means to be a chef, and is integrated into chefs' labours in various ways. My analysis of chefs' labours through the lens of celebrity culture showed up the ways celebrity articulates masculinities of chefs; the ways print, television and social media has integrated with chefs' work; and the ways chefs' changing labours have led to different forms of mobility.

My arguments

Celebrity culture affects chefs' work across gender, class, and labour. Marshall argues that "the celebrity's agency is the humanisation of institutions" and "the simplification of complex meaning structures" (1997, p. 244). Masculinities are institutionalised in

commercial kitchens and processes of institutionalisation are reinforced in popular media. The male-dominated nature of the industry is nothing new; the physical demands of working in a professional kitchen is one of the most exclusionary factors of chefing, and not limited to women. But the professional kitchen is also an environment that encourages homosocial bonds. I have shown that to operate successfully, the professional kitchen typically requires homosociality, a devaluation of the feminine, and sometimes the exclusion of women.

Celebrity culture plays a part in the institutionalisation of homosocial masculinity in kitchens. I showed that depictions of celebrity chefs in mainstream popular media programs like *MasterChef Australia* reify the masculinities produced in professional kitchens. Turner suggests, "we have long passed the point where [textual analysis] can be seen as constituting an entirely sufficient basis on which to mount a broad programme of cultural studies research" (2010b, p. 15). My textual analysis of *MasterChef Australia* constitutes one strand of my broader empirical and media analysis and my textual analysis is informed by empirical research on chefs. Chefs' recollections of their experiences in kitchens, when considered beside a textual analysis of *MasterChef* and its treatment of gender, add depth to the argument that popular media representation has the capacity to produce cultural and social effects (Turner 2010b, p. 17). The chefs in this study acknowledge the professional kitchen's reputation for being male-dominated, but are at a loss to explain how to address the issue. Working as a chef is emotionally, mentally, and physically demanding, and to be a successful chef

> *takes a very special kind of person in general. I think there is a bit of macho*
>
> *that you need because – people don't encourage it, but in some of those bigger*
>
> *kitchens you have to sort of muscle your way around to get equipment, to get*
>
> *to the stove, you know. And it's not for everybody. Even I felt intimidated in*

some kitchens back in the day, and I'm not small (Parry, personal communication, 27 November 2013).

My empirical research showed that the negotiation of gender in the chefing community is complex – chefs have particular ideas about the labour that is required as a chef, and particular ideas about how gender can be understood in the kitchen. Parry, along with several other chefs in this study, emphasises the physicality required in the job and equates the capacity for physical work with masculinity. Women chefs, on the other hand, persevere. Those who have succeeded with the physicality of the work are also aware of the way female chefs are portrayed in the media:

> *A lot of the women celebrity chefs, they are… like Nigella* [Lawson] *and stuff like that, you know? They're just like, they are portrayed to be mothering, like, we want to go home and be like domestic goddesses and bake, and stuff like that* (Gregory, personal communication, 29 November 2012).

In terms of media acknowledgement for their work, the San Pellegrino 'World's 50 Best' offers a best female chef category, to which Gregory responds,

> *I like it because it brings female chefs to the fore* […] *but also I think… I don't know, do we need a special category? Like is it sort of saying that we're not as good as male chefs, like we can't compete against them, so here, we'll give you your own little category over here. I don't like the limitations associated with it* (personal communication, 29 November 2012).

By extending Connell's theories of the institutionalisation of gender, I have illustrated that the gender disparity in kitchens is the result of an emphasis on homosocial masculinity and the institutionalisation of homosocial masculinity. Celebrity culture serves to cement

these ideas on a cultural level through exposure in mainstream media. Chefs' depictions in mainstream media and their performances of masculinity in mainstream media maintain a notable level of celebrity capital. The construction of their celebrity capital begins with food criticism but moves through the institutionalisation of their labour and its incorporation into popular media. This process of institutionalisation has gendered and gendering dimensions.

As Turner argues, and as this study has found, celebrity is understood differently in different cultural contexts (Turner 2004, p. 17). In the chef economy, celebrity is a combination of authority, specialised skills and knowledges, and media exposure. According to Marshall, "The various social constructions of taste intersect with the industrial construction of celebrity figures to produce a system of "functioning" public personalities and forms of subjectivity" (1997, p. 186). My multimedia ethnography of celebrity chefs makes clear the processes of social construction in both food criticism and consumption on, or through, social media. Bourdieu's (1984) and Skeggs' (2004) work on cultural capital and taste show the different ways chefs and their work are valued, particularly in celebrity culture. While chefs' specialised skills and knowledges are the result of years of training, food critics are the principle providers of chefs' authority.

