Class, Food, Culture

Exploring 'Alternative' Food Consumption

by

Jessica Paddock

Cardiff University

This thesis on submitted to Cardiff University in fulfilment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR IN PHILOSOPHY

September 2011

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed ………………………………………………………. (candidate)

Date …………………………

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD.

Signed ………………………………………………………. (candidate)

Date …………………………

STATEMENT 2

This thesis is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references.

Signed ………………………………………………………. (candidate)

Date …………………………

STATEMENT 3

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Signed ………………………………………………………. (candidate)

Date …………………………

Acknowledgements

There are many who are to be thanked for their support in helping me to start, write-up and submit this thesis. First of all, thank you to the participants, producers, volunteers and stakeholders who made this research both fun as well as feasible. I am also very grateful to my supervisors Professor Susan Baker and Dr. Bella Dicks for being generous with their time, patience and kindness. Everyone in SOCSI has made the experience of doing a doctorate a pleasurable one. Thanks to Dr. Tom Hall and Dr. Ian Welsh for their input along the way. None of this would have been possible without a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council.

Supporting me have been my family and friends. I'm grateful to them all, particularly my parents, for their encouragement. Thanks to Helen, Jaz, Graham, Zoe and Jamie for helping me to get the thesis handed in, and to Jaz and Sam for putting a roof over my head when I needed it.

Abstract

Contributing empirically, methodologically and conceptually to the body of work that remains unconvinced of the 'death of class' (Pahl 1989), this thesis explores the resonance of class culture in contemporary 'alternative' food practice. Indeed, arising from disenchantment with conventional industrial food production and supply chains, 'alternative' food networks aim to provide a means to reconnect consumers, producers and food (Kneafsey *et al.* 2008). By taking seriously the act of shopping for food as culturally meaningful and not merely a practice of routinely provisioning the home (Lunt and Livingstone 1992) this thesis then argues that 'alternative' food practice provides a platform for the performance of class identities. That is, both structurally and culturally, class is thought to matter to people (Sayer 2011), and is elucidated and reproduced through food practice.

By means of mixed methods data collection; participant observation, survey, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis, this study provides support for a Bourdieusian approach to class analysis. In particular, the thesis makes use of Bourdieu's toolkit of concepts by conceiving of class as a relative 'position'. This is understood to be achieved via the moral derision of the 'other', where participants draw moral boundaries between 'good' and 'bad' foods and the 'good' or 'bad' who partake in its consumption. In this way, the field of 'alternative' food practice seems not only ground from which to observe class. Rather, 'alternative' food is understood to be appropriated as a resource of 'distinction' (Bourdieu 1984) that is then figured in the very maintenance and reproduction of class culture.

This interface between class, food and culture may prove consequential for those seeking substantive alternatives to conventional foodways. Crucially, it is argued that by imagining less socially and culturally uniform strategies to promote 'alternative' food practice, we may unlock their potential to provide an equitable and sustainable food future. To this end, by elucidating the moral significance of class in the field of 'alternative' food practice, this thesis has wider implications in carving a role for sociological enquiry in the emerging field of 'sustainability science' (Marsden 2011).

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture Schemes
DOH	Department of Health
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
FARMA	National Farmers' Retail and Market Association
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
PGI	Product Designation of Origin
FTAP	Food Tourism Strategic Action Plan
LSAP	Local Sourcing Action Plan
M&S	Marks and Spencer
NS-SEC	The National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification
OPCS	Office of Population Censuses Surveys
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WIMD	Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

List of Figures

List of Appendices

Chapter One

Introduction

"Ethical shopping is just another way of showing how rich you are. The middle classes congratulate themselves on going green, then carry on buying and flying as much as before".

The Guardian, July 2007

"The idea that shopping is the new politics is certainly seductive. Never mind the ballot box: vote with your supermarket trolley instead".

The Economist, December 2006

This thesis argues that we can readily observe class culture in the practice of 'alternative' food consumption. In so doing, and by virtue of their mutual consideration of the exploitative relations that drive wider inequalities, the thesis brings together the scholarly fields of class analysis, environmental sociology and sustainability science. In this way, those who explore the class dimensions of consumer culture (Bennett *et al*. 2009, Warde 2000) and those who have long theorised the inter-relationship of nature and society (Macnaghten and Urry 1998, Redclift and Woodgate 2000) are thought to have much in common. Indeed, with the contemporary consumer tides turning towards 'ethical', 'sustainable' or 'alternative' consumption, these bodies of work seem well placed to contribute to the burgeoning field of 'sustainability science'. While this field emerges as an inter-disciplinary bastion for understanding global environmental change, it has so far shown relatively little engagement with sociological forms of analysis. By exploring the class dimensions of 'alternative' food consumption, this study contributes a sociologically informed analysis to these interconnecting fields of scholarship.

1.1 Context

Inspiring this study is the widespread movement towards 'ethical consumption'. First of all, it is puzzling, particularly as a sociologist, to ascertain what is at all 'ethical' about 'ethical consumption'. Reduced carbon emissions, alleviated third world poverty and restored biodiversity cannot, surely, be met by continued consumption? Apparently, it can. According to the companies that sell the necessities and luxuries of everyday life as well as policy makers themselves, consumerism is not the problem. Instead, the challenge lies with the sort of product consumed, and the prices paid for them. While considerations made to pay a fair price for the products we consume and to lessen the environmental impacts of our actions appear honourable, these seem only to scratch the surface of the challenges faced by late modern society. Under certain conditions, we might even think of 'ethical consumption' as worsening the very problem it seeks to address. That is, to consume in a particular fashion neglects the problem of consumption itself. Suspecting that 'ethical consumption' allows us to have our 'green' cake and eat it too, there are wider sociological questions to be asked here that challenge the integrity of its purpose to make 'good' the consumer shopping basket.

As such, a second concern lies with a suspicion that the practice of 'ethical' consumption is figured in the reproduction of class culture. In the face of the declarations that class is 'dead' (Pahl 1989) this study thus contributes to the body of sociological work that remains convinced of its importance. Indeed, by taking on board the conjecture that consumption offers greater potential to explore class than production (Saunders 1990), this study pursues a line of enquiry most famously associated with the 'cultural turn' (Abbott 2001). That is, the priority given to employment aggregates as a measure of class is no longer considered sufficient as an indicator of social position (Crompton 1998). Such a focus on culture gave way, for example, to the axes of age, race, ethnicity and gender to explain social positions and the inequalities between them. On the one hand, this 'cultural turn' brought with it the abandonment of structural analysis altogether (Devine *et al.* 2005) with more theoretical consideration given to identity as a fluid and subjective construct. While this study does not pursue anti-foundationalist social theory, it does consider the cultural face of class identity and its expression through consumption. In this way, the thesis makes use of Bourdieusian social theory, which is applied for it offer a means to explore the expression of class in a manner that is mindful of both culture and the structures that underpin them.

Crucially, inspiration for this study emerges from a concern with the movement towards 'ethical' consumption on the one hand and the battle for class to be recognised as a sound explanatory concept on the other. It seems, from observing how shoppers acquire and talk about their 'ethical' purchases that this practise is at once figured in identity work. Indeed, Cloke *et al.* (2005) describes this process of displaying the 'ethical' self as 'moral selving', while Littler (2009) even describes the practice of 'sanctimonious shopping' as a means of consciously adopting a moral stance that can be displayed to other shoppers. A symbol of the moral self, the carrying of a jute bag might convey one's responsibility towards others and the environment. A suspicion guiding this study, then, is that the accomplishments of class identities are involved with such practices of 'sanctimonious shopping'. The most obvious way in which class can be thought of as linked to 'ethical' consumption is by considering the structural base that underpins this practice, where all cannot partake with the same verve. Put simply, 'ethical' consumption costs more financially than its 'morally corrupt' counterpart, creating clear means of demarcation between those who are 'ethical' shoppers and those who are not. Not simply drawing attention to the structural inequalities underpinning contemporary consumer practice, this study explores how class manifests itself through culture and not simply through one's occupation. However, to suggest that class is manifest in culture is not to say that it can necessarily be observed at theatres and opera houses. Instead, culture is thought to be comprised of common understandings and negotiations about what is or is not reasonable or normal. For Raymond Williams (1958) culture is 'ordinary' and is comprised of everyday practices that together make a social world, from reading and eating, to walking and talking.

By taking the view that culture is 'ordinary' this study also supports the notion that class cultures manifest in everyday practices of consumption (Warde 2005). Indeed, class may even be figured in cultures of 'ethical' consumption. Again, by exploring this conjecture, this thesis brings together two relatively separate fields of scholarly enquiry; that of class analysis and environmental sociology.

1.2 Sociology, Environmental Change and Consumer 'Choice'

As a discipline, sociology has been gradually realising its potential to make an empirical and theoretical contribution to environmental, economic and social concerns that together seek to form a new development paradigm. Not least, the extensive works in environmental social science undertaken over the last three decades are testament to this. Here, the inter-relationship of environment and society (Pretty *et al.* 2007) is recognised as key to understanding the contradictions of contemporary capitalism (O'Connor 1996) maybe, even, over and above the exploitation of human labour. Driving social change is, then, not solely the resistance to the exploitation of workers but the domination and exploitation of nature in the name of Western style 'progress' and 'development' (Macnaghten and Urry 1998). Indeed, the founding fathers of sociology, particularly Marx and Weber, recognised that capitalism planted the seeds of its own destruction with its neglect of the environment and its disregard of finite resources. The inherent contradictions of building an ever-growing society dependent on resources such as oil, land and water, then, are identified in a corpus of theories concerning the 'greening of Marxism' (Benton 1996). As such, a recognition of the fallacy of abundant Western 'progress' has prompted empirical and theoretical investigation of what it would mean to 'slow down'. Within the disciplines of social science and philosophy, the works of Gorz (1994) and Soper (2007) theorise the transformation of capitalism as underpinned by an 'alternative hedonism'. For these writers, reducing work hours, consuming less and more creatively marks the break with the 'rat race' that the Frankfurt School saw as central to the survival of capitalism.

More recently, Wainwright (2011) draws attention to mounting interest from sociologists in the study of climate change. Sociology, it seems, is 'warming' to the study of climate change. Contributing to the emerging field of 'sustainability science', Urry (2011) makes a case for putting 'society' into climate change research in his most recent book. Other sociological contributions involve understanding the social processes of making climate projections (Yearley 2009). From this, we can see that the sociological imagination is turned towards this topic. Questions of social order, social change and cultural identities are then making their way into climate change debates that have until now been largely dominated by the behavioural sciences. That is, the drive towards 'ethical consumption' has been predicated upon a faith in individual consumer choice as a sufficient driver of social change. Here, the intricacies of social reproduction are reduced to the matter of an attitude, behaviour or choice

and appear to neglect the complex cultural dynamics that shape everyday social life. To make better use of the social sciences' intellectual resources, Shove (2010) argues that we move beyond the dominant paradigm of 'ABC' – 'attitude, behaviour, choice'. This paradigm assumes that individuals are driven towards particular forms of behaviour as a result of their attitudes and behaviours. That is, with the appropriate advertising, and the right causal factors and external drivers they might choose to adopt pro-environmental behaviours. Taking issue with this neglect of context, it is suggested that social practices (Giddens 1984, Schatzki 2002) be considered as the unit of enquiry, where a social practice is taken to be the outcome of other social practices and performances. Carrying out a particular task, then, not only involves the performance of that task itself, but is interconnected with other practices that each in turn reproduces what is considered normal or reasonable. As such, practices are dynamic and are reproduced over time and under particular conditions. Not necessarily becoming institutionalised and objectified (Berger and Luckmann 1966) the social order as we know it is considered in flux, and is so as the result of our everyday actions.

This concept of 'practice', then, acts as an invitation for sociologists to contribute to debates about global environmental change. Focusing on the different social practices that interlock on an everyday basis, rather than on external drivers of 'behaviour change' seems a fruitful basis from which to gain insight into the social world that now faces momentous environmental challenges. This thesis contends that while important contributions have been made by the social sciences, the socio-cultural dynamics of climate change have up until now been largely neglected. Through the analysis of 'alternative' consumer practices, it is argued that efforts to realise sustainability in the face of global environmental change must first accomplish a nuanced understanding of the cultural and social dynamics underpinning everyday life. Indeed, to explore the class dynamics of 'alternative' consumer practice, this study does so from the perspective of food.

1.3 'Alternative' Food Consumption: An Appetite for Change?

Necessary for the maintenance of human life as we know it, consumption has also widely been considered a cultural practice central to all *social* life (Douglas and Isherwood 1979). The consumption of food in particular has such cultural resonance and has certainly become 'politicised'. Here, processes of globalisation have been considered to have created a distance

not only between producer and consumer, but between consumption and its consequences. Although not always making an example of food, Klein (2000) makes the case that consumers in the developed world exploit the labour and environmental resources of those in the developing world. Consumer obsession with acquiring more and more is fuelled, she argues, by the corporation, whose logos and brands take centre stage in reconfiguring social life. Charting the emergence of resistance to such corporate power, we can see how the study of anti-consumerist consumption has gathered momentum. That is, the contemporary consumer has been mobilised to stand against the practices of transnational and multinational corporations that exploit child labour and fail to meet standards of fair working conditions. Gathering continuous momentum is, then, what Micheletti *et al.* (2004) refer to as 'political consumption'. Here, the consumer is said to find expression for their beliefs not through political action but through adjusting their consumption accordingly. Resistance to unfair global labour practices is, then, initiated by the consumer 'vote'. As responsibility shifts toward market forces of supply and demand, the consumer becomes further separated from the consequences of their actions.

Similarly, Gabriel and Lang (2006) suggest that the contemporary consumer is unmanageable. The many faces of the consumer portrayed by different traditions of consumer research - the rebel, the chooser, the victim, activist, citizen and the identity-seeker to name but a few – they argue, are inadequate to explain the complexity of the contemporary consumer condition. Nevertheless, the contemporary consumer is invited to consider the political, social and environmental problems generated by particular products. Fair trade coffee, cotton and handicrafts, free-range eggs, ecologically oriented cleaning products and construction materials, organic food and wine are but a few examples of such artefacts. Overarching these consumer practices is the conjecture that three potential futures envision the wake of resource scarcity; 'business as usual', 'dramatic constraint' or pressure towards 'sustainable consumption'. Whichever of these gains prominence, we can see that consumption in all forms is in crisis. Whether speaking of 'extraordinary' or 'ordinary' consumption (Gronow and Warde 2001) the carrying capacity of the planet is being overstretched, with no sign of abating. Our exploitation of nature through overconsumption and overproduction forms what O'Connor (1996) calls the 'second contradiction of capitalism'. Thus, not only is labour exploited by capitalism, but nature itself. Arising from a concern over such exploitative relations are consumer movements expounding the benefits of 'ethical' (Harrison *et al.* 2005) 'sustainable' (Jackson 2006) or 'alternative' consumption (Kneafsey *et al.* 2008).

As an 'ordinary' (Gronow and Warde 2001) form of consumption, food is gaining increasing attention from social scientists. Unlike the consumption of 'extraordinary' (ibid.) items such as cars, designer clothing and labour saving technological devices, food is consumed by everyone albeit in different amounts, at different times and in different ways. As a "highly charged and contested field" (Lien 2004:1) food reveals dilemmas fundamental to modernity as increasingly it becomes involved in controversies at a transnational level, particularly as it has over time become less localised and more globalised (Ritzer 2004). Resisting the globalisation of food has most commonly been met by appeals to eat food produced and sold locally. For the benefit of local economies and local environments, shortening supply chains and grounding these within local economies has become central to the project of sustainability (Arce and Marsden 1993). Food, then, embodies the contradictions of late modernity, and provides a unique site for the study of contemporary consumption. Indeed, with the 'politics of food' gathering momentum around more and more issues, the age old problem of its unequal distribution remains largely under-researched. Despite the industrialisation of its production, some still starve or go undernourished while others reap the benefits of an advanced system of production and distribution. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations estimate that 925 million people were undernourished in 2010. In Sub-Saharan Africa is the highest proportion of these. While alleviating such inequalities at the transnational level is of paramount importance to relieving world hunger, this is not the purpose of this study. Instead, this thesis explores a less well understood element of contemporary food politics. By exploring how inequalities play out *within* high consumption societies, it is argued that we may reach a more nuanced way of dealing with environmental change at the local level that engages with the needs of consumers across a diverse social, cultural and economic landscape. Indeed, Morgan (2010) argues that 'ethical consumerism' as part of a 'progressive narrative of care' is insufficient to meet the challenges of climate change, particularly when considering issues of social justice on the international 'foodscape'.

Crucially, the challenge here is somewhat different to that faced at the transnational level. Within high consumption societies, access to food is considered relatively secure. There appear, however, stark inequalities in the *quality* of food consumed according to social class. By and large, the academic literature emerging from nutritionists and social scientists suggest that middle class people generally have healthier diets than working class people (Hupkens *et al.* 2000). Despite efforts to address these inequalities, it appears that the new 'politics of food'

adds another layer to this inequality. It is a contention of this thesis that the growing numbers of initiatives that purport the moral and ethical imperatives of food consumption exacerbate and create anew such inequalities. These, it may seem, reproduce the distinctions between classes on a cultural and structural level that have been widely thought of as 'dead' (Pahl 1989).

Again, what is not so well understood is how inequalities in access to food play out *within* high consumption societies. What is even less understood is the way in which class *cultures* mediate these inequalities. That is, this study seeks to explore the differences between consumers not merely on the grounds of occupation, but through the everyday practice of shopping for and talking about food and in the context of a growing field of 'alternative' food practice. This field comprises the many different practices of 'alternative' food emerging; from community gardening, farmers' markets, community food co-operatives to sheep adoption schemes (its produce is sent to its adoptive parent in the mail). This thesis argues that with the emergence of such a field comes its incorporation into the world of cultural consumption. However, situated in a field of food consumption that is marred by inequalities, 'alternative' food consumption seems not to escape the same trappings as conventional food. The moral, ethical and political status given to 'alternative' food marks it with a further degree of separation from conventional 'good' food. That is, a balanced diet of conventionally produced food has formed the consistent advice from the UK's Department of Health (DOH). Now that there are added pressures to consume differently in order to ameliorate the industrial system of food production, this study explores how this may have brought to the fore new inequalities. This is explored through a case study of an 'alternative' food network. At a farmers' market and community food co-operative situated within a deprived community in Cardiff, the practices and talk associated with 'alternative' food consumption are paid attention.

Commensurate with the scholarly literature that surrounds food politics, the term 'alternative' food is used rather than 'sustainable' or 'ethical' food. This term has acquired prevalence amongst scholars seeking to explore food as a means of reconnecting with nature (Kneafsey *et al.* 2008) and as a means to achieve environmental sustainability (Renting *et al.* 2003) social justice (Guthman 2008) and anti-commoditisation (Bryant and Goodman 2003). However, taking care over suggesting that such settings do in fact represent an alternative to the status quo, the term is adopted critically. As such, it is not the purpose of the thesis to

assess the effectiveness of such initiatives, but to explore the importance of class in mediating 'alternative' food practice.

1.4 Research Design and Research Questions

1.4.1 How is alternative food consumption accomplished?

Hailed by Stoecker (1991) as a comprehensive research strategy, this case study explores *in situ* expressions of class at both the market and the co-op. In this way, the deployment of mixed methods of data collection facilitates an understanding of '*how alternative food consumption is accomplished'*. Indeed, observing interactions between consumers and producers alike at both the market and the co-op provides a means of familiarisation with practices of 'alternative' food consumption. Not simply a means of familiarisation, the 'field notes' and 'scratch notes' (Jackson 1990) made over a two year time-span contributes substantially to the data set as a whole. Here, the interactions observed between customer and market producer/co-op volunteer are considered revealing of their entirely contrasting socialities.

1.4.2 How does class figure in 'alternative' food practice?

To explore the conjecture that social actors no longer 'speak' class (Savage 2005) this study also contributes methodologically, empirically and conceptually to the body of work that explores the resonance of contemporary class identities. An objective measure of class is achieved by a survey administered to the consumers of both sites; the Riverside Farmer's Market (hereafter 'the market') and the Riverside Community Food Co-operative (hereafter 'the co-op'). Here, asking questions about income, occupation, educational qualifications as well as parents' occupation and qualifications, provide a means to measure the objective class position of respondents. Indeed, the survey also acted as a tool for recruitment in that it invited respondents to participate in further research. Of the 149 respondents of the market, 10 were interviewed. At the co-op, of the 12[1] respondents, 10 were interviewed. During these semi-structured interviews, a considerable methodological risk was taken in order to bolster the internal validity of the findings. By making no mention of 'class', and instead asking

---

[1] There are around 10-20 customers signed up to the co-op at any one time.

about practices and routines of food shopping, about where they live and what they like to do in their spare time, discussions of class were left to arise of their own accord. Where appropriate, documents such as cookbooks, policy action plans and statements are considered.

Although the thesis supports Bourdieu's concept of class as a relative position, it does so with some critical amendments. By exploring the resonance of class within 'alternative' food practice, the thesis takes on board the concept of lay normativity. That is, as Sayer (2005a) argues, in exploring class, we explore what matters to people. Rather than thinking of different foods simply as different modes of display, some foods are considered better than others. Some are 'posh' but some are also 'good'. If class does indeed figure in 'alternative' food practice, it would seem further thought be given as to how 'alternative' food futures can be constituted around the relations of inequality that figure in the production of these distinctions. Analysis of participants' talk, observed *in situ* and elicited through semi-structured interviewing provides a means of exploring this conjecture.

1.5 The Research Sites

Chosen for their situation within the same community, the market and co-op comprise the research sites. Photographs are provided in Appendix 1. As the community scores high on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) the market was set up, according to its manager, in order to provide better access to fresh food to the local community. As the market has become increasingly popular, the local community is less and less visible among its customers. Instead, a greater representation of the local community can be found at the co-op. Selling bags of fruit, vegetables, salad and later stir fry, the co-op is an entirely contrasting space to the market.

The market usually comprises twenty five to thirty stalls and is situated on the embankment of the River Taff. Early each Sunday morning, the Market Association's team and the producers themselves set up the stalls. These are laid out in a linear pattern with a walk-way in between to hold the 1600 (approx.) customers. The co-op customer base is far smaller than the market. Indeed, customers pay for their produce in advance, for upon picking up their bags, they make and pay for their next order. In stark contrast to the market, the co-op operates from within the

local community centre. Around the corner from the site that hosts the market every Sunday, the co-op works on the basis of volunteers who give up their time for at least four hours every Tuesday morning. Throughout the two years of participant observation, volunteers have come and gone. Customers have even become volunteers. Among the volunteers are women and men ranging in age, ethnicity and nationality.

1.6 Thesis Structure

To review the literature, *Chapter Two* discusses empirical studies of food and class. In this way, the Chapter makes the argument that practices of 'alternative' food shopping are culturally meaningful, and indeed offer a means of exploring further the relationship between class, food and culture. To consolidate the theoretical underpinnings of the thesis, *Chapter Three* explores the theoretical treatment given to the study of class within sociology, before considering the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Andrew Sayer in particular. It is their conceptual frameworks that together form the theoretical approach of the thesis. In this way, Bourdieu's concept of class as 'position' is applied. That is, in understanding one's relational position to be anchored by a wider system of differences thus forms a 'practical philosophy' for the study of class. Bourdieu's framework is of course not taken aboard without recognising critical modifications made of his conceptual toolkit. By drawing upon the work of Sayer (2005a) in particular, as well as Lamont (1992) and Southerton (2002) the Chapter explores the moral significance of class as played out within a site of 'alternative' food consumption.

Having outlined the theoretical position of the thesis, *Chapter Four* discusses the mixed methods of data collection employed. To explore the cultural as well as the structural elements of food consumption in relation to class, this case study adopts the methods of participant observation, survey, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. Taking into account the methodological difficulties of studying class when it is widely thought that social actors no longer 'speak' class (Savage 2005), the Chapter considers how the thesis contributes methodologically, empirically and theoretically to the study of class 'dis-identification'. Further reflections are then given to the epistemological tensions involved in doing so when adopting a Bourdieusian conceptual framework.

Having discussed the existing literature as well as the theoretical and methodological tools employed, *Chapters Five, Six* and *Seven* present empirical material gathered via mixed methods of data collection. To set the scene, *Chapter Five* presents findings from the survey administered at the market and co-op. Bolstered by observations made while volunteering at each site, the settings seem to be characterised by entirely different socialites. In contrast with the market, the customers of the co-op know each customer by name, and often live in the same community, have the same neighbours and intimate knowledge of each other's lives. Exploring further the talk and practice around food shopping observed at these sites, *Chapters Six* and *Seven* present data gathered from semi-structured interviews with customers of both the market and co-op. Their talk about food and the everyday practices that surround its consumption reveals not only that class finds expression through direct speech, but the ways in which such talk is constructed suggests that there is support for Bourdieu's concept of class as a position taken relative to an 'other'. *Chapter Seven* pays particular attention to the role of food as a resource employed in consolidating these positions taken in the social field. These, the Chapter argues, are consolidated through the formation of moral boundaries. That is, boundaries *between* positions within the social field are considered to be maintained by virtue of *moral* judgement of the 'other'.

Considering the multifarious challenges faced by conventional food supply chains, *Chapter Eight* argues that there appears to have emerged a field of 'alternative' food consumption. This field seems not only ground from which to observe class but appears figured in the very maintenance and reproduction of class culture. In short, contrary to the widely held assumption that class is 'dead' (Pahl 1989) it is argued that class can be recognised through observing participants' practices and talk about food consumption. Indeed, not simply the means of routinely provisioning the home (Lunt and Livingstone 1992), the act of food shopping is also taken to be a meaningful cultural practice. As such, by exploring the subjective and cultural as well as the objective and structural elements of class inherent to the practice of 'alternative' food consumption, class is seen to be enunciated and indeed reproduced through 'position taking'. Here, to secure a position in the social field it is argued that social actors become engaged in discursive moral derision of the 'other'. Food, it seems, is figured as a resource that enables such distinctions to be made. This provides empirical and theoretical support for Bourdieusian sociology.

To re-cap, contributing empirically to debates that expound the significance of class in contemporary British society, this thesis explores the act of *shopping* for food. Not simple the means of routinely provisioning the home, it is understood as a meaningful cultural practice. Indeed, through direct speech, participants candidly position themselves in relation to 'others'. Mostly, self-professed middle class participants separate themselves from working class 'others' by virtue of their professed moral commitment to 'good' food. Evidence of such a strong interface between class, food and culture may indeed prove consequential for those who seek substantive alternatives to conventional foodways. That is, by elucidating the moral significance of class and its role in mediating the very social relations central to 'alternative' food practice; it would seem that those seeking to ameliorate an unsustainable food system may do so with a sound understanding of the cultural dynamics underpinning them. In this way, the thesis carves a role for sociological enquiry in the field of sustainability science.

Chapter Two

Consuming the 'Alternative': Food, Class and the Resurgence of Distinction?

From a number of disciplinary perspectives, food has received much scholarly attention. Anthropologists, for example, have considered the cultures that are reproduced through eating. Clinicians have explored the nutritional characteristics of food while historians have charted changing patterns of food consumption as concomitant with the emergence of civilised society. Sociologists, having taken these contributions in hand, extol the social significance of food. Having examined these contributions, and indeed the emergence of the sociology of food, this Chapter argues that there is a clear route from which to move forward with this project. That is, although much sociological treatment of food has considered the role of social class in shaping its consumption, debate remains over the significance of class cultures in shaping consumer preferences for some foods over others. For example, in 1960's France, Bourdieu (1984) found that preferences for particular foods as well as the form that meals took within the home conveyed class distinctions. Conversely, Bennett *et al.* (2009) find that these distinctions are not particularly evident within the contemporary British home. Instead, eating out is seen as the arena for the display of distinctive class identities (Warde and Martens 2000) in lieu of those considered by Bourdieu (ibid.) to take place at the family dinner table. Having explored studies pertaining to the class dimensions of both 'eating in' and 'eating out', this Chapter argues that the research gaze be turned towards spaces in which consumers shop for food that is later consumed within home. While food shopping has been famously considered by Lunt and Livingstone (1992) as an act performed for the purpose of the mundane and routine provisioning of the household, studies of 'alternative' food consumption suggest otherwise (Zukin 2008). As such, this Chapter argues that the relationship between class distinction and food purchased at sites purporting to present 'alternative' means of shopping for food warrants further empirical investigation.

First of all, this Chapter explores empirical studies of food and class within the social sciences. While there is a wealth of literature relevant to each of these areas in their own

right, this Chapter considers the empirical studies that concern the subjects of food and class together. Finally, this Chapter explores the emerging literature pertaining to studies of 'alternative' food consumption. In doing so, this Chapter considers the extent to which studies of 'alternative' food consumption can lead us towards more nuanced ways of exploring class distinction.

2.1 Social Science, Food and Class

2.1.1 The Social Science of Food Choice

The early 1990's saw a growing interest in food amongst sociologists, particularly with Anne Murcott's flagship Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) research initative 'The Nation's Diet'. Again, sociology was allegedly put 'on the menu' in Beardsworth and Keil's (1997) invitation to the study of food and society. With chapters focusing upon the social dimensions of the food system, the social organisation of eating, and patterns of preference, this book provided an overview of sociological contributions to what has been and remains an extremely interdisciplinary field of research. Under the banner of rural sociology, Miele (2006) has charted the relationship between consumption and culture in the case of food. Citing literature from a sociological tradition this Chapter represents recognition of the growing 'canon' of sociological work on food and if not class, then along the lines of social differentiation and contemporary identity politics. Similarly, a reader in 'Food and Culture' (Counihan and Van Esterik 1997, 2008) boasts collections of essays that deal with the culture of children's food consumption as well as with issues of class, gender and ethnicity.

Arising from the ESRC 'The Nations' Diet' research programme, is a collection of essays that mark the social science contribution to understanding the issues surrounding food choice in Britain. Notably, Caplan *et al*. (1998) diverge from conventional understandings of food choice as based upon individual taste. Instead, they suggested that food choice be considered within in its social and cultural context. Here, empirical material was collected via interviews, food diaries and participant observation in Lewisham and Newport. These were conducted with a wide range of people from varying socio-economic backgrounds as well as from 'health and food professionals' such as doctors, health visitors and food retailers. Interviews covered topics of shopping, food preparation, eating out, dietary changes, diet and body

image to name but a few. A central premise of this study was to take seriously the social and cultural constraints faced by people in maintaining their diet. With respect to class, Caplan *et al*. (ibid.) considered the extent to which dietary subcultures were determined by particular socioeconomic backgrounds. Two means of measuring class were used; participants own definitions of their class background and the Office of Population Censuses Surveys (OPCS) definition of class. They found that while some households on low incomes tended to purchase cheap and calorie-dense foods, others were tenaciously inventive in attempting to maintain a healthy diet and to serve 'proper meals'. Moreover, people living on low incomes were seen to have restricted dietary choices, particularly when compounded by problems of feeding children on a lone parent income or state benefits.

Similarly, classed patterns of food consumption were noted by Mennell *et al*. (1992). In their book entitled 'The Sociology of Food: Eating, Diet and Culture', they suggest that "higher socio-economic groups are generally reported to consume a greater range of foodstuffs which are more likely to accord with the nutritional orthodoxy of the day" (ibid p.54). The case studies discussed by Mennell *et al.* (ibid.) examine the types of food consumed by professionals, high and lower income groups. In England and Wales, the consumption of brown bread and rice, skimmed milk, vegetables and fruit are associated with professional groups, whilst diets high in animal fats are common to lower socio-economic groups (Blaxter 1990). Given that by the early 1990's an interest in the relationship between class and food had seen somewhat of a revival, there emerges a literature grappling with the cultural and social dimensions determining diet. Before discussing this literature in depth, the Chapter discusses further the empirical studies that explore the links between class and food from a nutritional health perspective.

2.1.2 Class, Food and Nutrition

The comprehensive summary of the sociology of food provided by Lupton (1996) begins with a discussion of nutritional science. Here, she suggests that a highly instrumental view of food had rather dominated research into eating practices. More recent examples of this are noted by Prynne *et al.* (2002) whose secondary analysis of data collected from the 1946 British birth cohort included a nationally representative sample of 4,419 children of four years of age. The data for this research was collected in 1950 in England, Scotland and

Wales, where they conducted a cross-sectional analysis of consumption of selected food groups, energy and nutrients from one-day dietary recall records. Findings revealed a decreasing frequency of consumption from the highest social class to the lowest of vegetables, fruit, orange juice, bacon, cake and biscuits. Non-rationed foods such as bread and potatoes were universally consumed across all social classes. However, fruit and vegetables were also not rationed, yet they observe a disparity in their consumption across classes, with the higher income groups consuming more of them and more frequently. They suggest that there may have been a better response to the health messages administered by the Ministry of Food by the more educated classes.

Corroborating this assumption, Coveney (2004) observes that parents with higher incomes were more likely to discuss food and health in technical terms informed by contemporary nutritional messages. This qualitative study explored socio-economic differences in parental lay knowledge of food and health. In-depth interviews with forty families - twenty each from two socio-economically divergent suburbs – were examined. The data pointed to a difference in lay knowledge used in order to inform understandings about food and health in various social classes. In sum, high income families were seen to speak of eating habits in terms of nutrition and food risk. Low income families described children's eating habits in terms of outward activity such as their ability to play effectively, not getting sick and growing well. Coveney (ibid.) links this finding with that found by Bourdieu (1984) in the French context. Here, those from a working class background are considered more likely to see food as a fuel and immediate means of sustenance, and to see the body as a site for physical work and action. In contrast, middle class groups are seen to view the body as a site for aesthetic distinction, as a cultural form embodying good taste and style. Essentially, family food choice is seen as located within a social and cultural context, and as differentiated across socioeconomic groups.

Similarly, by exploring the relationship between food, class and culture, Hupkens *et al.* (2000) conduct a cross national study of class differences in the 'food rules' imposed by mothers on their children. Questionnaires were given to 849 women living in middle class or lower class districts in Maastricht (Netherlands), Liege (Belgium) and Aachen (Germany) in 1993 and 1994. These were distributed in order to establish the number and types of foods that mothers both restricted on the one hand and on the other allowed to their children. They found that class differences in the number of restricted foods were to some extent explained

by class differences in taste. They suggest that mothers in higher social classes prescribed more healthy foods and imposed most restrictions on their children's diets. Their adoption of a Bourdieusian framework here demonstrates some effort to explore the social and cultural context within which food choice rests.

More recently, research conducted by Darmon and Drewnowski (2008) in the area of clinical nutrition has recognised that diet quality follows a socioeconomic gradient. From a US perspective they find a social gradient in diet quality but in concluding, suggest that nutrition research should "not lose touch with reality" (ibid. p.1113). By this, they suggest that the promotion of high cost foods to low income people without taking food costs into account is not likely to be successful. While the above studies claim some allegiance to the exploration of cultures of food consumption, it seems that their analysis of the relationship between food and class focus primarily upon objective socioeconomic classifications of class as a variable in food consumption. From this it seems that greater attention be paid to class cultures as played out around food. This has been particularly fruitful within the field of cultural studies and sociology and it is to this field that this Chapter now turns in order to elucidate the areas of the literature to which this thesis anticipates making a contribution.

2.1.3 The Origins of Food in Sociological Analysis

Sociological treatment of food is said to have leaped from the confines of the sociology of nutrition, now being recognised as a sociological endeavour in its own right (Nestle 2010). In other words, studies of food and culture have made it onto the sociological map (McIntosh 2010). Before discussing the most recent developments in the sociology of food, culture and class this Chapter begins by discussing the earlier contributions to the field of food and culture. From a structural functionalist perspective, and from the fields of both semiotics and cultural anthropology, early contributions arise from the work of Levi-Strauss (1966), Barthes (1973, 1975) and later, Mary Douglas (1975) and Douglas and Isherwood (1979). Here, food is considered very much the matter of culture with patterns of food consumption considered to mark particular occasions, both ordinary and extraordinary. By regarding food as a language of communication, structural functionalist perspectives bring to the study of food and culture a lens through which to consider what is represented by food. Such

perspectives consider the elements of our culture that are embodied by the meals we eat, and of course in how we eat them.

From a structural functionalist perspective, food can be considered representative of the patterns and means of organisation of the wider social world. Levi-Strauss' (1966) 'culinary triangle' underpins such structural functionalist analysis. Here, meals are seen as constructed within a system of oppositions. The culinary triangle comprises three points within a triangular semantic field; the cooked, the raw and the rotted. Lying underneath this triangle are further oppositions between the elaborated/unelaborated and nature/culture. The roasted potato rests on the side of nature given its direct meeting with fire in cooking, and the boiled potato on the side of culture, given its contact in becoming cooked is made with water and a pan. Put differently, boiling demands cultural mediation in the form of a pan, whilst roasting does not – for it is presumed to be cooked on a fire and not in a now conventional oven. The cooking methods of a society are, then, a language in which it "unconsciously translates its structure – or else resigns itself, still unconsciously, to revealing its contradictions" (ibid. p. 43). Food, from a structural functionalist perspective (Levi Strauss 1965, 1968) can then be understood as providing a key to unlocking an understanding of any social structure.

In his essays on 'steak and chips' and on 'wine and milk', Barthes (1973) famously notes the capacity for food to convey meanings that correspond to the wider social system. In his contribution to the analysis of a European Diet, Barthes (1975) claims that wine is not simply wine, nor is sugar simply sugar. Instead, these substances are considered as institutions that imply a set of images, dreams, tastes, choices and values. Food, as the "first need" (ibid. p.30) of (wo)man is highly structured, with substances, techniques of preparation and habits that each form part of a system of differences. It is these differences that form systems of signification, and comprise a means of communicating by way of food. By asking what it is that these foods signify, Barthes conducts an analysis of French advertising. This analysis identifies three groups of themes; food as commemorative, food as the anthropological situation of the consumer and food as an experience of health. The commemorative is seen in the appeals made to the French to partake each day in their national past through the consumption of particular foods. This analysis is mirrored in his essay on 'steak and chips' wherein the eating of steak is seen as a way of "being part of the nation, it follows the index of patriotic values: it helps them to rise in wartime, it is the very flesh of the French soldier…" (Barthes 1975:63). Similarly, as the "alimentary sign of Frenchness" (ibid.) chips

signify a form of nationalism. Imagined memories are brought to bear through the processes of signification made use of by advertisers. Viewers are reminded of an (imagined) collective memory of a rural idyll, of placing one's hands in the soil. It is in this sense that the French are seen to participate in a 'myth' of being in and being part of a particular vision of France. Such a theme is then seen as transported into a situation. That is, to eat a snack bar is seen to communicate very different messages than the consumption of the business lunch. Each, however are transported into the social world of the modern workplace, a sign of participation in modern life.

This line of thinking is continued by Mary Douglas (1972). For Douglas, food systems are seen as analogous to the social system. In 'Deciphering a Meal', Douglas (ibid.) suggests that the patterns of rules that categorise animals can be transposed onto those that govern human relations. This suggestion underlines the central argument made in this piece, where she makes explicit the rules governing Jewish orthodox food prohibitions. These rules are based on conceptions of holiness and purity. The abomination of the pig and its dismissal from the Jewish dinner table is said to be analogous to the classification of animals. These criteria are based on the animals' degree of holiness associated with its derivation from water, land or air and based on their defining features. In this sense, all the ordered systems of the meal are representative of greater ordered systems such as that of the animal world, or even the rules of a poem. Taking this concept of food rules as representative of wider structures operating within the social world, Douglas and Isherwood (1979) chart the anthropology of consumption in their influential text 'The World of Goods'. With consumer goods representing a system of information and communication; the social universe as we know it was seen as constructed on the basis of such commodities. Rather than seeing goods as necessary for subsistence or for competitive display, Douglas and Isherwood suggest that commodities were necessary for "making visible and stable the categories of culture" (ibid. p.38). In taking this assertion to task, sociological works have turned to the practice of consumption to understand the categories of culture. For example, clothing has been subject to much semiotic analysis to date (McCracken 1990, Fiske 2011). Moreover, while the analysis of food has not continued along such a tradition, several authors have drawn from these in influencing their work. In viewing food as a means of communication, Sindey Mintz's (1985) analysis presented in 'Time, Sugar and Sweetness' explores changes in sugar consumption over time. Here, he calls for a study of the everyday in modern life, of the

changing character of "humble matters as food" (ibid p. 102) with attention to its production, its consumption and indeed, the emergence of and variation in its *meanings*.

Attention to such humble matters as food is paid by Anne Murcott (1983) in an edited collection of essays relating to the social significance of food. Building upon the semiotic and anthropological works discussed above, this collection boasts contributions that decipher the language, and indeed the social significance of the wedding meal (Delamont 1983). Here, Delamont (ibid.) explored the suggestions made by the mass media in relation to wedding menus. This analysis explores the messages carried in relation marriage, the 'proper' wedding meal and the 'proper' role of women. In another essay, the meaning of food across two generations with regard to the 'moral' is considered. Here, Blaxter and Paterson (1983) observe via interviews with fifty eight three-generation families that 'goodness' in food is as much about moral as it is about nutritional values. Moreover, in a discussion of 'eating virtue' Atkinson (1983) illustrates the general social and cultural issue of understanding what it means to speak of 'good' food. Strong cultural assumptions with regard to the character of 'proper' food are found in a BBC radio programme on the topic of pre-cooked frozen meals. Demonstrating that food has cultural significance, Atkinson (ibid.) points to the ways that foods are laden with meaning about what is natural, proper and virtuous.

Echoing the analysis of the "alimentary Frenchness" of steak and chips offered by Barthes (ibid.), De Soucey (2010) delineates how foods comprise cultural and material resources that respond to and affect political agendas. In this article, 'gastronationalism' is developed as a concept to understand the juxtaposition between globalism's homogenizing tendencies and the resulting emergence of new form of identity politics. This concept explores the development of culinary nationalism and its role in fostering a sense cultural patrimony. It is De Soucey's contention that "gastronationalism facilitates national claims of cultural patrimony for foods because it performs similar symbolic boundary work in creating exceptions, [to free trade] under the veneer of culture, within otherwise open-market structures" (ibid. p. 436). Research involved an in-depth case analysis comprising four months of ethnographic fieldwork and interviews in France. This included ten *foie gras* farms, seven production facilities, a Parisian gourmet food exposition, local markets, tourist offices museums, shops, restaurants and a hotel management school. Ultimately, this study sought to understand how nation states and industries use *culture* to protect their markets. Means of creating cultural differentiation between nations is achieved via an appeal to a

shared national and cultural identity. In the case of *foie gras*, appeals were made to tradition and patrimony in seeking to achieve EU PGI (European Union Product Designation of Origin) legislative protection. Crucially, this study reveals the uses of food as a material, symbolic and cultural vehicle for the protection of both the economy and identity of particular places. This study demonstrates clearly the links between the identity of a nation, its economic interests and its cultures of food consumption in protecting and preserving status within the context of globalisation and free trade.

These studies have paid great attention to the role of food as a cultural artefact, and not simply a nutritional substance or as 'fuel'. However, there is little discussion of class in relation to food culture. From this, it seems that a commodity such as food, and the related human practices that are carried out around practices of food consumption, do in fact carry social meanings that are communicated by social actors in carrying out those very social practices. While the essays discussed above do not deal directly with the practice of gathering food, it seems that further study of such a practice may be revealing in light of recent trends towards 'alternative' food consumption. While consumption cannot be reduced simply to the act of shopping (Warde 1997) it seems that a sociological analysis that explores the settings within which consumers are engaged in the practice of shopping for food may offer nuanced understandings of the relationship between food and class culture. This thesis will address this lack of attention by exploring class cultures as played out through 'alternative' food shopping.

Studies pertaining to the practice of 'alternative' food shopping are examined at the close of this Chapter. For now, the Chapter extends the analysis of the relationship between food and culture discussed above, but with the added dimension of class.

2.1.4 Food as an Expression of Civility

The earliest sociological analysis of food and class can be traced to works that considered the emergence of civilised society. An example of such work can be found in Norbert Elias' (1978) work on the 'Civilising Process'. Elias (ibid.) has been considered the foremost sociologist to have traced developments in the regulation of emotions in Western societies.

Crucially, this is a process that he maps onto the changing class structures between the sixteenth and nineteenth century. The breakdown of the feudal order alongside the formation of capitalism brought with it a changing landscape of class relations, one that saw the development of a particular set of manners. These manners pertained to a sense of honour and dignity. With the formation of a court society he suggests that there was a gradual containment of emotions. This provided somewhat of a contrast to the perceived indulgence and violence of medieval times. With the emergence of several classes other than those of the 'landowner' and 'serf' arose a heightened sense of social differentiation, particularly amongst those occupying the middle ranks of society. Differentiation was thus achieved by the regulation of one's emotions, and indeed the management of one's bodily functions. It was no longer, for example, seen as appropriate to spit, vomit or urinate in public. By then, people were seen to suffer great anxiety over the execution of the 'correct' behaviours. Here, the focus upon the context of a changing class landscape is coupled with observations made of the body as a site of good manners. Extending Elias' (ibid.) theories of the civilising process, Mennell (1985) explores the case of food.

In 'All Manners of Food', Mennell (1985) accounts for the arrival of table manners and notions of propriety around eating. Through an analysis of etiquette manuals he charts the gradual process of refinement. Touching food with hands and putting half-eaten food back into a common bowl were practices that came to be reviled by European court society. Such expectations of propriety did not apply solely to nobility, for these etiquette manuals were said to be widely distributed within schools. Given the food shortages faced in the Middle Ages through to the Renaissance, there was little need to impose restrictions on the amount of food eaten, other than for seasonal shortfalls and its associated religious fasting. In an essay discussing the civilising of the appetite, Mennell (1991) saw increased food security in the eighteenth century to bring the need to impose controls over appetite. Here, Mennell (ibid.) notes that there was a growing pressure upon members of court society to differentiate themselves - though food and feasting - from the lower classes. The moderation of one's appetite and the consumption of delicate and refined dishes could then be seen as a sign of distinction. Moreover, the development of *haute cuisine* in France during the seventeenth and eighteenth century formed a hierarchy of tastes that allowed for further forms of distinction. To be restrained and to have 'proper' manners, then, became associated with the ability to select and discriminate among foodstuffs. To have 'good taste' was thus considered to be proficient in negotiating the hierarchy of distinction then emerging across the French gourmet

foodscape. Mennell's work has sparked much discussion in the sociology of food, for it raises questions about the emergence of 'taste' as a marker of distinction on the one hand, and its democratisation on the other. This perceived demise of 'good taste' as a marker of distinction has been the subject to much controversy. Indeed, with the 'increased variety' offered by late capitalism, we are thought to be more cosmopolitan in our preferences for cultural goods. The Chapter now turns to explore this conjecture.

2.2 Changing Food Choices and the Problem of Variety

2.2.1 Changing Tastes

Taste as expressed through food consumption has been explored in contemporary Britain by Warde (1997). This case study explored the effects of social and cultural change on British food habits from 1968 to 1992. The data collected explored how people are advised about what to eat as well as the patterns of individual and domestic practices of food purchasing and preparation. Here, Warde (ibid.) forms criteria of four 'antinomies of taste'. This maps what he considers to be the competing rationales that pervade in legitimating the choice for one foodstuff over another. These comprise oppositions between novelty/tradition, health/indulgence, economy/extravagance and care/convenience. These provided a systematic basis for analysing data pertaining to contradictory guidance about food offered by the mass media, social contacts, and government. These categories were derived inductively from a content analysis of recipe columns in women's magazines from 1968-1992. These antinomies of taste are described as comprising "the structural anxieties of our epoch: they are parameters of uncertainty, apt to induce feelings of guilt and unease" (ibid. p.55). This refers to the anxieties over the plethora of choices offered by neo-fordist processes of production and consumption, and the corresponding angst over what one consumes says about one's lifestyle.

Across the antinomy of novelty and tradition, Warde (ibid.) finds evidence for a concern about greater variety in the British diet, as well as appeals to awaken interest in 'traditional' cooking. Appeals to tradition within women's' magazines were, however, considered as somewhat an appeal to an *imagined* tradition. Citing Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), evidence is found for the 'invention of tradition'. As such, recipes for bread and butter puddings found

in the 1960's magazines referred to ingredients such as suet, stale white bread, golden syrup and mixed fruit. In 1992 an 'alternative' recipe is offered, including ingredients such as brioche, amaretto, almonds and skimmed milk. The sense of tradition evident in the 1992 magazines are seen to offer a more "reflective sense of tradition" (ibid. p.66). The appeal to both tradition and novelty are considered, then, to imply that both the strange and the familiar are equally desirable in the 1990's. Traditional dishes are seen to provide a sense of security in an ambivalent modernity, and the novel brings an element of excitement to the table. From the data and arguments put forward by Warde (ibid.) it seems that adding a 'twist' of the novel can be regarded as a compromise between the antinomy of novelty and tradition.

Similarly, the antinomy of health/indulgence is considered to mark a trend towards the individualisation thesis (Giddens 1991, Beck 1992). Here, Warde (1997) argues that appeals to readers to both take care of their health and to indulge physical and emotional cravings are thought of as arousing anxiety amongst consumers. Again, a concern for controlling the body is central here, for it is said to convey messages about self-control and discipline. The slim body is representative of the control and self discipline of the middle classes – a phenomenon that resonates with Bourdieu's (1984) analysis of French consumers. Necessitated by the abundance of foodstuffs now available in the West that has lifted the imposed constraints of scarcity, the average Western consumer now faces obligations to impose constraint upon themselves. Such calls for self-discipline alongside media messages to indulge in 'naughty but nice' cream cakes and confectionary are seen to contribute to the burden of the modern consumer in negotiating such an antinomy.