Print media remains significant because of its accumulated authority and experience, even in an environment of democratised content production in food culture. My multimedia analysis of celebrity chefs also showed that the significance of print media in the chef economy lies in its production of celebrity chefs via food criticism. Food critics' writing legitimises the work of chefs and positions chefs' work culturally, as something to be appreciated and respected. "Every dish sent out by Tetsuya's former head chef Martin Benn is a marvel" (Durack & Savill 2011, p. 127). There is much meaning in this sentence: the writers expect the reader to understand the weight of cultural capital that comes with being

named as a former head chef of Tetsuya's, and what this means for the quality of food that produced by someone of this calibre. Thinking about chefs' work with Bourdieu and Skeggs' adds further layers of meaning, in terms of taste and cultural capital, to the economy of celebrity chefs.

Food critics and print media are still at the forefront of constructing cultural capital in the chef economy. In Sydney, the *Good Food Guide* is a significant publication that offers markers of cultural capital in the form of hats. Food critics endow chefs with cultural capital and construct particular expectations of chefs for diners. The authority of food criticism reinforces the cultural capital possessed by chefs. Chefs are expected to meet expectations set by critics, and in doing so, encourage diners to aspire to consume cultural capital by consuming the work of particular chefs. Parry explains that diners, as a result of Sixpenny's and the head chefs' (Parry and his partner, Puskas) media exposure,

> *expect a certain level of refinement and, you know, in that way* [as a result of having a hat] *but, I still want them to be very open-minded. You find that people come in, and like I said before: 'That's this dish, and I've seen this', you know? And they've never been here before, but they know every single dish* (personal communication, 27 November 2013).

The diners described by Parry visit Sixpenny because of what they have read about the restaurant, and attempt to demonstrate their knowledge (and therefore cultural capital) by noting that they have 'seen' this or that, even though they have never been to the restaurant. It is clear the diners are referring to reviews that describe the restaurant's food. That diners are not so "open-minded" is a result of food criticism and evidence of the influence food criticism has over a number of consumers.

Chefs' celebrity status makes them prominent tastemakers; "celebrity culture is bound up with aestheticization of everyday life" (Rojek 2001, p. 102). In the chef economy, the cultivation of taste through consuming particular chefs and engaging in particular dining practices – whether it be in fine dining, or demonstrating a knowledge of the newest, trendiest restaurants and most talked-about chefs – requires food criticism to produce the celebrity chef. Chefs in Sydney (and globally) are united through the common experience of having their work publicly judged. Cultural capital is valued in the chef economy and is marked clearly by symbols such as hats, stars, or a ranking. Diners at establishments that are branded with symbols of cultural capital then become associated with the capital, and the associated celebrity chef. "[T]hrough their consumption of the celebrity-commodity, the consumer accessed some forms of power" (Turner 2013, p. 154). That power is translated to cultural capital. Food critics produce celebrity chefs and incentives for diners to consume celebrity chefs. Turner, Marshall and Bonner suggest that "Australian personalities are being developed through a system of celebrity promotion and production" (2000, p. 23). Food critics are integral to the production of celebrity chefs, but unlike the relationship between celebrities and celebrity media industries examined by Turner, Marshall and Bonner, the relationship between critic and chef is far less straightforward. This is a site worthy of further consideration, certainly in light of consumer participation and production through convergence culture and social media.

Celebrity chefs legitimise eating out as a cultural form that can be engaged with through many mediums besides the physical act of eating. My research substantiated Marshall's claim that celebrities can be used to "make sense" of the world around us (1997, p. 51). One mode of engagement that is significant in the chef economy takes place on social media. Chefs maintain a presence on social media for marketing reasons, but their presence also encourages engagement with the culinary community. The global community formed on

social media can be read through Appadurai's neighbourhood (1996) with Jenkins' concept of convergence culture (2006), Berlant and Warner's discussion of publicly mediated intimacy (1998), and Bourdieu's notions of taste and cultural capital to explicate the effects of social media on the chef economy. From its participatory nature to its emphasis on presentation of self (Marshall 2010) through various modes of conspicuous consumption, I showed that social media has been incorporated into chefs' daily labour and facilitates their active production of celebrity. Tweeting and Instagramming have become part of everyday labour for chefs, and position Sydney as part of the global chef community. In the economy of Sydney's robust and constantly changing restaurant culture, chefs are aware that to succeed, they must put in the extra effort.