Thirdly, the antinomy of economy/extravagance pays attention to symbolic differentiation in food consumption. While contributions of the sociology of consumer culture indicate the insufficiency of neoclassical economics in understanding consumption, Warde (1997) points to the naïveté of dissolving materialist accounts of food consumption altogether. Instead, attention is paid to class differences over time - through the analysis of recipe columns and family expenditure - revealing that class differences do indeed persist in food consumption. Although the distance between classes is not considered to have dissolved, it is thought that there is insufficient evidence to declare the persistence of a hierarchy similar to that observed by Bourdieu (1984). Magazines displayed a commitment to economy and thriftiness whilst references to extravagance since 1968 had been eliminated by 1992. Warde (1997) attributes this to the growth of eating out as a form of extravagance replacing the practice of

entertaining with opulent foodstuffs in the home. Here, while some class differences are found to persist in food consumption, they are not considered to be a source of social conflict. Instead, one might find that the working classes reject professional advice, and find a patronizing voice emanating from the middle classes (ibid.). It seems that, in light of an expanding field of 'alternative' food consumption, that such an observation be revisited. This thesis suggests that the growing phenomenon of 'alternative' food consumption offers a novel site for the study of food, class and distinction that may offer a nuanced insight with regard to such social conflict.

Lastly, the antinomy of care/convenience represents a trade off faced by the modern household with regard to food preparation. Warde (1997) finds that such a trade-off is most likely made by women, who in their roles within a domestic division of labour, care for and reproduce ideas of a 'proper' family (DeVault 1991). Moreover, in making the compromise between care and convenience, it is women who carry the burden of guilt while making choices between the 'proper' meal that is suggestive of care and love, and the convenient meal put together around the busy schedule afforded by the 'triple shift' (Hochschild 1983).

Overall, this study offers a comprehensive analysis of changing food tastes in Britain. Much of this work concentrates on taking issue with Stephen Mennell's (1985) thesis of 'increased variety and *diminishing* contrasts' in food choices. Here, the abundance of foodstuffs afforded by industrial production is considered as a signpost for the diminishing contrast between food consumed by different classes. However, Warde (1997) finds that despite an abundance of foodstuffs there remain nuanced differences in food consumption between classes. That said, Warde (ibid.) concludes that it may be more appropriate to speak of 'increased variety, *increasing* contrasts', given that it remains possible to predict the social class of a consumer by studying the contents of a consumer's shopping basket (Tomlinson and Warde 1993). As discussions of 'distinction' appear central to sociological treatment of food and class, it seems appropriate that Bourdieu's treatise on 'Distinction' (1984) now be explored in some detail.

2.3 Distinction

2.3.1 Bourdieu and 'Distinction'

Thorstein Veblen's 'The Theory of the Leisure Class' (1899) marks one of the earliest examinations of the relationship between culture and class. His commentary on American culture brought to bear an analysis of 'conspicuous consumption' - a form of consumptive display that characterised the doings of the aspirational classes. Ultimately, it was the open display of free time and care taken to show wastefulness - 'because one could afford to' - that was seen to reflect pecuniary status. The most comprehensive examination of social class and taste within a contemporary setting has, however, been undertaken by Bourdieu (1984).

While his work is underpinned by the theoretical concepts of the 'field' 'capital' and 'habitus', these concepts are reserved for discussion in Chapter Two. For now, Bourdieu's empirical findings in relation to food and class are discussed. The analyses presented in 'Distinction' (Bourdieu 1984) are based upon a survey questionnaire carried out by extended interview and ethnographic observations in 1963 and 1967-68. This was administered to a sample of 1, 217 people in Paris, Lille and a small provincial town in France. His empirical work was founded upon a premise that;

> "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed".
>
> (Bourdieu 1984:6)

Here, cultural consumption is seen to figure prominently in fulfilling the social function of marking and legitimating social differences between social subjects. In understanding how such a system operates, he suggests that the "science of taste and of cultural consumption" (ibid.) consider the sphere of legitimate culture not as a detached sphere from that of the popular. In so doing, the relations which unite seemingly incommensurable 'choices' for one form of 'culture' over another can be understood. The taste for, or indeed the manifested

preference for one thing over another is most often justified by the refusal of other preferences. Thus, the aesthetic stance adopted by social actors in choosing cosmetics, clothing or even home decoration are considered as opportunities to assert one's position. Moreover, in asserting this position within social space, one's rank may be upheld or distance kept between one system of dispositions and another. To comprehend the nature of distinctive practices, and the ways that different systems of dispositions express themselves, Bourdieu subjected the entire set of survey data to multiple correspondence analysis. These questions involved probing for respondents' preferences in painting, music, radio programmes and books amongst many others.

Treatment of food is sparse, though not absent in Bourdieu's (1984) analysis. Amongst the working classes, he observes that necessity imposes a taste for the necessary. The working classes are distinguished by the "inclusion of salty, substantial, clearly masculine foods" (ibid. p. 382). These include soup, meat, and cheese. On the other hand, senior executives scored highest in the consumption of sweet foods such as jam and honey. In contrast, the working class meal is characterised by 'elastic' and 'abundant' dishes brought to the table. There is also an avoidance of dishes that involve the measuring of portions. Instead, the soup or the casserole is brought to the table and served with a ladle - a way of eating that does not restrict portion size or the potential for second helpings. All dishes are brought to the table at the same time, and stirring spoons shared to save labour – the ceremonious over use of cutlery and plates is considered an affectation. On the contrary, the bourgeoisie "is concerned to eat with all due form" (ibid. p. 196). In the bourgeois habitus there is an expression of order, propriety and restraint that is as applicable to eating as it is to dressing. Crumbs are brushed from the table before dessert is served. The meal marks aesthetic refinement, with focus on quality over quantity and style over function. For the working classes, food is seen to belong to the realm of 'substance' and 'being', and for the bourgeoisie to the realm of 'form' and 'appearance'. Crucially, the practice of eating, even within the family home, is here considered privy to distinction. It is to the understanding of the prevalence of distinction in food consumption in Britain that this thesis anticipates making a contribution.

Within a more contemporary context, and indeed beyond France, the extent to which cultures - and to some extent cultures of eating - represent practices of distinction are considered both by Michèle Lamont (1992) in the United States and by Bennett *et al.* (2009) in Britain. Each of these are now discussed in turn.

2.3.2 'Distinction' After Bourdieu

Having conducted 160 in-depth interviews with successful French and American upper-middle class men, Lamont (1992) provides a startling portrait of their means of separating themselves from the lower classes. Whilst paying some homage to the work of Bourdieu (1984) her work is suggestive of some neglect in his work to the moral dimensions of boundary formation between and within social classes. In the United States and in France, Lamont (ibid.) finds that boundaries are drawn on moral and socio-economic level as well as cultural. For example, in mobilising moral standards by which to evaluate people, French and American interviewees were seen to distinguish between the 'honest' and the 'dishonest. To be insincere by pretending to be someone that they are not, to claim knowledge of things that they did not know was reviled. Thus, amongst the interviewees there was sense of moral superiority that pervaded amongst those who condemned the 'social climber' and the 'phony'. Moreover, disobedience of the law and a lax work ethic was a source of disparagement and cause for moral boundary formation between their class and the 'other' – between 'us' and 'them'. Amongst the American upper middle class men, socio-economic boundaries were drawn between themselves as 'successful' against the 'losers' they disparaged. However, French interviewees were far less comfortable with discussing their 'success' whereas social positioning by means of 'power' and 'social background' were highly valued. Despite the predominance of moral and socio-economic consideration in the formation of their positions in the social field, culture is seen to remain central to the expressions of high status amongst both French and American interviewees. While the French stressed cultural boundaries more firmly than did the Americans, they were also drawn differently. The French interviewees drew cultural boundaries based on high culture, a propensity that was perceived differently amongst the Americans. In the USA, it was considered that there would be some form of reverse cultural discrimination if one was seen to err too firmly on the side of high culture. Intellectual elitism and cultural exclusion was, then, less evident amongst the American interviewees that amongst the French.

Above all, Lamont (1992) pays close attention to the discourses of boundary formation, particularly in relation to cultural refinement, success in the workplace and conspicuous consumption. However, there is little exploration of the role of food in maintaining such moral, socio-economic and cultural boundaries. Taking on board the importance of moral boundary formation to the study of class, attention is paid in this thesis to the formation of

such boundaries around *food*. While not paying direct attention to food, Lamont's (ibid.) concept of 'boundary work' has since been developed by Southerton (2002) in a community study of class identification in a new southern English town. Although the relationship between class and identification is not found to be straightforward, it is established that other factors figured prominently in the construction of boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. For instance, the town's social relations were figured around its conventions and reputations and the different patterns of geographic mobility served to configure these classed boundaries. To organise the data, Southerton (ibid.) employs Lamont's three status related frameworks as a heuristic tool. Thus, socio-economic, cultural and moral boundaries are understood as configuring boundaries of separation between 'us' and 'them'. Based on forty eight interviews with thirty five households with white, married homeowners between the age of thirty five and sixty five is a representative sample of the town's population.

The least affluent respondents' narratives are revealing of a sense of distinction gained from asserting one's sense of economy over extravagance. Boundaries are thus drawn between 'us' who are "down to earth" and 'them' who are "stuck up", "have come into money" and "think they are, like, above the likes of us" (ibid. p. 178). These are considered to mark the construction of a socio-economic boundary. Cultural boundaries are however constructed along lines of anti-cosmopolitanism and an outwardly expressed preference for custom over novelty. Participants speak of those who "show off" (ibid. p. 179) by drinking New World wines and travelling abroad. With reference to food, older respondents talk of liking to "recognise" what is on their plate, thus rebuking a general trend towards cosmopolitanism. Finally, moral boundaries are considered the clearest mode of group identification offered by this group, and were found to be drawn – much like Lamont (1992) - around a sense of honesty, the expression of a strong work ethic and personal characteristics such as "being down to earth" (ibid. p. 180). Here, there are echoes of what Skeggs (2004) perceives as the phenomenon of 'anti-pretentiousness'. This refers to the critique of pretension observed by Vicinus (1974) in music hall entertainment of the nineteenth century. Applied to a contemporary context, Skeggs (ibid.) discusses what seems to be a process of 'devaluing of the valuer'. Essentially, this is a process of derision, whereby the 'pretentious' who 'put on airs and graces' are mocked. Anti-pretentious humour, is, however, according to Skeggs (ibid.) a way of keeping the working classes "in their place" (ibid. p. 114). In so doing, mocking of those who 'put on airs' could be seen as serving as a reminder for the working classes to 'stay put', to enjoy what they have, and not to desire or hope for more.

The second group of respondents in Southerton's (2002) community study are described as having experienced short-range social mobility. They are considered as having marginally better socio-economic resources than the previously discussed group yet also possessing fairly low levels of social and cultural resources. Here, socio-economic boundaries are drawn between the Northern and Southern parts of the town and are based on position within a housing hierarchy. Respondents describe their area as "better" than the "rough" (ibid. p. 181) southern side of town. Cultural boundaries were drawn through expression of an aversion to common culture of being 'rough' noted in behaviour such as drinking beer at the breakfast table. Moreover, to look after one's garden was presented as a mark of cultural distinction over those whose garden was a 'mess'. With regards to moral conviction, family values are prominent. Respondents who claimed to take an interest in their child's education positioned themselves as separate from those whom they imagine do not take such a care, and who mostly inhabit the "rough" side of town.

The final group of respondents comprised of professionals living on the most prestigious streets of the town. These respondents are considered to possess high levels of social, cultural and economic resources. Much like the previous two groups, socio-economic boundaries are considered based upon the local housing hierarchy. With allusion to cultural boundaries, there were references amongst respondents to cultural refinement. For example, "I love good food, I love good wine, I love good holidays […] I also like experimenting, so we will try any cuisine as long as the restaurant has a good reputation…" (ibid. p. 184). Moreover, references to tacit cultural tastes shared with friends who "know the difference between Australian and French red wine" and whose embodied social differences mark them as separate from those who have "always got a cigarette in their hand" (ibid. p. 185). Likewise, moral boundaries are constructed around perceived shared values with regard to parenting and community responsibility.

Overall, class based social categories are found to be employed by respondents when describing the boundaries that mark 'us' and 'them'. It is then understood that "class formed the most significant social basis of identification for the respondents interviewed" (Southerton 2002:186). Indeed, such a finding is considered as support for a Bourdieusian schema of social identification. That is, economic, cultural and social resources are considered central to explaining the accord between the respondents in constructing

31

boundaries of separation and alignment. Indeed, these are considered as inherently class based forms of social categorisation. While Southerton (ibid.), like Michèle Lamont, pays homage to Bourdieu's (1984) schema, the *moral* is taken explicitly into account, an element that is considered as a "blind spot" throughout Bourdieu's work (Lamont 1992:184). Elucidating the prevalence of moral discourse around food consumption, this thesis pays attention to the moral dimensions of classed discourses around 'alternative' food consumption.

Further treatment is given to Bourdieu's (1984) treatise on 'Distinction' by Bennett et al (2009). Research is conducted with close to two hundred people involved in interview or focus groups in 2003. In so doing, this study explores the role played by cultural capital in producing and maintaining patterns of social differentiation and inequality in Britain. By involving further categories of social differentiation in their analysis, they engage with much of the critique of Bourdieu's (1984) work. Categories of ethnicity, age and gender as well as class are employed here. In addition to the incorporation of previously neglected categories, Bennett *et al*. (ibid.) take issue with three of Bourdieu's conceptual conjectures. In order to apply Bourdieusian frames of analysis in a British context, it is considered appropriate to question the salience of cultural capital. Secondly, they question the nature of homology across cultural fields. This refers to the tastes or 'elective affinities' that consumers may share according to their worldview (or class) across different fields. For example, middle class people may share tastes for a particular style of furniture, certain types of music and food. The field of food, music and furniture on the surface appear to have little to do with one another, except that certain classes share a homology of tastes across them.

Lastly, they consider the extent to which established middle class groups are set to advantage from the organisation of cultural forms. This study also takes seriously a further criticism of Bourdieu; that in 'Distinction' he dramatised differences in preferences for particular consumer goods and leisure activities that *highlighted differences* and distinctions between classes. That is, Bourdieu is thought to have neglected to focus upon the tastes and preferences that were *common* to all classes (Lahire 2004). Taking issue with this neglect, Bennett *et al*. (2009) find that contemporary cultural advantage is not so much pursued in order to gain advantage in the social field through 'snobbishness', but is accrued via the competencies of the social actor to 'bridge and bond' between expanding and proliferating cultural worlds. Also, systemic patterns of cultural taste and practice were, without doubt,

found across and within fields. At times, they find that personal differences and preferences did find some expression around core class patterns.

While the exercised and cultivated body is found to be an instrument of social classification - through sport, exercise, diet management and maintenance - the practice of eating, particularly within the home is not found to play a part in this. Much akin to the findings of the study as a whole, eating out was found to be a widespread activity across all social groups with sixty-two per cent of the sample eating a meal out for pleasure at least once a month. This is not to say that there is no evidence to suggest that distinction does not find expression in this activity. Rather, across social cleavages, there is evidence to suggest that people eat out *differently*. Having a taste for fish and chips proved most divisive, being most popular with the working classes and most disliked by educated and older professional-executive class" (Bennett *et al.* 2009:164). The young and less well educated demonstrate an aversion to French restaurants whilst those of a higher-class group declare French food as a favourite cuisine. There are little or no differences in preference observed along the axis of gender. Notably, there was a nomination of pub restaurants as a favourite across all social classes. Surprisingly little evidence is found for any difference between households high or low in cultural capital with regard to eating at home, other than to some extent in relation to social ritual and adequate nutrition (ibid. p. 168). Instead there are commonalities found across groups with regard to food preference. For example, across households with high and low cultural capital;

> "The meals described are almost all of one course, plus a drink and perhaps yoghurt, though more often for the children. Pudding is a rarity, with strong hints that sweets should be avoided because they are too pleasurable for everyday consumption. People talk as if they understand messages about healthy eating and to some degree care – people diligently recount the vegetables they prepare – but their behaviour is much tempered by circumstances. Children's preferences, making sure that everyone eats enough and personal tastes, are at least as prominent in the discussions."

> (Bennett *et al.* 2009:167).

Moreover;

> "The dominant discourse is of logistics, of time constraints and routines; the next most prominent being about sociable togetherness. While there is a

moral undercurrent to discussion of appropriate social ritual and adequate nutrition, symbolic distinction finds little place in family dining."

(ibid. p.168)

As such, this finding warrants further investigation, particularly given the limits found in Bourdieu's concentration upon cultural capital at the expense of the moral (Lamont 1992, Southerton 2002). Food consumed within the home, purchased at, say, farmers' markets and co-ops', may indeed be revealing of symbolic distinctions between what is deemed 'good' or 'bad'. As such, while there is little evidence for differentiation in the food consumed across households high and low in cultural capital, what is not known here is where these items are purchased, how these foods are prepared, presented, and assembled on the plate. It seems reasonable to imagine that there may be differentiation in the form that this "one course, plus a drink and perhaps yoghurt" (ibid.) takes. It is on this presumption that thesis explores the potential for sites of 'alternative' food consumption to present its shoppers with other means of conferring status. In this way, it may not be through the meal itself that distinction is achieved, but the performance of shopping at sites of 'alternative' food consumption, or indeed, both. To this end, studies undertaken in Norway, the United States and in Britain, have found class differences in food consumption to be significant, *even* within the home.

2.3.3 Distinction - Eating In

By making use of the 'Family Expenditure Survey' Tomlinson and Warde (1993) draw upon data gathered from over 7,000 households. The data generated here was found to support the notion that class differences persist around food. However, food tastes and habits were seen to operate along new lines of distinction. In this study, Tomlinson and Warde (1993) found they were able to predict accurately the occupational class of a household simply by reading the receipts from a week's food and grocery shopping. Significant differences are seen in the food consumption practices of different classes that imply different social practices, rendering social class as more than the realm of the economic. For example, the practice of eating out as well as the variance *between* choices of alcoholic drink expressed distance between different social classes. Therefore, if class is not distinguished purely on the basis of income, the *cultural* territory of class is still considered as having potential in explaining

contemporary class relations. That is, if social actors across all social strata share a propensity to purchase alcohol, this does immediately suggest that the cultural practices surrounding its consumption remain uniform across social classes. Instead, it seems reasonable to presume that different alcohol is consumed, with different modes of conviviality and even accompanied by different cultural activities.

Echoing Mary Douglas' seminal work 'Deciphering a Meal' (1972) Bugge and Almas (2006) explore the practices of a 'proper meal' amongst young suburban mothers in Norway, where preparing a meal is seen as a means of positioning oneself within a myriad of "culturally acceptable feminine subject positions" (Bugge and Almas 2006:203). Twenty five mothers are interviewed to establish how they think about and perform every day dinner related practices. The sample comprises those who describe themselves as 'ordinary'; thus as working or lower middle class, as well as some who describe themselves as 'different'; thus representing the urban middle class. Choices of dinner are seen to follow a strict moral logic, with some meals considered more 'proper' than others. For example, meatballs constitute either a 'proper' meal or a 'fast' meal, depending on the social position of the mother. Furthermore, such positioning corresponds not only with economic and structural relations of class, but *moral positions*. Indeed, young mothers are studied in this case for they are thought to be at a stage in the life course where women typically struggle to establish an eating pattern for their family, while simultaneously negotiating the dilemmas posed by the notion of a contemporary female identity in which chores, leisure activities and work life compete for prominence. As a terrain of such negotiations, the kitchen, as well as the person who cooks in it is considered to be involved in 'heavy' identity work (Bugge and Almas 2006). In order to uncover the class dynamics involved in this identity work, Bugge and Almas (ibid.) discuss the *ways* in which these women talk about the ingredients and dishes they prepare and even *aspire* to prepare. Crucially, it is thought to be insignificant that they did or did not *actually* eat fish every week, but the very fact that they *talk* about the benefits of regularly eating fish is revealing of the rhetorical patterns of everyday life (Potter and Wetherell 1987) that are, they suggest, rooted in classed moral discourses.

In their discussion of practical, social and biographical repertoires of dinner, Bugge and Almas (2006) demonstrate that food consumption is multifaceted. The strategies for preparing dinner achieved particular class identities. Dinner related practices are then seen to constitute class distinctions. For example, women who served macaroni cheese or a 'couple

of sandwiches' as a meal were looked down upon as an ideological 'other' by mothers of a higher social class. One 'different' urban middle class mother distinguished themselves from the 'other' by claiming that were they to prepare traditional Norwegian meatballs, that they would then seek to add something 'different' to separate it from the 'ordinary' recipe. Indeed, the 'ordinary' working to lower middle class mother dislikes 'new and spicy food' that is positioned in sharp contrast to the new taste for spice articulated by the urban middle class mothers. Cooking food, then, constitutes a practice that positioned their families within the class hierarchy. Similar results are noted in British studies, with balsamic vinegar considered as a resource of middle class positioning (Ashley *et al.* 2004). More recently, Mellor *et al.* (2010) explore how friendships are 'done' through processes of eating formally together within the home. They base their findings on the life history accounts of thirty six female members of a women's organisation and interviews with the adults of seven households as well as participant observation. On the basis of occupation, all participants are considered middle class. Here, dinner party events are described as a "lifestyle showcase" (ibid. p. 123). That is, dinner parties are thought of as a performance that if successful, confirms middle class identities. These middle class affairs are said to be revealing of the 'dark side' of middle class friendships where the anxiety felt by women hosts about getting it 'right' illustrates the very competitive nature of maintaining important social ties. Indeed, the home is an arena for such competition, where the hosting of a dinner party is considered key to the performance of gendered class identity. Moreover, Mellor *et al.* (ibid.) suggest that this performance is hinged upon the successful deployment of social and cultural capital. The findings presented by Mellor *et al.* (2010) may concur with those of Bennett *et al.* (2009) in the sense that symbolic distinction is still seen to play a part in eating out. The dinner party could even be considered a form of eating out, for one's practices of eating, and indeed one's family are on 'display' (Finch 2007) to those outside of the home. What seems clear here is that the boundary between what is considered as eating in, and what counts as eating out hinge upon the presence of an 'other' for whom a performance is given. It follows to explore whether there are other ways in which food destined for its consumption within the home becomes figured in a 'performance' of this kind.

While not exploring performance *per se*, DeVault (1991) provides a discussion of 'feeding work and social class'. Here, middle class cooking practices in the home are considered central to producing family, in obscuring class differences, and in "recruiting women into the project of perpetuating them" (ibid. p. 30). Her findings are based on interviews held with

thirty women and three men that inhabit a range of thirty different households from 1982-3 in the suburbs of Chicago. This research explores the significance of class relations for the conduct of what DeVault refers to as "feeding work" (ibid. p. 167). She suggests that in the United States – as a result of severe income inequalities – many must spend a greater proportion of their income simply to eat. This account pays attention to the structural as well as the cultural elements of styling family life around food. For example, there is a propensity for working class women to report rarely using recipes and to having stuck to traditions and routines learned from their mothers. On the other hand, middle class women speak of styling a meal in order to provide a platform for sociability and entertainment. In attention to the pervasive deployment of nutrition discourse across classes, DeVault contends that this does not suggest a lack of class differences in their use. Women from professional or managerial households are seen to closely follow and act upon media accounts of nutrition research. On the other hand, working class women are seen to show some awareness of such nutritional messages, but display a sense of uneasiness with expert advice. Instead, working class women were seen to adhere to general principles such as knowing "that vegetables are better than candy" (ibid. p. 218). As well as demonstrating that there are class differences in access to food, DeVault explores the culinary codes of working and middle class women, observing that 'new' middle class women - who had experienced social mobility through marriage - reject their mother's cooking practices. Much as Mellor *et al*. (2010) find in their study, in efforts to educate themselves into a particularly middle class lifestyle - through the use of magazines such as 'Gourmet'- it was the newly ingratiated middle class women that report anxiety over getting this new lifestyle performance 'right'. In this way, to understand the prevalence and form that class reproduction takes in the case of 'alternative' food consumption, this thesis considers the extent to which shopping provides an opportunity for such a classed performance.

Similarly, Lupton (1996) saw food as a means of self-improvement. Conducting semi-structured and focus group interviews with three different sets of people living in Sydney, Lupton (ibid.) finds that food is central to the practices of everyday life. As such, food is considered a means for the new middle classes to add 'value' to their lifestyle for its preparation is conceived of as an activity or hobby rather than a chore. Indeed, the more repulsive the food, the more status there is to be gained in the performance of culinary bravery. For example, one interviewee professes an enjoyment of having ordered "octopus eggs cooked in seaweed" (ibid.). For Lupton, this can be theorised as "reverse food

snobbery" (1996:128). To eat the obscure is, then, considered an effort to distinguish oneself as an adventurous 'gourmand'. That is, as separate from the characteristically working class meals.

Likewise, in their summary of works in the field of food and cultural studies, Ashley *et al.* (2004:69) make a case study of celebrity chef Nigel Slater. They contend that what and how we eat has a wider basis within class cultures and lifestyles. This case is made by suggesting that distinction may not lie in the food itself, but in the *way in which it is consumed*. Nigel Slater's advice on making "frightfully common" chip butty is linked to the trend of "reverse snobbery" (Lupton 1996) cited above. An excerpt from his book 'Real Fast Food' (1993) is seen to revoke the style of foodie reinvention of working class food by celebrating the "plastic" in favour of "real baker's bread". Nigel Slater also makes the point of reminding the reader to use "malt – yes I said malt – vinegar" (Slater 1993:176). He even goes on to suggest that this recipe "provides the perfect antidote to the char-grilled-with-balsamic-vinegar-and-shaved-parmesan school of cookery" (ibid.). This employment of the "frightfully common" is seen by Ashley *et al.* (ibid.) to serve the purpose of informing and educating the new middle classes into the art of lifestyle through the performance of "reverse snobbery" (Lupton, 1996). Such a performance is later attributed to celebrity chefs making available to *almost* everyone "the distinctive poses, the distinctive games and other sign of inner riches" (Bourdieu 1984:371) that were previously only the preserve of the intellectual elite. As such, it remains to consider how such performances figure in the world of 'alternative' food consumption. To this end, this thesis considers how these settings may serve the act of distinction. It does so guided by the suspicion that these sites of 'alternative' food consumption may be replete with evidence of such 'reverse snobbery' at work.

Along a similar vein, and within the discipline of cultural studies, attention has been turned to the celebrity chef, and their constructions of class around food. Jamie Oliver in particular has come under scrutiny as having made the transformation from a "lifestyle expert" to the "moral entrepreneur" (Hollows and Jones 2010). Following a textual analysis of the television series 'Jamie's Ministry of Food' they suggest that this text operates within a "wider discourse of class pathologization" (ibid. p. 308). His focus upon the working class diet in the Northern English town of Rotherham provides a stark example of this moral entrepreneurship as he suggests 'new' traditions for the British working classes. Rather than promoting British cooking, Jamie suggests that the working class inhabitants of Rotherham

adopt an 'authentic' and Italian culinary tradition. Moreover, the style of the programme invites the (middle class) viewer to distance themselves from the show's participants and to instead identify with Jamie. The depiction of the ideal 'store cupboard' boasts bags of organic flour, and Sainsbury's 'Taste the Difference' condiments and spices -ingredients that would not easily stretch within the budget of those on a low income. As the camera pans onto children eating kebabs from Styrofoam packages, the viewer is invited to produce class differences as they become figured in separating themselves from Jamie's participants, and go along with Jamie on his crusade. They are offered "a respectable distance from 'the problem', and his fans are reassured that they, with their rocket and parmesan, are not contributing to the nation's troubles" (ibid. p. 316). De Solier (2005) suggests that television cooking shows operate to service class distinctions based on culinary taste. In their analysis of Jamie Oliver's television show 'Jamie's Ministry of Food' Hollows and Jones (ibid.) suggest that class relations play out at the level of the symbolic, and can be read through the analysis of popular media culture. Similarly, de Solier refers to the tastes and preferences cultivated by such 'TV gastronomes' (Bell and Hollows 2007) that are ultimately seen to reproduce class distinction in food. Class, it seems, is steadily making its way back into socio-cultural analysis.

The extent to which 'eating in' can be considered a practice yielding symbolic distinctions is, however, contested. It follows to suggest that greater consideration be paid to the nature of symbolic distinction in food consumption that takes place within the home. It is to this very tension that this thesis pays empirical attention. While there seems a boundary of separation between research that focuses upon 'eating in' and 'eating out', this thesis explores the intermediate spaces of distinctive food consumption that have emerged in between the home (eating in) and the restaurant (eating out). Before exploring sites of 'alternative' food consumption as a site for such investigations, this Chapter turns to examine further the empirical evidence that has supported the theory that greater distinction is to be found in the practice of 'eating out'.

2.3.4 Distinction - Eating Out

As the signs of 'inner riches' (Bourdieu 1984:371) become more ubiquitous, the means of conferring status evidently become more nuanced. This trend is captured by Warde and Martens (2000) in their study of eating out. This study comprises semi structured interviews conducted in Preston, Lancashire in 1994 and a survey conducted in London, Preston and Bristol in 1995. With a focus on the effects of group membership on taste, this study charts the growing practice of eating out as a means of displaying status. Following the work of Bourdieu (1984), they suggest that there remains continued empirical evidence to support the claim that class-based distinctions in food consumption persist. However, the claims to distinction made by participants of this study are seen as far more nuanced than pursuing cultural capital as a 'gourmand'. Instead, Warde and Martens claim that it is the more general ability to "display knowledge experience and judgement about cuisine as a cultural and aesthetic matter [that] is a key marker of social discriminations" (ibid. p. 75). This survey question has respondents reporting whether or not they had eaten out at a particular venue over the preceding twelve months. The aim of this question is to ascertain preferences for or aversions to one venue over another, and indeed, to discover the socio-demographic basis of these. By presuming that having eaten out in such establishments equates with a preference for such venues, they find that respondents with a higher income, educational qualifications, and social class background preferred Chinese and Thai restaurants. In the consumption of fast food, however, there is little differentiation across socio-demographic classifications.

This finding is discussed against the backdrop of the 'increased variety' (Mennell 1985) thesis introduced above, and the 'cultural omnivorousness thesis' (Peterson and Kern 1996). This 'omnivorousness' thesis contends that individuals no longer recognise distinctive differences between cultural goods. Instead, consumers are seen to appreciate a wide variety of cultural goods, viewing each of these as of equivalent status and value as the next. It is even suggested, following their analysis of musical taste, that this represents a democratisation of culture. The extent to which the 'omnivorousness' thesis holds is, however, greatly contested. In an examination of different commercial sources of meals, Warde, Martens and Olsen (1999) discuss the 'problem of variety' and 'omnivorousness' in the practice of eating out. Here, they maintain that the pursuit for variety in consumer experiences can to some degree be recognised as expressing social distinction. To establish

an analysis of the relationship between eating out practices and the 'problem of variety' Warde *et al.* (ibid.) construct an index of respondents' visitation of particular commercial venues over the period of a year. A 'variety index' is then used to perform a linear multiple regression analysis, indicating a breadth of exposure across a variety of commercial eating our venues. They suggest that a breadth of exposure can be explained by high household income, having a university degree, being in the middle of the age range and being in a white collar occupation. They uphold that "this is prima facie evidence that a distinct and comparatively privileged section of the population achieve greatest variety of experience" (ibid. p. 114). This is particularly the case where respondents with high levels of economic and cultural capital visited a wide range of ethnic restaurants. If concern for variety is without doubt correlated to the exhibition of refinement, a familiarity with ethnic cuisines could then be seen as especially distinctive amongst the privileged. Though this assertion is made tentatively, Warde *et al.* (1999) suggest that experience of foreign cuisine can be seen as a mark of refinement in Britain. That is, pursuit of *variety itself* is significantly influenced by socio-demographic characteristics (ibid. p. 113). From this, it follows to consider the extent to which such marks of refinement find expression through the pursuit of variety when shopping for food later to be consumed within the home. Although Bennett *et al.* (2009) find some homogeneity in the form that meals typically take within the contemporary British household, it seems reasonable to imagine that class distinctions may find some expression through the pursuit of particularly 'omnivorous' ingredients. Greater attention is paid to this conjecture in the following section.

2.3.5 Omnivorousness and Distinction

Having found that variety itself is significantly influenced by socio-demographic characteristics, Warde *et al.* (1999) suggest that this affords partial corroboration for a much stronger interpretation of 'omnivorousness' offered by Bryson (1996). That is, the celebration of less traditionally snobbish dishes is thought to reinforce distinction rather than fostering the democratisation of 'high' and 'low' culture. Variety is, then, seen as a mode of distinction in its own right. While Warde *et al.* (1999) and Warde and Martens (2000) do not find strong evidence in their study to suggest that this strong interpretation of the 'omnivorousness thesis' - that contends that omnivorousness upholds distinction can be upheld - it is nonetheless considered partially sustained. Moreover, Warde *et al.* (ibid.) suggest that their

research design was not geared towards testing such a hypothesis and that further research that seeks to understand the prevalence of omnivorousness and distinction in Britain is needed. This thesis will make such a contribution through the study of consumer practices of food shopping at sites of 'alternative' food consumption. Before examining the literature pertaining to such sites of 'alternative' food consumption, this Chapter turns to a further studies of 'omnivorousness' undertaken in the USA and in Britain.

More recently, Johnston and Baumann (2010) have undertaken an analysis of gourmet food writings in the USA. This work sought to explore the prevalence of distinction across the gourmet foodscape. Here, Johnston and Baumann (2007, 2010) do not only find fault with the omnivorousness thesis, but go further by suggesting that the omnivorousness thesis in fact *supports* the notion of distinction. They argue that the appearance of democracy in food culture across the gourmet foodscape serves to hide more subtle means of conferring status. These are seen to serve both the legitimation and reproduction of inequality across the social field. Their analysis of all 2004 issues of the three most popular gourmet food magazines in the USA; 'Gourmet', 'Saveur' and 'Food & Wine' sought to examine how food production and consumption is contextualised in the resulting one hundred and two articles. Subsequently, thirty interviews were carried out with self professed 'foodies'. These interviews sought to explore foodie discourse and the framing of 'worthy' foods.

Gourmet food writing is seen to define a repertoire of foods that *should* be desired by the reader. The selectiveness of the ingredients listed, rather than the explicit exclusion of the consumers on the grounds of price is thought to constitute subtler means of conferring status. Such subtle means are drawn out via two dominant frames found in gourmet food writing: *authenticism and exoticism*. Within the frame of *authenticism*, smaller appeals to geographic specificity, simplicity, personal connection and historicism are made in order to activate 'omnivorousness'. These are achieved by reference to the origins of certain foodstuffs brandishing the most local of olive oil, while simultaneously, the simplicity of certain dishes are valorised by drawing on examples of small scale production of 'unschooled' cookery "from mama's kitchen" (Johnston and Baumann 2007:181). Furthermore, personal connections are imported through championing the authenticity of the food created with the personal flair of the chef's artistic creativity. The dish is then seen to invoke a sense of originality, for this dish is presented as authentic and personal to *that* chef. A further strategy identified in gourmet food writing is that of engendering a sense of authenticity. As a

technique of validation, a sense of historicism is found through the connection of foods to their historic or cultural tradition. This, they suggest, requires a high degree of cultural capital, for highly specialised gastronomic knowledge (most commonly obtained from gourmet food writers) and a deep seated understanding of why authentic foods are finer than their industrially produced counterparts is said to be compulsory.

Gourmet food writing is also seen to legitimate omnivorous foods by drawing upon a frame of *exoticism*. The framing of exoticism refers to foods that are exciting and unusual, and ones that might offend the 'mainstream' taste bud. Unusualness and foreignness constitute part of the exotic frame, while excitement is bred through the write-ups that break food norms. The apparent democratisation of food as elucidated by proponents of the omnivorousness thesis (Peterson and Kern 1996) is said conceal these relations of distinction, allowing omnivores to both 'have their cake and eat it'. The 'having it' is represented by the consumption of superior goods, the 'eating it' constituting the guise of a democratised food culture while they remain the very arbiters of such 'omnivorous' good taste.

Much in line with the findings of Warde *et al*. (1999) discussed above, Johnston and Baumann (ibid.) discover that their respondents only refer obliquely to a preference for expensive and inexpensive food. Instead, they focus on "brow spanning food" (ibid. p. 195). This refers to the foods that may expand one's horizons, and invite us to move out of our comfort zones by tasting new or more exotic foods. Moreover, the symbolic boundaries drawn by 'foodies' between worthy and unworthy food are considered instances of omnivorous cultural consumption. In this way, the 'foodie' understands their food consumption as a matter of cultural and symbolic importance, and not solely the concern of sustenance. Here, it is the foodie that represents the consumer who is constantly concerned over the 'worthiness' of the food being consumed. To be 'worthy', the food is "successfully authentic and delicious" (ibid. p. 194). Importantly, the foodie simultaneously abhors the terms 'foodie' when aligned with traditional snobbery, and instead prefers to see themselves as pursuing excellence in food. Johnston and Baumann question the democratic availability of such excellent food and the choices of foodies are considered highly selective and discriminatory. Ultimately, their analysis concludes with the assertion that under the guise of omnivorousness there remain highly distinctive practices of differentiation. The hidden manner in which a rearticulated form of distinction indeed operate are said to afford greater power to these distinctions. That is, the system of 'omnivorous' ideas that here misrepresent

the realities of what are distinctive food practices that in turn serve the hegemonic reproduction of inequality in food consumption.

Johnston and Baumann's (2007, 2010) critique of the omnivorousness thesis, however, does not entirely capture the nuances of this debate. While contributing theoretically to a discussion of the cultural omnivore in relation to food, their study of gourmet food writing coupled with thirty interviews does not provide an overly convincing argument to suggest that the rejection of the term 'foodie' represents a shroud for reinforcing distinction via a mere guise of omnivorousness and cultural tolerance. Peterson and Kern (1996) do not for example suggest that the omnivore has a taste for everything indiscriminately, but instead see omnivorousness as a "standard of good taste" (Peterson 2005:264). A close reading of their work does not reveal proclamations of a democratised culture as a result of the rising omnivore. Instead, it seems that the 'increased variety' observed by Mennell in his book 'All Manners of Food' (1985) is questioned to a great degree by the omnivorousness thesis.

In responding to the challenge of understanding the location of the cultural omnivore in relation to class and distinction, Warde, Wright and Gayo-Cal (2005) carry out a study tailored to the investigation of this very dispute. Their study builds upon previous research pertaining to the cultural omnivore. In returning to participants from a previous survey, they are able to compare quantitative and qualitative data about the same people. Although this study does not focus on food, but instead explores the consumption of music, television and film, this study does offer further contextualisation of the omnivorousness debate within the British context. Overall, Warde *et al*. (ibid.) conclude that there is little evidence to suggest that the omnivore represents an 'ideal type'. Instead, we are warned that there is no "integrated aesthetic or social orientation towards cultural practice" (ibid. p. 160) amongst the omnivores identified within this study. That is, there is little evidence to show that there are patterns to the tastes of these cultural omnivores. Wide participation across cultural forms is, rather, seen to entail both a rejection of snobbery in some cases, but also the recognition that such wide participation does not include the consumption of 'consecrated' or indeed 'high' culture. The question that remains, then, is to explore further the extent to which consecrated culture remains a resource of distinction. Plural forms of omnivorous engagement with all culture are then seen to demand further attention. The distinctive baby, then, need not be thrown out with the omnivorous bathwater.

From the literature presented in this section, it seems that there remains a need to further an understanding of distinction in food consumption practices within the British context. Crucially, the discussions of distinction offered in the empirical studies above invite further research into the phenomenon of distinction disguised as cultural 'omnivorousness'. This thesis seeks to explore further this phenomenon of distinction in the case of food. By considering the prevalence of distinction in food consumption practices, this thesis will also consider the extent to which omnivorousness can be understood not within the frame of foodie discourse, nor in the context of eating out. Instead, this thesis will consider an emerging site wherein consumers are offered an 'alternative' means of shopping for food that will be later prepared and consumed within the home.

2.4 Class, Food and Sites of Consumption

2.4.1 Class on the British High Street

It has been well documented empirically that social actors now rarely speak of class, or identify directly with class. With this, academic studies of class partially dwindled. In seeking to explain the decline in academic study of subjective class consciousness, Savage (2005) does suggest that such experiences may appear to have seen such a decline for they remain *unspoken* rather than absent. When such utterances do occur, he suggests that they find expression in claims to being 'ordinary' and 'like everybody else'. This is not to suggest however that claims to distinctiveness do not find expression through symbolic acts of distinction, through, for example, the enactment of particular rituals of consumption. In her popular anthropological study of English behaviour, Kate Fox (2005) sketches - mostly for the benefit of oversees visitors - the 'rules' of English behaviour. Drawing on examples provided by sustained periods of observation at many public sites such as train stations, pubs, coffee shops, as well as within the homes and gardens of English people, Fox (ibid.) suggests that there is a 'class rule' that can be observed in many settings, even in 'M&S[2]'. "If you want to get an idea of the convoluted intricacy of shopping class indicators, spend some time observing and interviewing the shoppers in Marks & Spencer" (Fox 2005:233). This, she calls the 'M&S test', which she claims can be applied in order to make a quick assessment

---

[2] M&S is an abbreviation for Marks and Spencer, a British high street store that has sold clothes, luxury foods and home ware under it own brand since 1884.

about someone's social class without having to ask them about their family background, the price of their house or how much money they earn - for this, she contends, would flout the English rule of 'excessive politeness'. Here, Fox (2005) presents an analysis that resonates with the idea that class operates at the level of the symbolic, rather than being expressed openly via direct speech. For example, Skeggs writes of the "understated ubiquity of class" (Skeggs 2004:117) that is rarely spoken of but is alluded to and is ever-present through the symbols embodied in cultural artefacts. In this account, Fox (ibid.) suggests that class is a cultural phenomenon that is peculiarly English in the sense that class consciousness is omnipresent, but at the same time is denied expression in speech. Given the apparent invisibility of class it seems reasonable to suggest that one cannot begin to research and understand it. However, much like Skeggs (ibid.) Fox recommends that one unravels class at the level of the symbolic.

Different classes purchase different goods at M&S with the working classes purchasing food as a 'special treat' that she claims is much akin to eating out at a restaurant or ordering a 'take-away'. On the other hand, upper middle class customers are seen to purchase a greater amount of food than the working class customers, but also 'turn their nose up' at the sort of food purchased by the working classes; i.e. ready-made meals in pre-packaged containers. Lower middle classes are seen to purchase a wide range of clothing, whereas the middle-middle and upper middle classes are said to purchase items such as under garments and plain clothing given the reasonably priced and good quality of these garments, but would not like to be identified in an item that was obviously purchased at M&S, such as a floral dress. This study of the class rule applies to many other settings, but here, this example is given in order to demonstrate that class as a social and cultural phenomenon can be examined via acts of consumption. Given that social class is explored within the setting of food and clothing consumption on the British high street, it is reasonable to suggest that social class be explored within the context of a growing phenomenon of 'alternative' food consumption - sites that appear to have grown around a taste for the traditional.

2.4.2 Invoking 'Tradition'

The 'invention' of tradition is a term coined by Hobsbawm (1983). This refers to a social process whereby somewhat new activities are given legitimacy via the pretence that they are rooted in tradition, that they are in some way 'timeless'. As such, "traditions which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented" (Hobsbawm 1983:1). While some traditions remain alive or adapted, others are abandoned, later to be revived in a manner which bears little resemblance to its original. For example, since the industrial revolution, it is argued that 'invented traditions' map onto three forms. Firstly, they may work to establish or symbolise the social cohesion of an imagined community. Secondly, they may serve to establish or legitimise an institution. Lastly, a reinvented tradition may serve the purpose of facilitating socialisation, the inculcation of certain beliefs or the habituation of particular behaviours. Similarly, Giddens' (1990) analysis captures a form of reinventing traditions in an analysis of 're-embedding'. This refers to the process of recasting dis-embedded social relations so as to pin them down to local conditions of time and place. An example can be made of such re-embedding by referring to the emerging practice of 're-embedding' face-to-face interactions between producer and consumer in food purchasing. Ashley *et al*. (2004) suggest that since the Second World War, retailers have negotiated new landscapes of food provisioning – most notably marked by large sub-urban retail parks often hailed as perpetrating a homogenised shopping experience for the consumer. However, tendencies for supermarkets to be located on the suburban rim does not equate with a wholesale flight of food provisioning from within the city. Rather, urban markets are thought to create "textured" spaces of food consumption within the city (ibid. p. 113). Urban markets, while predating the now conventional supermarket, are not 'old' as such. Instead, they form a representation of the 'old' though invocation of a sense of tradition. That is, they 'reinvent tradition' by recapturing a "glimmer of what used to be" (Giddens 1991:147). Here, the somewhat alienated consumer is encouraged to 'relate' to food by purchasing directly from producers and traders. Markets are understood here as central to the project of reimagining a city's history. In their analysis of the 'Seattle Pike Place Market', Ashley *et al*. (2004) consider this site as a 'mythology' under construction. The roots of such sites in the growth of capitalism are denied in their pamphlets and spin-off cookbooks, and appeals to a pre-capitalist world of face-to-face interaction are made, while the alienating experience of shopping and shop work suppressed. Crucially, the consumers that frequent and have access

to such sites were not considered to represent a diverse classed and ethnic population. Such appeals to 'traditional', 'authentic' and 'pre-industrial' relations is revealing of what is considered to be an important feature of the contemporary food shopping landscape.

2.4.3 Emerging 'Alternatives'

Much like invoking a sense of the 'traditional', 'authentic' and 'pre-industrial' that has been central to the Slow Food and Fair Trade Movement, these concerns have formed what has been coined as 'alternative agro-food chains' (Arce and Marsden 1993, Ilbery and Kneafsey 1999, Sage 2003) or 'alternative' food relationships (Kneafsey *et al.* 2008). Here, the standardised supply and mass marketing of food in late modern capitalist societies has led to concerns amongst consumers over the homogeneity and diminished 'authenticity' brought about by industrial production methods. These methods are not rooted in specific locales as in pre-industrial times, nor are they considered ethical or moral, in the sense that they exploit animals, the environment and producers in developing countries. To speak of 'alternative' sites of food consumption is now common across scholarly literature, particularly in rural studies. As defined by the 'Encyclopaedia of Environment and Society' these sites can be described as 'alternative food networks';

> "new and rapidly mainstreaming spaces in the food economy defined by – among other things – the explosion of organic, Fair Trade and local, quality and premium speciality foods. In these networks, it is claimed that the production and consumption of food are more closely tied together spatially, economically, and socially; however the politics and practices of alternative food networks have more recently come under critical scrutiny from geographers and others as a narrow and weakly politicized expression of middle – and upper – class angst."

> (Goodman and Goodman 2007:2)

As a site of 'alternative' food consumption, farmers' markets have recently received greater levels of scholarly attention. Holloway and Kneafsey (2000) claim that they "hold the potential for a challenging of conventional production, retail and consumption patterns by alternatives which embrace discourses of the local, environmental awareness and direct contact between producer and consumer" (ibid. p. 49). The number of farmers' markets in the

UK have has increased to over 500 (FARMA 2008) since the opening of its first official farmers' market in 1997. It is worth noting here that existing markets selling similar produce re-branded themselves as farmers' markets at this time. Some did so in order to secure further funding.

La Trobe (2001) conducted a study of Stour Valley Farmer's Market in 1999. 146 customers were interviewed via a face-to-face questionnaire in order to establish their reasons for attending as well as their attitudes towards a number of 'food issues'. These included organic, genetically modified, local and seasonal food. She found that the vast majority of consumers interviewed (89 out of 146) claimed to attend out of 'curiosity' and for 'something to do'. This is considered to stem from the 'novelty value' of farmers' markets in the UK, given that the first one established in Bath, only in 1997. This novelty factor was found to wear off, with customers returning not out of curiosity, but to purchase fresh, healthy and/or organic food. Also, La Trobe (ibid.) notes that consumers would shop in groups, unlike in a supermarket, thus adding to the sense of sociability. While this case study draws attention to a form of sociality that can be considered distinctive from that evident in supermarkets, La Trobe does not consider in sufficient detail the reasons for this. Nor does this study regard the socio-demographic disparity between those who maintain attendance and those who do not as anything other than to do with finance. Given the theoretical and empirical objective of this thesis to study the prevalence of class culture, the empirical work will seek to go beyond mere socio-demographic description. Paying close attention to the socialities characterising a farmers' market, this thesis will consider the implications of this.

More recently, Carey *et al*. (2011) assess the decision making habits of farmers' market consumers by utilising Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour. This was used to capture the intention of consumers to purchase items at four farmers' markets in Scotland during the summer of 2009. Although they acknowledge the limitations of such approaches, they find from 159 questionnaires that 'resource conservation' was a motivating factor for consumers. This is attributed to heightened awareness of issues of sustainability. This rests in contrast to findings presented by Zepeda (2009). In her study of farmers' market shoppers and non-shoppers across a national random sample of 956 adults in the USA, Zepeda (ibid.) found that environmental, animal welfare and local concerns were not likely to trouble farmers' market shoppers over non-shoppers. Moreover, Zepeda suggests that perception of cost played a significant part in non-shoppers non-attendance of farmers' markets. As stressed above, this

thesis seeks move beyond such socio-demographic description by bringing a sociological lens to the study such settings of 'alternative' food consumption and class culture.

These studies suggest that there may be income inequalities that prevent some from attending farmers' markets, particularly Zepeda (2009), and indeed make suggestions to ensure the longevity of these sites. However, these studies take for granted that farmers' markets are indeed the preferred form for delivering the kind of 'alternative' food system described by Holloway and Kneafsey (ibid.). Critical treatment of the farmers' market, particularly within the USA context has been offered by Julie Guthman (2003) who reflects upon the emergence of bagged salad as 'yuppie chow' as well as the subjects of 'alternative' food practice (Guthman 2008). Rachel Slocum (2008) has further explored the reproduction of race in the growth of 'alternative' food. Their attention to ethnicity in particular stresses the 'whiteness' of farmers' markets, as well as 'alternative' food networks in general.

In an article entitled 'Bringing Good Food to Others' Julie Guthman (2008) suggest that current activism within the alternative food movement reflect 'white desires' more than those of the communities they seek to serve. Attention is drawn here to the race inflected missionary zeal that underpins alternative food politics in the USA. Research is conducted on students majoring in 'Community Studies' at the University of California. The objective of this study was to explore social positionality and white privilege within these movements through the accounts of the students, who upon enrolling sought to 'teach kids how to eat'. Students expressed an affinity with good food, a value that they hope to share with 'others'. They are surprised, however, to find that a passion for organic or farm fresh food does not resonate with African American youth communities as they expected. A student reports in her thesis that most of the youth were repulsed by organics, using terms like 'disgusting' 'dirty' and 'gross'. Moreover, a field trip to pick vegetables did not turn out as planned, learning that they "resented the expectation to work not only for free, but for white farmers (ibid. p. 440). In sum, Guthman suggests that such projects reflect a limited politics of the possible. It is not so much the prevalence of white bodies as the "associations of the food, the modes of educating people to its qualities, and the ways of delivering them that lacks appeal to the people they are designed to entice" (ibid. p. 442). Indeed, African American residents living within food deserts express a desire for conventional grocery stores, not 'alternatives' run by privileged white people who come around "wearing ripped up clothes and generally insulting everyone" (ibid.).

Furthermore, Sharon Zukin (2008) provides an analysis of emerging 'entrepreneurial spaces' such as farmers' markets that offer urban consumers the space to 'perform difference'. These are considered to produce an "aura of authenticity" based on the history of the area or the "back story" of their products (ibid. p. 724). Here, the 'alternative' consumer is seen to figure in a form of urban redevelopment that displaces working class and ethnic minority consumers. In so doing, the need to shop for food, and indeed, of socialising over a cup of trendy coffee, is seen a means of 'manipulating authenticity'. On the surface, it may be considered more common for modern discourses of consumption to be based on inclusion – 'buy one get one free', 'everyday low prices'. Zukin suggests, however, that upon closer inspection, the discourses of authenticity that play out in an urban setting reveals consumption practices that produce exclusion. The farmers' market, located on Union Square, New York is said to have enjoyed the great success afforded by a wider desire for a "special kind of authenticity: real food, locally grown" (ibid. p. 736). This park was notorious for drug deals before Business Improvement District took this in hand, to redesign it for a more refined public use. The norm of alternative consumption - she illustrates with ethnographic observations and interviews with shoppers – served the eventual function of driving away those who originally inhabited these spaces. That is, the inevitable fate of an 'outpost of difference' is to become 'the next big thing' and the next big area earmarked for gentrification. It is this process that excludes 'others' from their own communities, their own space.

While Zukin's (2008) analysis considers the farmers' market as such an 'outpost of difference' destined to exclude its original inhabitants from "their space" (ibid. p. 145) this article does so mostly through a discussion of racial politics. Here, a study of 'alternative' consumption has been telling of the complexity of differentiation between cultural products. That is, the desire for exposed beams in a converted loft in SoHo goes hand in hand with their inhabitants 'consumption of authenticity' in the bars, the coffee shops and thrift stores of the neighbourhood, most of which, Zukin suggests, are destined to be turned into Whole Foods stores and other means of attracting the gentrified. It is around this critical zeal that this thesis is shaped.

Similarly, against the backdrop of Liverpool's attempt to engineer a cultural and social renaissance following its success in winning 'European Capital of Culture Status' in 2008,

Kierans and Haeney (2010) trace the social life of 'scouse'[3]. Through a combination of ethnographic observations and twenty eight interviewees with participants of mixed socio-economic background, they find that 'scouse' continued to mark distinctions between classes within the city of Liverpool. Moreover, the eating of 'scouse' is considered a "field of practice" (ibid. p. 110) and thus an exponent of scouse identity that expresses social and cultural solidarity as well as demarcation from 'others'. As a dish of 'necessity' or indeed the "historical dish of the great unwashed" (ibid. p. 116) it may seem surprising that it became figured in an attempt to entice the tourist, canned and sold in Tourist Information Centres alongside tea towels and other souvenirs. However, 'scouse' formed a strategy for culturally driven urban development as it came to be reinvented by the city's bistro's and café's, with prices ranging from £3.95 to £25 per plate. Each variation boasted a reinvention of its ingredients, thus placing authenticity 'on display'. As such, it remains to consider the classed consumption of such 'authenticity' or indeed, reinvented forms of 'neo-localism' (Shortridge and Shortridge 1998) within settings of 'alternative' consumption.

It is clear from the literature discussed in this Chapter that further research is required to understand the complex relationship between food, class and culture. Indeed, the emergence of sites for 'alternative' food consumption offers an opportunity to investigate further this relationship. While the empirical research pertaining to food consumption demarcates 'eating in' and 'eating out', this seems unfitting with the growing moral surveillance that pervades the contemporary shopping basket. Providing a clear starting point from which to commence further research, it seems that we might not draw boundaries between what counts as 'eating out' and what counts as 'eating in'. Instead, the ways in which food is employed as a tool for distinction may prove to be more nuanced in its manifestations. For example, the emergence of 'new' sites of 'alternative' food consumption may provide settings within which consumption taking place outside of the home - that is destined to be consumed later within the home - may provide a bridge between these two worlds. To observe sites of 'alternative' food consumption may provide a lens through which to examine the nexus points between these, and the prevalence of distinctive practices that may be performed in between. To this end, this thesis explores class culture as practised through 'alternative' food shopping.

---

[3] 'Scouse' is a traditional stew of meat and vegetables that was traditionally consumed by the urban poor.

Chapter Three

The Moral Significance of Class

From the empirical studies discussed in Chapter Two, it seems that there is merit to be gained from paying further attention to the relationship between food and class culture but within settings of 'alternative' food consumption. In this way, a focus upon 'alternative' settings may offer nuanced insights into the prevalence of differentiation in the food consumed between those possessing low and high levels of 'capital'. Crucially, from the studies detailed in Chapter Two it would appear that a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between class and culture may be reached by exploring further 'cultural omnivorounsess'. This Chapter explores these aims with view to consolidating the theoretical framework that underpins the thesis. Outlining the theoretical treatment given to the study of class within sociology, the Chapter considers the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Andrew Sayer in particular. It is their conceptual frameworks that together form the theoretical approach of the thesis.

3.1 The Analysis of Class and Consumption in British Sociology

3.1.1 Context - Identity Formation and the 'Death of Class'

Class analysis has undergone somewhat of a revival within the social sciences, despite having been rather famously thrown 'out with bathwater'. With the rise of post-fordism, post-industrialism and the rise of advanced capitalism, Savage (2000) suggests that class no longer provides a sharp analytical tool for understanding identity in the late modern age. While it is beyond the scope of this Chapter to rehearse these debates, it is worth pointing out that the academic and social tides were turning towards the pronouncement of the 'death of class'. Indeed, against a backdrop of individualist neo-liberal politics famously associated with Thatcherism and Reaganism, social class ceased to resonate in popular as well as academic discourse.

Since, the concept of class has enjoyed somewhat of a revival. The purpose of this thesis is to contribute theoretically, methodologically and empirically to the body of work that continues to champion its resurgence as an explanatory concept for the late modern age. This restoration comes not only as we might believe class is not such a dusty concept after all, but that it seems to *matter* to people. Whether or not class matters to people has been central to controversy over the pursuit of social class analysis and possibly even the 'death of class' itself. Savage (2005) suggests that people no longer seem to speak in class terms in that they are unlikely to position themselves within a hierarchy of occupational categories as 'working', 'middle' or 'upper' class. This has not, however, led to the abandonment of class as a conceptual category altogether. Some sociologists have preferred to pursue other axes of identification such as ethnicity, gender, or sexuality. Others have remained steadfast in their claim that while class identities as we once knew them may no longer have salience, this does not point to the absence of class altogether. Instead, they claim that class as an academic concept as well as an identity, subjectivity, experience or culture or disposition has *changed*. Among others, these arguments are well reviewed by Crompton (1999) Savage (2000) and Skeggs (2004). A full detailing of these arguments is, therefore, neither appropriate nor desirable. For now, this Chapter explores the resurgence of class analysis among sociologists studying consumer culture.

The reorganisation of employment in post-industrial Britain somewhat gave rise to the pronouncement of the 'death of class'. That is, the loss of traditional working class jobs in the UK in, say, mining and manufacture is considered to have fragmented the collective working class culture notorious of, say, mining communities. Coupled with the rise of white collar and service sector employment, class, or rather, collective working class culture is thought to be obsolete. For many sociologists, however, such re-organisation of employment is evidence not of the death of class, but of its manifestation now through consumption rather than production. These arguments will now be discussed in order to make explicit the body of theoretical work to which this thesis anticipates making a contribution.

3.1.2 Class and Consumption

Proponents of a 'death of class thesis' such as Bauman (1982) Pahl (1989) and to some extent, Clark and Lipset (1991) do so on the basis that consumerism offers new opportunities

for identity formation. That is, the opportunities afforded by consumerism render conceptualisations of social class identities as formed around one's position in the relations of production as redundant. Even though production-centred understandings of class relations may indeed be considered out of date, this is not to say that class relations do not find new means of expression. Saunders (1990) argues that consumption has replaced production as an axis from which to understand class differentiation. Employment aggregates, Crompton suggests, are no longer considered appropriate in providing a proxy for class measurement. This argument has been considered to have brought fuel to rather than having empirically closed this debate (Crompton 1996). As such, class schemes derived from 'job structure' have been proven to provide a useful indicator for 'life chances' and have not entirely been superseded by consumption based factors. However, in terms of forming a basis for class *identity* or class *consciousness*, consumption is now considered to play a greater role than production (ibid. p. 127-8). Whichever way one seeks to explore the basis of identities in late modernity, those who both take issue with class on the one hand and those who embrace it on the other each agree that *consumption matters*. In this way, whether or not we are thought of as individuals or part of a social collective, consumption is considered to form a strong basis in each of these identities.

A focus on consumption would then seem to resolve somewhat of an impasse between those propounding a 'death of class' thesis and those convinced of its endurance. However, the extent to which consumers are free to *choose* their identities around consumption is somewhat contested. Warde (1994) argues that the extent and quality of the freedom experienced by consumers in enacting their identity projects around consumption is somewhat limited. Theorising the contemporary consumer as suffering the pressures and burdens of 'choice' Warde (ibid.) suggests is a misplaced conjecture. That is, people are said to experience little anxiety over consumption for they do not 'choose' in a strong sense. When selecting consumer goods, he argues, there are very little real choices likely to cause angst, for even amongst the most poor, there are only certain options available to them. Similarly, Lodziak (2000) argues that increased levels of consumption cannot be explained by its centrality to individuals' identity formation. Instead, increased consumption is better explained by practical responses to contemporary living conditions. Indeed, these living conditions may be fiscally constrained, and/or, as argued by this thesis, mediated by what is considered reasonable or unreasonable cultural practice.

To explore what is considered reasonable cultural practice is underpinned by a hypothesis that class has cultural a as well as structural basis. This hypothesis, however, arrives at somewhat of a conceptual bottleneck when confronted with the theory of *identities* possessed and 'put on' by individuals on the one hand and that of *practices,* which contends that social actors position themselves (consciously or unconsciously) in an ongoing project of self-making. With use of Bourdieu's concept of practice, this thesis does not presume to resolve this impasse. Instead, as demonstrated below with an explication of the elements of Bourdieu's conceptual toolkit, we can see that separation of these concepts cannot be maintained. For example, in seeking to overcome theories of fixed identities that one may inherit by way of socialisation, Bourdieu suggests that the habitus gives both a sense of one's place in the social field as well as capacity to in some extreme cases, overcome its constraints. In this sense, we may hold a particular worldview or indeed, an 'identity' – although Bourdieu does not use the word – that gives us 'elective affinities'. That is, we may acquire a taste for one thing over another, or indeed, a sense of what may be a reasonable or unreasonable practice. As such, the thesis refers at times to 'identity' in a manner that is consistent with the Bourdieusian view that social actors develop a particular worldview consistent with their 'habitus' as certain practices *become normal over time*.

Further debate over the 'death of class' has sprung from suggestions that practices typical to one class over another were seen to fragment. That is, the practices normal to the middle classes have been considered to have lost their coherence as they engage more widely with different and indeed more typically working class cultural practices. Wide cultural participation across classes in, say, eating fish and chips and watching soap operas can serve as evidence of such widening participation. In taking this assertion to task, Savage et al (1992) suggest that Goldthorpe's (1980) Nuffield schema no longer sufficiently depicts the complexities of class in contemporary Britain. According to Savage *et al*. (1992) by focusing on horizontal division *between* classes rather than upon divisions *within* classes the Nuffield Schema misleads the sceptic to a 'death of class' conclusion. Empirical support for this is provided by Warde and Tomlinson (1995), who were able to accurately predict the social class of a person by the contents of their shopping basket. This conclusion was arrived at, however, only after having considered the middle classes themselves to be internally differentiated. Thus, the tastes of managers were differentiated from the tastes of the self employed, professionals and routine white collar workers. They suggest that an 'assets approach' to class analysis that takes into account the value of cultural capital amongst the

middle classes is more appropriate. That is, a Bourdieusian approach that takes consumption as an indicator of class practice is considered theoretically and empirically fitting. Indeed, Savage *et al*. (ibid.) call for further research informed by Bourdieusian concepts that illuminate the dynamics of class in the field of cultural consumption. Contributing to this endeavour, the Chapter now turns to consider how Bourdieu's toolkit is operationalised by this study.

3.2 Position Taking in the Social Field

To explore the presence and significance of class, this thesis considers both objective and subjective approaches. As such, it is Bourdieu's concept of class as relative 'position' that is upheld. To elucidate Bourdieu's concept of class as position within the social field, the underpinning concepts of 'field', 'habitus' and 'capital' are considered.

3.2.1 Habitus, Field and Capitals

For Bourdieu, it is in the interaction between 'field' and 'habitus' that social action is determined. By means of the 'habitus' the structures and practices of everyday life are seen to interplay. The habitus, then, provides a set of unconscious rules that serve the perpetuation of its conditions over time;

> "The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operation necessary in order to attain them".

> (Bourdieu 1990: 53)

The habitus, as a deeply structured cultural grammar, produces an infinite number of possible practices. That is, the habitus inculcates "reasonable" and "common sense" forms of social action (ibid. p. 55). As a "structured structure" (ibid. p. 53) the habitus provides form for the social actor to become socialised by their families and peer group into a set of reasonable dispositions appropriate to that habitus. As a "structuring structure", the objective structures

of life chances are transformed and perpetuated into subjective ones, and in turn reify the objective structure of the status quo. As such, the habitus is formative. It presents a set of reasonable practices such as attaining higher education, meat eating, or sporting activities to those positioned within the corresponding habitus to which these practices have become "common sense". These correspond to the economic or indeed structural possibilities afforded by this habitus. In turn the social actor's perceived chance of success within any of these practices affects its reproduction over time. To this end, existing opportunity structures are perpetuated. If one does not have a "stylistic affinity" (Bourdieu 1984:173) with, say, a particular form of handwriting, it is unlikely for this practice to become normal. For Bourdieu;

> "being the product of a particular class of objective regularities, the habitus tends to generate all the 'reasonable', 'common sense', behaviours (and only these) which are possible within the limits of these regularities, and which are likely to be positively sanctioned because they are objectively adjusted to the logic characteristic of a particular field whose objective future they anticipate. At the same time 'without violence, art or argument' it tends to exclude all 'extravagances' ('not for the likes of us'), that is, all the behaviours that would be negatively sanctioned because they are incompatible with the objective conditions".

> Bourdieu (1990:55-6)

Again, it is within the habitus that the social actor forms a sense of reasonable 'tastes'. The habitus forms lifestyles, as the tastes common to one habitus exist in opposition to those that seem reasonable to those occupying another. It is this recognition of the structural and cultural elements shaping one's location in the social field that makes Bourdieu's concept of 'position' appropriate to the study of contemporary class relations. To illuminate further the prevalence of class within settings of 'alternative' food consumption, we must add Bourdieu's conceptualisation of taste formation. This provides further potential to understand the classed dynamics of preference for one cultural form over another. Here, Bourdieu's concept of taste as forming within the habitus allows us to consider the ways that division within and between classes can be understood as having being determined both structurally and culturally. For Bourdieu, the habitus is;

> "a practical mastery of distributions which makes it possible to sense or intuit what is likely (or unlikely) to befall – and therefore benefit – an

individual occupying a given position in social space. It functions as a sort of social orientation, a 'sense of one's place', guiding the occupants of a given place in social space towards the social positions adjusted to their properties, and towards the practices or goods which benefit the occupants of that position. It implies a practical anticipation of what the social meaning and value of the chosen practice or thing will probably be, given their distribution in social space and the practical knowledge the other agents have of the correspondence between goods and groups".

(Bourdieu 1984:466-7)

Acquired within the habitus, tastes operate "below the levels of consciousness and language beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will" (ibid. p. 465). That is, the inhabitant of a particular habitus thus gains a practical and embodied 'sense of one's place' in the world. Habitus, then, can be seen as a social actors' 'world view'. Moreover, in acquiring a sense of one's place, the inhabitants of a particular (underprivileged) habitus then attains the logic of 'limits' where they are considered to forget the limitations imposed upon them, and instead conform to the 'relation of order'. Over time, these limits are forgotten, and become self-evident in their acceptance of 'their lot'. The deeply entrenched relation of order within the habitus then radically reduces one's capacity to alter their 'lot'. The habitus is, then, more likely to have incited small changes over a prolonged period of time, and somewhat explains the persistence of inequalities, and indeed, as Bourdieu suggests, the acceptance of one's domination.

The power of the habitus to impose limits upon its inhabitants derive from a wider structure; the field. For Bourdieu, the field is a;

"network or configuration of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation… in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capitals) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relations to other positions"

(Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97)

Here, fields are bounded spheres of activity identifiable through their shared principles and knowledges. A person will have an elective affinity with one field and not another - they may be in or out of 'the game'. In this sense, the field is an arena of struggle for resources. These resources are defined as 'capitals'. The structure and distribution of different types of capital represent the structure of the social world in that they both constrain and enable social actors. Here, Bourdieu offers a means of understanding why it is that social actors come to refuse what they are refused. In the case of this thesis, Bourdieu's conjecture that elective affinities are acquired by those occupying particular positions in the field allows us to think of how social actors may come to refuse 'alternative' consumption on the grounds that it is culturally and structurally unavailable to them. That is, that social class on an economic and cultural level excludes particular people from partaking in particular social practices. It is, then, an assumption of this thesis that particular spaces of 'alternative' consumption such as farmers' markets embody these very social relations. The possession of 'capital' may serve the potential for one's advancement in the field. Indeed, acquiring capital can provide a way of escaping the limits of one's habitus. There remains, however, the obstacle that underpins all other 'capitals'; 'economic' capital, which "is first and foremost a power to keep necessity at arm's length" (ibid. p. 55). As such,

> "it has to be posited simultaneously that economic capital is at the root of all the other types of capital and that these transformed, disguised forms of economic capital, never entirely reducible to that definition, produce their most specific effects only to the extent that they conceal (not least from their possessions) the fact that economic capital is at their root, in other words – but only in the last analysis – at the root of their effects"

> (Bourdieu 1986: 89)

The most sought after resource in the field - once one is free from economic necessity - is 'cultural capital'. This occurs in three forms; in the embodied state, the objectified state and the institutionalised state.

> "Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.); […] and in the institutionalized state […] in the case of educational qualification"

> (Bourdieu 1986:82)

Moreover,

> "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition-or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity owned capital [...] The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected"

(Bourdieu 1989:86)

It is the mal-distribution of access to these capitals across the field that forms the centre of Bourdieu's critique of domination. As such, the field is the battleground for the struggle to acquire capital while the habitus simultaneously imposes limits upon one's likelihood of pursuing advancement in the field. Within the field of 'alternative' food consumption, it seems reasonable to assume that these forms of 'capital' are at stake. For example, any field of consumption offers rewards be these material and/or cultural. This thesis argues that 'alternative' food may bring such opportunities through the display and acquisition of further capital. Through the consumption of organic apples one could be considered to gain material advantage through the satisfaction of, say, hunger. It is a contention of this thesis that these apples, purchased and sometimes consumed at a particular site such as a farmers' market may also provide a vehicle for the display and acquisition of cultural capital. That is, there are financial constraints imposed on entry to this setting, but added to this are potential cultural forms of exclusion. It is the purpose of this thesis to operationalise Bourdieu's concept of position taking alongside these concepts of field, habitus and capital in order to explore the prevalence of such class relations within the field of 'alternative' food consumption. Before examining further the implications of drawing on a Bourdieusian theoretical framework to understand the prevalence of class it is worth noting that to the three forms of 'capital' outlined above Bourdieu adds a fourth; symbolic capital. This is the form that 'capital' takes when it is misrecognised, indeed, when there is a failure to recognise the "specific logic" in misrecognising "the arbitrariness of its possession and accumulation" (Bourdieu and Waquant 1992:119). The functions of symbolic capital are, then, central to understanding class domination. For Bourdieu, this lies in the arbitrary recognition of certain commodities,

61

relationships or practices as worthy, which means that some are invested in, while others are others ignored or disparaged. It seems reasonable to imagine that within a field of 'alternative' food consumption that class may indeed be misrecognised in this form. A purpose of this study is to explore this conjecture.

While Bourdieu's tool kit offers us concepts of 'habitus', 'field' and 'capitals' to understand the basis of cultural reproduction, further motivation for their use in undertaking class analysis is inspired by their potential to overcome the subjective/objective dualism. In sum, the concept of 'habitus' and 'field' offer a schema for understanding social class both objectively and subjectively. In speaking to an audience at the University of California, Bourdieu summarises his theory of social action;

> "If I had to characterize my work in two words […] I would speak of *constructivist structuralism* or *structuralist constructivism* […]. By structuralism or structuralist, I mean that there exist […] objective structures independent of the consciousness and will of agents, which are capable of guiding and constraining their practices […]. By constructivism, I mean that there is a twofold social genesis, on the one hand of the schemes of perception, thought and action which are constitutive of what I call habitus, and on the other hand of social structures, and particularly of what I call fields and of groups, notably those we ordinarily call social classes"

> (Bourdieu 1989:14)

Conceptually, the 'field' provides a route to overcoming the stances of objectivity and subjectivity that pervades amongst sociologists seeking to theorise social and cultural structures and practices. In so doing, the concept of the 'field' invites sociologists to think "relationally" (Bourdieu and Waquant 1992:96) by going beyond the antinomy of social physics on the one hand and social phenomenology on the other. In thinking relationally about class as a particular form of social order, the concept of *position* offers a means of thinking about class that renders it timeless. To think of class as reproduced through a system of oppositions, then, allow us to consider the possibility that the habitus or indeed "schemes of perception" (Bourdieu 1989:14) have an effect upon the reproduction of particular fields or groups, or indeed *classes*. It is through the conceptual lens of field and habitus that this thesis comes to understand class as a relative social position. Here, in the field of 'alternative' food

consumption, oppositions and distinctions appear to be continuously drawn between what is deemed 'good' and what is 'bad' and therefore as 'other'. It is to this spirit of relational sociology that the Chapter now turns.

3.2.2 Relational Thinking - Class and Homology

A relational mode of thinking is demonstrated methodologically by Bourdieu's adoption of multiple correspondence analysis when discerning homologies of taste in France. Crucially, from this concept of field, we are offered a theoretical tool from which to explore homologies across them. Homologies are sets of correspondences that exist relationally both *within* and *across* fields. For example, drawing oppositions between, say, 'light/heavy', 'high/low' 'elegant/vulgar' maintains analogous social distinction, say, within the field of social classes. That is, it becomes possible to recognise the interrelationship between someone's taste for a particular way of eating and a particular style of handwriting or preferences in styles of furniture. Thus, there is a link between the cultural domains of food consumption and home décor. As mentioned earlier, for Bourdieu, social actors unconsciously adopt these 'elective affinities' for one style over another, producing sets of homologies across fields where groups of people with similar tastes 'go together'.

> "The social sense is guided by the system of mutually reinforcing and infinitely redundant signs of which each body is the bearer – clothing, pronunciation, bearing, posture, manners – and which, unconsciously registered, are the basis of 'antipathies' or 'sympathies'; the seemingly most immediate 'elective affinities' are always partly based on the unconscious deciphering of expressive features, each of which only takes on its meaning and value within the system of its class variations […]. Taste is what brings together things and people that go together."
>
> Bourdieu (1984:241)

Described as a "resemblance within a difference" (Bourdieu and Waquant 1992:106) homologies consist of tastes that unite people from within a particular habitus or 'world view' *across* fields. In 'Distinction', Bourdieu (1984) suggests that art and cultural consumption fulfil "a social function of legitimating these very social differences" (ibid. p. 7). That is, the tastes common to those occupying a particular habitus may be homologous across fields. Yet, these tastes acquire recognition via relational legitimation. Within a particular habitus, for

example, one might find a taste for luxury foods that corresponds with a preference for a particular musical work such as the 'Well-Tempered Clavier'. Moreover, a taste for luxury foods acquires its legitimacy in its distinctive opposition to 'tastes of necessity'. Such a system of differences is clearly delineated in the case of food. For Bourdieu, the "body is the most indisputable materialization of class taste" (ibid. p. 190). The ways of feeding and caring for the body reveal the deepest of dispositions of the habitus. The working classes are seen to opt for cheap, nutritious and heavy food and the professionals for more expensive, tasty, non-fattening and light foods. These oppositions are considered representative of deeply entrenched class cultures in eating that demonstrate the power of cultural categories to become natural over time. It is this process of reification that is central to his critique of class domination; one that is founded upon this concept of field and habitus, and indeed the location of one's relational position within this and a wider system of differences.

"It is clear that tastes in food cannot be considered in complete independence of other dimensions of the relationship to the world, to others and to one's own body, through which the practical philosophy of each class is enacted."

(ibid. p. 193)

The 'practical philosophy' through which class is enacted thus forms a central line of inquiry for this thesis. This 'practical philosophy' is understood as one of 'position taking'. That is, that social actors take positions (albeit constrained somewhat by objective structures) that are characterised by their opposition to the cultural forms preferred by an 'other'. Food as a consumer good can be seen as prime material for its conversion into distinctive signs. That is to say, food may bear the signs of vulgarity, as well as distinction, but only when perceived *relationally*. It is through the projections that individuals or groups make with regard to these distinctions (consciously or unconsciously) that class can come to be understood. Nevertheless, this form of field analysis has come under some criticism, most notably in that Bourdieu's framework marginalises the normative dimension of class. From the work discussed below, we can see that there are means to overcome this.

3.3 Critical Amendments

Bourdieu's sociological corpus came under fire throughout his career. A recently published collection of essays by Silva and Warde (2010) brings together the reflections of scholars in the field of class analysis who have adopted Bourdieu's framework throughout their careers. This collection, some aspects of which are discussed below, draws upon praise for, partial critique as well as complete repudiation of his schema.

3.3.1 Dis-identification: An Analytical Quandary

The widely pronounced 'death of class' trope has been met with refute, both conceptually and empirically. However, empirical studies have shown, over and again, that social actors do not appear to identify strongly with class. That is, people do not speak in class terms (Savage *et al.* 2001) and are more likely to claim to be 'ordinary' and an 'individual' (Savage 2005). Moreover, Bennett *et al.* (2009) find that out of 227 respondents to their survey, only thirty three per cent of the sample thought of themselves as belonging to a social class at all. Savage *et al*. (2010) suggest that this is the lowest level of class identification found reported within a UK survey to date. The methods used can to some extent explain this finding, for different methods have been found to produce different class accounts. For example, Silva (2006) found that different class profiles of participants were produced by qualitative and quantitative data. The former built upon the strict classifications made by the latter, providing a more nuanced class profile of the participant.

Alternative explanations are offered by Skeggs (1997, 2004). This lies mostly in her conceptual and empirical analysis of 'dis-identification', which has sparked some degree of methodological controversy. Here, it is considered problematic to gleam sociological evidence from what is *not* said. That is, reading class into participants' narratives when they do not explicitly refer to it can be considered problematic (Savage *et al*. 2010). However, Skeggs (1997) argues that pathological representations of the working classes have led to a process of dis-identification, whereby working class women work to escape this label. It was through an appeal to self improvement that white working class women attempted to escape the moralising and pathologising bourgeois gaze. It is this effort to dis-identify that is considered as the corollary of the working class identity. As such, class is the "structuring

absence" (Skeggs 1997:74), for they are said to be more easily identified by *what they were not* rather than what they were. Indeed, their desire not to be seen as working class is "lived through their bodies, clothes and (if not living with parents) their homes" (ibid. p. 82). By seeking to become respectable, they wear 'elegant' rather than 'tarty' clothing, and in so doing actively produce the very class identity that they are seeking to disclaim. As such, class is considered very much the *hidden* injury observed by Sennett and Cobb (1977), in that efforts to become respectable form an indirect expression of shame in their actual conditions of existence. That is, there is still something – their 'lot' - from which they wish to escape. For Skeggs, such dis-identification with class marks the touchstone of the contemporary (working) class condition.

As noted above, the extent to which a researcher can confidently derive from their data support for theories of dis-identification can be contested. Following the suggestion made by Savage *et al.* (2010) this thesis seeks to explore further the methodological, conceptual and empirical resonance of 'dis-identification'. In so doing this thesis pays attention to and seeks to disentangle what is and what is not said with regards to class within the context of 'alternative' food consumption. While Skeggs (1997, 2004) enthusiastically takes on board Bourdieu's conceptual framework, others somewhat challenge his claims.

3.3.2 The Subjective/Objective Dualism

King (2000) argues that there remains an ontological incompatibility between Bourdieu's structuralism and his theory of practice. Thus, his efforts to overcome the structure/agency dualism are considered bereft of any substance. King (ibid.) argues that through the concept of the habitus, Bourdieu consistently returns to explain the nature of intersubjective social action as based upon deterministic economic class positions. That is, Bourdieu is considered more of a structuralist than a constructivist. Even if this can be taken as evidence that Bourdieu did not overcome this dualism as he had hoped, it seems appropriate that his sociology allowed for the objective conditions underpinning social life never to be overlooked. It is Bourdieu's faithfulness to the structural conditions of social life that this thesis takes aboard, despite claims that this explains only social *reproduction* more than it does social *change*.

3.3.3 Lay Normativity and the Moral Significance of Class

According to Sayer, Bourdieu's studies do not tell us about "what, in everyday practice, lies beyond self-interest and instrumental action" (Sayer 1999:409). Building upon the work of Adam Smith (1759), Sayer (1999) turns to a central assumption of Bourdieu's theory; that all forms of non-economic 'capital' (symbolic, cultural and 'social' capital) are involved in the trade of 'exchange-value' and 'use-value'. In so doing, Sayer (1999) argues that Bourdieu's conception of non monetary forms of capital as having 'exchange value' impedes the recognition of the '*use* value'. That is, "the rich are not fools for preferring big, well-heated houses to damp shacks, and the poor are not fools for envying them" (Sayer 1999:410). Consumer goods are not merely symbolic, but have a genuine *use value*.

For Bourdieu, the taste or preference for goods imbued with the 'correct' form of 'capital' derives from one's socialisation within a particular habitus. Thus, one's tastes and preferences are unconscious. For example, a taste for and enjoyment of olives, and not of salted peanuts, derives from the habitus. This taste then affords greater social advantage within the habitus. Moreover, Sayer would argue that such a taste for olives is not only a symptom of habitus that gives *exchange* value, but it affords *use* value, for olives, under certain conditions, are *better* for one's health than salted peanuts. Olives are better for the body (use value) and confers status within a middle class habitus (exchange value). To use another example, for Sayer, a warm home does not simply comprise symbolic advantage, and does not merely figure in a struggle for 'distinction'. A warm home provides real material advantages. It is this neglect of the *use* value of consumer goods and indeed, of the merits associated with, say, educational qualifications that qualify his accusation that Bourdieu often retreats into social reductionism. It is this neglect that has inspired a shift towards an approach to understanding class that is mindful of 'lay normativity' (Sayer 2005a) and indeed, is combined with a commitment to understanding the normative role of moral norms and sentiments involved in all social action. Such moral norms and sentiments, Sayer argues, cannot always be bound up in a struggle for 'distinction' but are more often than not manifest in expressions of 'disinterested' as opposed to 'interested judgement'. This approach then considers the moral aspect of everyday life that was central to the work of Adam Smith (1759). It is this work to which Sayer (1999, 2005a) refers when arguing for a conceptual shift towards normative understandings of the moral significance of class. Echoing Kant,

Smith (ibid.) argued that moral sentiments are rooted in the very fibre of our humanity, and find expression in moral judgements, be these met with reward or sanction. For this reason, it is argued that all moral action cannot be reduced to a Bourdieusian understanding of human action as instrumental and self-interested acts of pure display for the sake of position maintenance or advancement. Instead, the 'moral' is considered deeply entrenched in the business of being human. As such,

> "The struggles of the social *field*, between different groups, classes, genders and ethnicities, certainly involve habitual action and the pursuit of power, but they also have a range of normative rationales, which matter greatly to actors, as they are implicated in their commitments, identities and ways of life. Those rationales concern what is of value, how to live, what is worth striving for and what is not."

> (Sayer 2005a:6)

If the 'moral' is indeed central to everyday social practices - in the judgments we make between what is 'good' and what is 'bad' - then it seems reasonable to suggest that it be considered in any effort to explore class. As such, Sayer argues that at the core of an analysis of class should be recognition of the "moral dimensions of actors' behaviour and struggles" (Sayer 2005a:2) as well as "the lay normative ideas and sentiments that lie behind them in terms of their rationales" (ibid.). Moreover,

> "Class, unlike, say, ethnicity, is not a social form or identity demanding recognition as legitimate […]. Low income people are not disadvantaged primarily because others fail to value their identity and misrecognize and undervalue their cultural goods, or indeed because they are stigmatized, though all these things make their situation worse; rather they are disadvantaged primarily because they lack the means to live in ways which they, as well as others, value."

> (Sayer 2005b:947-8)

Bourdieu's habitus, for Sayer, should thus include a *moral* dimension. The social actor within any given habitus becomes practised in particular forms of judgement that have logic or a structure common amongst its members. Moral imperatives thus represent emotional responses to evaluative judgements. Class affects what we value, including how we value others and ourselves – whether we feel pride or shame, envy or contentment. In order to

understand the subjective experience of class we need to consider the emotional and evaluative aspects of the relation of "self to self and self to other" (Sayer 2005a: 22). By drawing our attention to his underestimation of actors' rationality and reflexivity, we are warned against the "dangers of… denying or marginalising the life of the mind in others" (Sayer 2005a: 29) and in so doing are offered an enhancement of Bourdieu's conceptual framework.

The theoretical position adopted here in order to begin to explore the field of 'alternative' food consumption, then, inherits the framework of field and habitus as set out by Bourdieu, along with Sayer's (2005) modifications. With this approach, it follows to take seriously the notion that some of the resources at stake in the field *are* better than others, and that middle class social actors do secure the advantages to these resources in *real* terms and not solely on symbolic terms. Advantages thus secured then enable further security in maintaining the 'habitus' and indeed, their position within the social field.

3.3.4 The 'Posh' and the 'Good'

Central to a critique of the 'soft forms of domination' has been the processes by which cultural goods gain their legitimacy. Bourdieu (1986), in conceptualising 'symbolic capital' presents us with a means of understanding the advantages secured by those who in their possession of cultural capital refuse to recognise "the arbitrariness of its possession and accumulation" (Bourdieu and Waquant 1992:119). That is, they refuse its status as cultural capital, suggesting that its advantages are open to everyone. Those who suggest that we live in a meritocratic society, who believe their success in the field of education has purely been the result of hard work and nothing to do with the advantages of an upbringing in a middle class habitus could be accused of exercising such symbolic violence upon those who haven't 'made it'. The symbolic violence is, Bourdieu argues, exercised when those who are advantaged in say, the field of education, claim to be so, solely as a result of their abilities and not of their standing. Those who are unsuccessful are then accused of being so, solely as a result of their (alleged) *in*ability. To this end, with the conversion to symbolic capital - the form that cultural capital takes when it is misrecognised - come the powers to exercise symbolic domination over others. The dominated - generally the working classes – internalise the shame of having been relegated as 'lazy' and/or 'uneducated' by condescending middle

class voices. This misrecognition of cultural capital applies not only to the field of education, but, as this thesis argues, to the field of 'alternative' food consumption. Here, to the exercise of symbolic domination in the case of food, like education, is the conflation of what Sayer (2005a) describes as the 'posh' with the 'good'. As such, that which is struggled for in the social field can be 'good' but are rejected by some on the grounds that they are 'posh'. Such an example of this dynamic can be found in the field of education as discussed above.

To discern the 'posh' from the 'good' Sayer (ibid.) distinguishes between internal and external goods. That is, the internal goods of education such as self-development are accompanied by external goods such as advantages in the labour market. Again, it has real advantages both internally and externally. Education is 'good', but it can also be considered 'posh' – that is, as 'not for the likes of me'. When working class people relegate education as merely 'posh' they can be seen to exercise what has been referred to as people "refusing what they are refused" (Sayer 2011:8). This can be considered misrecognition – for in refusing education, they may believe they are refusing what they believe to 'posh', that is, pure affectation, when it is also 'good' in that is brings both internal and external rewards. Food, this thesis argues, can similarly become party to such misrecognition. As a first need of the human body - alongside water, shelter, and companionship - is in certain forms 'posh' but is also 'good'. Like education, food is not singularly concerned with status displays. Their internal and external goods can, however, be misrecognised as merely 'posh', particularly in the case of 'alternative' food consumption. A locally sourced herb crusted chicken breast stuffed with spinach with a cream and white wine reduction served with seasonal steamed vegetables may seem 'posh'. A nutritionally balanced meal however, is often considered 'good' for one's health. Eating seasonally and locally has been thought to be 'good' for the environment, for local economies, for the individual to be 'reconnected' with nature (Kneafsey *et al*. 2008). If organic, this meal would, for example, also be considered 'good' for biodiversity and the preservation of soil fertility.

That said, 'alternative' food can be considered 'good' but when presented in particular combinations according to a particular aesthetic can present itself as merely 'posh'. This 'poshness' can, however, come to conceal the 'goodness' of particular forms of food consumption. By misrecognising particular forms of food consumption as 'posh' some may come to refuse what is in essence 'good'. It is the intention of this thesis to discern the class dynamics that play out around 'alternative' food, and indeed their implications in the

conflation of the 'posh' with the 'good'. Popular discourses are even testament to how working and middle class consumers are expected to compete in the field of 'alternative' food consumption on equal terms - 'there's something here for everyone', 'everyone can afford good food'. It is the purpose of this thesis to explore the significance of class felt by consumers in such a field of 'alternative' food consumption.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Bennett *et al.* (2009) found that the tastes and preferences of various socio-economic groupings vary, but that these tastes do not fuel any class 'hostility'. If we were to take Sayer's (2005a) argument to hand, it would be reasonable to imagine that there may belie some class resentment regarding the advantages secured by some in the social field. Such advantages as the truly 'good' rather than merely the 'posh' may inspire feelings of resentment or envy on the grounds that these 'good' goods are valued by everyone and not just those concerned with displaying their status. Here, class resentment, may not derive from an envy of another's taste for certain cultural goods, for not all forms of 'legitimate culture' have 'use value'. Rather, those who reject 'legitimate culture' may do so for they do not see a benefit to its consumption in comparison to a lesser esteemed counterpart. For example, designer clothing may be of no better quality and we assume will have no greater use value than a mainstream good quality garment. Conversely, there may be relative cultural preferences as some goods may only have symbolic value and indeed no use value. Food, however, presents us with a different sort of quandary, for it seems reasonable to anticipate that some foods really *are* better than others. That is, food is not only a means of conferring status through display, but has *use value*. The organic vegetables purchased at a farmers' market may be 'posh', but they may also be 'good'. As such, it seems reasonable to consider the use value of particular foods in comparison to others when exploring the (moral) significance of class. Finally, this thesis draws upon the modifications of Bourdieu's conceptual tool kit made by Sayer, and of course, as discussed in Chapter Two by Lamont (1992) and later by Southerton (2002). In each of these cases the 'moral' figures prominently in the construction of boundaries between one class and an 'other'.

3.4 Direction of the Thesis

At the outset of this Chapter, the core elements taken from a reading of empirical studies in the field of food and culture were outlined. These were considered as a point from which to

commence exploring both the theoretical background of these subject areas as well as the conceptual tools developed for their empirical study. Firstly, a brief discussion of class and individuation suggests that consumption does indeed provide a fruitful site from which to explore the form of contemporary class enunciations.

To do so, Bourdieu's concept of class as 'position' is taken onboard. That is, one's relational position within a wider system of differences is considered to form a 'practical philosophy' for the study of class. A 'practical philosophy' is understood as 'position taking', where social actors take positions (albeit constrained somewhat by objective structures) that are characterised by their opposition to the cultural form of an 'other'. Here, food as a consumer good can be seen as prime material for its conversion into distinctive signs. As such, food may bear the signs of vulgarity as well as distinction, but only when perceived *relationally*. It is through the projections that individuals or groups make with regard to these distinctions (consciously or unconsciously) that class may come to be understood.

Bourdieu's framework is of course, not taken aboard without recognising critical modifications made of his conceptual toolkit. By drawing upon the work of Sayer (2005) in particular, as well as Lamont (1992) and Southerton (2002) this thesis considers the moral significance of class within sites of 'alternative' food consumption. Within Sayer's discussion is a concern for the neglect of lay normativity in Bourdieu's work. That is, there is little consideration of 'use' as opposed to 'exchange' value. In response to Sayer's call for a separation of the 'posh' from the 'good' this thesis considers the extent to which 'alternative' food conflates these in exercising symbolic domination. By operationalising Bourdieu's concept of positioning, this study considers how moral and evaluative judgements are made with respect to 'alternative' food shopping.

Returning to the central tenet of the thesis, as discussed above, the extent to which a researcher can confidently derive support for theories of dis-identification can be contested. Following this suggestion, made by Savage *et al.* (2010), this thesis explores further the methodological, conceptual and empirical resonance of 'dis-identification'. In so doing, this thesis pays attention to and seeks to disentangle what is and what is not said with regards to class within the context of 'alternative' food consumption. From Chapter Two there arose a concern over the 'cultural omnivore'. Thus, by adopting Bourdieu's concept of homology across fields, this thesis seeks to examine the extent to which homologies of taste across the

wider social field pertain to the field of 'alternative' food consumption. Even if incongruities of taste across the field were found by Silva (2006) it remains to consider the extent to which omnivorousness contributes to a new sense of distinction founded upon demonstrating eclectic tastes.

Chapter Four

Exploring 'Alternative' Food Consumption

A Case Study

This Chapter makes explicit the research design of the study. To this end, we begin by exploring the relationship between theory and research through the lens of critical realism. Having detailed the ontological position of the thesis, the Chapter then outlines and reflects upon the mixed methods of data collection employed to satisfy the research aims. Forming the core methods of this case study are; a period of participant observation, the administering of a survey and qualitative interviews. Documents are also used to situate this data within a wider social, cultural and political context. These are discussed in turn, before reflecting on the method of critical discourse analysis employed in order to make sense of the data. Indeed, the Chapter concludes by discussing the epistemological tensions involved in doing so when adopting a Bourdieusian conceptual framework.

4.1 Research Aims

As discussed throughout Chapters One, Two and Three the aim of the thesis is to explore class within sites of 'alternative' food consumption. This concern arises from a suspicion that the widely pronounced 'death of class' (Pahl 1989) thesis is misplaced. That is, the re-organisation of employment in advanced capitalist societies has turned attention to consumption rather than production as a marker of identity. A central aim of this thesis is, then, to study class within the context of food *consumption.* As noted in Chapter Two, attention to food and class has mostly focused upon objective factors. This thesis then aims to explore the subjective and cultural as well as the objective and structural elements of food consumption in relation to class. Finally, informed by Bourdieu's conceptual framework of class as 'position' within a 'field' the thesis seeks to explore such 'position taking' within the field of 'alternative' food consumption. By taking into account the methodological

difficulties of studying class when it is widely known that social actors no longer 'speak' class (Savage 2005) this study engages with the methodological, empirical and theoretical implications of class 'dis-identification' (Skeggs 2004).

4.2 Ontological Position

This section considers what can be known of the social world. It explores the critical realist perspective that deliberates over what exists in the world for the researcher to uncover and understand. In making a distinction between the 'real' the 'actual' and the 'empirical' (Bhaskar 1975, 2008) a critical realist approach offers a means of studying the social world without descending into either blind objectivism or complete social constructionism. As such, this approach offers a "third way" (Sayer 2000).

4.2.1 The Intransitive and Transitive Dimensions of Knowledge

The intransitive dimension of knowledge, according to critical realists such as Bhaskar (1975, 2008), is made up of the objects studied by science. That is, the physical objects or social phenomenon that each come under scrutiny by both natural and social scientists alike. Theories generated by these works and even the discourses that surround them form the transitive dimension – even though these may also become an object of study in their own right, and form a constituent part of the object itself in the intransitive dimension. Central to the critical realist perspective is, then, that knowledge acquired in the transitive dimension need not alter the objects of the intransitive dimension. Indeed, there is a world outside of what we understand, observe and experience, one that will continue to operate regardless of our understanding of it. The distinction between the intransitive and the transitive dimensions of knowledge can then be broken down further, to the 'real' the 'actual' and the 'empirical'. The 'real' refers to what exists regardless of our understanding of it, and also the realm of objects, structures and their powers. The 'actual' refers to the activation of, say, the powers arising from the 'real' while the 'empirical' refers to the realm of 'experience'. It is here that we as social subjects come to know about what we *think* exist in the world. By referring to the act of observing the 'real' and the 'actual' in varying degrees, this forms a *stratified* as opposed to *flat* ontology.

To adopt a critical realist ontological standpoint, then, demands intensive research that thinks *in situ* and critically with regards to lines of causation between variables. By situating actors or indeed subjects of research into causal rather than taxonomic groups, such intensive methods of research can reveal how a "part" is connected to the "whole" (Sayer 2000:25). This rests in contrast to approaches that explain connections between variables by virtue of their repeated occurrence, which may reveal relationships as a consequence of the method itself rather than of any basis in the 'real' or the 'actual'. Extensive critical realist research, in keeping with its ontological position, avoids reducing causal relationships between phenomena around one theme. Thus, it would be unsatisfactory to explain all social differentiation around social class. Instead, the researcher might consider other factors such as gender, kinship ties, neo-liberalism, ethnicity or globalization. Class may form but one means to understand the 'positions' taken by consumers within a field of 'alternative' food consumption. Thus, despite the complexity of the world around us, we may begin, through critical realism, to understand *something* of it. As such, while there may be a world that exists outside of our understanding of it, this does not hold for the *social* world, for Sayer argues that as part of this social world, what we experience, regardless of whatever else exists, has *meaning*.

4.2.3 'Practical Adequacy'

Going beyond the view that there is objective 'truth' to be gained in studying the social world, Sayer (2000) suggests that we are capable of reaching 'practical adequacy'. How practically adequate our ideas are about the social world are dependent upon the location of and the point in time at which these are applied. That is, hermeneutic and realist theories of knowledge such as those put forward by Outhwaite (1987) suggest that there is little need to assume that theories mirror the social world exactly, but that they interpret it in such a way as render it somewhat intelligible. Polarised ontological standpoints of positivism and social constructionism can then to some degree be overcome. Indeed, social phenomena are sought to be understood rather than counted and measured. In this case, it seems reasonable to suggest that through the study of 'alternative' food consumption, that some practically adequate knowledge about that field can be gained. This knowledge is not considered a mirror image of the 'real world' but is an interpretation of that world that does so "in such a way that the expectations and practices it informs are intelligible and reliable" (Sayer

2000:42). Because we cannot know 'absolutes' about the world, this does not imply that we cannot understand something about it, for these interpretations and even discourses themselves are linked to objects, to 'real' things. To this end, a 'practically adequate' interpretation of data collected within settings of 'alternative' food consumption takes on board the accounts, experiences and observations of the participants and researcher as indicative of the dynamics of that field.

4.3 Research Design

In pursuit of the research aims outlined above, the empirical data collection is guided by the following research questions.

- How is 'alternative' consumption accomplished?
- Does 'class' figure in 'alternative' food practice?

According to Punch, four main ideas form the "basic plan for a piece of research" (1998:66). These involve forming a strategy of data collection, considering the framework that informs and guides this and identifying where or from whom this data will be collected. Finally the researcher is to select the appropriate methods of data collection. Each of these four stages are discussed below. As informed by a Bourdieusian conceptual framework, this Chapter first of all discusses the adoption of a case study research strategy. Following on from this, the Chapter then explores how the market and co-op came to be identified as appropriate research sites. We then reflect upon the mixed methodological approach to data collection that comprise a survey, participant observation, interviews and document analysis.

4.3.1 A Case Study Research Strategy

A case study strategy is adopted for it fits the aim of this research; to understand if and how class figures within 'alternative' food practice. Indeed, the case study strategy offers means of doing so both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Bourdieusian framework that underpins this thesis is also suited to a case study in that it provides a strategy akin to 'field' analysis. That is, focusing upon one case, explored through multiple methods, we are offered the potential to explore in depth the homologous tastes of consumers across the social field. In

this way, the market and co-op together form a case of the Riverside 'alternative' food network. These provide a means to explore in-depth the tastes of its consumers, and of how these relate to a preference for the goods of other fields. Indeed, this strategy offers a means to then explore *in situ* how a class position might be constructed around these. Commensurate with a critical realist ontological perspective, this strategy does not claim to pursue 'universal' or 'objective' knowledge. Instead, this strategy allows us to suggest that something of the social world can indeed be known through careful, reflexive in-depth research.

The case study research strategy has been widely considered suitable to facilitate the study of complex social phenomenon (Yin 2003). It enables the study of complex social phenomenon for it has the freedom to ask '*how*' questions. As such, a case study strategy allows multiple means for exploring *how* 'alternative food consumption is accomplished and does so *within* rather than divorced from its context. Indeed, the case study affords the observation of many social phenomena at one time, and without the discounting of any other points of interest to the researcher that might not have initially occurred to them to consider. It is this focus on context, on the necessity for multiple methods of data collection, and thus a multiplicity of sources from which data is obtained that separates it from other methods. In this way, it is considered as more than a *method*, but as a comprehensive research *strategy* (Stoecker 1991). In sum, the case study strategy is adopted for it allows the researcher to "catch the complexity of a single case" (Stake 1995:xi) to observe interactions *within* its contexts and within the important circumstances through intense *in situ* examination.