The visual image-oriented platform Instagram is a noteworthy part of the social media celebrity trend (Marshall 2010; Marwick & boyd 2011; Turner 2013). Chefs sharing photos of behind-the-scenes activity and non-work related images (like photos of their children, or holiday snaps) inspires a sense of intimacy with their social media audience (Berlant 1998, p. 283; Marwick & boyd 2011, p. 156). As I have shown, an unprecedented database of information and connections is produced on Instagram (and Twitter), bringing the food community closer together than ever before, bound by the 'intimacy' of social media.

Communities are formed on Twitter and Instagram that reinforce celebrity chef culture and the cultural capital that comes with consuming particular chefs' work or food trends. Jenkins' convergence culture thesis usefully frames the operation of the chef economy across social media platforms. With access to different media platforms on which to pursue their interests, communities with mutual interests are formed. Social media users seek out their own media, and have the means to produce their own content. Hashtags (or searchable key words) are a way of grouping mutual interests or maintaining a topic of conversation. My

multimedia ethnography shows that social media not only allows diners to engage with chefs, but provides an avenue for people with mutual interests to connect and collectively produce cultural capital. The food communities constructed across these platforms are important in creating a culture to which consumers can feel like they belong; interacting on social media allows audiences "access to practices, objects and requisite knowledge… required in order to know what is worth having" (Skeggs 2004, p. 136). Participating in food cultures on social media reinforces a sense of intimacy in the broader context of the chef economy.

Turner suggests, "celebrity is not only a category of media text nor merely a genre of media discourse" (2010b). My empirical research has made clear the lived experience of celebrity among chefs. Celebrity culture is visibly leading chefs away from the kitchen – not merely on social media but to writing cook books, judging cooking competitions, or presenting on television. A consequence of this shift in culture and labour is social and class mobility.

Celebrity culture has opened up more opportunities for chefs to trade on their media profiles and enabled access to greater agency. When asked how to define a celebrity chef, Ingham responded, "I think it's a chef that's always in the media, that's constantly in the media" (personal communication, 5 July 2011). Yu adds, "How would I define a celebrity chef? [They're] the ones who don't cook anymore" (personal communication, 11 July 2011). Greater access to opportunities outside industry kitchens results in greater agency in chefs' work. Skeggs' work on making class (2004) is key in making sense of class mobility (Bourdieu 1984, p. 127; Skeggs 2004, p. 47) in the chef economy. Skeggs (2004) helps me show that chefs' cultural capital and mobility can be understood through their relationships and engagement with media, and the shift to intellectual labour. "Living class…is very much

part of how class is made" (Skeggs 2004, p. 173). My empirical research on chefs examined the lived experience of celebrity and with it, lived mobility.

Perceptions of chefing change in response to constant media attention. Chefs respond to media demands by actively sharing their specialised knowledges on different platforms – from social media, to television, to chef-run symposiums. At a certain level of the chef hierarchy, chefs' labours incorporate more intellectual labours. While previously chefs' proximity to production and manual labour may have labelled the vocation as working class (Bourdieu 1984, p. 395; Skeggs 2004, p. 75), contemporary investments in chefs' know-how and specialised skills value chefs as middle class. Additionally, the cultural capital allocated to chefs and their work through food criticism further positions chefs as middle class. Chefs' class mobility allows them to access other ways of reinforcing their position in the middle class, whether it be through the different restaurants at which they choose to work, or the kind of food they produce. As Skeggs argues, and as I emphasised, middle class can be constituted through "expressions of taste" (2004, p. 37). Celebrity chef culture makes expressions of taste visible across diverse platforms; media and consumers constantly invest in the cultural capital produced – the media through critical approval, and consumers via different practices of consumption.

Food media encourages chefs to invest in intellectual work, with prestigious awards such as the Josephine Pignolet Young Chef of the Year and events like the MAD food symposium rewarding these kinds of labours. Intellectual and creative labour undertaken by chefs are part of their cultivation of taste, and an investment in making the career of a chef one that is worthy of respectability – something Skeggs posits as a signifier of class (1997, p. 1). I argued that food media's investment in chefs' intellectual labours can be understood through Skeggs' emphasis on the "relationships that enable exchange" (2004, p. 3). Turner

reminds us "celebrity… also needs to be understood and studied as an industry" (2010b, p. 14). Addressing the gap flagged by Turner (2010b, p. 13, 15), my close reading of food media's construction of celebrity chefs highlighted particular aspects of the industrial construction of celebrity chefs that have resulted in changes in labour. Food critics' relationships with chefs enable cultural capital to be exchanged, and class mobility to take place. Media exposure enables chefs' greater access to different forms of agency in their own work. Skeggs' suggestion of a "shifting emphasis on culture as a source of economic value" (2004, p. 174) can be seen clearly in celebrity chef culture.