However, the case study approach has been widely considered lacking in eliciting precise, objective and rigorous data (Yin 2003). Conversely, the widely cited weaknesses of the case study have even been considered *strengths*. For Flyvbjerg (2006) generalisability is an overvalued source of scientific development. In fact, given that the work of natural scientists is indeed guided by 'exemplars' (Kuhn 1970), it is considered surprising that the 'force of example' is underestimated in the social sciences. Moreover, the social scientists' concern with reflecting on interpretive bias lends their hypotheses as more likely to be falsified and treated with great caution than being verified. That is, the social researcher is more mindful of the social construction of *all* – including natural scientific – knowledge. Concrete, context dependent knowledge is thus considered of greater value than the vain search for predictive

theories and 'universals'. To this end, the case study researcher does not necessarily strive for external validity and generalisability.

While the case study strategy does not lend itself nor expect to achieve external validity *per se*, the integrity of findings generated by this research need not be compromised. Rather than achieving external validity, the findings can be considered to have some degree of *construct/measurement, internal* and *ecological* validity. First of all, the concepts used in order to measure and explore the social phenomenon at hand are considered for the extent to which they fairly reflect these phenomena. Where social class is concerned this is a particularly thorny subject. A valid measure will then fairly reflect the concept it seeks to understand. The extent to which measures of income, education and occupation have for some time been widely upheld within stratification and social mobility studies as fair indicators of 'class' (Bendix and Lipset 1953, Erikson and Goldthorpe 2010). The internal validity of this study, then depends upon the extent that we can confidently read 'class' into participants' talk and practice. Further reflection on this issue is reserved for Chapter Eight. For now, it suffices to suggest that it might be more appropriate to consider the ecological validity of the case study strategy. As such, the case study can be deemed ecologically valid for it offers opportunity for the collection of data in everyday social settings. The instruments of research, then, capture something of the daily life conditions, opinions, values, attitudes and knowledge base of those studied, and does so within their natural habitat. As will be discussed below, participant observation, on-site ethnographic interviews and *in situ* semi-structured interviews aim to bolster the ecological validity of this research. To employ such mixed methods of research are considered wise by Silva *et al*. (2009) particularly when seeking to understand cultural practices. In their case, no single method was thought to be sufficient to explore complex social and cultural phenomenon. Again, this thesis employs a case study research strategy in order that such complexity may be taken into account.

4.3.2 Identifying the Research Setting

With an explosion of interest in 'alternative' food consumption from scholars (La Trobe 2001, Zukin 2008) practitioners (WAG 2009) and consumers alike, the field of study was extremely varied, and indeed, difficult to define. The task of identifying a 'field' of 'alternative' food consumption involved my seeking out many different spaces within which

to engage with 'alternative' food. In looking for a 'case', that is, while 'hanging around' at farmers' markets, community food co-operatives, food fairs and festivals, it transpired that the case study had already begun. Both the market and the co-op are part of an 'alternative food network'. This term has acquired common parlance amongst scholars and practitioners to refer to local schemes aimed at supporting each other in providing alternatives to mainstream modes of production and consumption (Kneafsey *et al*. 2008). The use of this term in this thesis does not reflect acceptance that these settings are in any way 'alternative', nor that these settings are joined by any means that afford their description as a 'network'. Rather, this term is used with some reservation. The term 'alternative' is used, albeit placed in inverted commas, in order to avoid confusion over terms.

A key component of the 'alternative food network' of the Riverside Community Market Association is the first of their four farmers' markets. The Riverside market is such a site from which to observe customers going about their business of gathering on a Sunday morning or early afternoon to peruse and to sometimes purchase food from any number of stalls selling (often organic) vegetables, fruit, meat, fish, as well as ready-to-eat meals such as curry, burgers and falafel. Crucially, there was at this time a fledgling food co-operative within this same community. Both the co-op and the market are also set up with the support of the same umbrella organisation, yet there is a clear demarcation in their customer profile. For these reason, these settings begged for research attention. Located on the embankment of a socio-economically community deprived (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2009) the customers of the market appeared predominantly white and middle class, resting in sharp contrast to both the local community and the customers of the co-op. Its geographical location, the apparent absence of the less affluent consumer and mostly, its professed ambitions - expressed by its managers and supporters - to reconnect the consumer with 'good' food inspire this choice of research setting. Moreover, the market's link with the co-op has led to the adoption of a causal rather than taxonomic case study. In this way, it is not desirable to study a number of markets or co-op's, but instead to understand the dynamic relationship between the chosen market and co-op, for the reasons detailed above.

4.3.3 Choice of Research Setting

The market and co-op were chosen not solely for their location within a deprived neighbourhood, nor for the clear absence of the local people for whom the market was at first set up. Rather, both are also situated within a dynamic nexus of Welsh policy making around food. Since the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) pledged a statutory commitment to sustainable development as their central organising principle, food has played a role in their vision for delivering on this obligation. The 'Food and Drink for Wales' strategy as laid out by the 'Local Sourcing Action Plan' and the 'Food Tourism Action Plan' is explored briefly in order to demonstrate the means by which the WAG seek to achieve their vision of sustainable development through food. These Action Plans bring together the aims and objectives set out in the 'One Wales: One Planet' scheme, that later culminated in the food strategy for Wales entitled 'Food for Wales, Food from Wales 2010/2020'. These Action Plans described by one respondent from within the WAG as plans that 'drip down' from the One Wales: One Planet Scheme, set out the WAG's strategy to increase the amount of food and drink sourced from Wales. Central to this strategy is their support for "the development of farmers' markets" (WAG 2009:3). First of all, to justify the research setting of this study, attention is paid to the 'Local Sourcing Action Plan' (LSAP) and the 'Food Tourism Strategic Action Plan' (FTAP). Crucially, under the banner of its commitment to sustainable development, and in line with the definition of 'sustainable food' set by the UK Sustainable Development Commission, the WAG state that 'food for Wales' should 'meet the needs of less well off people' (WAG 2009:5). Such a claim, given the social context within which such food strategies are implemented, appear to present a great number of obstacles that could potentially mar the realisation of such equitable intentions.

The LSAP outlines the WAG's current approach to mediating the consumer experience of 'good' food. In order to encourage consumer participation in activities that involve the consumption of 'good' food, the WAG have developed the 'True Taste' brand. This sets out to convey what they suggest are the "underlying messages' of 'purity, naturalness, authenticity, pleasure, integrity and quality representing good food, true taste and real pleasure" (WAG 2009:7). Forming a large part of the FTAP, the 'True Taste' brand forms a large part of a strategy to "improve perceptions of Wales as a destination where high quality and *distinctive* food is widely available" (WAG 2009:9 emphasis added). Indeed, through the 'True Taste' brand, the WAG seeks to "provide an exceptional *food experience* to visitors

based on locally sourced and *distinctive food"* (WAG ibid. emphasis added). It is worth remembering here that these strategic aims to promote local food form a substantial part of the strategy to meet the goals set out by the 'One Wales: One Planet' scheme, which is itself founded upon the principles of sustainable development. To have a strategy of sustainable development that rests upon promoting distinction is arguably at odds with a core principle of sustainable development, that of *equity*, a commitment that resounds throughout the 'One Wales' policy statement. In haste, the WAG set action points to address "the needs of less well off people" by supplying "local and affordable fruit and vegetables through sustainable food distribution networks to disadvantaged communities". This particular action point, they claim, is to be delivered by community food co-operatives. However, to suggest that the community food co-operative supplies *local* food is somewhat problematic. The WAG has stated that food sourced from within 30 miles of its site of production is considered as 'local'. Crucially, the food supplied to community food co-operatives is not local, not even if the definition of a 30 mile radius is taken into consideration; for the produce is supplied wholesale from grocers who obtain their produce only *on occasion* from within this 30 mile radius and more frequently are sourced overseas.

Crucially, it seems that the action points outlined within the FSAP appear to mostly guide the development of the 'True Taste' brand. Undercutting their promises to promote social inclusion for the 'wellbeing' of Wales, the branding of 'True Taste' appears to promote *distinctive* food by creating niche markets creating 'value added' products. Sustainable development, the agenda allegedly adopted by the WAG in order to address problems of environmental degradation and resource scarcity has at its core this commitment to equity. Equity, however, as an underpinning principle to sustainable development lies open to interpretation, which presents a quagmire of theoretical and empirical questions. To this end, we might seek an understanding of *consumer experiences* of 'alternative food', of the cultural experience of food from both an objective and subjective class position. These may in turn provide useful insight for those seeking to develop sustainable consumption strategies in practice. That is, if farmers' markets fuel middle class practices of distinction that then exclude 'others', this creates problems for those who have stored faith in these and other modes of delivering distinctive 'food experiences' as the route through which to realise sustainability. The 'True Taste' brand campaign, as laid out in both the LSAP and the FTAP then appears to be aimed at *promoting* distinction, and promoting the proliferation of niche markets that at the same time exacerbate inequality in access to and appreciation of 'good'

food. In exploring potential sites for this study, an informal interview with a civil servant working on development of the 'True Taste' brand made clear to me that the market and co-op provide highly fertile ground to examine the prevalence of distinction in the field of 'alternative' food consumption. Here, he explains that a commitment to sustainable development is met by promoting economic growth around sustainable food by 'adding value' where possible. This, it was said, is achieved by creating a 'sense of place'. To give an example, it is explained that a meal of 'ham and eggs' can have value added by distinguishing the ingredients and constituents of this meal. The ham, rather than being described in a menu as simply 'ham' he suggests be described as "prime local gammon from so and so farm with free range eggs from so and so place" (WAG Interview). Inflaming the title, by telling the consumer more of the produce, enables the retailer to charge a premium for that product. Through the careful deployment of language, a retailer, is then encouraged to charge a higher price for food that is *described* as being procured more locally, even though there has been no change in the production processes involved. As such, the centrality of promoting a distinctive food experience to the WAG's project of developing settings for 'alternative' food consumption at farmers' markets, provide convincing evidence that the sites represent those that the WAG identify to deliver sustainable development through a "distinctive experience" (the market) on the one hand, and that "meet the needs of less well off people" (the co-op) on the other.

It is argued that with two such contrasting settings representing WAG's approach to delivering sustainable development, that these provide grounds from which to begin exploring the prevalence of social class within such 'alternative' settings. Thus, it is not solely the intentions of well meaning social enterprise to develop such initiatives but these - especially farmers' markets - are heralded as flagship initiatives supporting the promotion of equitable sustainable development and wellbeing. The status afforded to sites such as farmers' markets by those seeking to develop means of sustainable consumption through distinctive place making then makes the market a sound case for the study of 'alternative' consumption and the class practices that may unfold within and around it. Indeed, being subject to the same policy gaze and being situated within the same community, they provide a point of comparison with each other.

4.3.4 Gaining Access

Entry to the field was gained firstly as a customer, and then as a volunteer. To have a set of 'plausible explanations' (Kluckhohn 1940:334) proved necessary in order to 'hang around', without raising suspicion. In order to gain access as participant observer, I identified roles to play within that community as Kluckhohn had when researching a Spanish community in the 1940's. This she termed 'the quest for roles' (ibid. p. 332). Initially, in order to observe the customers of the farmers' market, I attended as a customer myself, wandering through the market, stopping to purchase produce, sitting to drink a cup of coffee, all in order to gain the opportunity to watch and listen to what other customers were doing and saying. This practice of familiarisation was later formalised by seeking other means of 'hanging around' for the duration of trading hours, which normally lasted between nine thirty in the morning until two o'clock in the afternoon. While speaking with the manager of the site, it appeared that some producers were finding it difficult to staff their stalls for the duration of trading by themselves. Permission was then obtained from the market manager - who was aware of my intentions as a researcher - to ask these stall holders if they would like my help. Having informed them of my intentions as a researcher; to understand more about how the farmers' market works, and to observe how customers use them, my help was fortunately accepted by three stall holders. Their acceptance of me as a researcher, in return for my help in staffing their stall allowed me to observe the social interactions of customers with the producer, but also with their friends, partners, spouses, friends, family members and indeed other customers and acquaintances. It was the observation of such interactions that allowed me to gain some initial insight into the class 'habitus' of customers as well as allowing a deeper familiarisation with the setting.

Customers who visited the stalls were 'selectively informed' (Jorgensen 1989) of my interests and purposes as a researcher (Adler 1985). Although a large and brightly coloured sign explaining my presence was pinned to the awning of the stall, customers did not appear to pay attention to this sign, nor did they enquire any further with regards to the research. Customers who took part in further stages of data collection were, however, engaged in more rigorous practices of informed consent. These are discussed below in conjunction with those methods.

Access to the co-op was gained in a similar manner. Following a period of participant observation at the market, I approached the volunteers at the co-op, explaining my role as a student and researcher, and offering my help, during which I explained my hope to gain understanding of the co-operative, its customers and its volunteers in relation to 'alternative' food networks. Like the producers at the market, the volunteers of the co-operative accepted my help. Immediately, I began to 'bag up' produce that had arrived from the local wholesaler, ready for collection by customers. By the close of one day at the co-op it became apparent that as a participant observer, there would be ample opportunity to gather data pertaining to the research questions by spending time with the volunteers, taking orders from customers and observing interactions between the customers about how to cook their vegetables. These provided the opportunity to gain some understanding of this social world, and even of the class 'habitus' of the volunteers, based on the stories that they told and anecdotal references made.

Although this period of participant observation was invaluable in terms of understanding the landscape of these social worlds, this period was also vital in building rapport between myself and customers. However, this remains the case mostly of the co-op, given the smaller number of customers and the extended opportunities of interaction that this afforded. Due to the number of customers attending a farmers' market, it was not possible to build rapport to the same degree. At the co-op customers were asked openly if they would like to be interviewed, whereas, at the market, a survey was used partly in order to recruit further participants. This survey was also administered at the co-operative at a later date.

4.4 How? A Mixed Method Approach

This section explores the methods of data collection employed during fieldwork carried out between May 2008 and January 2010. These methods comprised an extended period of participant observation at both sites, a survey administered to customers and twenty semi-structured interviews. As the result of being central to some participants' discussions, the appropriate popular cultural texts such as cookbooks are analysed. Combining observation, note taking, casual conversations, surveys and several different forms of interviewing likewise formed my strategy for data collection. This is reminiscent of the combination of methods employed in the participant observations carried out by Hochschild (1983) in her

study of airline cabin crew, and by Fine (1987) in his study of 'Little Leaguers'. These are each discussed in turn below.

4.4.1 Participant Observation

Ethnography, in its most fundamental form involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994). In this case, participant observation as an ethnographic research method emerged as the most appropriate method to employ in order to begin to understand this social world, and indeed, to begin to generate further questions that would lead onto an understanding of what further methods of data collection may be necessary. In line with this definition of ethnography, the method of participant observation certainly provides a means by which to collect whatever data is available to throw light on the phenomena being studied. Moreover, ethnographic methods have been considered the most appropriate for understanding complex social settings and complex social interactions, for it is seen as the only method of data collection "that gets close to people" (Gans 1999:540) and indeed, allows for the observation of what people *do*, and not only what they *say* about what they do. The methods employed for this study are, however, geared towards *both* of these aspects of study. As such, this thesis is concerned with what people do *as well as* how people speak about what it is they do.

The nature of my involvement in the field settings altered the degree to which I could be considered a participant or an observer at various points. Classifications of participant observation offered by Gold (1958) and Junker (1960) comprise the fourfold typology of the complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994). The degree to which I conformed to one of these research roles varied according to the activity in question. That is, my engagement with the field of study varied along a continuum from the complete observer to the complete participant, a feature arguably common to all social research. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) it is impossible to demarcate participant observation from social research in general, and even, arguably, to conceive of the complete observer of the social world, for we cannot study the social world without being part of it. To suggest at any stage in this research, that as

a researcher I occupied the role as complete observer - who has complete separation from the social world under observation - is   to miss the point here. Rather, at the stage of complete observation, I was *not* performing my role as a volunteer, but simply observing those who were performing their roles as volunteers, as stall holder and as customers. However, as noted by Jorgensen (1989) the 'competition and conflict' between the tasks of observation and participation have been exaggerated to a great extent. Multiple roles are executed in everyday life on a daily basis, and a skilled and self conscious investigator will have the ability to participate "intensively and extensively, at the same time they are experiencing and observing the world around them" (Jorgensen 1989:56). Again, claims to objective knowledge are problematic in social and natural science research. However, participant observation can produce data that is ecologically valid for it is based on the participants' very participation within as opposed to distance from the subject of inquiry. The active participant who engages with the field and those who are active within this field enables misunderstandings and the misinterpretation of 'folk' terms to be avoided. Indeed, the participant observer is said to be less misled by the 'myth of complete objectivity in social science' and is more conscious of their biases as a result of constant reflection over their own role in producing data (Kluckhohn 1940). To be involved, and indeed, to avoid an overly fervent concern with 'distance' and 'objectivity' might even afford a richer and greater understanding of the social world in question, without, of course, 'crossing the line' or indeed 'becoming native' and abandoning scientific tools of inquiry altogether.

4.4.2 The On-site Ethnographic Interview

As well as more structured and formally organised interviews, impromptu and unstructured ethnographic interviews were conducted at the research site. Descriptive questions were asked of stall holders and of volunteers and site managers, questions identified by Spradley (1979) as 'grand tour', 'mini tour', 'example' and 'experience' questions. These ethnographic interviews, conducted informally, were conversations held in the field mostly with producers at the market and with volunteers at the co-op. The sorts of questions asked invited the producer or the volunteer to speak about the practices involved with being a producer or a volunteer. For example, asking a producer to tell me a little about how he became involved in trading at farmers' markets led on to them speaking of the successes and failures of markets, and even of disputes between traders. Indeed, such conversations over the period of

participant observation gave me an insight into the social world of the producer. Similarly, at the co-op, conversations were held between volunteers while separating out the produce that had been delivered in crates and boxes that morning, and 'bagging' the set quantities that customers would later collect. Such conversations would revolve around their personal lives, and even their thoughts about customers. In the early stages of participant observation at the community food co-operative, the volunteers would talk through the routines of the co-operative, and would speak later on in greater depth about the past experiences of the co-operative with 'difficult customers' and with being 'taken advantage' of by wholesalers. Such conversations and the opportunities available to ask further questions about these experiences were not only present during 'bagging up' but as the volunteers sit and drink coffee together, before customers begin to trickle slowly through the door for the remainder of the morning.

Although these conversations were never recorded, as will be discussed at greater length below, these opportunities to conduct impromptu 'ethnographic' style of interviews proved invaluable. That is, in contrast to the formal interview - that by their rhetorical nature creates retrospective data - conversations were had with respect to what was going on in that moment. As such, impromptu, *in situ* interviews contextualised the knowledge later gained through semi-structured interview. By contextualising these interactions in accounts regarding how produce is delivered, organised and ordered and indeed, how customers access and become involved with these settings, the social world of 'alternative' food consumption comes to be understood.

4.4.3 Making Field Notes

To record data, combinations of different methods are used. These include photography, note taking and audio recording with use of a digital voice recorder. At first, attempts were made to keep the digital voice recorder running for the duration of the trading hours at the market, but having listened to the poor quality of the recording generated, this practice was abandoned. Given the nature of the practice of participating in this field, finding, turning on and the placement of a voice recorded interrupted not only the flow of the conversation, but also the business of selling produce. The tape recorder, as widely acknowledged by researchers undertaking such ethnographic work (Altheide 1976) was both disruptive as well as ineffective. Field notes then became the mode for recording the conversations and

impromptu ethnographic interviews held in the field. These field notes were written as soon as possible upon leaving the 'field' or took the form of 'scratch notes' (Sanjek 1990:101). This refers to short notes taken that will later be written into 'notes proper' (Jackson 1990) or may even be delayed until they can be absorbed into the full ethnographic account. Indeed, at times, and where appropriate, notes were made discreetly in order to prompt further memories at a later date. These were written by taking into account the atmosphere, the sights, the sounds, and the smells as well as conversations taking place. Recorded in field notes were the notes of the physical place or places, of the people involved, the acts being carried out and the physical things present. Attention was also paid to the single actions, of the related activities that people carry out and the times at which they did these. Finally, taking account of the goals that customers seemed to be trying to accomplish, and of any emotions felt and expressed. At the market these notes would sometimes be written on a mobile phone. By sending an email or text message it was possible to take 'scratch notes' without drawing undue attention to myself. In a relatively busy public setting such as the market, pausing to look at and tap away at one's phone was not an unusual practice, and enabled note-taking of exchanges observed between customers while standing, for example, in a queue. At the co-op this was not so suitable. The sociality of the co-op is such that volunteers and customers are involved in a constant stream of either physical activity or are engaged in conversation with each other. Scratch notes were then taken in private, often in the lavatory.

4.4.4 The Survey

The survey was designed for two purposes; firstly to build a picture of the class composition of customers at each site on objective class terms and secondly; to recruit participants from the market for further research. This survey was piloted at the market and the co-op in January 2008 and repeated at the both sites in June 2009. The pilot survey served as the recruitment facility for market customers. On each questionnaire was an option to give personal details at the foot of this one page should they wish to take part in further research. Drawing on a simple random sampling method (Bryman 2008) out of 149 responses, forty two gave their details to be followed up for further research. Each of these respondents were contacted with further information and with stamped addressed return envelopes, and a sign-

up sheet requesting their times of availability. In total, fifteen replied. Of these fifteen, ten were finally interviewed.

The survey (Appendix 3) was not administered in order to generate data with statistical power, but to provide indicators for the objective classifications of social class of customers at each site. Data pertaining to the variables of sex, age, postcode, ethnic and national identity, frequency of visit, gross annual income, information regarding to the nature of that work i.e. full or part time, as well as highest educational qualification, and the occupation and educational qualifications of parents were collected. Moreover, these categories were expanded to allow the respondents to fill in data for their partner as well as themselves under the variables of income, basis of work. In order to prompt further information with regards to parental occupation and education, open 'tick' boxes were provided

These self completion questionnaires were handed out to customers as they approached the market, and a ballot box was placed near the coffee station, located around about the middle point of the market. It was explained to customers that should they wish to fill out a questionnaire, that they could do so at any point during their visit, and return their completed questionnaire to the ballot box. This technique proved successful in allowing respondents the opportunity to complete the questionnaire during a wait in a queue, or as they sat for a coffee, or indeed, straight away. The success of this method can only be measured, however, in the sense that it provided information that captures the demographic composition of the customer base at the market and co-op on the days in question. Due to the relatively small number of respondents, this survey does not offer statistical power, but rather provides indications as to the demographic characteristics of a random sample of customers. Ultimately, the survey recruited participants for further qualitative study. The Chapter now returns to a discussion of the qualitative process.

4.4.5 Qualitative Semi-structured Interviewing

The interview has been considered one of the most important sources for obtaining data as part of a case study (Yin 2003). Concomitant with the critical realist perspective of the thesis, interviews are not considered a mere social construction. That is, we do not take too seriously the suggestion that interviews have meaning only in so far as the interaction between

interviewer and interviewee. While there is merit in taking caution not to overstate the relationship between the interview and the social world writ large, this thesis does not discount the possibility of learning something of the social world through this method. To this end, it is noted that not only is "the story being told to particular people" (Riessman 1993) but that it might have taken a different form if someone else was the listener. It is, nevertheless, considered appropriate here to proceed with the interview method, for the reasons set out below.

Indeed, the suitability of the interview in eliciting data for case study research is afforded by the fluid (Rubin and Rubin 1995) nature of interviews that follow a pattern of 'guided conversations' more than 'structured queries'. Interviews were conducted with ten customers of the market and ten with customers of the co-op, generating data from twenty interviews in total. Following a line of inquiry set by the research questions, and in accord with the advice of Yin (ibid.) conversational questions were asked in order to elicit narratives from the respondent. Although respondents were encouraged to speak freely, so that the conversation might 'wander' into other topics, the form of the interviews conducted resembled more closely the 'focused' interview. Merton *et al*. (1990) suggest that a focused interview fosters a conversational style and permits open ended questioning. Interviews lasted roughly one hour, and were guided by an 'aide memoir' (Appendix 4, discussed below) to ensure the satisfaction of key research aims. The open ended and conversational style that characterised interviews conducted with customers of both sites, whether these are considered 'semi structured' or 'focused'.

Arrangements to meet with participants for the interview were made to correspond with their visits to each site, enabling me to shop with the participant prior to interview. Four out of ten of the market's customers were interviewed in this way, following a morning of shopping. These interviews were relatively *in situ* for they were conducted shortly after the shopping trip, either in a nearby coffee shop, or at a place of their choosing. Otherwise, the respondents who were recruited via the survey who did not wish to take part in the shopping aspect of the research were instead interviewed in their homes at a separate time. Similarly, respondents recruited from the co-op were interviewed either in their home, or in a place of their choosing following their visit, or on another occasion. In this way, it is taken seriously that two people can communicate their perceptions of the social world to one another. Indeed, these interactions may represent more truthfully these perceptions if taken place *in situ*.

Each interview was recorded with a digital voice recorder, following verbal consent from the respondents. After the interview, written consent was obtained giving the respondent the chance to reflect before giving permission for this data to be transcribed and used in this thesis. The presence of the digital voice recorder did not seem in any of these cases to elicit discomfort amongst respondents. Indeed, to minimise disruption, efforts were made prior to interview to ensure that batteries were full, and that there was sufficient space on the memory of the device to record new data.

Each interview followed a similar structure, beginning with inviting the interviewee to speak a little of their food related routines and of the various practices surrounding its consumption. This part of the interview 'aide memoir' was scripted and learnt by heart, for it was, for the sake of bolstering internal validity, crucial not to make any reference to class. As such, it is central to the research design that any discussion of class arises on the interviewee's own terms. In Savage's (2001) study of class identities in the Northwest of England participants were asked what class they thought they belonged to, and whether they had thoughts on the debate that Britain is becoming a 'classless society'. He found that respondents were reluctant to reflexively place themselves within a class. They spoke of divisions between 'haves' and 'have not's' but were hesitant in situating themselves using class language. By not mentioning class at all in my interviews, an understanding of whether or not respondents position themselves using the language of class might be gained. This was an important element of the preparation carried out prior to the interview, for it is as important to consider what will *not* be said or asked as well as what will be said or asked. To begin the interview, the following statement was made, in a conversational an informal manner, to each interviewee;

Interviewer Opening Statement

"I'm going to start the interview proper now, I'm not going to say much, just ask you some open questions as I want to hear about you and your experiences around shopping for food, and in particular about the (market/community food co-operative) and how that fits around your other routines. If we wander off into other topics then that's great, because I want to get a feel for how food in general fits into your life and of those around you, so

> please don't feel that we have to stick rigidly to the topic of food
> and the market/ community food co-operative".

The aim of this statement was to set an agenda, and to make clear to the interviewee that it was fine to wander into other topics other than those of food, the market or co-op. Beginning in a manner that was conducive to this open format, interviewees were asked to 'tell me a little about…' themselves, about the area where they live, and about what they liked to do with their spare time. This served as both an ice breaker, and provided data that also pertained to 'habitus', and about homologous tastes and preferences across the fields of say, housing, food and leisure activities. Although the interviewees were encouraged to remain open with regards to the topics that the interviewee preferred to talk about, the aide memoir was structured in order to cover key areas. These 'areas' are encompassed by the following topics or set of questions; 'a little about themselves', as explicated above, 'a little about their reasons for going to the farmers' market or community food co-operative, wherein questions pertaining to their routines around food consumption were asked, and a 'a little more about themselves and their peer group'. Here, questions regarding the people that they see when 'out and about' at either the farmers' market or community food co-operative were asked. These topics or themes encompassed a set of possible questions that were asked at various stages in each interview. For example, one interviewee, when telling me a little about themselves and their hobbies, began to speak of his 'love of food'. By discussing with him his 'love of food' the objectives outlined in 'aide memoir' were fulfilled, but not necessarily in the order initially anticipated by the aide memoir. Similarly, in other interviews the 'aide memoir' was useful in that it ensured that the same topics and sets of questions were broached with each interviewee, but that questions were not asked in linear and sequential order, especially as interviewees veered into other topics. One such topic often raised was that of class. Only at this juncture was it considered appropriate to probe for further elaboration on the matter.

Crucially, not intended to produce a mirror reflection of the social world (Dawson and Prus 1995) these interviews sought to elicit narratives pertaining to food consumption practice. This was so that we may gain insights as to how class does or does not figure in these practices. In this way, eliciting talk about alternative food practice satisfies the research aim, for it is not 'reality' as such that we hope to understand here, it is how interviewees position

themselves within a field of 'alternative' food consumption. Nevertheless, having adopted a critical realist position, the thesis does argue that the narratives elicited are part of wider discourses. These are indeed, considered to be figured in the enactment, reproduction and resistance to wider structures of power and inequality. This is discussed at greater length in the concluding sections of this Chapter.

4.4.6 Documents

Documents and cultural artefacts were used to situate the data within a wider social, political and cultural context. On the most part, these included recipes from cook book or programmes written or hosted by Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall as well as WAG 'Action Plans' and 'Strategies'. It is suggested that 'official' documents offer a means of examining their place within organisational settings, the cultural values attached to them and their distinctive types and forms (Atkinson and Coffey 2011). Here, WAG strategies and action plans, as detailed earlier in the Chapter, were drawn upon in order to justify the choice of research settings. Indeed, to satisfy the research aims a comprehensive analysis of the discourses enacted by these documents is neither appropriate nor desirable. As such, these documents are introduced as a means of drawing attention to the position of the market and co-op as having attracted the attention of Welsh policy-makers and stakeholders, and were not subject to rigorous processes of textual analysis.

More pertinently, this study includes popular cultural artefacts such as recipes from celebrity chef cookbooks. For Prior (2003), these enable access to the wider context within which these documents are situated. Indeed, cultural and consumer products provide a greater wealth of knowledge than simply 'content' for they are social products that are "constructed in accordance with rules, they express a structure and they are nestled within a specific discourse" (ibid. pp. 12-13). In this way, documents provide insight to the discursive frames of the social world in question, providing an essential element in contextualising this case study within a wider social field. As they were often mentioned by customers when shopping at the farmers' market, these programmes, cookbooks and recipes figure in the presentation and discussion of findings. Again, these were not subjected to thorough processes of textual analysis. Instead, they are referred to in order to contextualise the data.

4.6.7 Ethics

In compliance with guidelines set by The British Sociological Association (2008) the research design, consent forms and information sheets were submitted to and approved by the Cardiff School of Social Science Ethics Committee. This ensures that the information supplied to participants is sufficient in order to claim they were given the appropriate channels through which to provide informed consent. Participants were also given the opportunity to opt out of taking part in the research as well as the option of pulling out of this research at any stage of data collection. However, to gain consent at all times and from each participant in any research has long been seen as problematic (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995) particularly when ethnographic methods such as participant observation are employed in public settings where hundreds upon hundreds of people circulate. During the stage of participant observation, when volunteering behind market stalls, signs were pinned to the awning of the stall, explaining that a researcher was present, taking notes in conjunction with a university project. This note also explained that a customer could object to being involved in this research as appropriate. Informed consent and 'opting in' as opposed to simply 'opting out' was, however, more easily obtained when recruiting and conducting the survey and the interviews.

At the head of this questionnaire was an explanation of the project that the information provided by the customer would inform. It was also suggested that the respondent need not fill out all aspects of the questionnaire should they not wish to do so. Respondents most commonly refrained from providing their post code or information regarding their income. Further to this, the option to disclose contact details was given at the foot of the questionnaire. Here it was suggested that they need not supply such details unless they would like to take part in further research. With regards to the interview, an information sheet was provided, which was discussed prior to interview. Informed consent was then obtained as the interviewee provided their signature in agreement that the interview be recorded and used in conjunction with the research. Interviewees were also reminded that they were free to terminate the interview at any time, and that they were welcome to view and edit or even withdraw a transcript of the interview should they wish to do so. In particular, participants were reassured that their personal details would remain anonymous. This marks an effort to safeguard the interests of all persons involved in informing this research.

4.5 Making Sense of the Data

4.5.1 Coding

The research takes a somewhat inductive approach, although it is theoretically guided by the Bourdieu's conceptual framework. Only following the initial coding of the data was Bourdieu's concept of 'positioning' taken fully onboard. Having transcribed each interview, and having written all field notes in full, both by hand and in Microsoft Word, these documents were imported into NVivo 8. Here, data was stored, managed and coded. Themes were identified and coded as the result of reading transcripts over and again with view to identifying the salient themes. At this stage, coding is considered a means of data management rather than analysis. Indeed, the use of computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) cannot assist the researcher with decisions about the coding (Sprokkereef *et al*. 1995) or with interpreting the findings (Weitzman and Miles 1995). Nevertheless, NVivo 8 assists with the coding and retrieval of all aspects of the data, allowing a means of familiarisation. As the coding process developed, the parent tree nodes were expanded representing sub-themes such as 'anti-supermarket', 'distinguishing themselves from an inferior other' or 'distinguishing themselves from superior other'. Again, managing the data in this way proved an essential stage in familiarisation, but did not comprise the analytical stage itself. Rather, it served as a platform from which the analysis then arose. Once the interviews and field notes were coded thematically into 'tree' nodes under which were coded sub nodes, case 'vignettes' were written. Not intended for use as an interview prompt, these vignettes were written as a means of moving from the stage of coding to analysis.

Despite having coded and written case vignettes based on each of the participants, the empirical Chapters of this thesis considers the range of data collected and analysed in different ways. For example, Chapter 5 explores the ethnographic and survey data collected during the period of participant observation. This is presented as a means to introduce the core thematic issues that are developed in the latter empirical Chapters (6 and 7). These Chapters each go on to focus in detail on fifteen out of the twenty interviews. Omitting five participants from these Chapters was a decision made on the grounds that their stories are instead woven throughout Chapter 5. In other words, the interviews explicitly explored in the thesis are indicative of the data set as a whole. They are considered indicative in the sense

that they are representative of the themes raised and accounts given by other participants. Moreover, they are presented in this fashion not simply to avoid repetition, or to circumvent the problem of having explored data through only one methodological medium. Instead, the presentation of typical cases in different forms is considered valid on the grounds that the empirical chapters are organised around particular stages in the conceptual development of the thesis. That is, they are concerned with presenting the *range* of mixed qualitative and quantitative data in discrete conceptual stages. We argue that having begun with ethnographic participant observation, that this allows the researcher to select with confidence the cases that are representative of the data set as a whole, without unduly marginalising other possible lines of enquiry.

4.5.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis, through the study of talk and language provides insight into the cultures, social groups and institutions that shape social activities and identities (Gee 2005). That is, by emphasising the role of language as a power resource, this approach draws particularly from the theories of Foucault (1977). As a form of discourse analytic, critical discourse analysis goes further in studying power dominance and inequality as both expressed reproduced and resisted by interconnecting texts and indeed, talk (Van Dijk 2001). Here, language is seen to enact specific social activities, identities and 'ways of being' within a particular group. Indeed, discourses may in this sense be considered central in upholding particular identities, such as that of the 'good' consumer. Language, then, is not seen as a passive means of communicating meaning, for both language and meaning itself are arbitrary, contested and political in the sense of how social goods are thought about, argued over, and distributed in society. To study the uses of language within a particular context, then, is to begin to understand the means by which social groups and institutions shape their culture, their social activities and identities. Crucially, adopting the lens of critical discourse analysis as part of a wider framework of critical realism, allows for some understanding of how these identities are shaped and to what effect. In this way, critical discourse analysts (Phillips and Hardy 2002) are also less likely to assume that these are entirely constitutive of 'reality'.

As well as understanding the role of language in the process of group identity formation, by adopting the 'explanatory critique' that has been central to the practice of 'critical discourse

analysis' put forward by Bhaskar (1986, 2009) and by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), the method of data analysis is implicated in a whole other set of ideas about what can be said about the social world of the 'alternative' food network studied. Adopting critical discourse analysis (CDA), as noted above, involves 'explanatory critique'. Here, the framework of analysis is conceived of in stages. First of all, the social scientist is advised to focus on a social problem. In this case, this is the extent to which class figures in 'alternative' food practice. Secondly, the analysis of the network of practices that the social problem is located within involves the identification of obstacles that obstruct the realisation of effective social change. This approach of 'explanatory critique' affords critical reflection also upon the possible *necessity* of, say, relations of inequality for the survival of a particular practice. For example, would practices of 'alternative' consumption remain a desirable goal for the middle classes if access to its advantages were made democratic? Are there obstacles in place that obstruct democratic access for all to engage with such a practice? If so, the remit of analysis is extended into identify routes that might break such barriers, and imagines a change in the organisation of that practice. Indeed, language is considered an ideologically powerful resource effecting social change. By analysing the discourses that surround 'alternative' food consumption, we are looking to understand what Reed (2000) refers to as the social structures and power relationships that occasion them, and look towards generating knowledge about these relations that are not simply self-referential. Indeed, these discourses may tell us something of the 'reality' outside of our sociological imaginations.

These stages are not devoid of interpretation on behalf of the researcher. However, the situated nature of the data does inevitably become entangled with the position that the researcher and analyst holds within the very same social field as the participant. In the interest of rendering visible the process of analysis, while also developed as a concept, the heuristic device of 'positioning' was incorporated in order to interpret the data. This incorporation came about for it suits the patterns of the discourses emerging from the data. That is, it became apparent to analyse the data with reference to the following question; how are positions taken by the interviewee, and how are these positions constructed and (re)-constituted through discourse? Crucially, to recap from Chapter Three, a central theoretical objective of this thesis is to understand and to take seriously the concept of 'lay normativity' (Sayer 2005a). This takes on board the consideration that social class as experienced in a lay and normative context. As such, this approach does not aim to categorise class in a positivist manner, but to gain a rich understanding of class as played out in the social field. This is not

'value free' social science, but a study of the subjective experience of class in the social field in relation to food. Such an understanding of lay normativity cannot be separated entirely from my own situated normative understandings of the social world. However, as far as possible, the discourses elicited in face-to-face interactions as well as those obtained via ethnographic participant observation are presented while also making clear their context. Doing so enabled me to remain true to the context of sentiments expressed by placing the extracts included within the context of the participants' biography as well as in the context of the questions asked of them. The framework of 'positioning', then, provides a lens through which the participants' actions, discourses and narratives are identified as existing within a wider structure of relative social class positions. This conjecture is supported by Sayer (2005a);

> "It is my belief that in social science, as in everyday life, we will understand people better if we take their normative dispositions, concerns and rationales seriously, rather than treating these as mere facts about them which can be given social location in relation to class, gender and 'race', and then left at that, as if they were no different from facts about their age or height….What it does allow us to address is the subjective experience of inequalities, how relations and differences are negotiated, and above all what it is about them that *matters* to people."

> (ibid. p. 21)

This way of understanding class does not exactly follow that of Bourdieu (1984). Indeed, Sayer (2005a) and Lamont (1992) have been critical of the absence of discourse in Bourdieu's framework. Here, Bourdieu is seen as not giving sufficient treatment to the moral conditions under which class distinctions flourish. To Bourdieu's framework of the social field and habitus in understanding class reproduction, this thesis includes the analysis of discourses and its role in constructing and maintaining the relations of class through the construction of *moral positions.*

This heuristic device of 'positioning', appropriated and developed as a tool for interpreting the data came from the early stages of analysis, from impressions taken from reading and rereading field notes and transcripts of interviews, and indeed from repeated listening to these interviews during the process of transcription. It was these early moments of analysis that made this heuristic device of 'positioning' a tool with which to carve the data. That is,

moments where respondents engaged in acts of 'positioning' became the nexus around which data was organised. This tool of positioning, then, led to the decision not to segment the data but instead to treat each interview in its entirety. To understand how participants' positioned themselves was to contextualise their talk in terms of what they had said before-hand in leading into discursive position taking. Again, rather than applying categories to the different aspects of the data, the broader means by which the participants actively construct and employ categories of class in talk is paid close attention. This is commensurate with the view that participants "themselves actively construct and employ categories in their talk" (Wood and Kroger 2000:29) that in turn provide the axes for analysis. Intuitively, then, to employ such a heuristic tool, complemented both the received wisdom of the body of work surrounding discourse analysis; that "people are positioned by and effected through discourse" (Edley and Wetherell 1997:205) as well as the ontological and epistemological perspective of critical realism, that provides some middle ground in the status of knowledge obtained through social science method and methodology. This compatibility lies with this notion that social actors are 'positioned' by discourse as well as being involved in the construction of such discourses, and is met with realist accounts of the researcher as involving and implicating oneself within that very process. In other words; people are the products of and indeed producers of discourse. As a result, it follows that there need not be conflict between the interpretation of social actors as passive to larger social forces at work, or indeed as active participants in the construction of social reality. This puts me as the researcher in a position of not only *using* discourse analysis but as *doing* discourse analysis (Wood and Kroger 2000).

4.6 Epistemological Reflections

4.6.1 Reconciling Discourse with Bourdieu's Sociology

As the thesis adopts a critical realist ontological standpoint, the method of (critical) discourse data analysis employed gains strength. From a critical realist perspective, discourse and the use of language in particular ways are the product of social relations of the 'extra-discursive'. As such, discourses come into being in relation to objects, in relation to particular social phenomena, and in conversation with other discourses or social texts. It is the relationship between discourse and the material world, and indeed the understanding that discourses

develop inter-textually that enable discourses to become known. Moreover, "critical realism argues that meaning is a product of both intra-discursive and referential relations" (Sayer 1999:33). It is through knowing these discourses that we can come to know the material world or indeed the structures to which these discourses are attached, and in this case, come to understand the subjective experience of class in relation to the objective structures to which that experience is inevitably bound. Indeed, discourse is taken as not simply pertaining to the 'empirical' world, but to the 'real' and the 'actual' world. To understand discourses is to understand something of these worlds, although it remains necessary to recognise that the real world will exist and continue to be, regardless of our understanding of it.

Just like Bourdieu's attempt to transcend the subjective/objective dualism by taking seriously both the subjective experience of class inseparable from objective structuring forces, critical discourse analysis brings back the 'object'. Moreover, the critical discourse analyst considers the location of an object of study within wider social practices, which again, is not incompatible with a Bourdieusian approach. That is, a *relational* mode of thinking supports Bourdieu's vision of social science research (Bennett *et al.* 2009). A conventional theory of discourse, according to Sayer (ibid.) has been associated with the 'death of the object'. Here, discourse came to be seen as an object in itself, as a language that comprises of signifier and signified (Peirce 1931, Saussure 1983) but without any concrete relation to a referent (Giddens 1979). With a critical realist perspective, discourse and the use of language in particular ways are considered as the product of 'extra-discursive' social relations. In this way, discourses come into being in relation to objects, in relation to particular social phenomena, and in relation with other discourses or social texts. It is this relationship between discourse and the material world, and indeed the inter-textual development of these discourses that enable them to become known.

In sum, discourse is taken to not simply pertain to the 'empirical' world, but to the 'real' and the 'actual' world. Indeed, it is this mode of ontological and epistemological thinking that successfully couples Bourdieusian sociology with the critical discourse analytic. As such, considerable effort is required on behalf of the researcher to avoid un-reflexively allowing their own position to be projected onto those whom they study.

> "If there is a single feature that makes Bourdieu stand out in the land scape
> of contemporary social theory, it is his signature obsession with reflexivity

[…] Bourdieu has continually turned the instruments of science upon himself - in a manner not always immediately perceptible to many of his readers"

(Waquant 1992:36)

The reflexivity demanded by Bourdieu is not akin to merely reflecting upon the researcher's location within fieldwork through endless diary keeping and emphasis in writing that the author has constructed this view of the social world. For Bourdieu, reflexivity is achieved by the researcher in subjecting their own position to the same scrutiny as the object of research at hand. That is, "it is not the individual unconscious of the researcher but the epistemological unconscious of his discipline that must be unearthed" (ibid. p. 41). Theory and research are thus inextricably linked through a form of *epistemic reflexivity*. Crucially, the researcher need not be concerned with uncovering the collective unconscious inscribed in the academic field itself. Instead, the invitation to reflexive sociology extended by Bourdieu recommends that the researcher works to "neutralise the specific determinisms to which their innermost thoughts are subjected" (ibid. p. 46). In so doing, and from a critical realist ontological perspective, this thesis seeks to explore class position, while paying attention to the potential self-fulfilling nature of drawing upon such concepts in the first instance. This is not to say, as discussed above, that the sociologist cannot 'say' anything about the social world. Rather, the sociologist must remain conscious of the refractions made by theories generated by sociologists, and then pushed back into the social world that are in turn reflected back again. From critical realist ontology, we can go through this looking glass, but must remain reflexive of the epistemological wares of doing so.

4.7 Concluding Remarks

To make explicit the research design of the study, the Chapter began by exploring the relationship between theory and research through the lens of critical realism. Having detailed the ontological position of the thesis, we then outline and reflect upon the mixed methods of data collection employed. These are discussed in turn, before reflecting on the method of critical discourse analysis employed in order to make sense of the data. As we can see from the empirical studies detailed in Chapter Two, this research design mirrors many of their methodological aspects. In this way, the approach of this thesis does not innovate beyond

applying these methods of participant observation, interviewing and survey within a novel setting. Drawing on data collected during the period of participant observation at both the market and the co-op, the next Chapter introduces the field of 'alternative' food consumption. To this end, Chapter Five also presents a demographic class profile of customers. This data is coupled with observations relating to how 'alternative' food consumption is accomplished, and how class is figured in this practice.

Chapter Five

Setting the Scene

A Field of 'Alternative' Food Consumption

According to Kneafsey *et al.* (2008), 'alternative' food networks are sites for consumers to reconnect with food. With 'alternative' food emerging as a consumer practice, we can see on the one hand an explosion of interest and debate around food. The growing numbers of cookery and lifestyle books, programmes and merchandise are testament to this. On the other hand, as consumers we are supposed to have 'lost' our skills, knowledge and sense of connection with food. It is from this tension that we find emerging practices of 'alternative' food consumption. These may find expression at farmers' markets, community gardens, allotments, community co-operatives, Community Supported Agriculture Schemes (CSA's), farm shops, fruit and vegetable box schemes. One can now 'adopt' or indeed sponsor a sheep, cow or pig and receive its produce in the mail. Through the analysis of survey findings and field notes this Chapter explores a field of 'alternative' food consumption that comprises both the market and the co-op. First of all, to establish the demographic profile of the customers, the Chapter presents the survey data. In order to explore the ways in which 'alternative' food is accomplished by customers, the Chapter moves on to discuss the field notes made during the period of participant observation. Discussion of the interview data is reserved for Chapters Six and Seven, where how such 'alternative' food consumption is accounted for by consumers is explored.

5.1 'Objective' Class- Survey Data

To establish the socio-demographic composition of consumers from the market and co-op, data was collected on variables such as income, occupation and educational qualifications. This data was collected via a survey piloted some months before the final data collection. Notably, a similar number of customers responded to the survey at both the pilot and final stages. At the pilot stage, 145 customers responded, and at the final stage, 149. Such a similar

number of respondents on both occasions suggest that this is a realistic response rate. Moreover, the findings of each survey map closely onto one another, suggesting that the demographic characteristics described by the data presented here is representative of the population of customers at the farmers' market. The 12 survey responses gained from the co-op is far lower number than the 149 gained from the market. This is due to the much smaller customer base at the co-op from which there is to draw[4]. This data was then not intended to generate claims with statistical power. Instead, the survey data gives an indication of the social class of the customer base, and does not provide statistically powerful evidence.

Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate the stark socio-demographic differences between the customers attending the market and those attending the co-op. Measures of social class accord with the National Statistics Socio Economic Classification (2010) hereafter NS-SEC. Given that this is a case study located in one particular neighbourhood, data regarding the area of residence of each respondent was gathered and corroborated with data provided by the Welsh Assembly Government that scores each ward across Wales on an index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD 2009). The following data substantiates intuitive and common sense observations often made by the casual observer; that customers of the market were predominantly white and middle class. Indeed, this data shows that the customers of the market visit the deprived ward (WIMD 2009) in which it operates from areas that score relatively high on this same index. Customers visiting the market from more affluent wards within the county of Cardiff tend also to earn a higher income, tend to have secured higher educational qualifications, and have come from more educated backgrounds. Indeed, their parents held positions that score highly according to the NS-SEC (2009) and whom also attained a greater number of educational qualifications. In contrast, customers of the co-op live either within or in neighbouring deprived wards, were unemployed or on a low income, and tended to have lesser or no educational qualifications, much like their parents.

---

[4] On average there are twenty customers 'on the books' at any one time.

Figure 1 Farmers' Market Customer Ethnicity (%).

Figure 2 Community Food Cooperative Customer Ethnicity (%).

Figure 1 Farmers' Market Customer Ethnicity (%).
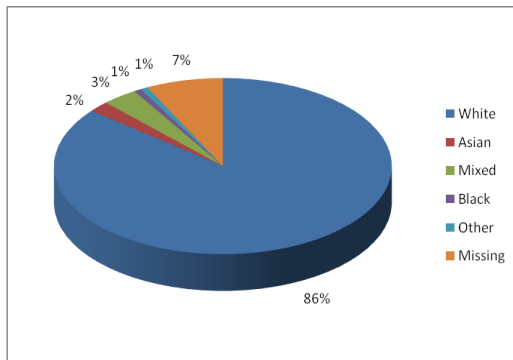
Figure 2 Community Food Cooperative Customer Ethnicity (%).
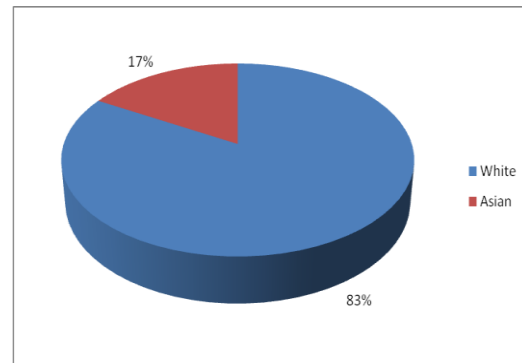
Figures 1 and 2 suggest that there is a predominantly white population of customers at each research site. There is, however, a larger Asian population at the community food co-operative than at the farmers' market. The following data suggests rather more stark differences between the two sites. These pertain to the variables of educational qualification and employment. In order to categorise the responses given to the open questions regarding educational qualifications and occupation, the NS-SEC (2010) was employed. Figures 3 and 4 convey the differences in level of occupation in correspondence with NS-SEC criteria. Due to the open nature of the question relating to occupation, and in line with the responses given by respondents, the variable of 'retired' and 'student' has been added to the 3-class NS-SEC criteria. The added details of 'student' or 'retired' were considered important for the purposes of this study and were therefore added to the NS-SEC 3-class version. That is, respondents frequently gave the answer 'student' or 'retired' to the question 'what is your occupation'. That respondents gave this as an answer to this open question is considered sufficient for addition to the categories of occupation. The decision to avoid the 5-class or 8-class criteria offered by the NS-SEC was made on the grounds that the survey did not incite sufficiently detailed information with regard to their occupations. The grading of their occupation depended on interpretation of the skill level involved in an occupation listed as, say, 'electrician', 'operations manager' or 'surveyor'.

Figure 3 Farmers' Market Occupation by Amended NS-SEC Category (%).
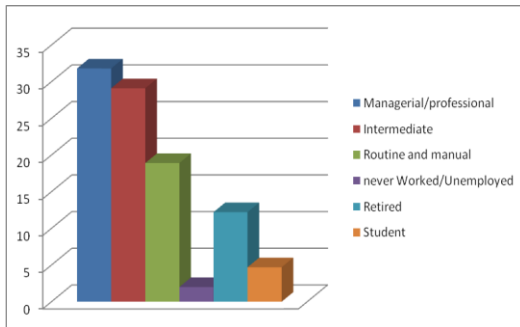
Figure 4 Community Food Co-operative Occupation by Amended NS-SEC Category (%).
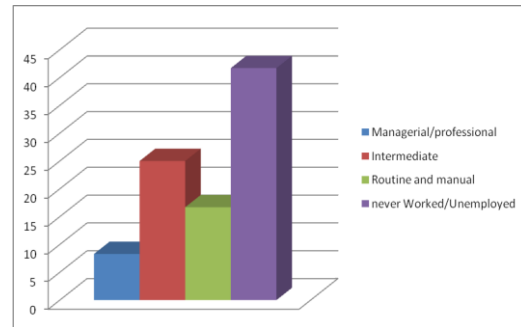
Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate that of the sample population at the market, 31.8% occupy positions of a managerial and professional nature as compared with 8.3% at the co-op. Only 2% of the RFM sample can be categorised as 'never worked or unemployed' compared with 41.7% of the co-op sample. The sample taken from the population of co-op customers seem to have experienced a higher rate of unemployment, while the sample taken from the market population shows that customers tend to occupy managerial or professional positions. A disproportionate number of co-op respondents have no non-compulsory educational qualifications as compared with a greater number of farmers' market customers who gained post-16 level qualifications as well as undergraduate degrees. From a sample of 149 respondents at the market; eleven had attained doctorate, twenty had attained a masters degree. Out of the twelve co-op customers one had a doctorate and two had a Masters level degree. At the market there are a greater number of cases where customers have achieved post-16 qualifications, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. The small sample of co-op customers does not allow for strong claims to be made here.

With respect to gross annual income, Figures 5 and 6 indicates that 58.3 per cent of co-op customers earn less that £10,000 per annum. Of this 58.3 per cent, 3 are unemployed, 2 are retired and 1 describes their occupation as an 'artist'. 1 of these respondents has a partner who also earns less than £10, 000 per annum. Conversely, only 19.6 per cent of market customers earn less that £10,000 per annum. Of the respondents earning less that £10,000 per annum at the market 8 of these were retired. 3 of these 8 had partners with an income of around £40, 000 per annum. 4 of the 19.6 per cent of RFM customers earning less than

107

£10,000 per annum were students and 14 described their occupations in such terms as 'supply teacher', 'artist', 'musician' and 'café worker', 'tutor', and 'artist'. Each of these had partners earning between £20, 000 and £40, 000 per annum. Moreover, customers earning a gross annual income of 20-40,000 are of a greater proportion at the market than of the customers of the co-op.

Figure 5 Farmers' Market Customer Income by Category (%).
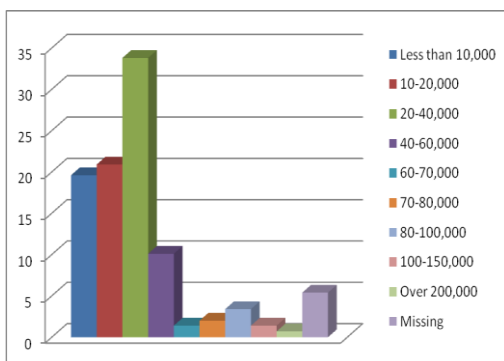
Figure 6 Community Food Co-operative Customer Income by Category (%).
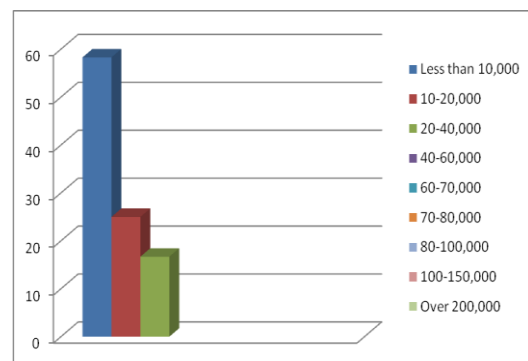
The greater privilege enjoyed by market customers is confirmed further with reference to the score of their area of residence on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. The scores afforded to each residence were broken down into categories of 'high', 'medium' and 'low'.

Figure 7 Farmers' Market Customer's Neighbourhood by WIMD Category.
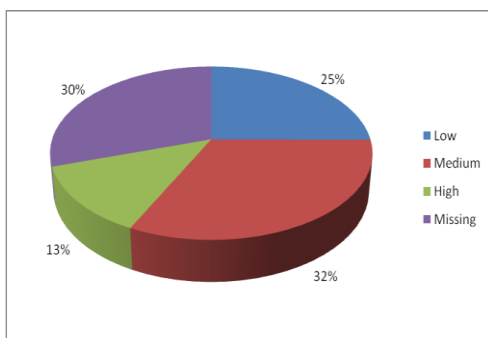
Figure 8 Community Food Co-operative Customer's Neighbourhood by WIMD Category.

108
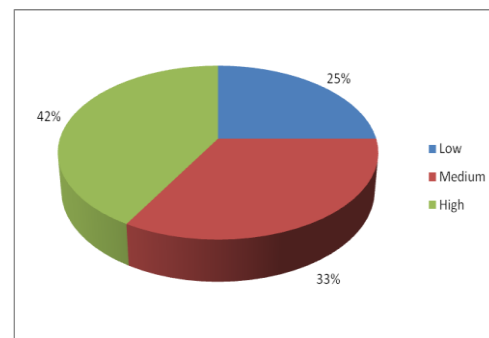
The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation scores neighbourhoods in relation to indicators such as income, housing, employment, access to services, education, health, community safety and physical environment (Welsh Assembly Government 2010). 12.8 per cent of market customers lived in a neighbourhood categorised as 'high'. 41.7 per cent of the co-op customers also score 'high'. As well as living in areas of lesser deprivation, market customers tend to occupy intermediate, professional and managerial positions in the labour market, whereas community food co-operative customers were more likely to be unemployed. In line with this, market customers earned a higher income, and had attained a greater number of higher educational qualifications in proportion to the community food co-operative customers. Similarly, 67.9 per cent of market customers' parents attained qualifications of an undergraduate degree and above, while 33.3 per cent of co-op customer's parents had attained an undergraduate degree. Notably, *no* postgraduate qualifications were held by co-op customers' parents. 16.9 per cent of market customer's parents had. These qualifications achieved by parents from each research site also mapped onto the occupations held. Based on NS-SEC categories, 21.6 per cent of market customer's fathers held occupations of a routine or manual nature, while 41.7 per cent of co-op customer's fathers worked in such occupations.

While comparisons cannot easily be made of these two sites - given the different sample sizes - it seems reasonable to at least suggest that there are clear differences in the socio-demographic profiles of customers at each site. Customers of the co-op, if not unemployed, tend to earn around £10,000 or less per annum. They also tend not to have higher educational qualifications, and live in the deprived neighbourhood (WIMD 2009) of Riverside. The market customers tended to have incomes of between £20,000 and £40,000 per annum, live in less deprived neighbourhoods, and achieve higher educational qualifications.

5.2 The Riverside Farmers' Market

5.2.1 The Distinctiveness of a Farmers' Market

Situated on the embankment of the River Taff in Cardiff, the market usually comprises twenty five to thirty stalls. Staffed each week by the producers themselves, the stalls are set up each Sunday morning by the Market Association's team. These are laid out in a linear

pattern with a walk-way in between to hold the 1600 (approx.) customers who visit. Green and white striped awnings and chequered table cloths cover many of the trestle tables. Salami and chorizo can be found displayed in wicker baskets, pots of home-made pesto and chutneys are tiered in stacks of three amongst wild flower arrangements. Large round blocks of artisan cheese are laid out on wooden boards, with 'tasters' sometimes presented in a bowl or on a wooden cheeseboard. Chalk boards lean against the stalls, or are hung from the stall frame. These convey information regarding the produce - "100% prime organic beef burgers", "Approved by the Soil Association" - and sometimes the price. The prices of items are not usually displayed upfront. Instead, customers must often ask or indeed wait until all that they intend to purchase has been weighed and calculated by the producer/stall holder. This is particularly the case for fruit and vegetables, whereas portions of meat tend to be individually priced. The absence of forthright markers of price is considered by one producer to be central to the identity of a farmers' market. Fluorescent star shaped cards marking 'bargain prices' do not, for one producer, fit in with the ethos of a farmers' market. In describing the difference between a farmers' market and "your average" market, a producer tells me of a stall that arrived some years ago. This stall, selling meat products is considered to embody such unwelcome characteristics. Identified by Sam - a stall holder - as characteristics that distinguish farmers' market from average markets, he speaks of the types of customer and the producer to be found in these different settings;

Field Note 1

> When speaking of the different sorts of customer that comes to a farmers' market as opposed to "your average market", Sam -the producer - tells me about a stall holder who previously came to the market. This stall holder was described as having adopted the role of a vocal and loud market trader, who bellows his prices, and offers 'deals' i.e. two packets of sausages for a fiver, and with fluorescent coloured badges stuck to different parts of the stall advertising these 'bargains'. Sam contrasts this with his approach, which involves being quieter, and prepared to talk to the customers about the product that they're purchasing on a level other than price. Sam says that he talks about a product when customers approach the stall, rather than shouting to them to come over to his stall and by bellowing 'deals'. According to Sam, this is not what the market is about. He then goes further by suggesting that each approach attracts a different sort of customer. Sam suggests that you can tell what sort of customer they are as soon as they come through the gate: depending on what sort of customer they are

depends on where they are going to go – that is, for the 'deal' or the 'real' farmers' market experience.

The vocal and loud market trader who bellows offers to customers is the antithesis of what Sam feels is the role of the farmers' market trader. At a farmers' market there is the sense that the customer is to approach the producer with questions about the *produce*, and not about price. As such, while observing interactions between producers and customers, it was rare to witness conversations about price. Instead, customers would ask if the pictures displayed on the awning of the stalls were of the piggery, they would ask about the rate at which the produce might perish, as well as advice about how to best tackle de-skulling a pig's head. In this way, a farmers' market can be seen as a setting for consumers to reconnect with issues of food provenance, a trend that producers encourage through their discussions with customers, and their willingness to offer advice. Often, this involves discussing segments of the television programme 'River Cottage', wherein customers ask for pig's trotters and heads, saying that they have been inspired by the self-proclaimed 'foodie' Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. Features from this television programme are often introduced by customers;

Field Note 2

> Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's recipe for pig trotters are brought into the conversation by a customer. She approaches Sam's stall asking if the trotters on display were the only ones he had. He'd better bring more next week she says, as Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall is doing a feature on them in the next episode of the River Cottage programme, so there'll be a rush in demand, she predicts. Adrian assures the customers that he will absolutely bring more next week if that is the case. Based on this exchange, Sam tells me that people often ask him for cuts of meat that have featured on a television programme. Belly pork, Sam says, is a good example of this. While asking for belly pork, customers refer to a Jamie Oliver recipe that they will follow.

From this, we can see that the customers of the market are figured in interactions that are different from those at 'average' markets. Customers make recommendations about what the producer should bring to market in future, they are seen by the producers to be more

inquisitive about the produce they purchase, and they share information about what dishes they will prepare when they return home. As such, it seems reasonable to suggest that the market provides a sound case within which to explore the discourses that surround consumer engagement with 'alternative' food. Moreover, this case is particularly important for it transcends the 'eating in' and 'eating out' dichotomy present in the scholarly literature relating to the topics of food and class. That is, at the market, customers do not simply place goods in a basket or a trolley, pay at a check-out desk before returning home without having uttered a word to the staff serving them, or to fellow customers. At the market, customers sit at tables in the outdoors - even in the cold and rain - where they talk to fellow customers. They also talk to producers; they ask questions about the quality of the produce, they ask how much of a certain type of flour is used in the spelt bread, they make special requests for gluten free products. From behind the stalls, the observer can witness conversations between housemates, spouses, parents and their children about what food they will prepare, when and how. It is these conversations that are revealing of a performance that seems central to accomplishing 'alternative' food consumption. There appear two elements to this performance, that on behalf of the producer as well as that of the consumer. These are now explored in turn.

5.3 Accomplishing the Performance

5.3.1 The Performance of Regard

To obviously display the price of produce in a manner described in Field Note 1 was described by Sam as a practice not in tune with the ethos of a farmers' market. According to Sage (2003) there are strong inter-personal ties between producer and consumer within 'alternative' food networks. Moreover, Hinrichs (2000) argues that the personal relations and sense of social connection characteristic of direct agricultural markets - such as farmers' markets – has been central to their success across the USA and Europe. It seems reasonable to suggest that the growing phenomenon of direct selling in the UK is guided, at least in part, by this sense of 'connection'. However, the social embeddedness of such initiatives has been considered to stem from reconciling self interest with a desire to pursue a common good. That is, the 'alternative' food producer, according to Ilbery and Kneafsey (1999) aims not to

maximise but to make *sufficient* profit through their direct sales. To make such a compromise is considered to stem from a commitment to collective, community or environmental causes rather than to individual gain. As ideal as this may sound, it appears that such a relation of regard does not hold so fast at the market. While closer personal connections between producer and consumer are evident, their distance from financial incentives is of course not to be underestimated. That is, the organic farmer cannot sustain a business on the regard of a loyal customer. Hinrichs (ibid.) and Sage (ibid.) thus recommend that further research be carried out with regard to the long term financial viability of 'alternative' food networks. Such centrality of finance is somehow obscured at the market. What appears so central to both producers (will I break even?) and consumers (how much does this cost?) is suspended in a performance that seeks to re-moralise a disconnected food supply chain. The absence of cash tills, credit card machines, obvious prices, promotional deals and its related advertising figure as part of this performance. With the consumer bringing cash, their own hessian bags or wicker baskets and a sense of conviviality the performance of 'alternative' food consumption unfolds. The producer adorns the stall with tablecloths, wild flowers and arrangements of artisanal produce and pretends they are not engaged in fierce competition. It is not the purpose of this Chapter, or the thesis as a whole, to examine the effectiveness of the market in representing a genuine 'alternative' to mainstream retail. However, it seems appropriate to note the internal dynamics that underlie the setting within which the consumers perform *their* notion of 'alternative' consumption.

Field Note 3

> Following on from talking about the 'real' farmers' market experience, Sam reflects on the future of 'farmers' markets as he sees it. He wonders how the market will fare 'now that everybody's doing it', and that there is no official regulation to keep them as '*farmers* markets'. He gives examples of producers who even come to the market with very tenuous producer links. There was one time that a stall holder came to sell chicken, which turned out to not be produced himself, rather, he tried to get around the market association by asserting that he was actually producing an *end product*. That is, by purchasing whole chickens and butchering and packaging them in order to sell separate pieces of the chicken in the form of say, chicken breasts, thighs and legs, this producer argued that he was in fact producing an end product that was different from the one he bought. I ask Sam how he was found out, to which he replies that this particular stall holder had tripped himself up in the market application form for a stall by admitting

that he did not produce some of the products being sold himself. Sam tells me of how unacceptable he finds this, for he rears the pigs and produces his product from start to finish. It is this that he says separates a farmers' market from an average market.

This field note is telling of the competition faced by farmers. Its growing popularity with customers over the last ten years or so has been matched by a similar growth in interest for producers. According to Sam, the market has become a site of interest for those wishing to capitalise on the growing number of consumers they imagine are willing to pay more for socially and environmentally responsible produce. Of course, these may not even be producers, but be hoping to assemble parts in order to create an 'end product'. It is in separating himself from the illegitimate 'producer' that Sam positions himself as an authentic farmers' market producer and stall holder. Moreover, even though this 'producer' did not gain entry into the farmers' market as a stall holder, others who were previously rejected access on similar grounds have passed the gatekeepers. For example, each stall holder presently trading at the market undergoes a process of application to the 'market association' that governs this social enterprise. On the board of members is its founder, a producer who represents the interests of the stall holders as well as other stakeholders acting as chair person, and treasurer etc. Here, two stall holders speak to me about the arrival of new stalls, of other stall holders making tenuous links between their produce and other 'value added' items that undermine their own sales. This sense of competition is, however, spoken of in somewhat hushed tones, and never in front of customers.

Field Note 4

An application from a small company selling organic pet food was first rejected on the grounds that they did not produce this food themselves. Less than two months later, the stall appeared. This was met with some resentment from at least one producer, where I was today spending time as participant observer. This stall holder who sells breads, cakes and puddings made from the farmhouse kitchen had been told by the market association that he was not to sell the butter produced by a neighbouring farm. His request went to the association after many customers asked for it. He tells me, was rejected for he does not produce the ingredients or the end product himself. If stalls were appearing with stall holders who did not produce any

of their products, then he could not understand why he is not permitted to sell butter.

Positioning themselves as an authentic producer against those seen as jumping on a metaphorical bandwagon, these stall holders express some degree of resentment. Sam's earlier reflection on how his business would fare now that "everyone's doing it" is central to this conjecture. Not only are stall holders arriving to trade with very tenuous producer links, the number of stalls with which they now must compete appears to have led to most stall holders diversifying what they sell. That is, given that customers appear not to be purchasing as much food to take home, but instead spend a great deal of time at the market itself stall holders have come to 'add value' to their produce by means of providing ready to eat goods. Matthew, a fish producer began to make chowder and smoked salmon with cream cheese rolls. Soup was brought by Mel, a bread producer, to accompany his cob rolls. A cheese producer began to make apple tarts on the grounds that the pastry contained goats' milk. When the electricity supply surged, Mel was accused by Matthew of doing this deliberately when heating the soup. Mel's diversification into bringing hot soup was then met with some antagonism for Matthew then faced less custom for his chowder and smoked salmon rolls.

Central to the performance of 'alternative' food consumption is the presentation of an illusion that the very same principles of competition that are central to conventional retail are not those that occupy the thoughts and actions of market producers. While consumers escape the alienated experience of supermarket shopping, the market offers a site for the reconnection of consumers with the food they purchase and consume. They talk to producers about the recipes they will follow to make 'pork belly with fennel and white wine'. They refer to the 'pigs' trotters' they will prepare according to Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's recipes presented on the River Cottage programme. However, it is the prerogative of the producers and the managers to disguise the entrepreneurial element of this interaction. If the producers offer this connection, this platform to talk about food, the customers may return. If the tenuous links between the producer's involvements in producing the raw materials that make up the 'value added' items on sale were becoming tolerated and indeed becoming commonplace, customers do not appear to be put off by this. In fact, the footfall at the market has increased steadily to around 1600 customers. Each week, the same faces turn up, drink coffee and purchase a token amount of produce and ready-to-eat food. It is this element of the performance, observed as carried out by the consumer that this Chapter now explores.

At two points the linear set-up of stalls is broken up by a seating area. Here, customers are invited to rest, chat, eat and drink the goods that almost all of the producers have now made available. Crepes, bean burgers, beef burgers, falafel, baklava, cupcakes, soup, curry, smoked salmon rolls, croissant and freshly ground coffee are but a few examples of what has been made available for immediate consumption *on site*. Over the two year period of participant observation, and as noted above, one of the most striking developments has been the growing number of producers diversifying their stock in this way. That there is a diversification towards ready-to-eat produce brought to market by producers suggests support for the theory that there is greater evidence for distinction in eating out than there is in eating in – as noted by Bennett *et al*. (2009). However, given that the primary attraction of this site is to purchase produce and ingredients directly from farmers tells us something about how people might like to be *seen* to have a different means of *thinking* about food if not about *doing* food.

That is, the move towards on-site consumption is indicative of the leisure-like features of the market. As customers stroll up and down the market, seeming to take pleasure in shopping and gazing at the spectacle of rural livelihood making, customers appear to perform 'alternative' consumption. In so doing, the ambience created appears more commensurate with a café culture entirely different to that located in a conventional supermarket. As such, the organic coffee and the cosmopolitan foods play a role in creating an ambience that oozes middle classness. That is, the aesthetic, the ambience and the performance of 'alternative' food consumption together paint a particularly classed picture. This picture will be reinforced by the analysis of customers talk presented in the subsequent Chapters. For now, it is notable that customers hang around and appear to enjoy the 'atmosphere', to drink coffee, to meander up and down the walkway, pointing to and commenting on how lovely the food looks.

Yet, the producers are not necessarily at peace with this performance. They speak in begrudging tones about the customers who come and just 'have a look' and come to have a coffee and chat with their friends, and do not purchase produce. There is only so much money flowing through the market every Sunday, they suggest, and there are more stalls to now share it with. As such, the market is busier than ever, but people's hands – the producers say - stay firmly in their pockets. Thus, the producers and their stalls seem to have become somewhat of a spectacle, drawing customers from nearby affluent neighbourhoods. As a platform for the *performance* of 'alternative' food consumption this thesis argues throughout

the following Chapters, that this mars the potential for realising substantively alternative foodways.

5.4 The Riverside Community Food Co-operative

While it appeared that the market provided a platform from which customers perform 'alternative' food, the customers who visit the co-op always purchase between one and four bags of produce. As such, the setting itself encourages a different kind of practice and sociality. If customers *performed* 'alternative' food consumption at the market, can the co-op customers be considered to be doing the same? From having spent two years as participant observer in each of these sites, it seems that the performance of 'alternative' food consumption is accomplished entirely differently. Much as the previous section did so for the market, this section introduces the setting of the co-op. Through an illustration of the practices central to the operation of the co-op, we can see that the different means of accomplishing 'alternative' food consumption at the co-op reveal astonishing differences in the food ways of its customers. It is argued that class can be understood through these very differences.

5.4.1 Accomplishing 'Alternative' Food Consumption at the Co-op

To begin with, the co-op customer base is much smaller than the market. Customers have already paid for their produce in advance, for upon picking up their bags, they make and pay for their next order. When doing this, volunteers and customers get to know one another. The volunteers know each customer by name, and often live in the same community, have the same neighbours and intimate knowledge of each other's lives. In stark contrast to the market, the co-op - at the time of this data collection- operated from within the local community centre. Around the corner from the site that hosts the market every Sunday, the co-op operates on the basis of volunteers who give up their time for four hours every Tuesday morning. Throughout the two years of participant observation, volunteers have come and gone. Customers have even become volunteers. Amongst the volunteers are women and men ranging in age, ethnicity and nationality. On a Tuesday morning, two or three volunteers meet to greet the delivery van arriving from a local wholesaler. The driver has a mutual

understanding with the volunteers in that if they let him into the kitchen to make a cup of tea, he will wait for the produce to have been unloaded from the crates and boxes. The driver then takes these with him back to their warehouse. If the driver did not oblige the volunteers, this could undermine its whole operation. As a community co-op, the co-op is not 'constituted' as an organisation. This means that it is not a business, and cannot pay for rubbish collection, usually paid to the local council. Furthermore, the community centre manager firmly resists allowing the co-op to leave between ten and twenty crates waiting to be collected upon the next delivery from the wholesaler. The informal arrangement between the driver and the volunteers is thus central to the operation of the co-op.

As the driver waits, boxes and crates of fruit and vegetables are tipped onto chairs, tables and into large blue 'IKEA' shopping sacks. Once this is done, the driver loads his van with the empty crates and returns to work, and the volunteers begin to 'bag up'. Bagging up refers to the process of counting the number of bags ordered the previous week by the co-op customers. These may be bags of fruit, vegetables or salad. Later, a bag of stir fry items is added to the repertoire offered by the co-op. These bags cost £2.00. Later the bags are increased in price to £2.50. The piles of produce scattered around the room are then laid out in turn according to the number of, say, vegetable bags ordered. If ten bags of salad are ordered, the pile of ten iceberg lettuces will be laid out in a line on a long trestle table. To the lettuce other salad items will be added until all of the piles of salad items have been divided between ten. Finally, after, say, spring onions have been counted and divided by ten, they are added to the lettuce sitting on the trestle table. Each volunteer might be in charge of one item. One volunteer might count radishes, and another counts and divides tomatoes. Once each volunteer has sorted their item they add this to the pile that will finally be put in a bag. Before the customers begin to arrive to collect their orders, the volunteers read out the list i.e. "two veg, one salad and three fruit for Mrs. Smith". To make the collection period run smoothly, and to check that the volunteers have 'bagged up' the correct amount, another volunteer will then collect these different bags, placing them in a pile and write the customer's name on one of these bags.

Typically, there are five different items in every bag. For example, on one occasion, in a vegetable bag there was a coconut, four onions, two new potatoes, one jacket potato, four muddy potatoes, four carrots, one punnet of mushrooms, one broccoli and one cabbage. In a salad bag there was one bundle of spring onions, three tomatoes, seven new potatoes, one

iceberg lettuce, one green pepper, one lime and one cucumber. In a fruit bag there were four bananas, three peaches, five nectarines, six Cox apples and one honeydew melon. At this time, these bags cost £2 per bag, and were later put up to £2.50.

5.4.2 'Cabbage, cabbage and more cabbage'

From the beginning, the volunteers are unhappy with the quality and variety of produce delivered each week. As the grocer decides what to deliver for the price of £2 or later for £2.50 per bag, there was a narrow margin of profit to be made. Crucially, no profit is made by the co-op, although it is reasonable to assume that the wholesalers do make a small profit from their sales to the co-op. However, the volunteers face having to complain and switch suppliers regularly to avoid the continuous downgrading of quality;

Field Note 5

> Today, the cabbages were of poor quality. They were very near their use by date, Gill - a volunteer - exclaimed "look at these manky leaves". We stood pulling these "manky" leaves away from the cabbages before sorting them into their piles. If they were not used at all, they suggest that customers might complain about the lack of substance to their bags. Customers, they say, have often complained about the poor quality of the produce they receive, i.e. brown skinned bananas that have to be thrown out within a day of receiving them. This concerns the volunteer who is mostly in charge of its operation. She speaks of how she is concerned that the wholesalers see the co-op as a means of offloading produce near its sell by date. That is, produce that the grocers whom this wholesaler supplies would not accept and would otherwise go to waste.

This concern materialised over and over again. Boxes of wilting asparagus were sent back. Potatoes, soft and sprouting would be thrown onto the flower beds outside the community centre. Having discussed this with customers, the volunteers eventually decide to change their supplier. Some volunteers resist this change, for they are worried that they will not be able to strike deals with a new driver to take away the rubbish. However, a visit to a new wholesaler results in this switch of supplier. The new wholesaler assures the volunteers that they will give the best quality produce that they can for the price. The volunteers stress their hope for a greater variety of produce to be delivered. They even explain that customers are growing

tired of being given cabbages week in, week out. The wholesaler lives up to this promise, delivering for example; broccoli, leeks, green beans, peppers and mangetout. This, unfortunately did not last. Before a month was out, the cabbages reappeared. While at the market the struggles and difficulties experienced by the stall holders in competing with each other is kept somewhat out of the customer view, at the co-op, customers and volunteers openly discuss and strategise together over how they can come to demand better quality produce. Securing good quality produce for the co-op is an ongoing struggle.

5.4.3 The Distinctive "Full Cooked Dinner on Sunday"

Having access to good quality produce was clearly important to the co-op customers. Mostly, the customers are preparing meals for their families with the food they source from the co-op. When a customer arrives, a volunteer will pass their bag/s to them. Conversations between customer and volunteer are wide ranging from community gossip – one customer exclaimed that her brother had been accepted to appear on 'Jeremy Kyle'[5] – to concern over other customers' wellbeing. For example, after the co-op had closed the previous Tuesday, Sophie, a customer claims to have seen another customer picking up rotten potatoes that had been thrown onto the flower beds as compost by the volunteers earlier that morning. Sophie was concerned that this customer, who often arrives with her son, was not getting enough to eat. Sophie asked for some of her food this week to be put into this customer's bag. Each week following this incident, the volunteers offered this customer and her son a cup of tea, cakes and biscuits while attempting to engage them in conversation. The small amount of English spoken by this customer proved somewhat of a barrier to being able to talk this through with the customer. Instead, Sophie and the volunteers resolved to 'keep an eye' on them, and to supplement their bags where possible, sending them away with cartons of milk and biscuits - bought especially for them - under the ruse that these were leftovers that needed to be taken away.

Further concern for other members of the community focused on a customer who had been referred to the co-op by their doctor. Suffering from alcoholism, this customer would often arrive promptly at 11am, the opening time for collection from the public house situated on the same street as the co-op - "hey, look this is handy I don't even have to put my drink down"

---

[5] Jeremy Kyle is a British talk show. Participants discuss their problems with an audience, mediated by a host.

he once said with a glass of vodka and tonic in hand. If he did not turn up, a volunteer would take his order across to him. This practice demonstrated understanding on behalf of the volunteers "he's had a hard time" they would say. Some months later, when he arrived sober and proud of not having a drink for over two weeks, one volunteer in particular touched his arm telling him how pleased she was for him, and to keep it up – "you know where we are when you need us".

There are, however, more seemingly mundane exchanges between customers and volunteers at the co-op. Often, customers look through their bags, commenting on the produce, checking what is of good quality and what is not. Importantly, the co-op customers talk differently to the market customers about the food they will make. Crucially, to volunteer this information was rare. At times, customers would exclaim "oh good, we've got a good amount of potatoes this week" or "oh, great, I can do cauliflower cheese now". Such utterances were never, to my observations, followed by talk of recreating recipes recommended by celebrity chefs. Instead, there is a sense that cooking is routinised and rooted in tradition.

Field Note 6

Bill and Victoria – who are brother and sister - attend every week, purchasing two bags of fruit, vegetables or stir fry. They arrive at the same time every week, on their way back from their weekly swim at the local pool. Bill worked in steel baths down at the Cardiff 'docks' (now the 'Bay') before retiring and becoming an official carer for his mother. Victoria works part time at a branch of a high street bank situated in the local community. When collecting their bag of vegetables, Victoria peeks inside and exclaims "there we are Bill, there's your potatoes for your sausages and mash". Victoria explains that she or her husband cooks sausages and mash every Wednesday. Either her brother joins them, or Victoria takes this to him the following day for him to heat up. There is no mention of recipes or of celebrity chefs when pointing out that they have the right sort of vegetables in the bag for the "full cooked dinner on Sunday". Later, Victoria says she will make a macaroni cheese to use up the mushrooms in the stir fry bag. She recounts the how she makes it her 'mother's way' by beating egg yolks, milk, mixing with cheese and macaroni and 'sticking it in the oven' sometimes adding bacon and mushrooms. Looking into the stir fry bag, Victoria notes that there's a "real pepper". The real pepper, along with the kiwi fruit and the kumquats that were this week (an unusually good week quality-wise for the co-op) in her bags, Victoria says she won't eat. She says that she hasn't eaten vegetables for years, and will even pick out the mushrooms from the macaroni she prepares each week. She says that her mother never forced her, and she feels sick every time she tries. She

tried years ago when her children were small, because she knows that it's good to have some fruit and veg in your diet, and she wanted to set a good example. "I couldn't do it" she says, but her husband, brother and grown-up children all eat something from the bags that are collected from the co-op.

DeVault's (1991) seminal study of women's cooking practices found that women who had experienced social mobility, mainly through marriage, would often reject their mother's recipes. They tweaked them, adding a 'twist' of exotic ingredients to show initiative when entertaining guests or indeed their husband's colleagues. Here, Victoria can be seen to represent more of what DeVault (ibid.) found amongst working class women. Here, working class women were content to stick with tradition, and not to take nutritional health messages too seriously. Much like Victoria, for DeVault's working class participants were content with knowing that "vegetables are better than candy" (ibid. p. 218). Thus, making vegetables and fruit available for her family is considered something that should be done. However there is little evidence of worry with regard to nutrition. Similarly, Laura, a co-op customer who was later interviewed, suggested that she did not worry so much about how many vegetables were being eaten, what type and how. Instead, Laura tells me that she likes to purchase a bag of fruit and veg each week, and that as long as this mostly gets eaten throughout the week then this is good enough for her. Mostly, the vegetables are cooked up, she says, for a "Sunday dinner". Murcott (1982) analysed the rules of the 'cooked dinner' in South Wales. The 'cooked dinner' is described as the 'proper meal' comprising meat from a warm blooded animal, potatoes, green vegetables, and non-green vegetables to which gravy is finally added. The vegetable bags provided at the co-op are almost every week conducive to the following of such 'rules' of the 'cooked dinner'. Indeed, customers and volunteers often refer to saving their vegetables for the weekend, when they will prepare their cooked dinner.

For Victoria, the "full cooked dinner on Sunday" involves similar ingredients to those purchased for this meal by customers of the market; meat, potatoes, maybe with carrots and cabbage. However, there are differences in how these meals are prepared, how they are talked about and the variety in the types of produce that qualify as 'meat' or as 'cabbage'. As discussed earlier in this Chapter, at the market, customers spoke of their "pork belly roast" of pig's trotters cooked in a particular 'River Cottage' style. Inside the wicker baskets or hessian shopping bags that were often within view, often was organic curly kale, fennel, purple sprouting broccoli, and butternut squash to name but a few examples. As noted earlier in this

Chapter, the contents of a co-op vegetable bag contain similar items in that there would be cabbage, carrots, and broccoli. In contention with the findings of Bennett *et al.* (2009), it does not appear to hold fast that distinctions cannot be found in home cooked food. That is, as discussed in Chapter Two, it was suggested that there may be differentiation in the form that the apparently uniform "one course, plus a drink and perhaps yoghurt" (ibid.) takes. The differences evident between a "full cooked dinner on Sunday" talked about by co-op and market customers cannot yet be considered to reveal class *distinctions*. However, the next two Chapters build upon these observations and *in situ* conversations to explore in greater depth the extent to which class can be recognised in interviewees' talk about food.

From the survey data presented in this Chapter, we can see that customers of the co-op fit within the lowest tiers of NS-SEC classifications. The market customers appear to fit within the higher tiers of these classifications. This data served to illustrate the socio-demographic composition of customers frequenting such sites of 'alternative' food consumption. Data obtained via participant observation within this field reveals that the market and co-op represent entirely different spaces of food consumption. As such, they provide an entirely different platform for experiencing and talking about food. At the market, customers speak to producers about food provenance, about how they will prepare 'simple' but often in reality quite complex dishes. Indeed, the producers express frustration at the increasing footfall and the depreciating sales made. This is theorised as part of a performance of 'alternative' food consumption. As such, at the market, consumers consume an idea, an experience and an ambience of 'alternative' consumption without purchasing produce. At the co-op customers purchase bags of produce that have proved to be consistently poor in quality and with little variety in content. The produce itself as well as the talk that surrounded it provide a clear mark of difference between the market and co-op. That is, at the co-op there is an ethic of care, neighbourliness and sense of rooted social relations that contrasts starkly with the performative sociality present at the market. It is the aim of the next two Chapters to discuss the interviews conducted with these participants in order to explore this talk further. Indeed, the next Chapter explores how class can be recognised through interviewees' talk of food and the everyday practices that surround its consumption.

Chapter Six

Position taking in a Field of 'Alternative' Food Consumption

Presenting empirical data collected via semi-structured interviews with customers of both the market and the co-op, this Chapter explores the class dynamics manifest in their talk. The previous Chapter provides an introduction to both of these settings by giving an ethnographic account. Expanding on these descriptions, this Chapter relates them to the ways in which participants not only talk about food, but of the expanse of daily practices surrounding its consumption. In this way, participants are seen to take up a 'position' (Bourdieu 1984) within the social field. This positioning work appears to be accomplished as they situate themselves in relation to an 'other'.

Such 'othering' is a device commonly used by interviewees in both positive and a negative form. In a positive sense, participants construct the superior 'other' as a figure or a position to which they aspire. On the other hand, participants also characterise the 'other' as a figure or as a position from which they wish to remain separate. Extracts from ten interviews are presented in this Chapter. Here, 'superior' positions are seen as constructed in relation to an 'other' via explicit recognition of class categories as well as by means of subtle verbal and non-verbal cues. Although it is has been suggested that social actors rarely, if ever, claim overt class identities, and instead make claims to 'ordinariness' (Savage 2005), the data presented below, particularly that provided by Karen and Valerie, suggests otherwise. Superior positions are indeed carved by participants in accordance with an 'other'. Crucially, the means by which food figures as a resource in such positioning work will not form a focus for this Chapter, but the next, where processes of position *consolidation* are explored. For now, the resources drawn upon by these participants, regardless of their discussion of food are introduced in order to give a sense of how such positions are negotiated through talk.

6.1 Positioning in the Social Field - Distancing from the 'Inferior' 'Other'

When asked to speak a little of themselves, about what that they like to do in their spare time, and to speak of the area in which they live, participants from both research sites began to

discursively construct a 'position'. Participants achieve this by a variety of means. Market participants typically do so by separating and distancing themselves from an 'other' that they deem inferior. Below, extracts from interviews with market customers Karen, Valerie and Julianne suggest that a position in the social field is indeed constructed and occupied through a discursive separation from an 'other'.

Positioning herself and her family as the 'English outsiders', Karen, a lecturer, describes her neighbours as the 'white working class' who have 'lived there always'. Separating herself from these neighbours, she suggests that they have a 'hugely different attitude to life', which is inferior to hers. Again, Karen distinguishes herself from her neighbours not through words alone. The scornful tone Karen adopts as she admonishes the neighbours as having all 'married their cousin and stuff', followed by a laugh is indicative of some degree of critique or assertion of superiority. Here, by positioning herself as the 'English outsider' Karen separates herself from the local white working classes, whom she suggests have a 'hugely different attitude to life'.

Extract 1
Karen, Farmers' Market Customer

K: It's a very erm nice area, in many ways, it's quiet there's quite a good community sense there, [the] park is a real focal point for the children who live quite near the park, and we've got friends living on the park so that really makes a real sort of sense of place. So it's very friendly, people look out for each other you know your children are safe to go off and you know, people will look out for them, everybody knows everybody else really, well not everybody but you know a lot of people do. Erm it's you know there's it's a kind of place where everybody's also kind of they've all married their cousin and stuff, and it's just like that you know you feel like a bit of an outsider. We still feel like the English outsiders a bit living [here]. Even though, you know there are quite a lot of there's quite an ethnic mix going to the local schools erm there's still a this sort of Cardiff thing and 'rest of them'. They think we're a bit weird I think…but…"

Clearly, Karen positions herself and her family as 'outsiders'. Karen accomplishes this position as an 'outsider' by discursively detaching herself and her family from those living in her community whom she suggests are 'in-bred' - they have all 'married their cousin and stuff'. Based on the tone of voice with which she makes this declaration, Karen separates herself from

her neighbours by deeming them inferior on account of their localness, their stasis within the community and their 'different attitude to life'. This, she later describes as a preoccupation with conspicuous consumer goods such as 'fast cars' and 'expensive holidays'. In addition, by positioning herself and her family as the 'English outsiders' Karen detaches herself and her family from those neighbours who are not her friends, but those whom she classifies as the 'working class white Cardiff people'. Having imagined how the local Welsh 'other' sees her family, she suggests they see her family as 'a bit weird'. When asked to explain why she imagines they perceive her in this way, Karen draws directly on categories of class.

Extract 2

Karen, Farmers' Market Customer

J: In what way do you think?
K: Just a sort of, you know, 'middle class English people' really, you know (laughter).
J: So what would they be?
K: Well you know, this is the sort of working class white Cardiff people who've just lived there always, and their families are all linked. Er and then there are the as I say there's quite a lot of difference, sort of ethnic sort of ethnic mix as well.

Here, Karen describes herself and her family as middle class, and her neighbours as local 'working class white Cardiff people' whose 'families are all linked'. Following an explicit categorisation of her family as 'middle class English people', Karen laughs. Such laughter could be indicative of many things, or is possibly telling of a discomfort and embarrassment of speaking in class terms (Sayer 2005, Savage 2005). Laughing at the imagined categorisation of herself as 'middle class' and 'English', could indicate that she is amused by the local people whom she imagines see *her* as 'a bit weird'. This could either mean that Karen is nervous about admitting that her neighbours find her 'weird' by virtue of her 'Englishness' and her self-identified middle class status. Or, her laughter at them finding *her* 'weird' could suggest that Karen is being ironic. Given that Karen portrays them as having 'married their cousin and stuff', and as having 'lived there always', it would seem reasonable to consent to the latter explanation. Indeed, the way in which Karen disparages her neighbours, and then laughs about them, could suggest that Karen is making an appeal to her superiority. This can be substantiated with reference to the tone of Karen's utterances about regarding the local 'other', where, via non-verbal cues Karen asserts her superiority in

relation to her working class neighbours. As she laughs, scrunches her nose, it seems that a position in the social field is carved by means of discursive and corporeal separation from an 'other' deemed 'inferior'.

Although Karen constructs a position of 'superiority' through a discourse of derision, it is herself and her family that she suggests is the 'other'. As such, to be an 'insider' of this community is to be inbred and socially immobile, a life course that is presented as entirely different from her career trajectory. In pursuit of her academic career, Karen speaks of having lived in different cities before settling in one place. As a prominent resource in position taking, the discussion of mobility appears a resource that is bound within discourses of nationality, of belonging or indeed not belonging to a particular place. Extracts 1-2 and 2-4 (below) imply that Karen does indeed position herself by drawing boundaries that separate herself from 'others', particularly within her neighbourhood. Nationality even figured as a resource to separate the English 'outsider' from the Welsh 'insider'. To be an outsider is here imbued with a sense of legitimacy, for Karen keenly demonstrates that she does not belong to this neighbourhood. Indeed, she does not wish to belong to a community who have an 'entirely different attitude to life'. Karen's ongoing project of positioning, thus seems to take place in relation to the community 'insiders' where she draws upon discourses of 'belonging' or indeed, of 'not belonging' with the effect of separating herself from a lifestyle that she claims to abhor.

Again, when discussing her neighbours, Karen refers to them using explicit class categories. She refers to herself as a middle class; a category of class whose members she suggests, embody entirely different characteristics to their working class counterpart. That working class people, for Karen, have a 'hugely different attitude to life' (Extract 3) characterises the substantive cultural difference between her family and her neighbours. These differences, not solely defined in objective class terms, are seen as *culturally* determined. Such cultural differences are drawn out by Karen as she contrasts alternate visions of the 'good life' (Extract 4). These visions, she claims, vary according to social class. When asked to explain what she means by this, Karen suggests that 'class is still hugely important'. To explain further, she continues:

Extract 3

Karen, Farmers' Market Customer

K: Well, both economically and socially erm you know the sort of the sort of people I was talking to you about in [area where they live], quite working class parents I know who took their children to […] school with my kids, they've got a hugely different attitude to life than my friends and I have. Erm and it's not just about money, I mean a lot of them are earning more money than I am, probably but they spend their money in different ways, because that's how that kind of culture is very different erm and so it' not just an economic thing it's a kind of cultural thing as well, I think.

Later, Karen continues to separate herself from the 'other' whom she considers to be 'uncritical' of consumer culture;

Extract 4

Karen, Farmers' Market Customer

J: What do you mean by it being a cultural thing as well?
K: Well I mean as I say in terms of being very uncritical about that sort of things I'm criticising in terms of the consumerist culture, cheap food, not worrying about where the stuff comes from how far it's come or how it's produced and just saying well something's cheap and that's great and bigger cars and going on foreign holidays and thinking that's you know, taking the attitude that that's the good life.

For Karen, class is important not simply in economic terms, but on social and cultural grounds. In this way, social class is defined by an 'attitude to life'. To qualify her claim to having a superior attitude to life, Karen suggests that this is defined by *not* having a preoccupation with consumer culture. The most outstanding aspect of this narrative is the explicit discussion of the *cultural* constituent of social class. That is, Karen distinguishes herself from her neighbours, whom she portrays as the local working class Cardiff people, on the basis of cultural characteristics. This is qualified by reference to the observation that her working class neighbours earn more than her and yet remain 'working class' by virtue of their 'hugely different attitude to life'. Crucially, this perception of a working class attitude to life is hinged upon consumer preferences. Karen relegates the working class 'other' as having

achieved *material* success of a particular kind; that associated with mass consumer culture, but without the ability to discern *cultural* vulgarity from cultural propriety and indeed from knowing what the 'good life' really is. A construction of the working class as 'other' through an expression of their perceived cultural vulgarity is then oriented around a critique of what she sees as a working class people's attachment to consumer culture. This orientation to a perception of cultural 'vulgarity' can then be seen to figure as an act of distinction. Indeed, working class engagement with consumer culture is associated with a culture of vulgar *display*, manifest in the archetypal consumption of 'foreign holidays' and 'bigger cars'. Crucially, it is the tone of these statements that imply a negative moral judgement is being made. In this way, the disparaging tone of her delivery accomplishes the discursive separation of one lifestyle from another. Achieved through the separation of and judgement of classed visions of the 'good life', hers is positioned far away from the conspicuous display of what she sees as the vulgar working class preoccupation with consumer culture.

The separation of oneself from an 'other' as a means of carving a position in the social field is not a practice unique to Karen. Valerie, another market customer engages in such position taking through the discursive construction of an 'other'. Like Karen, who positions herself by separating herself as an 'outsider' within a working class community, Valerie speaks of having wanted to leave the same area for some time. Here, she gives a sense that she does not in any way wish to belong to this community, where she and her family have lived for more than a decade. While Extract 1 saw Karen constructing a position for herself as separate and distinguishable from her working class neighbours, Extract 5 demonstrates something similar. Valerie - a retired nurse - alludes here to the unsuitability of her neighbourhood. She does so by drawing boundaries of distinction between areas with 'bad' schools that tend not to attract 'families with children'.

Extract 5

Valerie, Farmers' Market Customer

V: Now that we're retired we, for years we thought of moving house, and at the time we had a young child and he got upset at the thought of moving so we you know, preferred to have a kid who was well adjusted erm but now we are thinking of moving, it fit in, you know it did fit in very well, the street was a cul-de-sac so all the kids could play outside erm yes it's a sort of mixed neighbourhood really. It's a cul-de-sac and at the time erm

almost all the other children were sort of ethnic minorities, sort of Bangladeshi and that sort of thing. It wasn't in a good school area. Erm so it tends not to attract families with children because they prefer to move somewhere they can go to, you know. But in fact, my kid went to [a school] anyway, which he could do at that time. So, that's ok. Erm yeah it's fine, it's fine, very quiet, right next to the park.

Not having moved away to a 'good' as opposed to a 'bad' school area, Valerie claims is due to her son becoming upset at the thought of moving away from his friends. By virtue of this statement, it emerges that Valerie distinguishes herself from the 'other' families in the neighbourhood who did not in fact have the *option* of moving away to a 'good' school area. Indeed, Valerie suggests that she and her husband made a decision to stay, *despite* the area's deficiency in providing the facilities typically desired by 'families with children'. Here, 'families with children' appears synonymous with 'middle class families with children', for Valerie does not describe her neighbourhood as lacking families with children *per se*, for she clearly states that her son played with other Bangladeshi children in the '*cul de sac'*. Rather, by suggesting that the area tended not to attract 'other families with children' Valerie implies that it actually tended not to attract other 'families with children' who are *like themselves*. Crucially, when referring to the 'sort of people' who attends farmers' markets, Valerie identifies herself as middle class. It seems reasonable then to suggest that 'other families with children' is synonymous with other '*middle class* families with children', thus, other families 'like us'. By aligning herself with families from outside of the community, a position accomplished by her suggestion that she and her husband had wanted to move away for some time is qualified by her relief that her son did not suffer the consequences of an education attained in a 'bad' school area, for he was able at that time to attend a school *outside* of that community. This, she claims, made it 'ok' that they compromised by remaining in the area in order that their son grew to be 'well adjusted'. In sum, Valerie positions herself as separate from her neighbours, for she her family belong to another class of 'families with children' who would not ordinarily live in the area.

Here, Karen and Valerie clearly mark their relational position by separating themselves from an 'other' within their community. They have done so by directly using the language of class. They also do so by talking of their neighbourhood, which they appear to use as a tool for carving this position. In this way, Karen has separated herself from local people, whereas Valerie has detached herself from a commitment to a neighbourhood from which she has

been waiting to leave for some time. Similarly, Julianne, a community food co-operative customer and artist, distinguishes herself from the working class 'others' within her community. Extract 6 demonstrates further the connection between acts of positioning achieved through practices of distinction with the identification with a sense of 'belonging' or indeed of *not* 'belonging'.

Julianne moved to the UK having enjoyed what she described as a middle class upbringing in the Netherlands. Julianne has now lived in Wales for more than thirty years. Following a divorce, Julianne experienced downward mobility, and now lives in a council owned flat in a working class neighbourhood. Julianne positions herself by virtue of a sympathetically voiced analysis of what she depicts as the working class disposition and attitude. In contrast to Karen, this is not described as a 'hugely different attitude to life'. Instead, Julianne presents herself as champion for a community that she sees as representative of many such communities across the country. That is, she sees them as having been de-valued, disrespected and misunderstood by the public at large. Julianne, however, positions herself as somewhat separate from this community, for the de-valued and disrespected people of whom she speaks are 'others' and are the British working classes of which she is not part. Rather, Julianne positions herself as a form of 'outsider-within', as an honorary working class member of the community with ameliorative intentions. Such restorative and politically conscious objectives are evident in Julianne's expression of her desire to become part of the community by engaging as a customer and a volunteer at the community food co-operative. Here, Julianne constructs her position in the social field as an 'outsider-within'.