I have shown that the elite sector – to which chefs in this study are regarded to belong – utilise media exposure, social and class mobility in order to develop their enterprising selves. My research used first-hand accounts from chefs who have experienced the effects of celebrity culture and are discovering the extent of their mobility to show how class is made in the celebrity chef economy.

My contributions to knowledge

This is the first study to examine the different labours of chefing in diverse contexts and the economies these contexts produce. By undertaking a multimedia ethnography of celebrity chefs – that is, engaging with the media channels with which celebrity chefs are expected to engage, and participating in and observing food culture – in addition to conversations with celebrity chefs about the experience of celebrity, I have provided an in-depth analysis of celebrity in terms of representation and lived experience. The ambiguous (or multi-faceted) definition of celebrity means that it can be difficult to find appropriate (or adequate) methods for research. I have drawn on existing ideas of global ethnography to form a multi-sited, multimedia ethnography. My consideration of such diverse sites of inquiry has produced different ways of thinking about the interpretation of 'intense' ethnography. My research on

the industrial construction of celebrity chefs and its effects has further augmented chefs' place in celebrity studies literature, and brought focus on research methodology in the field of celebrity culture.

Marshall suggests there are several different ways to understand celebrity – as a form of rationalisation, as a sign and text, as an expression of audience subjectivity (1997, p. 52) – and different ways to analyse celebrity – through the audience's conception, or as categorical types of individuality, or through the construction of the cultural industries (1997, p. 51). Rojek conceives different *types* of celebrity: ascribed, achieved, and attributed (2001, p. 18). The literature canvassed in this study understands celebrity culture as representational, a cultural formation, and discursive effect (Marshall 1997; Rojek 2001, 2012; Turner 2013) and notes that celebrity culture is a rich area for research. What the literature also requires, however, is an understanding of the lived experience of celebrity (Ferris 2010), which this study provides. My study shows that an understanding of the lived experience of celebrity enhances analyses of celebrity culture. Speaking to chefs who have worked around the world in numerous elite professional kitchens, and who are accustomed to being in the spotlight provided me with invaluable insights. Chefs acknowledge that celebrity culture has been integrated with their work and forms part of their day-to-day labour. Their perspective of celebrity culture is different to that of an observer – though they embody both observer and observed at various points in their work.

Singer argues that ethnography requires an emphasis on the subject's frames of reference (2009, p. 119). Drawing on the core principles of ethnographic practice, I formulated a multimedia, multi-sited ethnography with an emphasis on social media analysis. I have come to know chefs through different contexts – online, through their food, and in person. This insight has produced an understanding of the different contexts of chefs' work,

and the different ways they interact and engage in the celebrity chef economy. Research on celebrity culture is often broken up into theories of construction and theories of consumption (Holmes & Redmond 2006; Marshall 1997; Turner 2013). It is equally important to understand the lived experience of celebrity. Examining the audience conception of celebrity concurrently with an understanding of how celebrity figures conceive celebrity open up further interpretations of celebrity culture. In this case, it has highlighted the different modalities of labour required of chefs in celebrity culture across different contexts.

My approach to celebrity chef culture, through my conception of a multimedia, multi-sited ethnography, allowed me to bring together several approaches to celebrity analysis: the audience's conception of celebrity, the culture industry's construction of the celebrity, and understanding celebrity as a form of cultural legitimisation of a system (Marshall 1997, p. 51). I extended the methodologies of Marshall (2010), Marwick and boyd (2011) and Turner, Marshall and Bonner (2000) through a comprehensive multimedia, multi-sited ethnography which included social, print, and television media, in addition to visiting and dining in many restaurants. My multimedia and multi-sited ethnography produced knowledges of chefs' different labours in various contexts, and an understanding of the different economies that operate in celebrity chef culture. My approach brought together these different media platforms into a cohesive examination of celebrity chef culture through a focus on their contributions to, and operation within, the chef economy. I immersed myself in the culture as both a participant and researcher, and the observations I made were informed by my extensive background knowledge. Gille and ÓRiain suggest that globalisation has made traditional social scientific methods of inquiry more challenging for researchers (2002, p. 271) and propose global ethnography as a response to globalisation. My multimedia ethnography shows that ethnographic practice can be extended beyond its existing confines – following the connections of convergence media, particularly within a subculture, provides

in-depth data across multiple contexts. Multimedia ethnography reinterprets 'global ethnography', and demonstrates the potential of future methodological practice.