Extract 6

Julianne, Community Food Co-operative Customer

J: I quite enjoy being sort of part of this community and meeting people and there, and customers, and that's, for me that's quite important, it gives me some sort of feeling that I belong, you know, and so I don't mind that, and I'm also trustee of the [an Arts Association], so I have to go to the meetings and help, you know, and do work and stuff like that, so that takes up a bit of my time, so sometimes I get a bit ratty…think 'oh all these things' you know, I'd rather just stay in my studio and paint! But the main things I do is I paint and I read, you know. I read quite a lot.

Here, Julianne constructs through her talk a position for herself within the community. In contrast with Karen and Valerie, Julianne positions herself as a *willing* outsider-within, who has something to 'offer'. This is evident in Extract 6 where Julianne expresses a desire to become *part* of the community, unlike Valerie (Extract 5), who was keen to move *away* from the neighbourhood bereft of 'other families with children'. Volunteering at the co-op, for Julianne, then, is a measure to aid a *feeling* that she does indeed *belong* to the community. In suggesting that she is hoping to *feel* that she is part of a community by proxy suggests that she is not part of the community in real terms. It is this separation from the community that Julianne makes use of and enables her to speak of class relations from comparative experience. Moreover, it is this degree of dual class membership that seems to afford Julianne the ability to speak with some authority about middle and working class identities and experiences of everyday life. As such, Julianne speaks with ease and without prompt about local 'classed' experiences, and draws on descriptive categories of class in order to do so. Crucially, Julianne refers to 'middle class people' and 'working class people' when making comparisons between diet, access to education, health and fitness. Indeed, Julianne goes on to suggest that middle class people are more likely to eat well, exercise and be healthy and that working class people are 'down on themselves'. Such comparisons made by Julianne will be explored in greater detail in the next Chapter. For now, this Chapter explores participants' means of position taking within the social field as expressed through their distancing from an 'other'. Acts of position taking as explored above are, however, not confined to the taking of positions of 'superiority'. Below, the taking of a position in the social field is also accomplished via separation *from* what is deemed as the 'superior' 'other'.

6.2 Positioning in the Social Field- Distancing from a 'Superior 'Other

From Extracts 1-5 we can see that Karen and Valerie position themselves as separate from an 'other'. The 'other' depicted by Karen in particular is described as 'working class'. These 'working class others' engage in positioning work of their own. Again, when positioning themselves in relation to the middle class 'other' direct references to class are made.

From the outset of the interview, Ken – a co-op customer, unemployed at the time of the interview - positions himself as a local working class person. Stressing that he grew up in

'proper Canton', he separates this area from the 'posh' parts inhabited by what he describes as the middle class 'poshies'. Here, Ken accomplishes a position in the social field by separating himself from these middle class 'others'; the 'poshies'. Elaborating on his analysis of the class structure, Ken articulates his understanding of the division of labour as he sees it (Extract 7). Relating this to his experiences at an engineering firm where he worked for most of his career, Ken attributes his ability to discern the difference between people such as himself and 'other' 'poshies' as dependent upon his capacity to recognise differences in *accent* (Extract 8). To this end, Ken expands on a point made earlier in the interview, where he uses the term 'class' to differentiate between people in the workplace. Here, Keith responds to being asked – after he had brought up the term 'class' - about how he can tell the difference between people who belong to these different classes;

Extract 7

Ken, Community Food Co-operative Customer

K: I noticed it quite strongly because I'm an engineer you know, the jobs I've been involved with, there's been quite a clear class divide. The working class people were the engineers that actually repaired the stuff and then the people who worked in the offices were always middle class, you know, and it was a quite clear class divide, there were a few working class people who worked their way up into the office sort of thing, you know, but they were the ones that were usually then working harder in the office sort of thing, but er yeah I've always been aware of that, there's a sense that like if you're working class you need to be doing sort of physical work you know and then there's 'we're middle class so we need to be doing middle class sorts of jobs, and the manual we shouldn't be involved in', you know. I mean obviously it's up to you, you could ignore that and do it anyway but I think there's still a lot of that around, because there was no middle class engineers, I never worked with any middle class engineers they've all been down to earth working class guys you know, so, yeah I think there's a clear divide, especially for engineering type stuff. I don't know about other types.

Positioning himself in accord with 'down to earth working class guys' who are engineers on the factory floor, Ken contrasts this position with the middle class people who work in the offices doing 'middle class sorts of jobs'. This Extract is revealing of the discursive construction of class boundaries, for through discussion of the division of labour in the factory, not only does Ken make explicit his ideas about the break-down of class structure, but at the same time positions *himself* within a hierarchy of positions. Such positions as

termed 'working' class relates to physical labour, carried out by 'down to earth working class guys'. In this way, Ken refers to a popular metaphor that conveys one is 'approachable', is without false 'airs and graces'. Within the workplace, the 'middle' classes, for Ken, are those who perform managerial tasks in 'up' in 'the office'. Middle class people, according to Ken, are seen to have visibly separated themselves from the engineers who work on the factory floor, by placing themselves 'up' in the office. To describe the office as being 'up', and as a place in which a working class engineer had worked 'up' to is positioning the middle class office worker as higher 'up' the scale of social class. Moreover, those who work 'up' in the office are the middle class 'others' who are not 'down to earth' like himself and his co-workers. Here, Ken, positions himself as a 'working class guy' in opposition to the middle class 'other'. Recognition of the 'other' is not, for Ken, confined to the observations made of the workplace hierarchy. Indeed, discerning the differences between social classes, for Ken, depends on identifying the nuances of accent.

Extract 8

Ken, Community Food Co-operative Customer

J: So you say you notice class, how do you notice it?
K: yeah, erm yeah I suppose erm a lot of it's down to accent isn't it you recognise people with a local accent and ok we're the same sort of thing, and you recognise people with a posher accent and you're used to working with the people with the local accent and working together, and you're used to the people who are the bosses having the posh accent. So when you're in a room of people and they're talking a certain way, you know they're the 'poshies' and they're the middle classes and you shouldn't really be there sort of thing you know that's my feeling obviously a lot of people don't feel that way but I still do.

Such an ability to identify 'poshies' from 'down to earth working class guys' is a skill that Ken describes himself as having understood first of all within the context of the workplace. Such boundaries of class that mark the differences between middle and working class forms of work, according to Ken are now boundaries that he is sensitive to in social contexts. Prior to the interview, Ken speaks to me about having attended a salsa dancing class in a centre within the community where he grew up. Upon entering the class, Ken describes having felt that he 'shouldn't really be there'; a similar sentiment is also conveyed by Extract 8. Ken suggests that he felt that he 'shouldn't really be there' because it seemed as though the dance

class was not 'for' him due to the number of 'posh' accents discerned. Moreover, Ken claims to have felt some discomfort at having misjudged the social setting, and has not returned since, for the presence of 'poshies' whom he associates with 'the bosses' at work, left him feeling as though 'shouldn't really be there'. Again, it seems that the act of position taking within the social field is accomplished via separation from an 'other' and indeed via identification with certain places and with certain people with whom one belongs or does not belong. This is clear as he positions himself as 'not belonging' at either the market, or at a salsa dancing class. Hinged upon the discernment of accents, Ken gets a sense of who does or does not belong.

Similarly, Vera and Sheila – sisters who attend the co-op together each week - speak of their family, but not until the close of the interview do they position themselves explicitly as 'working class'. This is not to say that positioning work is not carried out throughout the interview for it is clear that through discussions of their family life that they identify themselves within a field of relative social positions. As such, Vera and Sheila converse freely throughout with very occasional guidance. A theme of conversation that was commonly returned to without prompt was that of 'community'. Vera and Sheila appear proud of their community, where they have lived since birth. Such pride in their community is conveyed through a reverence of practices such as that of taking care of one another by looking after each other's children, feeding each other when the 'chips are down' and taking care when neighbours are sick. Achieved through talk about moving away to neighbourhoods that they 'hated', Vera and Sheila identify with their community. Not being 'used to' a neighbourhood where 'nobody bothered with you' Vera in particular is moved to extreme measures by this absence of community. Walking *daily* from one corner of the city to the other, with her children in a pram, Vera spent her day times with friends and family from her childhood neighbourhood - for 'once you've been brought up here you didn't want to move'.

Similarly, Sheila walked the length of the city each day before returning to this same community, where she has lived next door to her sister ever since. By summoning an image of a community where 'nobody bothers with you', Vera and Sheila invoke a sense of belonging, of having roots within a particular logic of practices that appears central to the process of constructing their position within the social field. In this way, their everyday practices together appear to form a coherent worldview, a sense of what is reasonable or unreasonable. In talking of their daily routines, they surmise that they have had a 'wonderful

life', to which Sheila nostalgically replies; 'oh I think so, quite happy' and 'absolutely gorgeous'. It is here that Vera and Sheila begin to speak about their 'nana' whom is upheld by them as a 'capable woman', as 'teeny' and 'beautiful' who took charge of bringing up the children of the extended family during and after the Second World War. Vera and Sheila's parents and aunties and uncles are described as having been 'on the stage', a career that meant their children were passed over to 'nana' to be brought up all together under the one roof. When speaking of their father and how they enjoyed going out walking with him as children, Vera and Sheila begin to speak of the meaning of walking 'for miles'. A love of walking is then described as a family activity as well as an individual pursuit. As such, their 'nana' would walk a good distance each morning before returning home to her housework;

Extract 9

Vera and Sheila, Community Food Co-operative Customers

V: and we walked for miles with him when we were kids.
S: it was lovely.
V: and our grandmother, when she was over 80 would walk up Lewis St, right up Leckwith you know where the big roundabout is right at the bottom of the hill and if you, there was this old bridge, she used to walk up there before six o'clock in the morning sit on the bridge, have a cigarette, come home and do all the housework, and she was well over 80.
S: and she always, always had gingery hair, so my mother used to rinse her hair she never had it go grey but nice soft you know, and always had a bit of make-up and always a lovely pinnie on.

Here, both Vera and Sheila seem to position their 'nana' as a respectable working class woman. They do so by speaking of their nana as being well groomed and disciplined for she would complete a long walk 'before six in the morning' and always had 'a lovely pinnie on'. Although neither Vera nor Sheila refers to class here, they describe their family as 'working class' as the interview draws to a close. In so doing they speak of how the Second World War and the boom years to follow allowed them, the 'working classes' to 'get their act together'. Accompanied by their description of their nana, it seems that their outlook on a working class worldview is strung together by hard work and respectable appearances. As such, their nana is described as having awakened before six o'clock each morning to 'walk for miles', before returning to a day of house work. This image of respectability is built upon as Sheila describes her 'nana' as having taken such a pride in her appearance. Never having

'had it [her hair] go grey' and 'always had a bit of make-up and always a lovely pinnie on', their nana appears respectable, particularly alongside their discussion of her strong work ethic. Taking such pride in appearance has some resonance with claims to respectability (Skeggs 2004) as a 'compensatory strategy' for a lack of material wealth (Southerton 2002). Such compensatory strategies have been deemed those that compensate for a lack of the advantages associated with greater material success. For example, the pride taken in cultivating and maintaining a garden, of keeping a tidy home, and of making oneself 'tidy' has long been documented as a compensatory strategy adopted by working class people in order to provide a sense of self-worth in the face of relative lack of success in the wider social field. Skeggs (2004) has even suggested that the working class female body is characterised by excess, with excessive displays of sexuality, the overspending of money and excessive 'fat' bodies. Vera and Sheila, by stating the respectability of *their* working class family, seem to rebuke such a stereotype as cut out by the 'restrained' middle classes. However, the internalisation of middle class perceptions of working class 'boorishness' is met with a counter offensive. That is, to become respectable is to be tamed by the hegemonic rule of the middle classes. To take a position for one's family as 'respectable' does not immediately seem to be accomplished through a direct contrast with an indecent 'other'. From their very effort to convey their nana as 'respectable', Vera and Sheila appear to be putting forward what they are not; lazy, work-shy and badly groomed. However, given there is no talk in this interview about resisting these labels, care must be taken in attributing a conscious resistive motive to this account. Nevertheless, choosing to talk of their nana in this way indicates some desire to be considered 'decent'.

The 'other' to whom Vera and Sheila contrast their position in this interview is however, not clear cut, for Vera and Sheila purport to have mostly lived their lives within the same community, where they claim to have had a 'wonderful life' and indeed, where everybody in their community has been 'beautiful'. The 'other' that Vera and Sheila employ as the compass from which to locate their position within the social field becomes evident as they begin to speak of their relocation from their nana's home to different neighbourhoods after marrying their respective husbands. Vera refers to the neighbourhood that she moved to as 'up there' while her home is described as 'a community'. Being in different neighbourhoods, away from the community in which they grew up, and from each other, they claim to have 'hated'. In their home community, they maintain that there are many who have remained their entire lives, who are 'always there' and have remained a constant source of support, comfort

and sociability, much akin to the community spirit of solidarity and amity famously observed by Young and Willmott (1957) in Bethnal Green. Crucially, this is the sort of community that Karen and Valerie earlier disparaged. For Vera and Sheila, the 'other' is the loosely integrated neighbourhood where 'nobody bothers with you' and is entirely separate from *their community*. For Karen and Valerie, this sort of community is the epitome of vulgarity.

As well as creating an 'other' based on community membership and indeed, lack of community membership, Vera and Sheila, seem to take a position within the social field in relation to 'others' who 'have' and themselves, who 'have not'. Such a discussion is started by Vera, who speaks of how she and her husband struggled to buy their home. When searching for a home, Vera claims that 'there was no way you're gonna get any council housing' and it was a case that they 'had to buy'. To buy their home, Vera tells me of how she then went out to work to raise the money to cover living costs, given that her husband's wages were used entirely to cover mortgage payments. Vera described this as a 'struggle' in which they had to 'pull the horns in'. Here, they discuss feelings of stigma experienced both today and in their school days by children within the community, as a result of 'being poor'.

Extract 11

Vera and Sheila, Community Food Co-operative Customers

> **V:** No, the first year he bought everything, but then the second year you bought books from the girls in the year above you and that's how it went you know, I honestly don't know how they managed then, I know that the girls whose fathers were out of work, they did give them free dinners but they did treat them like rubbish, I felt so sorry for them.
> **S:** Yeah cause that's what kids today some of them, they don't like to think they're having it free cause of other children, 'cause they can be nasty…kids
> **V:** and I mean they will look down on you
> **S:** Yes, yes as if 'oh you're poor' like, you know, it's a shame but it does happen.
> **V:** terrible.

Here, Vera wonders about how her parents managed to put them through school before books were provided for free. Vera suggests that her family managed by purchasing second hand books from 'girls in the year above'. Other girls, were however, stigmatised, and subject to mockery by their peers for receiving 'free dinners'. Their peers were seen to 'treat them like rubbish'. This relationship between class and stigma, they suggest, has remained prevalent,

for 'kids today' are 'nasty'. In this way, they describe those who 'look down' on those who 'are having it free', which Vera agrees is 'terrible'. Further references are then made with regards to their position, but still without using the explicit language of social class. Indeed, care is taken when they discuss how they never *felt* that they were poor.

Extract 12

Vera and Sheila, Community Food Co-operative Customers

> **V:** our father was never out of work but he never earned much but we never felt we were poor, did we?
> **S:** No, never ever, in fact I think we always had nice things and you know.
> **V:** Yeah we didn't have a lot.
> **S:** No, but what you had were nice.
> **V:** Whitsun you always had a new dress…
> **S:** had two and I used to think we were so rich, only from Peacocks, but I always had two.
> **V:** Course with me being five years older than her, I'd go with my mother to buy her Christmas presents, but I mean it wasn't until Christmas eve, you know and then it was Woolworths. Woolworths, or something like that, you know, and in the market on a Saturday night, people used to go there because they'd be selling the stuff off cheap and that was the only time they could really afford it.

In refusing the position of *being* poor they instead position themselves as having never *felt* poor. Indeed, their family 'didn't have a lot' but 'what you had were nice'. However, Vera suggests to Sheila that they never *felt* poor. This use of the word 'felt' implies that they were in fact poor, but that various strategies of compensation gave a sense of comfort. As such, Vera and Sheila position themselves as better off than the children at school who 'had it free' but not so well off that they could have a new dress any more than once a year and from anywhere other than 'Peacocks'[6], or indeed Christmas presents from anywhere other than 'Woolworths'[7]. Indeed, Vera and Sheila position themselves by creating distinctions between themselves and others. In this way, they ground this position as respectable working class women by virtue of their attitude towards financial debt.

---

[6] Peacocks is a high street retail outlet that sells women and men's fashions at low prices. Peacocks began as a street 'penny-bazaar' in Chesire in 1844.
[7] Woolworths was a retail outlet selling items from garden furniture, clothes, and confectionary to music and children's toys. Woolworths was a store renowned for providing everyday lifestyle goods to those on lower incomes.

Extract 13

Vera and Sheila, Community Food Co-operative Customers

V: You don't want to get in to debt, my father always used to say.
S: Well if you're brought up like we were.
V: Never get into debt. Oh, it was a terrible thing to get into debt.
S: You saved up if you could, even if it took you a long time, and buy it then.
V: If you couldn't pay for it, you didn't have it. There are lots of things I want but I can't afford it so I don't have it.
S: We'd all like plenty wouldn't we, but if you can, and we're not, we don't care about it do we really, I'd like lots more perhaps, sometimes, but we don't worry about it.
V: There's no point worrying about it, make yourself miserable and what's the point of that.
S: We're quite happy if it's just nice, and go out and, you know, quite happy to do that.
V: I should say, that's what I say as long as you've got good kids.
S: Yeah that's right.
V: and good family that's the main thing in'ne.

To be respectable, then, appears to depend on their ability to refrain from overspending, and gaining the inevitable financial debt. Although they express pride over this restraint, Sheila claims that, despite sometimes wanting 'a lot more', going out on a nice day will compensate, and indeed make them feel 'quite happy'. Vera also agrees, adding that 'as long as you've got good kids' that this is 'the main thing'. The overarching sentiment expressed here is suggestive of dissatisfaction with a lack of material wealth, which is compensated for by other means. However, Vera is reflective about this predicament, claiming that 'there's no point worrying about it', thus 'no point' being 'miserable' about 'what you can't have'.

Conveying a sense of their position in the social field, Extracts 11-13 in particular, demonstrate Vera and Sheila's use of an 'other' in order accomplish this separation by relative comparison. They are working class for they are not middle class. They are respectable for they do not get into financial debt. Indeed, Vera and Sheila also position themselves in relation to those who have more, as well as less material wealth than they possess. They revere the strength of the social bonds built within their community, and are proud of having brought up children whom they describe as 'good kids'. So far, it seems that respondents position themselves within a social field relative to 'others'. Here, Vera and Sheila position themselves as working class, respectable, and as belonging to a tightly knit

community. They contrast this position with that occupied by those who have greater levels of material wealth, and against those who do not stay out of debt, and to some extent against those who do not make an effort with their appearance.

Continuing to argue that positions are taken in the social field by means of relation to an 'other' the Chapter now turns to data where participants do not separate themselves from an 'inferior' or 'superior' other, but aspire to become like the 'other' that they construct as a projected target for their *ideal* self.

6.3 Positioning- Aspiring to the 'Other'

In particular, two participants position themselves in relation to the lifestyle that they hope to lead in the future. Both of these participants are in the early stages of building their professional careers, and by virtue of their age, their positions within the social field appear transitory. In both cases, Niamh and Adam do not attempt to anchor their position within the social field, but instead aspire towards an ideal lifestyle that they hope to be able to consolidate. Here, Niamh, a physiotherapist and market customer, speaks of her imagined lifestyle, one that she hopes to share with her boyfriend in the future. Such an 'idea' or aspiration about a future lifestyle is spoken of with reference to an episode of Channel 4's 'Grand Designs'[8].

Extract 14

Niamh, Farmers' Market Customer

N: I was watching 'Grand Designs' the other day and there was this man and woman who bought this eco house, and they had their own wind turbine on site and they had their own garden and they went and got stuff that they would need, but they tried to make themselves as self sufficient as possible and I don't know, to me I love the idea of that, whether I have the determination to live the life like that but I'd quite like to think , I'd like to think that say in 15 years time that I'd be living in a house like that and I'd be living a lifestyle like that, whether I'm working in my current job or whether I'm sitting

---

[8] 'Grand Designs' is a programme aired on Channel 4. In each programme the presenter and camera crew follow a team through the process of designing and building their 'dream home'.

somewhere writing a book or something like that, I quite like the idea of that you know, working to keep yourself, and I was talking to my boyfriend about it as well and he's like 'yeah it's really nice' and everything like that…it's his vision of us being together in a house where it's partially built and having the sort of lifestyle where he bakes cakes and bread. I kind of like, erm, I'm quite into poetry and I think one of my ambitions in life is to write a book of poetry and maybe it's quite a self gratifying thing to have a book published but it's maybe something that I don't know I guess the way I feel about it is if you don't have that many passions in life then you do need to embrace the passions you do have and explore them fully, and I think sometimes you need some feedback in terms of, it's not just good enough having this passion it needs to be worthwhile and unless someone else sees that you not only have a passion for it but a talent for it as well so I think that's why I'd like to be a published maybe poet at some point but, I have a way to go.

Describing the lifestyle she hopes to share with her boyfriend, Niamh imagines living in an eco-home or a partially renovated home. Here, she imagines her boyfriend baking bread and cakes whilst she writes a book of poetry. This 'idea' of a lifestyle is extended to one of being a 'self sufficient' as possible, for she would 'like to think that in 15 years' she would be 'living a lifestyle like that'. It is not possible on this Extract alone to make inferences with regard to her position in the social field. However, by exploring her ambitions and aspirations, and indeed, by describing her ideal future lifestyle, Niamh constructs a sense of her position as *transitory*. A transitory position in the social field, in this case can be attributed to her age, for Niamh is in her mid twenties, is a recent university graduate, and has recently completed postgraduate training. Niamh's instability within the social field is alluded to as she speaks of her flatmates, with whom she shares a home, and with it, all shopping and cooking duties. Since moving into shared accommodation, Niamh describes how she has learned to cook 'more adventurously'. As well as owning her first cook book, she bakes her own bread, makes her own pasta and grows herbs and salad in the garden. Crucially, Niamh contrasts her present state of food knowledge and practice with that of her childhood, where food consumed was typically a plate of 'basic meat and potatoes'. Now, Niamh speaks of having cooked 'red mullet' with 'deep fried rocket and sesame seeds' whereas previously, she says that she would have 'just made different types of potato like mash or whatever, baked potato I guess'. Such progression in her repertoire, Niamh attributes to her flatmates, from whom she claims to have received an education in culinary practice. By one flatmate in particular, the 'woofer'[9], Niamh seems to have been encouraged to 'do a bit more'.

---

[9] A casual farm worker, who occasionally works in exchange for food and board.

Niamh illustrates her 'doing a bit more' by virtue of her burgeoning interest in growing food and experimenting with new recipes. Through such practices, she claims to earn 'favour' with her flatmate the 'woofer'. Niamh goes on to explain that there is a 'star system' that operates in their flat share, where each flat mate, when buying staple household items, they are awarded a gold, silver or bronze star dependent on the 'ethical' status of the goods purchased. For example, Niamh claims that a bronze star is awarded for a locally farmed pint of milk, silver for an organic pint, and a gold star for a local *and* organic pint of milk. Sadly, such purchases did not result in literally being awarded the corresponding stars, Niamh explains, but that from purchasing a 'gold star level' pint of milk, the purchaser would gain '*favour* with him'. By gaining favour with him (the woofer) it appears that Niamh aspires to a lifestyle distinct from her own. Indeed, she seems quite keen to receive approval for acting in accordance with this lifestyle.

Much as Niamh seems to aspire towards an 'other' lifestyle, Adam appears to hold similar hopes. Adam, like Niamh, is in his mid twenties, has graduated university, and has been pursuing his career for at least two years. In order to boost his potential for success in the labour market, Adam has begun studying for a further degree in his spare time. At the outset of the interview, Adam positions himself in opposition to what he terms as a 'typical' British food culture. Aspiring to an Italian food lifestyle, Adam peaks of his enjoyment of shopping leisurely at markets, and of taking time to prepare 'good' food. This, Adam claims is rooted in his experiences of living in Northern Italy for a year after his graduation from university. Not least, he claims to aspire to this particular lifestyle for he is a great fan of Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall[10]. As such, Adam speaks of the defunct British attitude to food. This, attitude, he associates with his parents. Describing them as 'ignorant' (Extract 16) he positions himself as having aspirations beyond the practices learned from them. In aspiring to an Italian food lifestyle, Adam separates himself from the embodied cultural experience of food that he claims was typical of his childhood (Extract 16). Extract 15 presents Adam's interest in reforming his attitude to food. Much like Niamh, Adam is reforming his food practice, and positions himself by separating himself from the simple cooking of his parents, and towards new and 'adventurous' forms of cooking that are part of a journey towards an ideal lifestyle

---

[10] Hugh Fernley Whittingstall is an advocate of seasonal food production and consumption. He has authored cookbooks alongside television programmes such as 'River Cottage' that seek to revolutionise the British attitude to cheap fast food by championing the superior taste and quality of seasonally grown produce. He has also led campaigns for free range meat, and a ban against all 'cheap' meats sold in supermarkets.

to which they both seem to aspire. This apparent aspiration towards an alternative food lifestyle marks a break with the food culture of his childhood. Like Niamh, Adam aspires to make a break with the cultures of food consumption to which he has been socialised.

Extract 15

Adam, Farmers' Market Customer

A: I think it was living in Italy was a large part of it because we didn't have money to eat out at all, we had pizza but the wide variety of produce and different types of meat available readily, you don't have to travel to them and taking advantage of that was the thing that got me interested in cooking. Every time I think of a typical market, and every neighbourhood has got a series of grocers and butchers and places like that, erm, so you don't travel at all to get food, they do have supermarkets but it's not so much ingrained in the culture, you can pretty much cycle everywhere and everyone seems to be related to someone who owns a bit of farm or vineyard or to someone who makes balsamic vinegar in that region so or everyone's got family in the south so they get olive oil in the summer so I think people are more closely related to the land than here, it's worth seeing.

While living in Italy, Adam speaks of having been introduced to an alternate attitude to food shopping. Here, he experienced a culture where 'people are more related to the land' than is considered the case in Britain. An Italian culture, which he believes to be 'more connected to the land', is also presented as structurally facilitating a manner of shopping locally and on foot, for there are grocers and butchers as well as markets in the centre of every city. Again, supermarkets are easily avoided, for they are not so 'so much ingrained in the culture'. In Extract 15 above and Extract 16 Adam positions himself by aspiring to a particular food *lifestyle*. This lifestyle can even be considered a resource that enables Adam to separate himself from 'others' such as his parents. Making distinctions between an Italian and a British food lifestyle, the former is heralded superior to the latter. Below (Extract 16) Adam positions himself in relation to and indeed, in contrast with the defunct British food culture embodied by his parents' portrayed food consumption practices.

Extract 16

Adam, Farmers' Market Customer

A: Well my Mum and Dad for example, they live in semi rural area with loads of fruit farms and vegetable places around them and between my Mum's house and the local Tesco's there's about three places where you can buy vegetables and eggs, but if my Mum wants her strawberries in summer she won't go to the pick you own place she'll go to Tesco's, she doesn't see the, she doesn't really seem to have much sense to me. And yeah I think they're quite disconnected from the food supply, and I don't think my friends are as in to cooking as me, and also interesting in Russia as well because most people live in city centres but they always have…it's such a big country, they've got summer houses and they've got allotments and they're much more connected as well.

Disconnected 'from the food supply', Adam's parents lack 'much sense' and do not 'see' what is problematic about their food practice. When stating that he feels that his Mum 'doesn't see', Adam associates this trait with British people in general, who are also considered 'disconnected from the land'. To qualify the insinuation that British people are typically more ignorant, Adam draws a comparison between the practices of those in the countries that he has visited, which are distinguished in opposition to his portrayal of his mother's practices and attitude to food. To confirm his parents 'ignorance' Adam speaks of his mother bypassing the opportunity to purchase strawberries from a farm and instead, chose to press on to the supermarket. Food figures here as a resource of distinction, for Adam separates himself from an 'other' whom he seen as disconnected from the land, and positions himself as making a re-connection by aspiring towards an alternative food lifestyle. Such a connection, for Adam, separates him from the disconnected 'other'. Much like DeVault's (1991) finding that women experiencing upward mobility through marriage cook ever more elaborate recipes and reject the cooking practices of their mothers, it seems that to 'reconnect' forms another element of this separation from custom.

Resources used in the social field to discern 'position' and indeed in order to engage with position taking have been present throughout this Chapter, particularly in excerpts from interviews that concern examples of separation from both 'inferior' as well as 'superior' 'others'. Such resources include the ability to discern different accents from one another, to engage with the politics of food consumption, and by positioning oneself within one's

neighbourhood. Ken, for example, when positioning himself as a 'down to earth working class guy' identified himself as so in relation to others whom he explained were 'poshies' by virtue of their accent. However, as demonstrated below, accent as a resource used for position taking in the social field does not simply pertain to separating oneself from the 'poshies' in order to identify with those who are 'down to earth'. By contrast, Emily positions herself as transitory in that position. Such a transition is presented as orchestrated and managed by her mother who is conveyed as having worked to dilute the local tones in her daughter's accent for some time. Having 'battered' the local accent out of her; Emily's mother appears to separate their family from the inferior 'others' within what Emily describes as a 'rough community'. This is accomplished by reconstructing a discussion that Emily claims was often had with her mother when she would be about to go out to play as a teenager. Emily claims that her mother was anxious about her 'going down the green', which Emily claims to have silenced by stating 'I know 'em'. 'The green' is explained as a row of shops which is 'used by kids to hang around' and where there is 'a certain pub that's known for drug dealing'. The 'green', is a place that Emily suggests her mother would worry if she was to 'go down there'. Coupled with Emily's statement that her mother had 'battered' the local accent 'out' of her, it seems that Emily constructs an impression of her mother as positioning their family with aspirations *beyond* the local community, where her mother and extended family remain. Extracts 17 and 18 below shows how Emily positions herself within the local community. Indeed, we are told about this position through the voice of her mother, whom Emily suggests has aspirations for her family beyond their community. To do so, we are told of how her mother endeavoured to have her stay away from the local children on the 'green'. This is exacerbated by Emily's suggestion that her mother has always encouraged her to speak differently, in order that she does not *sound* local.

Extract 17

Emily, Community Food Co-operative Customer

E: I went to 'Cae Coch', which is the high school in Pengrove, and some parts… are not the greatest some parts...I shouldn't sound too prejudiced now, there are some sort of quite, what we might call, quite rough estates, but equally there are some quite nice parts, like most areas probably in Cardiff there are some part that are 'urgh' and some that are really lovely. There's a little green of shops and things and they used to have once again, smaller businesses but now it's more used by kids to hang around, you know, there's a certain pub that's known for lots of drug dealing and things like that really

erm so yeah I mean I used to like it and I think because I grew up there, from 11-19, yeah, high school 18/19.. it doesn't bother me…I sound dodgy now...'I know that one so it's ok', my Mum says 'oh I'm not going down to the green' and I say 'why not it's alright I know 'em! (puts on a Cardiff accent to say this.) So I think once you've grown up in an area you're not that bothered by it 'cause it's what you know really, whereas other people might feel more intimidated by it.

Here, Emily describes her local community as having areas that were 'urgh' and others that were 'really lovely'. From this, it seems that they did not live in the parts that were considered by Emily as 'urgh', for these are the areas that are presented as having been close by, and yet separate from the immediate space in which they lived, for to go to the 'green' involved 'going down' to a distinct and separate place. Moreover, she suggests that her mother did not like her to 'go down' to the 'green' from the area of the neighbourhood in which they lived. This might be nearer to the parts considered 'really lovely'.

From this reported exchange, it seems that Emily positions herself as someone who knows how to live on the edge of 'quite rough estates'. She implies that she is not intimidated by the area, and even feels comfortable 'going down to the green' that is often occupied by 'kids' that 'hang around'. Emily's place within this community is presented as peripheral to the 'rough' areas, although her peripheral status has not affected the ease with which she believes she can access and feel comfortable with the 'rough' community. To present herself as moving between these places of home and 'down there' Emily implies that she does indeed live outside of the 'rough' community. What appears to make Emily's position peripheral to the 'rough' parts of the community is the reporting of her mother's concern at her going 'down to the green'. The 'green' is a place that is conveyed as disagreeable, whether this place be distinct in terms of its distance from their home, or whether the 'green' remained far from her mother's aspirations and ideas about what constituted a safe or acceptable space for her teenager to play or 'hang around'. We can assume that Emily's mother did indeed find the 'green' disagreeable, for when Emily accounts for a typical reply to her announcements that she would be going 'down there' we can see that she was required to appease her mother's concern, by reassuring that 'it's alright I know 'em'. Positioning herself both within and outside of this 'rough community', Emily also suggests that her mother objects to her accent. Here, Emily speaks of being reprimanded by her mother for speaking with a local accent.

Extract 18

Emily, Community Food Co-operative Customer

E: The Cardiff accent, although some people may say is getting stronger, erm was battered out of me (laughter). My mother always said 'you're not having a Cardiff accent', none of my family have a very strong Welsh accent at all and erm, so, yeah I guess I don't know why, I think because my family didn't have strong Welsh accents, and because I'm in a lot of contact with a lot of different accents as well, people can't tend to place where I'm from, apart from Welsh. Every so often the Welsh, you can hear, but not necessarily the local area and things, and maybe even…I've always tended to speak a couple of different languages and I think maybe [that] adds some bizarre little twang to things. It depends on who I'm with as well, now I've got friends who have strong Welsh accents and I spent some time in Port Talbot and my Mum said 'I can tell where you've been' (laughter) and she said 'oh my word listen to how strong your accent is now' it's a different accent, I would never have had a Port Talbot accent at all, but spent some time there with these girls and ended up sounding like I was from there. So yeah, I lived my life in Cardiff and it's just one of those things really.

In discussing the degree to which her family members have a Welsh accent, or indeed a *Cardiff* accent, it appears a position is being carved. According to Emily, none of her family 'ha[s] a very strong accent at all'. Emily's mother is even said to have been adamant that she would not speak with a local accent. Crucially, Emily does attribute alternative explanations for not speaking with a local accent, despite having lived her life in Cardiff. Indeed, Emily accounts for her lack of Welsh accent by virtue of multilingualism. By speaking and learning several languages she claims to have always been in contact 'with lots of different accents'. Despite such an appeal to multilingualism as a justification for having abandoned a local accent, Emily does recognise that she takes on the local accents of others. Indeed, her ability to learn languages, she claims, makes her susceptible to taking on new accents for a time. This denial of a conscious effort to downplay a local accent could be seen as an attempt by Emily to appear as devoid of any need to separate herself from 'others'. Otherwise, it may follow that Emily is unconscious of the positioning work that she undertakes. Regardless of intention, neglect, or lack of awareness of such positioning work, Emily, by virtue of attributing her accent to her multilingualism and tendency to 'pick up' on the accents of others, does at least indicate that she does not often fraternise with 'local' Cardiff people, for

Emily more often than not claims to speak with a more 'English' accent. However, on the occasions that Emily speaks of having visited friends in 'Port Talbot'[11], she claims that her mother admonishes this in cautionary tones - 'I can tell where you've been' and 'oh my word listen to how strong your accent is'. Regardless of what Emily's denial of a conscious effort to adopt an English accent could tell us about the positioning work being undertaken here, it is the reported positioning work of her mother that is telling of aspiration. Extracts 17 and 18 are revealing of how Emily sees her mother's concern to separate her child from those who 'hang around on the green' and her resolution to ensure that Emily did not speak with a local accent. Emily presents her own reasons for not speaking with a local accent, which she attributes to being a linguist in contact with people with many different accents to which she is susceptible. However, Emily also suggests that the absence of a local accent is the result of a conscious effort on behalf of her mother to ensure that neither she nor any other member of their family *sounded* local. From this, it seems reasonable to suggest that accent is key to the act of positioning. In this way, Emily's family or apparently guided by her mother, separate themselves from local people, and indeed do so with the resource of accent and its careful cultivation.

This section has explored the nature of position taking among those participants who conveyed a sense of aspiration in this very positioning work. For example, both Niamh and Adam seem to take a transitory position, accomplished by virtue of their separation from the position occupied by their families and gradual alignment with the lifestyles to which they each now aspire. Such aspirational positioning work is also evident as Emily reports her mother being concerned about her 'going down the green' to associate with 'kids' that 'hang around'. Having had the local accent 'battered' out of her, Emily suggests that her mother hoped for her daughter to aspire to a life beyond the neighbourhood that is described by Emily as 'urgh'.

6.4 Position Taking: An Ongoing and Dynamic Project

In this Chapter, position taking has been understood as taking place when social actors separate or aspire to an 'other'. However, it seems that these positions are not clearly defined, nor are they fixed and without capacity for change. The accounts represented above suggest

---

[11] Port Talbot is an industrial town in South Wales known for its production of steel.

that these participants position themselves as in a transitory position. As such, it seems that, so far, participants make sense of their location within a social field in relation to others. Above, participants have defined where they stand in relation to where they do not. They have positioned themselves within a particular worldview that is distinct from what they do not find a reasonable way to live. This, which Bourdieu (1992) called 'habitus' is central to this analysis of position taking. These positions have been understood as being constructed with reference to an 'other'. The dynamic of a participant's positioning work is further illustrated below. Rhys, a graphic designer in his early thirties, and a market customer, positions himself in relation to 'people from home' and also in relation to 'middle class Cardiff people'. As such, this account reveals the dynamic nature of position taking.

At the outset of the interview, Rhys positions himself as separate from an 'other'. The 'other' here is the 'stereotypical' market customer. As a market customer himself, it may seem surprising that he is separating himself from those carrying out the very same practice as he does. Except that he does not see himself as *doing* the market in the same way as the 'other' customers.

Extract 19

Rhys, Farmers' Market Customer

R: Yeah there's a lot of erm I see people that speak Welsh, Welsh is my first language and there are quite a few Welsh language speakers there, middle class Welsh speakers erm so I'm always bumping into someone I know there and also other people from, it' not all middle cl… not all, people I know from, I wouldn't classify it as necessarily a middle class neither, but, but I don't know it just feels stereotypical. It's like people make and effort to go on their bikes there, and I don't know many of those people go everywhere on their bikes or whether they just *feel* like you know you *feel* like '*oh you should'* and you take your *bags*, plastic bags there and your recycled bags and make a bit of an effort there, and I don't know maybe how if people carry that on in everyday of their life. Not that it's, not that it's criticising it, it just feels a bit like erm you know it's a bit it feels a bit artificial I suppose, but maybe I'm just looking at myself, and everyone else lives their lives like that all the time. Well I take my car down there anyway, so (laughter).

Here, Rhys makes a link between Welsh language speaking and being middle class. In so doing, Rhys discursively constructs and then departs from taking a position as a middle class Welsh speaker. At first, Rhys aligns himself as a Welsh speaker with the Welsh middle

classes. Through his critique of these other market customers he then positions himself as separate from them. This critique positions himself as separate from the 'other' customer who cycle to the market and re-use plastic bags, which he claims is 'artificial'. He further separates himself from these other market customers - described as middle class – by virtue of his driving down to the farmers' market. By driving, he positions himself as separate from the 'other' and thus 'artificial' middle class market customer.

Such separation from a middle class position is obscured when Rhys also separates himself from working class people 'from home' and aligns himself once more with practices that he associates with being middle class.

Extract 20

Rhys, Farmers' Market Customer

R: Yeah definitely in the area where I come from, like, you get, the school I went to, had proper, cause everyone there speaks Welsh, so you've got like rough, rough as nails, everyone… like pretty rough areas, but more down here I would say kids… the people who work with me now, well, my business partner he went to a Welsh secondary school in the Valleys- Llanharry- but a lot of the people who went there, their parents spoke English as a first language like their I think their parents generation, that generation or maybe a bit before, where Welsh was lost kind of thing, but the parents have made the effort for them but there's like I see completely differently for them you know I don't, even though they're not middle class kids but it's a different, a lot, the kids who have maybe moved down to Cardiff to work or whatever would be maybe from more of a middle class background, rather than, and the working class ones would maybe have stayed up in Caernarfon, you still see them in Caernarfon, you know what I mean which is the social part, and I would imagine you'd see that everywhere.
J: So what would they be doing in Caernarfon, where do you see them?
R: Well, they were all signing on when I was there (laughter) last but they were you know my mates were all, I was pretty jealous at the time I wanted to sign on and have fun as well! (laughter) But I've lost, I've seen some, but you know you lose touch I don't I only go up two or three times a year so, no they're working from what I hear, people are working in local jobs doing just various stuff, some have moved to Manchester and Liverpool and I'm sure some are in Liverpool as well but not that many have moved to Cardiff, some of them have but yeah.

Here, Rhys positions himself as a 'middle class kid' from a Welsh speaking family who went to university and then moved to Cardiff to begin his career. In doing so, Rhys acknowledges

that he is separate from those who remained in his home town, where he claims unemployment is rife. Such unemployment, Rhys claims, meant that while undertaking his degree, he was 'jealous' of his working class friends at home, who were free to have 'fun' without having to work. However, Rhys later suggests that he realised that this was 'no fun' and returned to follow a lifestyle that he says is typically pursued by middle class 'kids' from his home town by moving to Cardiff, London, or Manchester. As such, Rhys constructs a position that is in flux. Indeed, he is separate from the market customers but also separate from those 'at home'.

From this, we can see that a sense of belonging or not belonging within a particular field seems to play a part in position taking, even if this project has no clear end. Moreover, the language of class has often been used in order to carve these positions of belonging or of not belonging. For example, Karen and Valerie did not see themselves as 'belonging' in what they describe as a working class neighbourhood. For Julianne, volunteering at the co-op may give her a sense that she belongs. Ken, Vera and Sheila express an affinity with their neighbourhoods, where they share experiences with neighbours. Indeed, these seem to represent those that Karen portrays negatively as 'having lived there always'. Belonging to their communities are at the crux of what Sheila described as a 'wonderful life'. Furthermore, the apparent desire to belong elsewhere has been a feature of Emily's reported exchanges with her mother, as well as in Adam's aspirations to belong to an Italian style community of food practice. Niamh's purported wish to lead a self-sufficient lifestyle in the sort of house featured on 'Grand Designs' does not escape this very same analysis as an expression of desired belonging. Each of these expressions of belonging, not belonging or indeed, aspiration to or confusion about their relative position in the social field echoes much of Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' and 'field'. The habitus, in producing "reasonable" or indeed "common sense" (Bourdieu 1990) repertoire of reasonable behaviours and practices, brings with it a sense of security and belonging for those socialised within it. It may also be reasonable or common sense within a particular habitus to feel that one should belong to another. From the data presented in this Chapter, it appears that Bourdieu's concept of habitus has much to offer in understanding the space of lifestyles, and indeed how social actors position themselves in relation to an 'other' in order to make sense of their worldview. It remains to examine how these positions are upheld, and indeed how food figures in this struggle.

Chapter Seven

Marking Boundaries of Separation

Exploring means of discursive position taking in the social field, Chapter Six did not consider the means by which *boundaries* between these positions are mediated, maintained and contested. To this end, this Chapter argues that participants maintain symbolic boundaries *between* positions within the social field by making *moral* judgements. These are understood to arise from distinctions made between tastes for food deemed 'good' against those deemed 'bad'. The different ways that the 'good' is separated from the 'bad' is explored with particular attention to the ways in which food figures as a resource for the construction and maintenance of moral boundaries.

Addressing a key research question; does class figure in 'alternative' food practice, the Chapter revisits some of the Extracts presented in Chapter Six as well as introducing further interview data. The logic for this repetition is that an additional layer of analysis is applied. To this end, the Extracts presented again are considered for the illumination they give to the phenomenon of moral boundary formation with specific reference to *food*.

7.1 The Food of the 'Other'

Food has frequently figured as a resource in the distinctions made by participants to draw moral boundaries between what is deemed reasonable, or indeed 'good' against that deemed unreasonable or 'bad'. What is good for 'us' is, then, distinctively different from what is deemed 'good' by 'them'. According to Bourdieu (1990, 1984) across the social field, the 'habitus' brings with it a set of dispositions, affinities with and preferences for one thing over another. That is, these tastes will have homologies across the social field, wherein one group or habitus will have a preference for *foie gras* that corresponds with particular types of music, furniture or clothing. Here, we can see that through participants talk that food provides an example of such homology. Moreover, food is understood to be figured in the making of moral judgements, a domain that has widely identified as an oversight in Bourdieu's work

(Sayer 2005b, Lamont 1992). In this way, the Extracts discussed below explore the moral dimension of position consolidation.

Here, Catherine, a farmers' market customer and manager of a small scale, local council funded community farm and 'petting zoo', speaks of a particular 'ethos' that guides her and her partner's practices of food consumption. Both Catherine and her partner have worked in the hospitality industry, and have spent time managing restaurants. This, Catherine describes as a time that shaped her 'love of food'. Crucially, this 'ethos' of food of which Catherine speaks appears to form a 'philosophy' of food. This philosophy, Catherine suggests is one she shares with some friends, but not with others. This ethos is what she describes as 'terroir'. 'Terroir', Catherine explains is a practice of matching the foods and wines of one region, which she claims to have become familiar with while enrolled on a wine tasting course. This 'philosophy' of food is spoken of at length throughout the interview, firstly by reference to her and her partner's membership of an organic box delivery scheme, as well as through attendance at farmers' markets. These practices, she claims, fit 'with the whole ethos' of food to which she and her partner claim to adhere. When asked to explain further the 'ethos' of food that she holds, Catherine explains;

Extract 21

Catherine, Farmers' Market Customer

C: Well I guess everyone's thinking about it now, just generally thinking about cutting down on food miles and everything. I think it's got quite trendy now, which I've never done it for that reason, but I just think even, not even so much even the food miles, but just supporting the local people who've worked hard to produce. And I'm a great believer, I really got into it, because I did a wine course as part of my restaurant thing and they talked about 'terroir' and if you go to France, whatever region you're in, if you eat and drink the wine and the food of that region it just matches perfectly, and I think it's the same wherever you are. No matter what part of the world you're in, if you eat what's seasonal and what grows there, that's the best that you can possibly have. I don't like the idea of, sort of being able to buy strawberries all year round and that kind of thing, and so it's only really from working in the food environment for so long, and being with people who are really passionate about food, and know a lot about food, and it kind of rubs off on you and you don't want to stand for anything else, and I still get really excited by food now, and my role here, because I work with quite a lot of local producers, erm, but they're the ones we're trying to tie in for our produce markets but they're, well, they're generally small scale and they have no problem in selling what they produce, they get a good price and they know it's

154

> gonna sell, so it's kind of like, why would they come to do another market? Or they're not really a proper local producer as such. We've had to call it a 'local market' not a 'farmers' market' specifically, because we just knew that there wasn't enough farmers in the area to make it a farmers' market basically.

The 'ethos' that guides Catherine's food philosophy, is, she describes, a sentiment that has reached popular consciousness. Indeed, 'everyone's thinking about it now'. This may imply that Catherine finds the participation of a wider audience in 'cutting down on food miles' and partaking in aspects of the 'ethos' to which she subscribes has somehow become less culturally valuable, for it has now become 'trendy' to do so. Rather than being devalued due to its growing popularity, the taking of an interest in the politics of food is, she suggests, distinguishable from having a true 'love' of food. As such, to cut down on 'food miles', Catherine implies, is a practice that others subscribe to in order to be 'trendy'. However, Catherine positions herself as having 'never done it for that reason'. Thus, Catherine appears to safeguard the cultural capital of this practice, by asserting that her particular philosophy has a moral underpinning. Marking a moral boundary of separation not only between those who ascribe to a particular food philosophy and those who do not, but also does so on the grounds that she does so not for reasons of 'fashion' but for deeper reasons of a *moral* nature. That is, she claims to be a 'great believer' in good food, in supporting local producers and by proxy, local economies. It is this that forms part of a deeper, non-superficial 'ethos' that is separate from the fashion 'trend' that she perceives as guiding 'other' consumers. Given such an evaluation of the practice and ethos of the 'other', and indeed the assertion that 'others' act on issues such as 'food miles' on the basis of a fashion 'trend', it seems reasonable to identify such an analysis as a *moral judgement* of those 'others' as having a superficial interest in 'terroir'. Food, then, appears a resource of distinction. Crucially, this is not simply food, but 'alternative' food. Above, Extract 21 suggests that food has been drawn upon not simply as resource for position taking in the social field, but as a means of making moral judgements. It seems that food figures as a resource that consolidates the boundaries between them. There are, however, points at which Catherine's apparent success at drawing these boundaries can be contested.

Catherine's proclaimed adherence to the philosophy of 'terroir' is in contradiction to her *actual* food consumption practices - albeit as she describes them. Although Catherine and her partner claim to source the majority of their food at various farmers' markets each weekend, she also claims to use the supermarket to 'top-up' on items not available at farmers' markets,

and for 'last minute' ingredients. When speaking of shopping routines, Catherine gives an example. She says that her partner has asked her to bring home a block of parmesan cheese for the 'pasta arrabiatta' that he will be preparing that evening. The contradictory element of this statement rests in the notion that her commitment to the philosophy of 'terroir' is thwarted by the admission of purchasing ingredients that are not local to one particular region, for the parmesan, while not made locally, neither are the tomatoes in season. Not in line with having the 'best' food that can be had *locally,* their ethos of 'terroir' appears a manner in which they go about *thinking* of if not *doing* food. This claim to authenticity, it follows, is somewhat unfounded on the basis that, yes, she may claim not to engage with a particular 'ethos' on the grounds of 'trend', however, the actual food practices she describes do not reflect utterly the 'ethos' that she claims to guide her and her partner's food consumption. This 'ethos' represents a badge of authenticity that Catherine draws upon in order to draw a boundary that consolidates her position as separate from the 'other'. Indeed, this is understood as a moral boundary for Catherine claims that her attitude to food and issues such as 'food miles' have a basis in a particular 'ethos' that separates her from 'others' who engage with such forms of consumption simply due to trend. However, on the basis that Catherine and her partner's described practices of food consumption in reality do not match up with the claims of the 'ethos' of 'terroir', it seems that Catherine's claim to moral authority and 'authenticity' is evidently based on an incomplete actuality. In this way, there appears a *disjuncture* between her claim to moral authority and her *actual* practices of food consumption. Again, as noted in Chapter Five, as market customer and subscriber to a philosophy of 'terroir', it seems that Catherine displays an alternative means of *thinking* about food, if not an alternative means of *doing* food.

Further substance to this claim can be found when Catherine makes a distinction between those whom she imagines to share her 'ethos', and those who do not. This distinction is accomplished as Catherine speaks of her partner who shares her 'love of food', and her mother-in-law, whom she claims, does not. A boundary is drawn here by making moral judgements about how 'others' spend their money. Such judgements arise as Catherine speaks of her step mother's reported disapproval of her and her partner having spent five

hundred pounds on a lunch in a 'Michelin Star'[12] celebrity owned restaurant in London. To this end, Catherine gives an account of her step mother's alleged disapproval.

Extract 22

Catherine, Farmers' Market Customer

C: I suppose James and I have got a very set idea about what we enjoy. I remember for my birthday once a couple of years ago, he took me to a Gordon Ramsay restaurant and I remember my step-mother going, because we spent, not that it…but we spent £500 on this lunch and I don't think we even told her that, but she was like 'how can you spend that much on food and duh duh duh duh duh' but it's just the whole experience, for it's not just about the food or you know, it's the best food you can possibly get and it's done by absolute professionals, and because we work with food it means a lot more, but people don't think anything of going out and spending it on pints of cider, or, do you know what I mean, we don't do, we choose, we don't do that, we want to go and enjoy our food, and it depends on what people want.

Here, Catherine refers to her and her partner's 'set ideas' regarding what they 'enjoy'. Stating that these 'set ideas' pertain to the enjoyment of 'the best' of food available, she claims is an 'experience' that made all the more exceptional for having been part of the restaurant business. To 'experience' food appears a means by which Catherine separates herself from those whom she imagines to treat food functionally as a 'fuel'. For Catherine, these 'set ideas' are not necessarily shared by 'others'. Speaking of her stepmother who is said to have disapproved of their having 'spen[t] that much on food', Catherine positions her stepmother as the 'other' who does not share the same 'ethos'. With the use of food as resource of distinction, Catherine draws a further moral boundary between those who share their 'ethos' of food, and share their appreciation of 'the best' food, and indeed, of the *experience* of food. It is this explication of the experience of, and means of thinking about food that seems to consolidate the positioning work undertaken here.

The 'other' is here not solely characterised by her stepmother and indeed her stepmother's disapproval of their 'extravagant' spending on a lunch in a 'Michelin Star' restaurant. As such, the formation of a moral boundary of separation is brought about as Catherine accounts

---

[12] To have a 'Michelin Star' refers to the award system of a restaurant guide book that awards 'stars' for restaurants of outstanding quality. Only four restaurants in the UK currently hold the highest ranking number of three stars.

for this very extravagance. Here, a moral boundary is drawn between what she regards as spending that is *worthy* and associated with the 'best' in contrast with consuming for instant gratification. Illuminating this conjecture with the example of alcohol consumption, Catherine forms a boundary around the ability to delay gratification in relation to those who cannot. Indeed, cider drinking is the example chosen by Catherine to draw out the distinction between instant and delayed gratification. That is, between cider drinking and loving 'good food'. Catherine's choice to make an example of 'cider drinking' as the imagined preference of the 'other' when coupled with Catherine's discussion below of the time implications of her and her partner's food consumption practices (Extract 23) marks this clear boundary between 'instant' and 'delayed gratification'. Again, cider drinking provides the antithetical example of her and her partner's ideas about how to 'experience' food.

While Catherine and her partner appear to experience scorn from friends and family about their food 'ethos', they disqualify this, she says, by suggesting that they are just 'different'. That is, they are different from the 'other' who is party to a mass food culture of convenience. Extract 23 demonstrated the processes by which Catherine positions herself in relation to her friends. To this end, she appears to use food as a resource to figure in an act of distinction, and in order to affirm her position in the social field via the formation of a moral boundary.

Extract 23
Catherine, Farmers' Market Customer

C: We're quite different to general people in the way that they think about food and I'm lucky that I've got James because he's just a brilliant, and can cook anything, but, so many people come to our house when he's cooking and they say 'how can you do it, how can you cook fresh all the time, it takes so much time' and it's like 'no it doesn't it takes 15 minutes to prepare it and then you just cook it'. I think it depends on how you've been brought up and what their relationship is with food, because for some people it's just fuel and they don't think about food, and we both really love food and enjoy it and I think that makes a big difference.

The distinction between food as performing a necessary human function, and food as an 'experience' is here made clear. Catherine distinguishes herself and her partner from those

who see cooking food from fresh as taking too much time, affirming her position within a 'foodie' culture. This position is clearly demonstrated by Extract 23, where Catherine insists upon the ease at which one can prepare fresh meals on a daily basis. Moreover, this insistence is arrived at by Catherine via the reporting of statements made by friends and visitors to her home, whom Catherine suggests to have been amazed by her daily commitment to preparing fresh food. Friends who visit her home express surprise at her commitment to cooking 'fresh all the time'. Indeed, she claims to often reply by suggesting that it takes only fifteen minutes to prepare ingredients for a fresh meal 'and then you just cook it'. The use of the word 'just' here, accompanied with her insistence that these meals take only fifteen minutes to prepare, can be understood as an act of positioning. Indeed, Catherine seems to make some way towards a moral judgement for not only does she claim that it only takes *her* fifteen minutes to prepare a fresh meal, the 'other' people who see that as a 'long time' to wait are characterised as impatient and lazy. In this way, the 'other' cannot delay the need for instant gratification, and sees food as merely a 'fuel'.

For Catherine, the culture of convenience food qualifies for ridicule, as further into the interview she relays her fascination at a revelation made by a friend of her partner, whom she claims, was brought up on 'Findus Crispy Pancakes'.[13] Catherine speaks of how she and her friends, at dinner parties, joke about how he has now been awoken to 'taste' since marrying her friend who is also 'passionate about food'. Through attending dinner parties, Catherine claims he has now developed a taste for food. According to Catherine, having this 'taste' for food depends on family upbringing. She goes on to say that both she and her partner were brought up on freshly made, yet simple food. Furthermore, Catherine suggests that food for her comprises an embodied memory, she sees food as the centre of family life, and reminisces over celebrating special occasions at family gatherings that always took place around a dining table. This experience, according to Catherine, inspired her passion for food, although she makes a further distinction between the tastes for food developed from her family. In so doing, she appeals to an affinity with previous generations of her family when accounting for her food 'tastes'. Catherine imagines that her 'taste' for food is an inherited trait from her grandfather, whom she claims to have been a French chef. Her taste is thus presented as 'in the blood', which she became aware of while studying at University and working in a French bistro. The cultivation of particular food habits and a food 'philosophy'

---

[13] A ready-made convenience food made by Birds Eye - meat and gravy coated in pancake and breadcrumbs.

are derived not simply by socialisation, but from personal development and as 'in the blood' and inherited from a previous generation. Crucially, it is not her working class parents to which Catherine attributes her love of food. Family members have admonished their regular and extravagant lunches in 'Michelin Star' restaurants. Catherine and her partner's preoccupation with the 'best food' can be seen as partly an act of distinction that is reinforced through the rapprochement of a convenience food culture. For Catherine, food, is valuable, it provides a means of distinguishing herself from family members and from 'others'. While she and her partner indulge in extravagant lunches in Michelin star restaurants, they also seem, to draw considerable moral boundaries of separation with regard to food consumed *within the home*.

Again, by admonishing the convenience food culture, Catherine and Karen's (below) accounts highlight a disjuncture between a professed ethos and actual everyday practice. These two women each express a commitment to a particular ethos, ethic or politics that are rarely actualised. Indeed, while Catherine spoke of the 'ethos' of 'terroir', this that was not reflected in how she reports her actual practices of food consumption. Similarly, Karen provides a critique of 'consumer culture', which in its very delivery reveals the irony of a disparity between her stated commitments and her practical actions. Extract 24 was also presented in Chapter 6 in order to demonstrate the nature of position taking in the social field. Here, Extract 24 is again drawn upon, but this time in order to suggest that Karen forms a moral boundary to consolidate her position in the social field.

Extract 24
Karen, Farmers' Market Customer

> **K:** Well I mean as I say in terms of being very uncritical about the sort of things I'm criticising in terms of the consumerist culture, cheap food, not worrying about where the stuff comes from how far it's come or how it's produced and just saying well something's cheap and that's great and bigger cars and going on foreign holidays and thinking that's you know, taking the attitude that that's the good life.

A moral boundary is formed here by separating two alternate visions of the 'good life'. To be uncritical of a 'cheap food' consumer culture is, for Karen, morally irresponsible. To claim

that Karen finds such a disengagement from critique of consumerist culture as morally irresponsible is justified when coupled with the disparaging tone with which she speaks of the 'uncritical' 'other' who takes the attitude that '*that's* the good life'. Her emphasis on 'that's' is telling of her sarcasm; a rhetorical device that clearly marks her reproach of *their version* of the good life in contrast with hers. When coupled with Extract 25 it becomes rather clear that the moral boundary drawn by Karen in Extract 24 is somewhat contradictory. Here, as a potentially victim to the very same trappings of consumer culture as those whom in Extract 24 she admonishes as having an inferior concept of the 'good life'.

Extract 25

Karen, Farmers' Market Customer

K: C: Hmm well I think the supermarkets have a very bad effect on local communities in many ways really… and it's you know even having that view of it, making that critique of it is very hard not to be drawn into it yourself, so, you know you go to the supermarket and you see all this stuff that you don't actually need, but because of the way that they market it, you think 'oh it might be nice to try that' 'that looks that's new that's different' or 'there's an offer on this' and you buy all this stuff that you don't really, you didn't intend to buy it wasn't on your list, erm and now they sell all this other stuff as well, increasingly you know they're selling riding hats (laughter) suitcases and paint and you go and start looking at all this stuff and you go 'oh, well that's cheap' you know, 'shall I get a *golf club*' or something (laughter) what am I doing! You know. And I think it's very easy for people to sort of get drawn in to this habit of consumption, thinking that they want and need all these things that actually become more of a burden to them, get all this stuff home, and you've got nowhere to put it, and then you've got to get a bigger house because you haven't got room for all your things. So I think supermarkets are very much you know *part* of that story about the over-consumption as well as being obviously bad for individual producers and shops and the way the things one hears about the way in which they treat er producers and also some of the you know ways in which they actually, because they're *cutting* the margin so tight for their producers er the sort of things their producers feel pressured into doing to make a profit so they may be pumping water into food, putting nasty chemicals in to make it last longer and all the rest of it, washing these salad leaves in chemicals- so all that supermarket sort of stuff, seems quite malign on all kinds of levels I think- and yet, as I say I go and spend quite a lot of money at the supermarket every week, and kind of feel bad about it really and wish I didn't do it, but the alternatives are, buy *everything* from the farmers' market and some local shops, which aren't really selling equivalent stuff to the supermarkets any longer because they've you know those shops who would have been selling the same stuff, are now have gone out of business now so there's only more specialised shops left. I mean obviously there are still greengrocers, butchers around- but

you can't get organic vegetables in the greengrocers. Erm, I do get to, you know, buy free range meat at our local butchers- Bartlett's on Cathedral Road occasionally so that's an option.

Here, Karen claims that 'it's very hard not to be drawn into' a culture of consumerism. As such, consumerism is considered a trap for 'others' and not herself. Crucially, Karen does admit to some degree of slippage. By speaking of a recent visit to the supermarket, Karen reveals that she is not so separate from the 'other' who is a victim to the trappings of consumer culture, for she admits to having confronted this very challenge. Above, Karen depicts a moment of lapse into consumer culture. However, Karen accounts for having recovered from such a lapse by reflecting upon this momentary slip, by questioning herself - 'what am I doing' - and eventually stepping away from the golf clubs. These golf clubs, for Karen, embody all that is inappropriately on offer at large supermarkets. The expansion of supermarkets into the retailing of non-food and grocery products is presented as symbolic of a shift towards 'stuff' becoming a burden. This burden of 'stuff', Karen suggests has been foisted upon the consumer by the corporate sector. The consequences of this proliferation of supermarkets within the retail sector are seen in the shrinking number of independent shops. Reflecting on how she feels devoid of any choice when it comes to spending 'a lot of money in the supermarket every week', she concludes that any alternative choice has been obliterated by oligopolistic strategies of market domination. Crucial to her analysis is that Karen seems to position herself as a victim of oligopoly. As such, she spends 'a lot of money' in these supermarkets every week, because *'other'* people did not patronise smaller shops when they were still in business. Moreover, Karen admits to shopping regularly at a supermarket, but claims to do so in a manner that separates her from 'other' supermarket shoppers. Her separation is achieved by providing a critique of consumer culture, and by virtue of her abstinence from what is deemed as the unnecessary over-consumption of cheap and readily available goods.

Extracts 24 and 25 are telling of an inherent contradiction within what Karen describes as the 'ethic' of food consumption and production. Extract 24 highlights Karen's scorn of consumerist visions of the 'good life' that involve the purchase of cheap food, and the coveting of 'fast cars and foreign holidays'. To take the 'attitude' that such a penchant for the culture of 'cheap food' is 'good', Karen claims is entirely separate from her *critical* standpoint. Crucially, this critical standpoint is turned on its head as Karen speaks of having

fallen victim to such consumer predilections herself (Extract 25) whilst simultaneously positioning herself as separate from those whom she imagines to consume with moral abandon. Crucially, Karen presents her engagement as slippage, or indeed as a practice that she is *forced* into by oligopolistic market forces. This characterises a discursive practice by which Karen consolidates her position within the social field via processes of moral legitimation. Evident in Extract 25 is the step of moral legitimation, for Karen admits to a contradiction between her vision of the good life and her *actual* consumer practices. Her choice over actual consumer practices is presented as constrained by market forces. Moreover, Karen consolidates her position further by suggesting that she is able to withstand the pressures of a consumerist culture, for she is able to resist the temptation to consume, unlike the 'other' who is 'uncritical' and likely to willingly and even gladly succumb to the temptation to over-consume. It is the 'other' who will 'buy one and get one free'. Here lies the contradiction, for Karen creates a moral position for herself in which she separates herself from those who are 'uncritical' of the things that she claims to be critical of. However, this critique does not extend into *actual practice*, for she claims that to source 'everything' at farmers' markets and local retailers is impossible. Instead, Karen separates herself on moral grounds, as having a separate *attitude* to the uncritical 'other' of supermarket shoppers. Karen, then, consolidates a position of superiority via a discourse of moral superiority. Like Catherine, Karen suggests that she has an alternate means of *thinking* about food, if not an alternate means of *doing* food. It is this alternate means of thinking about food that Karen employs with the effect of forming a moral boundary of separation, which could be seen to consolidate this position carved in the field of 'alternative' food consumption.

The consolidation of positions taken in the social field, as demonstrated above in relation to Catherine and Karen's use of moral discourses of separation from an 'other', is similarly evident as Valerie, a retired nurse and art student - who was also introduced in the previous Chapter - speaks of her food shopping practices (Extract 26). Here, moral discourses serve the symbolic boundary formation between positions in the social field. That is, 'bad' food practices are associated with an 'other' relative to her own 'good' food practices. Crucially, Valerie speaks of 'good' and 'bad' food and in so doing makes direct references to social class.

Extract 26

Valerie, Farmers' Market Customer

> **V:** 'Pulse' (an organic shop) opened and gradually you could get organic food in Cardiff. So, I've always been interested in organic food or just food in general, I think, as a nurse and as a health visitor I'm sort of very conscious of how the relationship with food and people's health is…because I worked in Ely and erm oh it' just amazing how bad some people's diet were, I knew a family who didn't have any saucepans because they didn't know how to cook and they just lived on chips, amazing, extraordinary! And kids teeth were so bad sometimes they had no teeth at all just little black stumps erm so yeah I mean not just in places like Ely[14], but of course middle class diets now are very bad as well, erm.

Here, Valerie positions herself as someone who has 'always been interested in organic food or just food in general'. An allusion to a long standing commitment and interest in a particular food 'ethos' (Catherine, Extract 21) is similarly employed by Valerie with the effect of marking a moral boundary. Valerie has worked as a nurse and health visitor across Cardiff, an experience that Valerie draws upon in order to mark distinctions between herself, who has 'always been interested in organic food' and the 'other' families that were seen by Valerie to have 'bad' diets. Such 'bad' diets are presented by Valerie as characteristically consumed by working class families. Indeed, she claims that such bad diets are the result of a lack of education, equipment and moral fibre. Valerie considers the diets of the 'other' working class families as 'bad', and not just nutritionally. Rather, she suggests that the diets fed to children by working class parents are not only 'bad' but immoral. By feeding their children such 'bad' diets, the working classes, she suggests, are *allowing* their children's teeth to become 'black stumps'. That is, she attributes *choice* to these families. 'Bad' diets are referred to in reference to families that 'just lived on chips', which Valerie exclaims she found 'amazing' and 'extraordinary'. However, such exclamation of amazement at the families who 'just lived on chips' implies a sense of disapproval and appeal to her own moral authority. Such moral authority is, however, couched by professionalism. Again, Valerie also attempts to repair this moral judgement of the 'working classes' by suggesting that middle class diets are now 'very bad as well'. It is here that Valerie begins to speak openly about class, and continues to do so throughout the interview.

---

[14] A deprived area of Cardiff.

As Valerie reflects further on the relationship between food and health Valerie discusses the associated inequalities in their consumption and delivery;

Extract 27
Valerie, Farmers' Market Customer

V: The problem *is*, unless it fades away completely you're going to get an increasing division between those who've received lots of health education and have the finances to support it and the sort of under-proletariat who can't afford it and don't have that sort of information and don't believe the information, the problem is believing the information, but there we go, we have to see what happens, quite interesting.
J: Is that something you've come across in your work?
V: Oh God yes, I mean breast feeding is a good example erm I can remember erm in Pontcanna everybody breast feeds for years and years and years. In Ely, everybody thought it was disgusting, you know, absolutely disgusting and I remember one woman said she wouldn't breast feed because she'd been told if she breast fed her breasts would shrivel up, you know. There's this horror, horror of bodies really. So there is, there's a huge social class divide in nutrition unfortunately.

Presenting an analysis of the relationship between class and health Valerie characterises these issues in relation to two neighbourhoods. Polarised in their level of deprivation, the neighbourhoods of Pontcanna and Ely, Valerie suggests, are also opposites in terms of their class composition. Pontcanna is described as the middle class neighbourhood, where mothers are seen as having been enthusiastic about breast feeding and where they continue for 'years and years'. In contrast, Ely is described as the 'under-proletariat' neighbourhood, where people do not believe in health information. Indeed, she suggests that these women find breast feeding 'disgusting'. This, she claims is the manifestation of a 'horror of bodies' prevalent amongst working class mothers. Crucially, these words are spoken with a tone of disapproval. In this way, Valerie make a moral judgement of the mothers who refuse to breast feed their babies due to such a fear and 'horror of bodies'. It follows that this constitutes a moral judgement, for Valerie first of all attributes differences in health between social classes as an information deficit, before moving on to undermine her own invocation of lack of information as an explanation (a rational response) in favour of invoking visceral non-rational responses (horror of bodies).

To this end, the data suggests that Valerie attributes a degree of blame with the working class 'other' for *choosing* not to engage with health and nutrition information or guidance. Indeed, Valerie implies that there is a *choice* over whether or not to be healthy and to carry out what she judges to be the correct health practices. Despite such resistance from working class 'others' in acting upon healthy lifestyle guidance, Valerie imagines that education campaigns will triumph in the end. The success experienced by the anti-smoking lobby is used as an example of the potential to educate people about healthy lifestyles. Education, she claims, provides the 'magic bullet'. If the 'under-proletariat' were only exposed to more education based interventions, they would be more prepared to lead healthy lifestyles. Crucially, Valerie has observed a great deal of scepticism amongst working class populations, although it is imagined that this be overcome in time with further educational intervention.

As such, education is championed particularly by Valerie, but also to some degree by nearly all farmers' market customers as the 'magic bullet' to solve the problems facing the contemporary food system. This is problematised by Ken, a community food co-operative customer introduced in the previous Chapter, who speaks of his desires to eat more healthily and the prohibitions he faces in trying to do so.

7.2 Problematising the Legitimacy of Middle Class Moral Boundary Formation

When asked to tell me a little of his food shopping routines, Ken provides an account of his shopping, cooking and eating practices. As Ken begins to tell me about his routines around shopping for food, he also speaks of his efforts to eat as healthily as possible within what he describes as a very limited budget. The following Extracts are suggestive of Ken's appreciation of 'good' food and of his desire to consume 'good' food more regularly. It is this kind of 'good' food that middle class food consumers as demonstrated in Extracts 21-27 perceive working class food consumers as *not* wanting. Moreover, customers of the farmers' market who had also identified and positioned themselves as middle class, expressed a view where they imagined that working class people did not only neglect to consume 'good' food, but that they were not sufficiently educated to know *how* to consume 'good' food. The sort of 'good' food that these middle class participants speak of is fresh fruit and vegetables, locally sourced food, or even food purchased in a manner that supports local business. Here, when

speaking of his routines and practices around shopping for and cooking food, Ken reveals a sentiment and practice that problematises this middle class imaginary of working class food practices. Such an account challenges the basis of middle class legitimation practices. These, to recap, are considered to form positions in the social field are consolidated by boundaries of moral separation. These seem to be achieved by suggesting that working class people *do not wish* to consume 'good' food.

For Ken, 'good' food is about quality. With reference to 'quality', Ken speaks of 'good quality ingredients' that provide the basis for traditional family recipes such as 'Cornish pasties'.[15] By speaking of his shopping routines, Ken reveals that he is keen on supporting local business, but also frequents the local supermarket.

Extract 28
Ken, Community Food Co-operative Customer

K: Well I've mostly shopped in the supermarkets really but what I've tried to do recently is shop a bit more in the smaller shops. It's like when I do Cornish pasties, I'll go to the butcher's and get the meat from there because it tends to be a better quality meat than when I go to Tesco's… they take a bit more pride in the quality of the meat they're giving you, and I also top up the fruit I get I go to the fruit stall by 'Home Bargains' and I'll get myself a bag of apples, depends what I'm in the mood for. Obviously each week you get different things in the food bag so some weeks you only get like four apples, where I love apples, so I'll go down there and get another bag of apples you know, so yeah.

Here, Ken speaks of actively seeking out healthy, fresh and good quality food from retailers that 'take a bit more pride in the quality'. He also presents himself as having supplemented his weekly bag of fruit from the co-op with his favourite fruit from a local grocer's stall. This image presented by Ken does not match the middle class imaginary – presented by Karen and Valerie in particular – of working class food practices. In particular, when asked about how visiting the butcher had become part of his shopping routine, Ken continues to controvert this imaginary;

---

[15] Vegetables and meat encased in pastry and baked in the oven. The pasty is historically a lunch for Cornish tin miners, for a folded crust could be held with dirty hands and then thrown away. The discarded pastry was supposed to appease the spirits of the mines that may otherwise lead them into danger.

Extract 29
Ken, Community Food Co-operative Customer

K: I think I was in my mate's car and we both saw the sign, and we're both interested in cooking and you know and I said 'I'll have to pop in there one day and see what the food's like in there', so I did, you know, and I got a piece of beef and it's the best piece of beef I had like you know. And it costs a little bit more than Tesco's you know I think it's an extra 50p, but I'd rather spend an extra 50p on decent food, you know, rather than something that you bite into and you're disappointed sort of thing, and so, yeah, so, I'm happy going to the local butcher, paying a bit extra for decent stuff, you know, and plus you get the feeling that you're supporting the local community as well, you know I think it's horrible it's like with Woolworth's just closed down now and you walk past the shop and it's empty, and you think all those people who've lost their job, and it's wrong you know. Just sort of which bank is gonna have a bit of extra money in his pocket and people have been put out of work, so I try and support the other people in the community.

Extracts 28 and 29 above are revealing of Ken's engagement in current issues around food and local economy. Moreover, Ken suggests that he does not 'mind' spending 'an extra 50p' on food that is better quality and that in turn supports the community of which he is part. The issue of supporting local business and local community is framed by Ken with reference to the closing down of 'Woolworth's'[16] a store located on the main street of the community. Indeed, Ken has presented a distinction between the 'me', which he describes as 'your average person' and the 'them' which he relates to 'the banker'. Positioning himself as akin to those within the local community who have lost their jobs, he separates himself from those who fear the worsening of the banking crisis, that is, those who *have* something to lose. Within the context of the views expressed by market customers, and exemplified by Extracts 21-27, Ken's commitment to ensuring a degree of healthy eating and engagement with the politics of local food by patronising the local butcher, contradicts the middle class imaginary of working class food practices. Crucially, in describing a trip made to the farmers' market,

---

[16] Woolworths closed down on a national scale following the banking crisis of 2008/9. Woolworths, was a high street retailer founded in 1909 that sold sweets, entertainment media, clothes, household items and children's toys.

Ken provides an account for his dislike of this particular setting. This provides some further refutation to the middle class imaginary of working class practices, and for the middle class statement that working class people are not engaged in or are critical of contemporary consumer culture (Extracts 21-27). Alternatively, it is not the food or indeed the ethos behind the farmers' market that Ken appears to dislike, but the space itself.

Extract 30
Ken, Community Food Co-operative Customer

K: Well that's it you know I went round to...they've got the Riverside market haven't they on a Sunday. I went round there one time, like, because I thought they'd have interesting food and stuff, but it was really quite expensive a lot of the stuff it was quite strange I mean even though it's in the Riverside area seems…like the people most of the people there were quite middle class and it seemed more aimed towards them than the local people, so you know, I bought one or two things there but they were just, really just very overpriced so I never went back there you know, so I feel, I think it's a good idea but I think they should…they need more, you know, they need stuff, you know obviously high quality, high price stuff but they need the cheaper stuff as well, for ordinary people, yeah…

Here, Ken positions himself in relation to the 'other' customers who attend the market. By virtue of his attendance of the farmers' market in the first instance, refutes claims made by middle class participants that working class people are simply not interested or 'critical' (Karen, Extract 24) of 'the kinds of things' that they are 'critical' of. By positioning himself in relation to the 'other' customers at the market, Ken positions himself as both 'insider' and 'outsider'. That is, he is an 'insider' of the community in which the market is located, but an 'outsider' of the social world of the market itself. In so doing, Ken does not relegate himself as inferior to his perception of middle class superiority. Instead, Ken describes himself as 'ordinary'. Such categorisation and description of himself as 'ordinary' has been theorised as a discourse used by middle class people in order to deny privilege and assert that one has rustic, romantic and 'ordinary' roots (Savage 2000). However, in this case, Ken positions himself not as a rustic 'ordinary' person, living the 'good' and 'simple' life, but as a person like many other people of the class that he positions himself within; the working class. As such, he presents himself as average amongst his peers within his community.

Telling of the perceived link between food and class, Ken categorises the market as catering for a middle class audience, and not for 'ordinary' people like himself. The location of the market is also a topic of interest to Ken, for he relates the experience of finding such a middle class space of food consumption in a 'run down' community as 'strange'. When asked to speak a little more about why he felt this setting was 'strange' Ken continues;

Extract 31
Ken, Community Food Co-operative Customer

K: yeah cause there was a lot of people there wearing afghan stuff and 'hello Rodney' and all this you know (laughs) and then there's me with my Cardiff accent like, there wasn't much evidence of a Cardiff accent there like you know and you did feel like, what's this doing, this is not for me you know.

By 'afghan stuff' Ken later explains that he means oversized scarves and 'hippy' style clothes. In so doing, Ken separates himself from the 'other' middle class customers, for it is the 'other' people wearing such clothing, and not 'ordinary' people such as himself. Ken's impression of the average person at the market is achieved via a reported or imagined greeting of 'hello Rodney'[17]. This impression is made in an English accent, with the effect of further separating the middle class market customer as 'other' in comparison with his 'ordinary' Cardiff accent. To recap, accent, for Ken, is a linchpin for identifying class belonging. Thus, when claiming that there are no 'ordinary' Cardiff accents at the market, and that there are no people like himself present, Ken draws the conclusion that this space is 'not for him'.

As we saw in the previous Chapter, class, for Ken is recognisable through accents, with a local accent being a working class accent. Ken identifies himself as 'working class' and as 'ordinary' and the consumers at the market as 'middle class' by virtue of their non local accents. Such separation of the local accent from those who have accents other than local both distinguishes Ken as a local person but also relegates himself as 'outsider' in the context of the market. However, despite observing class differences between himself and other customers, and feeling as though the space 'wasn't for' him, Ken states that he does not feel hostile towards the market, but rather, accepts that this is a place that local people

---

[17] The name 'Rodney' is associated in popular discourse as a middle or even upper class name.

will simply not shop. This supports the notion put forward by Warde (2011) who suggests that although there remain class divisions, that these do not find expression in class hostility. It seems, from Ken's account, that there may be grounds to consider class as finding expression through feelings of comfort or discomfort – an affinity with what is 'for me' and not 'for me'. Further to this, Extract 32 represents Ken's response to being asked why he thought the market was set up in that part of the city if he felt it wasn't 'for' local people;

Extract 32
Ken, Community Food Co-operative Customer

K: yeah well I think the idea was to make available cheaper produce, good quality produce in that part of the city but it seems to have gone the other way…very elite sort of thing you know and it is full of stalls selling high price stuff which the local people just ain't interested in buying…so yeah I think it was set up with the right intentions but er I mean fair enough to them as long as they survive, not saying they shouldn't put their business out there but it'd be nice if they put high price stuff and the other stuff as well you know but er yeah that's my views on it…

From this Extract, we can see that Ken notes the lack of interest from local people in buying the highly priced value added goods available at the market. When combined with the sentiments and categorisations expressed and made in Extracts 30 and 31, it is possible to see how Ken knits together his understanding of class structure. He acknowledges that middle class spaces for food consumption exist, that it makes sense for businesses to sell food of a higher value added price to those who can both afford to and have the desire to purchase such goods. It is, however, the setting in which this space has been cultivated that Ken finds so puzzling. Again, as fully explicated in Chapter Five, Ken conveys discomfort, for the market, he suggests, is a middle class space where upon visiting, he feels uncomfortable and unwelcome.

Ken's perception of feeling unwelcome at the market is presented as a key determinant in his decision not to frequent it. Throughout Extracts 30-32 it is clear that although he does not attend the market, it does not follow that he is thus ignorant or passive in relation to contemporary politics of food and health as suggested by several of the market customers interviewed. This provides some clear contestation of the moral boundaries of separation

that middle class consumers utilise in order to secure their position in the social field. Crucially, this demonstrates that it may not be the price, or even disengagement with a food politics that makes Ken feel unwelcome, but the manner in which it *has been appropriated by middle class consumers.*

7.3 Marking Boundaries in a Claim to Authenticity

This rebuke of middle class moral boundary formation as expressed somewhat by Ken is explicitly made by Rhys, who was also introduced in Chapter Five, Extract 20. He provides a critique of the market as a setting within which, he claims, middle class people are likely to be found. However, through such utterances, Rhys suggests that the market provides a setting for middle class *performativity* rather than as a space of genuine and substantive political action. As a space wherein the middle classes perform class, Rhys challenges the legitimacy of 'alternative' food consumption. It appears that Rhys suggests that 'alternative' food is imbued with cultural capital that is devoid of any 'use' value (Sayer 2005a). Instead, the market, for Rhys is a performative space, where 'alternative' food consumption is performed in order that one can be *seen* to be doing what is legitimate as a cultural practice. Although Rhys appears to question the 'use' value (ibid.) of 'alternative' food practice, it is not the 'alternative' food itself that comes under fire. Instead, it seems that the ways in which the resource of 'alternative' food has been appropriated by middle class consumers for the performance of class identities that, for Rhys, seems to distort the 'use' value of this practice. As such, at the market, 'alternative' food has made the shift from cultural to symbolic capital. That is, its cultural capital as a resource in the social field is misrecognised as 'something for everyone'.

Extract 33

Rhys, Farmers' Market Customer

R: I'm always bumping into someone I know there and also other people from, it' not all middle cl… not all, people I know from, I wouldn't classify it as necessarily a middle class neither, but, but I don't know it just feels stereotypical it's like people make and effort to go on their bikes there, and I don't know many of those people go everywhere on their bikes or whether

they just *feel* like you know you *feel* like '*oh you should*' and you take your *bags*, plastic bags there and your recycled bags and make a bit of an effort there, and I don't know maybe how, if people carry that on in everyday of their life. Not that it's, not that it's criticising it, it just feels a bit like erm you know it's a bit it feels a bit artificial I suppose, but maybe I'm just looking at myself, and everyone else lives their lives like that all the time. Well I take my car down there anyway, so, (laughter).

Here, Rhys categorises and positions the consumers who attend the market. As well as characterising this space as middle class, Rhys typifies the space and the practice as 'stereotypical'. Indeed, the act of visiting the market is presented by Rhys as a cliché. Crucially, he positions himself as separate from this cliché by pointing out that he arrives by car. Rhys, then, appears careful to present a view of himself as someone who does not pretend to use the market as a site for performative over more substantive action on social and political issues. As such, the 'other' middle class consumer is presented as 'performing' rather than 'doing', for they are acting out the clichéd ritual of cycling, and re-using plastic bags. This is perceived by Rhys as a special effort that does not carry over into 'everyday' practice. Rather, the act of cycling there, coupled with the concerted effort made to re-use plastic bags is seen by Rhys to constitute a performative charade. This conception of middle class consumers as executing a performance as opposed to carrying out substantive action seems to undermine the boundaries formed by the 'other' consumers. That is, the positioning work carried out by 'typical' customers is contested. It remains, however, to consider the implications of this critique, for Rhys is himself a market customer. By separating himself from the 'other' market customers, Rhys does not tarnish himself with the same critical brush. Although, if we remember Rhys from Chapter Five, his class affiliations were complex and changing throughout the interview as he aligned himself with working class peers from home and also with middle class colleagues. It follows to suggest that, potentially, the critique of middle class practices of attending the market constitutes a claim to 'authenticity'. Rhys presents himself as middle class, but as separate from the middle class customers who *perform* a role that he imagines gives them a sense of having successfully accomplished a project of 'alternative' food consumption. However, the critique that Rhys offers with regard to this practice, is expressed as a critique of an aspirational practice that he imagines these customers to be performing. Indeed, it might be reasonable to suggest that Rhys is in fact secure in his middle class position, where he feels no need moralise the practices of working class culture. As a claim to authenticity, it seems that Rhys

simultaneously makes fun of the insecure middle classes who perform an aspirational role that is accomplished by the adornment of jute bags and bicycles. Such claims to authenticity could be seen as a further means of marking a moral boundary between himself as genuine and the 'other' as merely *performing*.

Indeed, to consolidate his position in the social field, Rhys separates himself from 'other' market customers whom he suggests are merely posturing. Here, Samantha marks a moral boundary by claiming a genuine commitment to alternative practice. The 'other', she suggests, claims undue credit for empty gestures. For Samantha, the practice of shopping locally and on foot, offers an opportunity to disentangle herself from the trappings of supermarket shopping. This, she claims, always leads her to purchase more than she intended. Samantha also expresses concern for the future of local shops in the face of oligopolistic market forces. This expression of concern is, however, met with some realism about the routines of everyday life that have stopped her from engaging with local shopping in the past. Samantha is reflexive about the difficulties of shopping locally, within local business hours when working in a full time job. Indeed, throughout the interview, Samantha presents herself as a sensible, thrifty shopper who is both aware of current environmental and ethical issues around consumption but is also reflexive about the limits faced in engaging with a type of 'ethical' or 'alternative' food consumption. As a result, the remit of Samantha's engagement with environmental action is firmly embedded in a discourse of 'waste watching'. Such a care to limit waste is rooted in an environmental consciousness expressed in the following Extract. Here, Samantha speaks of her way of 'doing' concern for the environment. This reveals these feelings and expressions as rooted within family traditions of gardening, composting and growing fruit and vegetables at home. To this end, Samantha begins by speaking of her practices of waste management;

Extract 34

Samantha, Community Food Co-operative Customer

S: What am I trying to say you know when you're trying to bury things under the carpet, brush things under the carpet…well that's a silly thing to do! I know it's a metaphorical expression but whatever you're saying it, you're saying it's a silly thing to do and we're *actually* doing it and you know. We're gonna run out of holes, and therefore that's where that comes from really… and the composting, that comes from my grandfather

because he always used to do it and I always used to do a lot of gardening with him, and you know he used to grow his own veggies and stuff and it used to fascinate me that you could put all this smelly old waste on top and then it'll go a bit mouldy, and then underneath would come out this really sweet smelling kind of earthy stuff that would then kind of make the plants grow better… and I always thought that was brilliant to be honest.

This account is telling of Samantha's perception of the environmental crisis. Here, one of the ways that Samantha constructs a position within the environmental debate is through drawing attention to the expression 'brushing things under the carpet'. Samantha stresses that this expression is generally used to emphasise that the act in question is a 'silly thing to do'. However, in burying our waste in landfills, Samantha emphasises that we, as a society are *literally* 'brushing things under the carpet'. Samantha's position within the environmental debate can therefore be seen as one of a fight against such 'silliness', about making sensible choices by consuming and wasting less. Moreover, an interest in ecology is demonstrated as Samantha attributes her environmental 'ethic' to practices learned from her grandfather. Samantha's environmental ethic is therefore presented as inherited. This possession of such a long standing environmental ethic is a tool that she then appers to use in order to separate herself from those who do so as a result of a fashion trend. Much like Catherine's separation from the 'other' that ascribes to practices of 'terroir' out of fashion, Samantha produces a similar appeal to authenticity. That is, Samantha positions herself as a form of 'quiet environmentalist' who has longer standing commitments than those whom she sees as taking up environmental practices on a 'whim' or who 'shout about' their environmental practices, and preach environmentalism to others.

Extract 35
Samantha, Community Food Co-operative Customer

S: I think there's a whole kind of group of hidden green people who don't wear hemp and kind of…I'm *vastly* generalising here but they're not overtly green, who make green choices *most* of the time but are quite pragmatic about it… and I think I probably fall in that camp but you know… we don't kind of wear it on our sleeve literally and you know therefore I just think I'm not going as far as some other people who are out there in kind of kaftans and long skirts and beads and don't wear anything unless it's been knitted by fair trade knitters from Peru or whatever, so yeah I've not come across it but I don't kind of advertise my… although there's just one example, there's a guy I used to work with

that really is quite green and I was painting one of the rooms in this house and he was horrified that I wasn't using erm oh now what's the name of the paint, some green paint that doesn't have any chemicals in it at all and he couldn't believe that I was using stuff that had volatile organic compound in there and I was like 'that's fine, it's not the end of the world it's just a teeny tiny smidgen… it's a water based paint with a fraction of VOC's in it is not gonna be that much of a problem, I wasn't pregnant she wasn't due…so he was quite critical and I was like 'for goodness sakes…I compost, and you're criticising me for using a water based paint with a tiny bit of solvent it in you know…get a grip' so yeah he was interesting, one of those annoying types who's just *way* too worthy!

Here, Samantha positions herself as a person who is subjected to moralisation by others. This incites some recoil form Samantha as she states an imagined response to such moralisation as 'for goodness sakes…I compost'. This alludes to a position that Samantha takes as being quietly better at environmentalism than those who embark on moral crusades. In this way, rather than 'shouting about it' Samantha constructs herself in opposition to a 'shouter' by positioning herself as a 'doer'. Samantha, here, presents herself as engaging in substantive action, whereas the 'other' can only 'sniff' at those beneath them who do not subscribe to the same brand of environmentalism That is, a brand that requires *more* and not *less* consumption. Those who engage with such practices on a fashion whim, Samantha suggests, are missing the point.

In contrast to interviews such as those with Catherine, Karen and Valerie (Extracts 21-27) from the market, Samantha positions *herself* as the judged, as the subject of moralisation by a 'superior' other. Those who do such judging, Samantha suggests as the 'worthies'. The 'worthies', are those who are 'loud' and 'shout' about any environmentally friendly practice they are currently involved with. She contrasts this position with herself, who goes about 'quietly' and authentically goes about the business of being mindful of the environment. Samantha goes further later in the interview when asked to provide examples of such 'worthiness'.

Extract 36

Samantha, Community Food Co-operative Customer

S: She [a person that she previously described as a 'Yoga Mum'] from gets a bit kind of full on about re-usable nappies which is a bit of a cheek because she's only just started to use them and her son is 20 months old or something, but now she's using them she's like massively full on about them and well some of us have been using them quietly without making a big deal about it for months! It's just a bit like that you know, when she makes a green decision everybody knows about it and all of a sudden any other way is not right, sort of thing.

Providing another example of Samantha's resistance to the 'moralising' of the 'worthy other', she speaks of an encounter with a fellow attendee of an ante-natal yoga class. Here, a fellow 'yoga mum' is described as 'worthy' for having preached the benefits of re-usable nappies. By telling this story, Samantha accomplishes a form of resistance to the moralising attitude of others. That is, she separates herself as quietly knowing that she has been engaged with that practice for longer than the so-called 'worthy' 'other'. Such resistance is, however, expressed through this account and does not suggest that Samantha confronted the 'worthy' 'Yoga Mum'. This 'quiet' resistance might indicate a lack of self confidence that has been noted as a symptom of a working class inferiority complex (Skeggs 2004). In this way, Samantha displays a quiet form of resistance also expressed through sentiments of anti-pretentiousness. Such anti-pretentiousness is conveyed by Samantha when speaking of negotiating contradictions in choosing between various modes of 'alternative' or 'ethical' consumption i.e. the local over fair trade dichotomy. In order to negotiate such contradictions, Samantha draws upon her degree level qualification in chemistry with the effect of authorising the decisive outcomes of any decision made. For example, Samantha believes that it is not possible to feed the entire human planet without the use of pesticides, and that a conviction for pure organic production *for all* shows naivety.

To question the grounds of middle class moral boundaries formed on the basis of moral distinctions in consolidating their position in the social field is a phenomenon very much present in the interviews held with Rhys and Samantha. Indeed, it appears that the boundaries formed in order to maintain superior positions in the social field are indeed contested and in flux. However, there is no denying that the means by which middle class participants attempt to distinguish themselves in the social field have been rewarded with some material advantage, even if this advantage is not openly coveted by 'others'. As such, while Rhys and Samantha reject middle class claims to superiority, and are critical of a propensity towards

'worthiness' by claiming a 'badge of authenticity', Samantha still claims to have been made to *feel bad*. It is this 'feeling bad' as a result superior 'others' whom she imagines to judge her practices or lack of 'alternative' practice that still 'hurt' somehow even if they do have some grounds to claim some form of genuine authenticity in their alternative practices that are not rooted in what Rhys and Samantha see as the performative charade of the 'worthy'.

Demonstrating that the moral boundaries drawn by social actors in order to attempt to consolidate one's position in the social field, are relational, and are indeed contested, Samantha and Rhys challenge the boundaries formed by middle class customers of the market on the grounds that their practices are performative rather than substantive. Samantha contests the 'moralising' of the 'other' as a means of boundary formation and position consolidation by suggesting that the practices linked to such moralising are not authentic. Moreover, Samantha suggests that the practices associated with such middle class moralising are carried out simply in order to claim superiority and distinction, or in her words, to assert their 'worthiness' over the 'others' whom they believe are not 'worthy'. However, rejections of dominant legitimate consumer practices of 'alternative' consumption are not met solely through claims to authenticity and to substantive alterity. The rejection of dominant and legitimate 'alternative' consumer practice is also expressed by Emily, a co-op customer introduced in the previous Chapter, as well Trevor, a market customer.

7.4 Rejecting 'Alternative' Food Consumption Practice

Rejecting 'alternative' food, Emily and Trevor object not solely through claims to authenticity. Nor do they object on the grounds that they deny their benefits, or because they do not care about their health, the environment or any of the other political issues surrounding food consumption (as suggested by market customers Extracts 21-27). Instead, Emily suggests that she can only worry about her health, the environment and other associated food politics as much as she can within her limited *capacity* to act. A resistance to 'alternative' food can in some way be theorised as a coping mechanism, or moreover, as a form of compensatory strategy (Southerton 2002) for their exclusion from this practice of legitimised 'alternative' food consumption.

Following a discussion of her friend's preferences in shopping for and preparing food, Emily, a co-op customer introduced in Chapter Five, expresses scepticism of 'alternative' food consumption. Here, Emily says that she is unconvinced by the efforts of the 'Department of Health' to encourage a particular way of shopping and eating. Emily gives the example of broccoli, which had been the subject of controversy in 'an article' in which the report focused upon how 'food experts' could not 'make up their mind' about its carcinogenic properties. Emily conveys exasperation over such reported controversies over the communication of nutrition advice. Emily complains that the information oscillates between 'one week' recommending that broccoli is carcinogenic, and 'the next week it's something completely different'. Such controversies are used by Emily to justify her scepticism about food information, giving her a good reason for not engaging with 'alternative' food consumption.

Extract 37

Emily, Community Food Co-operative Customer

E: Do we eat broccoli or do we not! Do we eat eggs or do we not! Do we eat chickens or do we not! Salmon is full of hormones but it's good for your brain, so at the end of the day I think well, all you can do is mentally, just try and eat a balanced diet and not worry too much about what we're gonna catch from all these things, because a lot of it, you're not going to be able to avoid anyway, so the obvious things yeah, being careful to eat your fruit and your veg and I think people who worry themselves so much about it probably worry themselves ill!

Scepticism in relation to food advice given by the 'Department of Health' and relayed in articles published in newspapers and magazines is, for Emily, rooted in what she sees as inconsistency in the advice given. Such inconsistencies translate into Emily's food consumption practices, where 'all [she] can do' is try to maintain a balanced diet. To worry about issues relating to health and food, such as eating free-range chicken as opposed to one 'full of chemicals' and eating organic vegetables as opposed to those that have been genetically modified, is to 'worry' yourself 'ill'. To worry excessively about such issues, according to Emily, may even induce illness. Moreover, one's level of commitment to such issues, for Emily, is presented as dependent upon 'how much you can afford to be affected'. Crucially, Emily suggests that her friends *do* worry about the safety of the food that they consume, and indeed purchase organic produce wherever possible. However, Emily is

sceptical of this practice, and positions herself as a critical outsider of the practice of organic food consumption.

Extract 38

Emily, Community Food Co-operative Customer

E: I mean we do discuss it and I don't know I think it does depend on your circumstances and how much you can afford to be affected by it in a sense 'cause I've got one friend who's the chef, she's brilliant but she does buy all organic and is really conscious about all of these negative reports about things, erm as I say she spends quite a lot. A younger friend, they are quite well off financially, erm, so when I go there now she'll like 'oh you know what Helena says about this, well of course this has to be organic', yeah well if I'd had that, then maybe I would be more conscious about it, but I can't be, so let's not worry too much. At the end of the day we could all get sick through hormones in meat or whatever, but if it happens it happens. And I, I don't think I'm condemning myself by eating your normal, your average chicken or things like that. If I knew it was then obviously I would avoid it but until, and we do have food standards, so, you know, it's got to be there for a reason, and all these reports, well they're quite conflicting really, erm, so until somebody can tell me that 'this is, this *is* bad, don't eat it', then I'll have to wait and see really 'cause if you stop eating it there'll only be another report that comes out later to say, well actually, it's like tea and coffee isn't it and all those things you think, 'oh I haven't been drinking tea and coffee for three weeks and now I'm meant to be because it's good for something else'. So I just think 'oh I'll do what I like', that's what it comes down to.

To be affected by the debates and information relating to the safety of food, for Emily, is dependent upon 'circumstances'. Emily's 'circumstances', she suggests, are such that she 'can't be' affected by it, for she cannot financially afford to be. Emily positions 'eating your normal, your average chicken' as a practice that should not be condemned by others, and that she does not condemn herself for doing. That is, if such chickens were truly dangerous, 'food standards' would not allow them to be consumed. Here, Emily also positions herself in relation to two of her friends who 'spend quite a lot' of money on organic food, a practice Emily claims that she cannot financially afford. Crucially, Emily also suggests that if she 'had that' money that her friends are stated to have, that she would possibly be 'more conscious about it'.

Again, there appears a contradictory element to this discourse. Emily presents herself as sceptical about the benefits of consuming organic over 'normal' food, but later confesses to a

desire to consume organics and being more 'conscious', *if* she had the money to do so. As such, Emily might see a benefit to organic food consumption if she were in the same financial position as those who do. However, as she is not privy to the circumstances that allow one to act upon food related risks, Emily claims that there is little point in worrying about such matters and instead suggests that she does 'what she likes'. From this, it seem that Emily draws upon the controversies that circulate around food and risk in order to compensate for her financial exclusion from the practice of 'alternative' food consumption.

A similar scepticism of 'alternative' food and more specifically, organic food is expressed by Trevor, a market customer.

Extract 39
Trevor, Farmers' Market Customer

T: Talking about quality and taste you know. I mean, it's not cheap, I can't imagine people spending their weekly allowance for food in the market because that would be a bit crazy, but I would have thought, as I do for treats and erm special things that you like. I would have thought, maybe not, some people won't eat vegetables on the principle that they're not organic. You know, I'm not into that and I can see that some of the people are, er, but I think that's really extreme.
J: Do you know people like that?
T: Yeah, one or two, but you know they have their views about, there's no point in getting into discussion with them 'cause I don't know in detail but they seem, you know, we're talking about a very small minority of people who are, you know, they won't eat anything else but, on a lot of principles probably. I mean, no doubt it does taste better and is better for you, but economics come into the factor.
J: So what sorts of principles?
T: Well that they taste better, I mean there aren't any additives in it, aren't any chemicals in it and er, er well it's basically going back to nature again isn't it, to the natural things which you know modern technology has diluted that and they're going back to basics aren't they. I mean some of the stuff I've had, I've had some pretty foul tasting stuff from, I bought a cabbage from there the other day and you know it, it was not very nice, it must have been, I don't know over-mature or something. That's the point I'm making is that I go for the taste. It's usually that all these organic things are better but not always, not always.