Using Twitter and Instagram highlighted the participatory nature of celebrity chef culture; the popularity of chefs and their cultural value can clearly be seen in interactions with their audiences. The audience responds to, and produces demand for, chefs' work by interacting with chefs online, whether it be 'following' their Twitter and Instagram accounts, or dining at their restaurants. My ethnographic research showed that social media facilitates participatory engagement with celebrity chef culture, and is a key platform on which the cultural capital framework of the chef economy operates. Reality television programs such as *MasterChef* bring chefs into living rooms across the country, leaving no doubt in the audience's mind that chefs are capable of specialised skills and possess specialised knowledges. In the chef economy, these diverse media platforms are constantly in conversation with each other. Online consumer-driven sites such as Yelp and Zagat would not be so successful if there was not space for professional critique to be debated and expanded. Chefs would not engage so frequently and willingly on social media if their presence on social media platforms were not in demand and did not contribute at some level to their own professional success. My multimedia ethnography has followed these connections and conversations in order to provide a thorough, multi-modal analysis of contemporary celebrity chef culture. The participatory nature of celebrity chef culture allows diverse ways of refining approaches to understanding celebrity; at the same time, the literature on celebrity culture used in this study allows me to show how celebrity culture has fundamentally changed what it means to be a chef.

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The inclusion of chefs in the consideration of celebrity culture allows a closer examination of the effects of celebrity in an individual's life. Turner warns against "going for the global explanation while we still have the option of paying close attention to the specific power relations in play" (2013, p. 157). Focusing on one particular vocation – chefing – and the effects of celebrity on that vocation, has allowed me to illuminate the power relations at play, in terms of gender, labour, and class. My localised approach allowed a "practical way to generate celebrity-level data" (Ferris 2010, p. 392) in order to contribute to broader theoretical work on celebrity culture. 'Celebrity chef' has become a ubiquitous term, folding in easily with the contemporary pervasiveness of celebrity. They are on our television screens, on the covers of our cook books, and they smile encouragingly from the pages of glossy magazines. They tweet about their day and post Instagram photos of what they're cooking and what they're eating. Celebrity chefs have been built up to be authorities on what and how to eat, but also as figures worthy of fan's aspirations.

My appropriation of ethnography using media illuminated the effects of celebrity culture on chefs' work. By developing a multimedia and multi-sited ethnography, I engaged with the multi-faceted participatory nature of the chef economy, showing the diverse contexts in which chefs are required to perform, and the skills and labours chefs have developed in response to celebrity culture. My empirical research emphasised the experience of celebrity culture among chefs. Celebrity allows chefs greater mobility, but also highlights the institutionalising nature of their workplaces. Celebrity chef culture illustrates the impact of online social media, but also relies on the authority and history of print media. The inclusion of chefs in celebrity culture in these particular contexts demonstrates the diverse ways celebrity culture can impact consumption and labour.

As Turner suggests, "celebrity is also a discursive effect; that is, those who have been subject to the representational regime of celebrity are reprocessed and reinvented by it" (2010b, p. 13). Marshall adds, "celebrities, then, often define the construction of change and transformation of contemporary culture, the very instability of social categories and hierarchies in contemporary culture" (1997, p. 244). The bewilderment (or amusement) of chefs regarding their celebrity status in my conversations with them, along with the increased space for their work across print, television, and social media, made clear the profound effects of celebrity culture on chefs' positions in contemporary culture, and the ways they have been "reinvented" in terms of class and labour. Chefs' celebrity status is linked to their labour in the kitchen but increasingly, celebrity culture has become an integral part of chef's labour. While the definition of 'celebrity' remains ambiguous, my research has clearly demonstrated that its effects on chefs' lives and labours are palpable. The celebritisation of chefs has changed the labour and the valued products of chefing irrevocably. Research on celebrity chefs illuminates the social and cultural function of celebrity; territories of further research on celebrity chef culture clearly lie outside the kitchen.

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