To spend one's weekly allowance for food at the market, Trevor claims is 'crazy'. Moreover, to refuse to eat vegetables unless they are organic, according to Trevor is 'really extreme'. When prompted, however, Trevor did claim to know a few people who are 'really extreme' in their views and actions with regard to organic produce. He claims that there is 'no point in getting into discussion with them', for they are seen by Trevor as committed to organic food based on 'a lot of principles'. However, Trevor claims that for him, economics must 'come into the factor' and indeed, so does 'taste'. Legitimating his rebuff of organic food, Trevor claims to have bought and cooked an organic cabbage from the market. This cabbage, he claims, was 'pretty foul tasting' and as 'over-mature'. As Trevor speaks here of organic food, which he describes as having been renowned for its 'real' taste it becomes clear that Trevor is not speaking of a taste as he claims is often defined as the 'natural' taste of organic food, but of a taste that is personal to him. Organic food, then, is described by Trevor as having been 'pretty foul tasting' and in one case as 'over-mature'. In this way, Trevor legitimates his disregard for organic food on the grounds that organic foods do not satisfy his personal sense of taste. Indeed, Trevor positions those who consume organic food as a rule as separate from himself; a person who is more concerned with satisfying their own personal tastes. Overwhelmingly, Extract 39 is telling of Trevor's resistance to the trend towards increasing organic food consumption. This trend, he suggests has gripped some of his friends, but that he, on the grounds of his own personal taste, does not wish to engage with. It is worth noting here that Trevor's 'taste' appears to be rooted in tradition. He speaks of dishes that he prepares as a treat, such as 'duck a l'orange' and also expresses a dislike for what he calls 'van Gough food'. 'Van Gough' food, Trevor explains are 'fashionable' foods piled highly on the plate. He points out that such food requires the diner to purchase and then eat several courses in order to satisfy their appetite. Indeed, Trevor explains that he prefers to have a 'starter and a main' of 'good British food' such as roast dinners and sometimes faggots.

Trevor's disregard for organic food on the grounds of taste, and 'economics' demonstrates some further opposition to trends observable at the market in which other people, Trevor explain, hold 'extreme' views about organic food. Positioning himself as separate from those whom he considers as blindly following a 'principle', Trevor suggests that he has always sought *quality* food of *superior taste*. This position appears distinct from that of Rhys and Samantha, for although Trevor objects to those who he describes as 'extreme' in their commitment to the consumption of organic food, the authenticity that he is bound up with his professed 'love of food'. This constitutes an entirely separate process of moral boundary

formation, for Trevor, as demonstrated by Extract 39, resists 'alternative' food consumption in the form of organics, but instead builds a boundary of moral separation between those who are 'extreme' and at the same time consolidates his position in the social field as separate from those who do not, like himself, care for or 'love' food. This is distinct from the account of the love of food offered by Catherine, for Trevor does not speak of the love of the '*best*' food, but by what he considered to be the 'best *tasting*'. Thus, Trevor seems to consolidate a position within the social field by moral judgement of the 'other' who is considered to 'blindly' follow trends, and who are devoid of the ability to discern true *taste*. While Trevor does not draw on the language of class in order to separate himself from an 'other', he does employ food as a resource for qualifying what he considers to be a genuine ability, by virtue of his 'love' of food, to discriminate between foods that have taste against those that he suggests are a mere trend. In so doing, Trevor's use of food as such a resource for positioning himself in relation to an 'other' supports the conjecture that food remains a resource of distinction. Moreover, food destined for its consumption *within the home* appears to be figured in such discursive positioning work.

7.5 Concluding Remarks

This Chapter has expanded upon the notion that positioning work is consolidated via the construction and maintenance of symbolic boundaries. These boundaries are understood to be maintained by the moral judgement of 'others'. To begin with, Extracts 21-23 explore the process by which Catherine constructs a boundary of moral separation between herself and those whom she imagines lack the 'ethic' and food 'philosophy' to which she and her partner subscribe. Karen and Valerie, also market customers, are seen to construct a moral boundary that separate themselves from 'others'. Such boundaries do not appear to be uncontested. Rather, Ken offers some contestation to what appear as the claims to moral superiority made by middle class 'others'. Rhys, a market customer himself provides further contestation of this moral boundary by suggesting that the practice of 'alternative' consumption upheld at the market constitutes *performative* over substantive action. This provides clear contestation of the moral boundaries of separation that middle class consumers seem to utilise in securing their positions. The processes of maintaining such boundaries appear in no way uniform, for Rhys forms a moral boundary between himself as authentic and genuine in his efforts to

consume 'alternatively' in comparison with the 'other' 'middle class' and 'stereotypical' (Extract 33) market customers. Further claims to authenticity were accomplished by Samantha (Extracts 34-36) with the effect of contesting the middle class moral boundary of separation that she describes as 'worthiness'. Such 'worthiness', according to Samantha, is observed in the attempts of 'others' to claim moral superiority. This, she suggests is unfounded, for their claims to distinctiveness on the grounds of their 'alternative' consumption is not genuine or authentic. Instead, she suggests that these 'worthy' people are false. This sentiment seems similar to what Rhys has suggested was *performative*. On the other hand, Samantha claims there are 'plenty' of 'hidden greens' who are 'quietly' engaged with what Samantha refers to as being 'green' without 'making a big deal' of it. Here, the moral boundaries of separation based on positioning as 'superior' by middle class farmers' market customers are contested by the 'others' that they positioned themselves as separate from (Extracts 21-27).

Ultimately, rejections of dominant legitimate consumer practices of 'alternative' consumption were not met solely through claims to authenticity and to substantive alterity. The rejection of dominant and legitimate 'alternative' consumer practice was also expressed by Emily, a community food co-operative customer, as well Trevor, a market customer. These objections were not simply a rejection of 'alternative' food on the grounds that they were ignorant of their benefits, or since they do not care about their health, the environment or any of the other political issues surrounding food consumption (as suggested by market customers Extracts 21-27). Rather, an alternate vantage point was evident, where, for example, Emily suggests that she can only worry about her health, the environment and other associated food politics as much as she can within her limited *capacity* to act. A resistance to 'alternative' food can in some way be theorised as a coping mechanism, or indeed, as a form of compensatory strategy (Southerton 2002) for their exclusion from this practice of legitimised 'alternative' food consumption. Finally, Trevor rejects organic food on the grounds of taste. Taste, for Trevor is presented as a personal taste for quality in food, and to blindly pursue organic food *despite* its taste is presented as 'extreme'. However, Trevor rejects the dominant legitimate practice amongst his friends, and observed amongst fellow market customers, Trevor constructs a moral boundary of separation based on his own criteria of taste that he claims derives from his 'great love' of food and not from fashion trends. While manifestations of class are not clear-cut in Trevor's talk, for he does not draw explicitly on the language of class, it is clear

that he draws boundaries of separation between himself and 'others' and in doing so, uses food as a resource.

From this, it seems that moral boundaries do indeed consolidate the process of positioning, that is, of separating and distinguishing oneself from an 'other'. As such, these moral boundaries accomplish the *separation* of *different positions* within the social field. It seems appropriate, then, to suggest that the marking of a moral boundary provides a further step in the marking of such distinctions. These then appear to consolidate the positions that social actors have discursively created for themselves. This further step of 'position' consolidation has involved more than simply 'position taking' in relation to an 'other' but has entailed a process of *distancing* on behalf of the social actor from an undesirable moral code. Such distancing, whether achieved through aspiring to an 'other' or by separation from an 'other' deemed inferior, were features of the process of positioning outlined in the previous Chapter. However, this Chapter has made a further step to demonstrate the means by which participants consolidate these positions by drawing *moral boundaries* between themselves and the 'other'. This seems to be accomplished by drawing upon *food* as the resource through which to make such distinctions. To judge an 'other's' food practice, it seems, is to seek the consolidation of one's position by the creation of such a symbolic boundary. Indeed, food and instances of 'ethical', 'environmental' or 'alternative' forms of consumption figure as tools for position taking and consolidation. In this Chapter, the use of food as both a material and symbolic resource is explored, particularly in light of the extent to which participants have drawn on moral judgements to consolidate their claim to a position. The next Chapter explores this notion in greater detail.

Chapter Eight

Class, Food, Culture

By discussing further the findings of this study, we can see their significance for those seeking alternatives to conventional foodways. Indeed, with the market providing a platform for the performance of middle class identities, co-op customers as representative of working class 'others' continue striving to maintain a reasonable diet while at the same time being subject to moral derision. This Chapter explores in detail this conjecture, arguing that such class dynamics of exclusion and inclusion are of consequence for those stakeholders and policy makers who imagine that a sustainable food system can be realised through the promotion of such farmers' market and community food co-operatives. To this end, we might imagine what could come from separating the 'posh' from the 'good' (Sayer 2005a). Finally, it remains to reflect on the validity of the data gathered as well as the usefulness of Bourdieu's conceptual toolkit in both collecting and analysing this data. As such, we consider how class can be recognised when its enunciation via direct speech is so often evaded.

8.1 Problematising 'Alternative' Food as a Resource of Moral Class Distinction

8.1.2 Contradictions and Contestations

Making an empirical contribution to the literature discussed in Chapter two, this thesis considers the practice of *shopping* for food to be culturally meaningful. Indeed, studies pertaining to class culture and food consumption have commonly drawn boundaries between what counts as 'eating in' (Mellor *et al.* 2010) and 'eating out' (Warde and Martens 2000). As such, the practice of shopping for food has been considered a mundane act that is primarily concerned with the routine provisioning of the home (Lunt and Livingstone 1992). Contemporary consumer practices, it is argued, particularly those at the point of purchase provide a novel interface from which to explore class. That is, with the globalisation of markets, the rise of transnational corporations, brands and pressure groups as well as

burgeoning awareness of the social and environmental effects of technological advance has brought with it the growth of a wider corporate social responsibility movement. With this came a form of consumption termed 'ethical consumption' (Harrison *et al*. 2005). While this study has been concerned with 'alternative' consumption, 'ethical' consumption remains part of this story in as much as they both refer to a burgeoning politicisation of overconsumption through an appeal to the consumer's ethical disposition, their sense of what is moral, good and responsible. As widely applied within scholarly literature, the term 'alternative' has been employed by the thesis in place of 'ethical'.

Arguing that the practice of shopping for 'alternative' food provides a platform for the enunciation and reproduction of class, the data suggests over and again that food figures as a resource of distinction. Through the deployment of 'alternative' food, middle class consumers seem to position themselves as separate from working class 'others'. Overt examples of moralising the 'other' are evident as self professed middle class consumers defy what has been termed an appeal to 'ordinariness' (Savage *et al.* 2001). This position taking is, however, problematised by observations made at the market, where it seems that 'alternative' food practice appears less a form of substantive action than a *performance*. To recap, Chapter Five introduced both the market and the co-op through the presentation of field notes. Taken during the period of participant observation at each site, these suggest that the market and co-op are comprised by entirely contrasting socialites. As such, they provide an entirely different platform for experiencing and talking about food. At the market, customers speak to producers about food provenance and of how they will prepare complex dishes. Indeed, the producers express frustration at the increasing footfall and the depreciating sales made. Theorised as part of a performance of 'alternative' food consumption, the market seems a setting where an ambience, experience and a particular idea of 'alternative' food is consumed without the purchase of much in the way of produce. Conversely, at the co-op customers purchase bags of produce that have proved to be consistently poor in quality and with little variety in content. The produce itself as well as the talk that surround it provide a clear mark of difference between the market and co-op. That is, at the co-op there is an ethic of care, neighbourliness and sense of rooted social relations that contrasts starkly with the performative sociality present at the market.

Throughout Chapter Six, 'alternative' food consumers were seen to discursively construct positions in relation to an 'other'. Exploring further their means of consolidating these

positions, Chapter Seven considers the moral judgements made with regard to 'alterative' food consumption. As a prominent resource in making distinctions between oneself and an 'other', 'alternative' food seems rich in cultural capital. That is, 'alternative' food figures in struggles for distinction. Catherine, for example (Chapter Seven), explains the ethos that guides her of food consumption practice. The ethos of 'terroir' to which she and her partner adhere is somewhat at odds with the actual practices that she describes. A similar disjuncture between claims to moral authority and actual practice is evident as Karen (Chapter Seven) separates two visions of the 'good life', while Valerie (Chapter Seven) draws a moral boundary between herself as someone who has 'always been interested in organic food' and 'other' families with 'bad diets'. The separation of oneself by means of moral distinction is explored throughout Chapter Seven, alongside expressions of scepticism towards practices of 'alternative' food consumption. In her discussion of organic food, Emily (Chapter Seven) is sceptical of the benefits of eating organic food. In light of what she considers the changeable and consequently unreliable information about the correct food to be consuming, she frames this suspicion around a distrust of science. Doubting information relayed by the media, Emily justifies her abstention from 'alternative' food practice. She later admits that she would partake in 'alternative' food practice if she had the means to do so. Appearing as a form of 'compensatory strategy' (Southerton 2002) being sceptical about the benefits of 'alternative' food is but one way that participants have sought to lessen the effects of exclusion from a somewhat valued cultural practice.

Although not related directly to food, Vera and Sheila (Chapter Six) speak at length about their lives, about growing up together, of their 'nana' and of how they would have liked to have had 'lots more'. In compensating for not having had 'lots more' they appeal instead to having been respectable. In speaking at length about staying out of debt and the importance of always looking 'tidy' they respond to an imagined middle class moral reprimand of working class culture – a reprimand that is clearly demonstrated in the accounts provided by Karen, Valerie and Catherine throughout Chapters Six and Seven. Despite drawing moral boundaries of separation between their vision of the good life and that imagined of the working class 'other', it was noted over and again that there was a disjuncture between their professed and actual practices. That is, Karen separates herself from the 'other' working class customers in a supermarket whom she imagines are uncritical of the consumer culture she tries to avoid. Yet, Karen admits some slippage as she confesses to being tempted by cheap golf clubs, and by 'buy one, get one free' offers. As such, Karen in particular positions

herself as having a different means of *thinking* about food if not a different way of *doing* food. Much as Silva *et al.* (2009) and Bennett *et al.* (2009) found in their study of cultural capital and social exclusion in Britain, there are cultural practices such as television watching, that boast wide participation across all classes. The ways in which the television is watched and indeed, the ways in which this practice was talked about varied across classes. Middle class participants were critical of their television watching, acknowledging its diminished position within a cultural hierarchy. Just like Karen, these participants had an alternative means of *thinking* if not of going about their television watching. As such, this thesis argues that wide participation in a cultural practice does not serve as sufficient evidence for muted distinctions. Instead, they may become manifest in talk that surrounds these very practices. As we have read from Chapters Five, Six and Seven, the market provides a platform for such discursive means of distinction as customers position themselves and consolidate the boundaries between them through the moral derision of the 'other'.

On the other hand, those who are subject to such discursive reprimand dismiss 'alternative' food as 'posh'. It is not so simple that they dismiss 'alternative' food as an affectation of those who can afford it. Above, we are reminded that Emily, after dismissing organic food, claims she would be purchasing it should her circumstances allow. Somewhere underneath the thick skin of compensatory strategies, 'alternative' food is valued. The way it has been appropriated by middle class consumer, however, is not. Ken, Samantha, Emily, Vera and Sheila, each explain how they go to great lengths to put food on the table. They would put 'good' food on the table more often if they could. Despite the overt moralising that the 'other' working class food consumer is subject to, working class participants show little overt hostility towards middle class consumer practices. Instead, a mild form of anti-pretention (Skeggs 2004) can be detected when Ken characterises the typical farmers' market customer as wearing the 'afghan scarf' and calling over to other customers 'hello Rodney' (Chapter Seven). A similar anti-pretentious sentiment is evident as Rhys suggests that the practice of carrying the jute bag and cycling to the market is a middle class performance rather than an effort to realise substantive change (Chapter Seven). Such evidence of anti-pretention, however, does not represent hostility towards middle class consumers. Instead, there appears an element of *discomfort* at entering the spaces occupied predominantly by the middle classes - a space that Ken suggests is 'not for me' (Chapter Seven). We can infer from this that discourses of distinction employed by middle class consumers embody a greater deal of

moral repugnance of the 'other' than is the case with the working class participants. This derision, it seems, goes hand-in-hand with an insistence that 'good' food is 'simple' food.

8.1.3 Omnivorous Distinction?

'Simple' food, as we have seen throughout often involves an added 'twist'. Recipes published by celebrity chefs are mentioned by customers at the market, most notably those of Jamie Oliver. Adding 'parmigiano reggiano' to a sheppard's pie, cooking chips 'three ways', however, might fail to conjure the image of a simple meal. Having overheard countless conversations about Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall's 'pigs' trotters' at the market as well as outright rejection of celebrity food culture from customers at the co-op there is evidence for a strong re-reading of Peterson and Kern's (1996) 'omnivorousness' thesis. In this way, 'omnivorousness' reinforces distinction by appealing to *variety itself* as a means of conferring status (Bryson 1996). Being adventurous and willing to sample a wide range of cuisines far from provides evidence for a democratisation of food culture. Instead, it is this very enthusiasm for acquiring a cosmopolitan palate that can be interpreted as a form of distinction disguised as democracy. At the market it seems that *rusticity* and *simplicity* provide a means of making such distinctions without drawing attention to the status giving properties of some foods and of some combinations of ingredients over others.

To recap, at each of the stalls food is presented in a 'rustic' style. Conforming to a popular imaginary of the 'local', cheeses are presented on wooden blocks, jam jars are covered in hessian cloth and vegetables displayed in sacks and in wicker baskets. The 'twists' that customers speak of adding to their meals appear to reproduce hidden distinctions, and indeed, middle class positions of dominance in the field of 'alternative' food consumption. Their insistence that the food on offer is available to everyone has the immediate implication of moralising the working classes as absent by *choice*. That 'alternative' food is couched in terms of the distinction and appears to conform to a middle class vision of the 'good' excludes the 'other'. This seems achieved in two ways; by means of fostering cultural discomfort - 'not for me' - as well as financial inaccessibility to these reinvented dishes that may, for example, require replacing water with a bottle of wine.

That 'omnivorous' food re-articulates distinction is supported by Johnston and Baumann (2007, 2010). By requiring extensive lists of difficult to source ingredients, traditional dishes are reinvented, with the effect of separating it and its consumer from the average version. This kind of reinvention, as discussed in Chapter Five, is evident in popular discourse, and particularly in the recipes endorsed by celebrity chefs. Given that they are cited by customers at the market, here is such an example. In his book 'Cook with Jamie: My Guide to Making you a Better Cook' (2006), Jamie Oliver develops traditional dishes such as the meat pie, carrots, bread and butter pudding and even macaroni cheese into rearticulated and refined versions of the same dish. However, these refined dishes are not done so in a manner that *explicitly* afford them gourmet status, but are presented as recipes that he insists are 'simple' and 'rock solid' methods of recreating 'classic' meals. The meat pie, traditionally a means of serving stewed cheap cuts of meat, and covering with pastry is, however, re-invented in a recipe for a 'Lovely Lamb Shank Pie'. Requiring eighteen ingredients, including ¾ of a bottle of red wine, organic French trimmed lamb shanks and small bunches of fresh rosemary and thyme, this pie marks a shift from its traditional counterpart. A further recipe provided by this collection included 'Dinner-lady carrots' the recipe for which is precluded by a preamble, stating the following;

Extract 40

Jamie Oliver, Celebrity Chef

> Last year I saw some dinner ladies cooking carrots like this. They were using one of those industrial slicing machines to knock out hundreds of finely sliced carrots and then throwing them in those classic dinner lady tins with metal lids. The tins were buttered and then they just kept layering the carrots with little bits of butter and some salt and pepper. I've tweaked the recipe by adding herbs and a tiny bit of wine, but essentially, these are 'dinner-lady carrots'! You'll be amazed at how quickly this dish cooks as the carrots are sliced so finely. Make a change by putting these in the middle of your table with a Sunday roast.

> Excerpt from 'Cook with Jamie' 2006 pp. 314-315.

These 'dinner-lady carrots' appear part of a trend of reinventing traditionally cheap recipes by adding what may be seen as expensive ingredients such as wine and fresh herbs. Again, a

traditional and 'simple' pudding recipe has been redefined in this book, with a 'Good old bread and butter pudding with a marmalade glaze and cinnamon and orange butter'. Such inflammation of the titles of the food is reminiscent of the WAG's 'True Taste' brand discussed in Chapter Four. In this way, the distinctiveness of Welsh food is flagged as a means of achieving both sustainability *and* economic growth. By adding a 'twist' to a conventional ingredient or dish, the 'True Taste' brand seeks to promote a distinctive Welsh experience. These 'twists' comprise either inflaming the title given to food, or adding expensive ingredients such as wine, fresh herbs and speciality cheeses. 'Simple' foods, then, when combined in particular ways may thus undergo a seamless transition into a distinctive dish. While there may be wide cultural participation across social classes in eating meals of, say, "all of one course, plus a drink and perhaps yoghurt" (Bennett *et al*. 2009:167) it seems that variations in the *ingredients* and their *presentational form* that comprise these meals serve as a means of conferring status across social classes.

At the market, such distinctive food can be found. For promoting these values, the market has even won the 'True Taste' award. Disguised as rustic, simple and straightforward, the 'good' food that apparently everyone can and *should* eat is, then, both exclusive and steeped with moral derision. Concomitant with Bourdieu's theory of struggle for the resources of the social field; the rules of the game are changed. If everyone is expected to engage in particular 'alternative' practices of food consumption, regardless of social class, it might be recognised that only some have the cultural and economic capital to do so. Should this continue to be ignored, we might imagine that strategies aimed at achieving an equitable alternative to conventional foodways might fail over and again.

Having shown that discourses of social class circulate and are indeed anchored within discussions of and enactments of the practice of 'alternative' food consumption, it remains to explore in greater detail the implications of this finding.

8.2 Implications for 'Alternative' Food Practice

The extent of moral derision evident in consumer discourses around food practice, this thesis argues, has consequences for those seeking to realise 'alternative' food systems. As such, some middle class consumers of this study are highly antagonistic in their assessment of

working class lifestyles (Karen and Valerie, Chapter Six and Seven). Other middle class consumers who are situated across class boundaries displayed a degree of understanding of the conditions of living under disadvantaged circumstances (Julianne, Chapter Six) and of feeling the effects of moral repugnance discussed by Sayer (2005a). The effects of this for those seeking to imagine and realise 'alternative' food systems do not appear to lie solely with the conjecture that working class people are excluded on the grounds of price – although this remains of great concern if these efforts are to result in an equitable food system. Instead, there appears an additional and more salient explanation for their absence. That is, there are *cultural* grounds for working class non-attendance of the market. Crucially, it is the interface between the food culture that middle class participants *imagine* of the working class 'other' and *actual* working class food practice that holds the key to understanding a momentous cultural barrier obstructing the realisation of equitable food systems.

Looking back to Chapter Six, Karen suggests that the working class 'other' is uncritical of a culture of cheap food. That is, they are seen as not wishing to engage with 'alternative' food practice for they are instead committed, in her view, to a conspicuously consumptive vision of the 'good life'. This vision, she claims, is the antithesis of hers. A similar sentiment resounds among those involved in the organisation of the market. This extends from those acting at a policy level, to those involved in its day-to-day operations. The working classes, they suggest, face a cultural barrier to engagement with 'alternative' food. This barrier is not, however, considered the result of discomfort with middle class cultural practice. Instead, they are taken to result from choice. That is, the working classes are seen to have a *choice* to make between spending their money on 'pints of cider' or 'good' food. Conversations held in the field, moreover, were revealing of a sentiment that such spaces were indeed not 'for' the working classes. Astonishingly, there prevailed a sentiment that working class people should just 'get over it'. This assessment nowhere near captures the complexity of the cultural (classed) dynamic at hand. It is not so simple that working class consumers feel excluded culturally but that the compensatory strategies developed in order to cope with such exclusion render the possibility of developing one all encompassing strategy for 'alternative' food consumption absurd. Not least, for the extent to which the farmers' market in particular has been appropriated by middle class consumers as a means of performance (Rhys, Chapter Six) and of expressive 'worthiness' (Samantha, Chapter Seven) is both resented and considered laughable by a number of self-proclaimed working class participants.

By labelling the 'other' as 'worthy' (Chapter Seven) Samantha, a co-op customer, provides some resistance to such moralising discourses. Here, the 'worthy' 'other' is deemed inauthentic in relation to her quiet practices as a 'hidden green'. This can be interpreted as an effort at moral boundary formation and maintenance as discussed throughout Chapter Seven. Presenting a confused class position, Rhys, a market customer both aligns and separates himself from other market customers. In so doing, Rhys provides a candid depiction of a market customer – a portrayal that he separates himself from (Chapter Seven). Classifying the consumer base at the market as 'middle class', he also describes the practice of going there as 'stereotypical'. Unlike Ken, Rhys does not feel discomfort in attending the market, but instead separates himself from the performance of arriving by bicycle with re-usable bags. It is this element of the practice that he suspects is artificial for these are practices that are not carried out 'in everyday of their life'. Not simply providing empirical support for Bourdieu's concept of class as a position taken in relation to an 'other', farmers' markets and community food co-operatives seem questionable as a means to realise alternatives to conventional foodways.

By moralising the 'other', by admitting feelings of discomfort, and resisting 'alternative' food through critiquing it, each of these situations can be of severe consequence for the success of *equitable* alternative/sustainable consumption initiatives. This is not to suggest that farmers' markets and community co-operatives do not have significant roles to play in providing a platform for community sociability and for providing a means to access fresh food. Rather, it remains to recognise whose communities are being served and whose are excluded and to what effect. From the accounts shared throughout this case study, it seems that this farmers' market serves a particularly privileged middle class population. Moreover, it is not the intention of this thesis to admonish the efforts made at the market to ameliorate an oligopolistic food system and to bring fresh food to the city. Instead, from exploring the importance of social class it is argued that the class dynamics highlighted by this study has implications for those seeking to form *equitable* strategies for sustainable consumption. Central to this conjecture is the recognition of the market as a middle class institution. As such, a middle class institution may not be an appropriate vehicle for the delivery of 'alternative' food for *all*. That farmers' markets are heralded as an exemplar of ameliorative food initiatives incites difficulty when their replication continues unchecked and celebrated as a means of achieving this objective. To acknowledge that farmers' market provide a platform for the performance of middle class identities may lead to more nuanced and

considered means of engaging working class consumers with 'alternative' food practice. Indeed, the very nature of the farmers' market becoming a space occupied mainly by middle class consumers seems to ensure the exclusivity of this practice. This is not to say that its exclusivity leads to desirability from excluded 'others' but that this very exclusivity could lead to the relegation of further alternative practices being considered something that is for 'us' and not for 'them' (Southerton 2002). That is, in refusing what they are refused they may not merely refuse what is 'posh' but also what might be 'good'.

As suggested above, 'alternative' food consumption initiatives resonate with current approaches to seeking the sustainability of our food system. In order to justify the choice of research setting, Chapter Four outlines the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) approach to sustainable development as underpinned by 'alternative' food strategies. Farmers' markets and community food co-operatives, just like the market and co-op, are hailed as part of this sustainable development strategy. Having found that class plays a role in 'alternative' food practice, it remains crucial to consider the ways in which such initiatives can move forward without contradicting its core commitment to equity. First of all, to imagine an *equitable* and sustainable food future, it would seem appropriate to suggest the 'posh' be separated from the 'good' (Sayer 2005a) by taking seriously the difference between 'use' and 'exchange' value.

To separate the 'posh' from the 'good' is to recognise the importance of alternative food as not simply 'posh' but also as 'good'. This presents a challenge, for the evidently highly moralised terrain of 'alternative' food consumption thus offers an opportunity for the very kind of moralising that sparks efforts of resistance from the moralised 'other'. Indeed, Bourdieu has famously argued that it is common for those who are refused certain goods to refuse what they are refused. However, what Sayer claims is overlooked by Bourdieu is that in refusing the goods that are legitimised by dominant culture, they then "not only invite the scorn of the dominant in so doing, they also *confirm their refusal of internal goods which are valuable regardless of whether the dominant happen to value them"* (ibid. emphasis in original). This marks the imperative to separate the 'posh' from the 'good' in the case of 'alternative' food practice. The 'good' can be described as that which can be of benefit to everyone (food, a warm home, and education), and does not simply provide symbolic rewards meaningful only to the corresponding habitus. In order for the 'posh' to be separated from the 'good', alternative food consumption strategies may take into account this moralised terrain, and indeed imagine alternatives that do not appeal solely to a bourgeois middle class

aesthetic. To pursue strategies that create separations between what is considered food for 'us' and food for 'them' (Southerton 2002), is to continue to misrecognise class (Skeggs 1997). Indeed, such misrecognition lies with the continued re-articulation of 'distinction' under the guise of 'simplicity' (Johnston and Baumann 2007, 2010). Currently, the advantages of the field of 'alternative' food consumption are secured for the middle classes - be these advantages embodied in social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital as well as in securing the advantage of a diet high in *use* value. In this way, the thesis adopts Bourdieu's conceptual framework, but not without serious consideration of its flaws. Taking on board the critical amendments made by Sayer (2005) particularly the neglect of lay normativity, we 'think *with* Bourdieu'. By paying attention to what *matters* to people, a considerable flaw is overcome. In this case, we can see that food clearly plays a part in what matters to people. Not only a first need of the human body, there is a moralised terrain that surrounds its consumption. Demonstrative of the highly charged nature of food, it is a carrier of our culture (Douglas 1979). In this way, food carries with subtlety and sometimes very obviously what Sennett and Cobb (1979) describe as the 'hidden injuries of class'. In moralising the 'other' for not consuming 'good' food, we misrecognise the harsh realities faced by many in feeding themselves and their families. Indeed, watching and listening to people go about their food shopping, it becomes clear that food contains embodied hopes and desires about how we would like to live, and how we would like to live differently should circumstances allow. Much as found by DeVault (1991) and Miller (1998), through the preparation of food, we also show love for our friends and family. Speaking of the imagined food practices of 'others' food is the subject of pride, envy and discomfort.

To this end, there is no doubt that these spaces offer a different means of consuming food. They do indeed provide some platform for resisting oligopolistic market forces, and make available produce delivered fresh from farm to fork. However, these 'alternatives' are simply the beginning in imagining what is necessary to transform our food system into one that is both equitable and sustainable. Indeed, to take on board the contention that farmers' markets provide a stage for the performance of distinctive practices that in turn create an atmosphere of discomfort for 'others' will begin to imagine a less uniform strategy for providing the necessary alternatives to conventional foodways. That is, we might think of more culturally sensitive strategies that do not provide one means of engaging with sustainable or 'alternative' food. Crucially, we might recognise that farmers' markets provide an excellent

means of engaging white middle class consumers. It is not sufficient to expect that working class, ethnically and racially diverse populations can or will engage on these same terms.

8.3. Validity Revisited

8.3.1 Internal Validity and the Power of Inference

Having adopted a case study research strategy, it remains to reflect on the internal as opposed to external validity of the study. Considering the validity of what Yin (2003) refers to as a 'typical' case involves assessing the extent to which the research methods employed were suitable to capture the circumstances and conditions of the case. To explore a matter as complex as class culture, Silva *et al*. (2009) call for the use of a mixed method approach. To this end, insights into the practice of 'alternative' food practice are achieved via participant observation, survey and semi-structured interviews as well as the analysis of documents, bolstering the validity of claims made by virtue of these insights.

The credibility of analytical claims made by the thesis are considered in the light of radical critique faced by proponents of the interview technique (Atkinson and Coffey 2002, Dingwall 1997, Coffey and Atkinson 1996). That is, data generated from interviews have been widely treated with caution on the grounds that they do not accurately access the minds of the interviewees or indeed the social worlds in which informants live (Silverman 1997). This has warranted the researcher's need to become circumspect as to the conclusions drawn from interview data. The conclusions drawn here are then treated with the customary caution expected of social scientists. It was not, however, the purpose of this research to gain access to minds of 'alternative' food consumers. Instead, interviews were conducted in order to explore what consumers *say* about what they do, and not about what they *actually* do. The latter concern was instead the focus of the period of participant observation. Indeed, there is of course the concern that field notes and the descriptions that arise from them reflect more the cognitive and cultural perspective of the researcher than the participants. Again, it is the combination of methods – interviews, participant observation and survey – that together bolster the validity of the findings generated from this research. By triangulating different methods of data collection (Denzin 1970) this research overcomes to some extent the shortcomings of each method. In this way, observing food shopping *in situ*, eliciting talk as

well as gathering data pertaining to socio-demographic characteristics, it is reasonable to suggest that inferences made from the data collected do fairly reflect the social phenomenon at hand. Indeed, what is ethnographically observed in the field can be verified by talk elicited from the interviews, and supported by quantifiable data and documents (Deacon *et al*. 1998).

Inferences made from interpretation of social interactions observed at the market and co-op may also be considered for their 'apparent validity' (Kirk and Miller 1986). That is, the extent to which the phenomenon represented convinces the reader that they are transparently true (Peräkylä 2011). To this end, the data is considered for the extent to which it resonates with the everyday experiences of the reader – whether or not it 'rings a bell'. While the data presented throughout Chapters Five, Six and Seven have not been subjected to audience research, much of this data has been discussed with peers and colleagues, with friends and relatives. The kinds of utterances made by customers at each site, and indeed the worldviews expressed by interviewees resonate with conversations overheard on buses, in the supermarket, and even ring true to the sentiments expressed in popular television programmes and comedy sketch shows.[18]

8.3.2 Recognising Class

With a methodological concern for boosting the validity of the findings, 'class' was not raised as a concept unless first mentioned by the interviewee. Although the survey asked questions pertaining to socio-demographic classifications, further questions were added in order to deflect from this focus. Class, then, arose from the data and was not imposed upon it. Applied by many participants in their talk and corroborated by categorisations according to NS-SEC (2010) operationalised by the survey, class is, then, a term considered fairly employed. As we might expect, given the findings of Savage *et al*. (2001), not all interviewees referred to themselves or others in class terms. 'Class ambivalence', is a term they use to describe people's discomfort with using class language with reference to their own identity or with other subjects 'close to home'. This reservation, they suggest, is coupled with their awareness of wider class inequalities. Indeed, no one likes to admit privilege or be caught out by political incorrectness. However, from the data we can see that participants'

---

[18] See the Armstrong and Miller Show, BBC1 October 30th 2010. Here, a comedy sketch makes light of the middle class nature of farmers' markets. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afY4v0y4fL4

talk of food and the practices that surround its consumption demonstrate clearly the role of food as a resource of distinction. Indeed, we have seen throughout Chapter Six in particular that interviewees were often quite content to apply concepts of class to themselves and to 'others'. Crucially, when class as a term of reference was not overtly used, there remained clear discursive means by which participants achieved demarcation from an 'other'. They separated themselves from those deemed inferior; a technique that often employed the language and corporeal expressions of moral derision. As such, a core argument of this thesis is that people do indeed position themselves and each other within a hierarchy, and do not always require the overt language of 'class' in order to do so. This echoes the argument of Payne and Grew (2005), where they find that the methods employed to study 'class ambivalence' (Savage *et al.* 2001) greatly affect the outcome. Discomfort in speaking of class, they suggest, may indeed result from unfamiliarity with the scholarly concepts and debates about class - on which Savage *et al.* (ibid.) invited their interviewees to provide comment - and not about class *per se*.

> "Indeed, it could be argued that it is we sociologists who have the mistaken sense of subjective social class. While our knowledge depended on empirical research using batteries of questions mentioning the term class, or surveys which posed prior questions about social inequality, capitalism, redistributive welfare, and industrial relations and unemployment, we were not properly tapping into the public consciousness(es)."

Payne and Grew (2005:908).

This is not, however, to suggest that such concepts have no purchase. Rather, to understand class we must consider the extent to which our scholarly concepts help or hinder. By refraining from asking interviewees to comment on broad debates about class 'out there', this study avoids such ambiguities. Instead, by encouraging participants to talk about food and the everyday routines and hobbies that surround its consumption, it is argued that we find another means through which the enunciation and reproduction of class inequality can come to be understood. To this end, Bourdieu's concept of class as a relative 'position' is supported by the data. However, this concept somewhat depends on the view that class can be read through people's participation in neatly delineated cultural practices. For Bourdieu (1984), the eating of abundant and 'elastic' meals would be readily associated with a working class position, while the overuse use of plates and cutlery may be identified with a bourgeois aesthetic. A contemporary re-reading of this concept in light of the work of Bryson (1996) and Johnston

and Baumann (2007, 2010) gives us a means to complicate the class differentiations noted by Bourdieu (ibid.) and between participation in 'high' and 'low' forms of culture. That is, their understanding of 'omnivorous distinction' gives us a means to go beyond the notion that observing engagement with particular kinds of culture can *neatly* delineate for us the contemporary cleavages of class. As such, the concept of class as 'position' provides a useful means of interpreting and understanding the complexity of contemporary class talk and practice. A careful reading of 'alternative' food practice provides a nuanced engagement with this debate.

Through food, then, the "elective affinities" (Bourdieu 1984:241) or predisposed tastes that are characteristic of a particular worldview or 'habitus' become apparent. In this way, preferences for some foods over others are thought to be very much a resource through which class is enacted, particularly as they correspond with preferences for other means of cultural engagement. Such homologies appear across fields as participants speak of their hobbies and routines. Here, interviewees *imagined* the homologous tastes of the 'other'. This presents us with an opportunity to understand the nature of classed homologies that figure in a class *imaginary*. For middle class participants, the working class 'other' is seen to typically enjoy fast cars, foreign holidays and cider. For the working class participants, the middle classes are characterised by the practice of salsa dancing, wearing 'afghan' scarves and parading at farmers' markets. Indeed, from conversations held with customers at both sites, and from both sides of the classed fence, these sets of correspondences do resonate. That is, tastes really do seem to classify the classifier, bringing "together things and people that go together" (Bourdieu 1984:241). The strongest support for any of Bourdieu's concepts, however, is to be found in his argument that class can be understood as a relative position. We can see from the data not only that likes and dislikes are commensurate with a particular position in the wider social field, but that through direct speech, social actors are prepared to separate these 'others' from themselves or aspire to an 'other'. In this way, food acts as a resource of distinction. It acts as economic, cultural and social capital by giving opportunities to display and impress as well as to make good one's health. It acts as symbolic capital when class is misrecognised, and the distinctiveness of foods live on through their reinvention as 'rustic', 'simple' and 'for everyone'. In this way, food figures as a resource that aids the disparagement of the 'other', and provides a means to claim particular spaces as one's own, to the end of excluding these morally repugnant 'others'.

Here, we have seen that Bourdieu's concept of class as a relative position is useful. While this study has not explored the inter-sectionality of class with other (in)equality strands such as gender, age, sexuality or ethnicity, a concept of class that is understood through 'positioning' has potential for their inclusion. Indeed, Bourdieu's neglect of gender and ethnicity formed the basis of a major re-appraisal conducted by Bennett *et al.* (2009). This thesis, however, is concerned with Bourdieu's neglect of the 'moral' dimensions of class (Lamont 1992, Southerton 2002). As such, this thesis adds empirically to the theoretical project of recognising the moral significance of class (Sayer 2005a) through a focus on 'alternative' food consumption. To this end, while we can see from this Chapter the importance of class for those seeking to develop alternatives to conventional foodways, the final Chapter locates this research within a wider scholarly framework.

Chapter Nine

A Sociological Perspective for Sustainability Science

Contrary to the widely held assumption that class is 'dead' (Pahl 1989) or is a 'zombie category' (Beck 1992), this thesis argues that class can be recognised through observing participants' practices and talk about food consumption. Indeed, not simply the means of routinely provisioning the home, the act of food shopping can be seen as a meaningful cultural practice. That is, figured in discursive moral derision of the 'other'; 'alternative' food comprises a resource of distinction in which social actors secure their position in the social field. This provides empirical and theoretical support for Bourdieusian sociology, particularly that which theorises class as a 'position'. Commensurate with the research aims outlined in Chapters Two and Three this thesis also addresses significant gaps in the existing empirical and conceptual literature. By focusing on a field of 'alternative' food consumption, this thesis brings a sociological perspective to the study of processes of global environmental change, particularly those that have arisen in response to the multifarious challenges faced by conventional food supply chains. Crucially, this field of 'alternative' food consumption seems not only ground from which to observe class, but appears figured in the very enunciation and reproduction of class culture.

By means of a case study, this research explores the prevalence of class discourses enunciated and reproduced via the practice of 'alternative' food consumption. A period of participant observation at a market and co-op enabled close examination of the ways in which consumers negotiated these two settings. Indeed, through direct speech, participants candidly position themselves in relation to 'others'. When class is not employed explicitly, accounts of food practice are nevertheless revealing of its use as a resource in making distinctions between oneself and an 'other'. On the most part, self-professed middle class participants separate themselves from working class 'others' by virtue of their professed moral commitment to 'good' food. This interface between class, food and culture may prove consequential for those who seek substantive alternatives to conventional foodways. By elucidating - with use of Bourdieu's conceptual toolkit - the moral significance of class, this

thesis has wider implications for carving a role for sociological inquiry in the field of sustainability science.

9.1 Embourgeoisement and Affluence

At the root of this thesis is a concern with the wider debates permeating the subject of class over the last forty years or so. With rising standards of living, greater availability of consumer goods and an ever increasing affluence amongst the old 'working class', such divisions, some argue, have dissipated (Zweig 1961, Pahl 1989). Even as the 'job for life' is replaced by the flexible work position characterised by uncertainty of contract, short-term pay and no sickness or pension benefits, we are all thought to be exposed to the ups and downs of late modern capitalism in equal measure, if not at the same time (Beck 1992). In this way, we might experience poverty and affluence at different points of our career. Indeed, our success in projecting our enterprising selves into the late modern market place will determine whether we retire in comfort or poverty. Whatever the structural inequalities of our day, they are not, apparently, marked by group identities. Inequalities experienced at the individual level can even be dispelled tomorrow, should the re-inventive social subject have the will and skill to do so. Indeed, according to Bauman (2001) there is nothing as rigid as class structure to blame for the inequalities faced by the contemporary self. This thesis joins rank with those who remain unconvinced by this argument.

Based on empirical evidence, this study, amongst many others as detailed throughout the thesis, show over and again that class differences persist as stubbornly as they ever did. Skeggs (1997, 2004) argues that working class women in particular experience the mal-distribution of social, economic and cultural resources. When misrecognising class, the entitled middle class self exercises symbolic violence, inscribing the female working class body over and again with the symbols of moral degeneracy. By exercising such symbolic violence, Skeggs argues (ibid.) that inequalities are reproduced anew through such processes of inclusion and exclusion. In addition, Southerton (2002) finds that people demarcate their communities from others by speaking of collective group identities; of 'us' and 'them'. In their study of cultural capital and social exclusion in Britain, Bennett *et al.* (2009) note that the possession of cultural capital still provides a route for advancement and distinction. Again, when it comes to the 'choice' of food, not only do these have a basis in class

differentiation (Warde and Martens 2000), but also map onto wider inequalities in access to such foods with health giving properties (Blaxter 1990, Caplan *et al.* 1998, Hupkens *et al.* 2000). From these examples alone, it would seem that class should not be thrown out with the proverbial bathwater. Crucially, by its very focus on 'alternative' food consumption, the class dynamic explored in this thesis is implicated in the wider project of promoting *equitable* sustainability. Doing so, it is argued, necessitates an understanding of the social world that goes beyond the notion of individual choice.

9.2 Beyond Individual Choice – The Role of Sociological Enquiry

According to Marsden (2011), attempts to invigorate the emerging interdisciplinary field of 'sustainability science' have intensified. What is becoming clearer is the role of sociological inquiry in this field. As such, this thesis makes a sociological contribution to the growing field of 'sustainability science' by is its focus upon consumption as a *practice* as opposed to *behaviour* (Shove 2010). That is to say that research around sustainability has often applied behavioural science to the understanding of an accelerating degradation of the natural environment. Thus, one's ability to 'make a difference' through consumption is steadily becoming seen as a 'new activism' (Bryant and Goodman 2004) that captures the means through which individuals participate in solutions to otherwise seemingly insurmountable problems (Micheletti 2003, 2004). Additionally, while opposition to the consumer cultures of the global mass market have long been marked by consumer boycotts and protests, it seems there has been a shift towards more populist critique of consumer culture. Naomi Klein (2000) in her seminal piece 'No Logo' suggests that corporate branding strategies be seen as their own Achilles heel; for they enable both the invasion of aspects of everyday life previously impenetrable by the corporation and on the other they become privy to consumer demands for greater corporate social responsibility. However, such mainstreaming of 'ethical' consumption has led to accusations of corporate 'green-washing'. According to Cohen (2011) this was a term coined by Jay Westerveld - a New York environmentalist - when referring to the widespread marketing of 'green' behaviours. He suggests that these appeals are underpinned by a profit motive entirely devoid of concern for the effects of global environmental change. Large hotel chains, when appealing to their customers to re-use their towels, he argued, are motivated by a desire to maximise profits and not to be 'green'.

This phenomenon of green-washing is widely seen to generate an active critique of corporations - jumping on a 'green' bandwagon – where their highly successful brand marketing strategies come to undermine the original ethical interest of the venture (Low and Davenport 2005, Levi and Linton 2003). More recently it seems that academic attention to the phenomenon of ethical consumption has been focused upon *defining* the ethical consumer (Adams and Raisborough 2010). An edited collection entitled 'The Ethical Consumer' (Harrison et al 2005) provides an example of such treatment, with Chapters heavily focused upon modelling individual consumer behaviour. It has, however, been considered problematic to place the individual consumer under the spotlight at the expense of the collective or the social (Seyfang 2004). More recently, the call to arms for sociology in addressing issues of global environmental change is mirrored by a growing dissatisfaction with such focus upon individual choice. Such a focus is seen as devoid of critical structural analysis (Redclift 2009). Mounting frustration with such approaches has culminated in provocative pieces that challenge the dominance of such epistemological treatment of the individual over the social (Shove 2010). It is by no means a closed debate. Whitmarsh (2011) strongly objects to the sociological rebuke of methodologically individualistic approaches to understanding global environmental change. Situated within the context of this debate is this thesis. Here, it remains to consider how an understanding of the 'ethical' or 'alternative' consumer figures within a social context. Indeed, to explore a *sociological* understanding of consumption in light of global environmental change and to pay attention to the structures that underpin social and cultural life is to move beyond *individual choice*. Again, by discussing practice as opposed to behaviour, it seems that class analysis is given the platform from which to contribute to wider debates about global environmental change. Specifically, we might recognise the structured and structuring nature of habitus in effecting the trajectory of a practice such as consuming differently and more sustainably. To this end, this thesis argues that efforts to realise sustainability in the face of global environmental change must first accomplish and be equipped with a nuanced understanding of the *cultural* as well as the structural dynamics that underpin everyday life. Central to these dynamics, amongst others, is class. This thesis contributes empirically, methodologically and theoretically to this endeavour.

9.2.1 Class and Practice Theory: A Note for Future Developments

This thesis responds to the call for sociology to assert its voice in debates around sustainability (Shove 2010). It does so by offering an account of class culture as played out around alternative food consumption in a manner that circumvents methodologically individualistic approaches to exploring consumption. Although sociology has by no means been quiet on this issue to date, it has been suggested that its contributions have been marred by individualistic approaches, particularly within the policy arena (Shove ibid.). Sociology, through its commitment to understanding the complexities of everyday life, and indeed in its attention to social structure, has much to offer. It is not the intention here to revisit debates around the salience of structure and agency, but to suggest that theories of *practice* (Warde 2005) - and not solely individual *behaviour* - provide a route towards more nuanced understandings of the problems faced in realising social change towards sustainability. Indeed, there are many examples of work that seek to define the 'ethical' consumer (Harrison *et al*. 2005). Such focus on defining personality traits, and exploring consumers' attitudes, beliefs and values is indicative of a tendency to view consumption as the result of individual choices. This thesis strives to move away from such methodological individualism, and towards an understanding of consumption that is rooted in a structural and cultural context. It focuses on the elements of social life that enable or disable choice about how to live and in this case how to consume that are rooted in class *culture.*

In conceptual terms, theories of practice (Warde 2005) are positioned as key to understanding the trajectories through which consumption becomes normal. This is of some consequence in carving a role for sociology in imagining the transitions necessitated by global environmental change. That is, practice theories take into account complexity, marking a step away from methodological individualism as well as holist accounts of social life. Schatzki (1996) suggests that practice theory does this by taking a social practice - such as swimming, eating, or talking - not only as a unit of analysis but as the central social phenomenon from which all other social entities such as institutions, actions and structures can come to be understood. Providing a middle ground for postmodern celebrations of the individual and structurally based understandings of collective action, theories of practice seek to overcome the

structure/agency dualism that was characteristic of Bourdieu's sociology. Practice theory acknowledges both the role of the individual and of the social in explaining consumption (Reckwitz 2002). Crucially, the resurgence of practice theory is explicitly linked to the potential for sociology to be heard in climate change research (Shove 2010). Such a move provides an alternative theoretical ground for studies of consumption (Warde ibid.) and offers another pathway yet to be explored in the context of 'alternative' food consumption. While this thesis has not employed such theories of practice, we can see that in exploring class culture, we move away from methodologically individualistic understandings of 'alternative' food consumption. We can potentially move a step further forward by exploring class culture in tandem with contemporary theories of practice.

9.3 A Sociology of Class for Sustainability Science

This thesis explores the wider socio-cultural context of 'ethical' 'alternative' or indeed 'sustainable' consumption. In no other arena might a study of such forms of consumption be more revealing of the complex terrain of behaviour *qua* choice and structure *qua* class than in the case of food, for there 'is nothing more basic than food' (Belasco 2008). Food might be considered to lie outside the realm of conspicuous consumption, outside of the 'extraordinary' (Gronow and Warde 2001) consumption embodied by luxury motor vehicles and designer clothing. However, it has long been documented that food has formed expressions of status and wealth (Veblen 1899) and provides a means of distinction (Bourdieu 1984). The difference is that regardless of one's class position, *everybody* needs food. Through the study of food we can come to understand the challenges faced by society today; to understand what it means to be constrained by the structures that underpin our actions, and the cultures that surround them.

As such, the semi-structured interviews with 20 of these consumers facilitated an understanding of how this practice was accounted for in talk, enabling a reading of the extent to which this talk bore traces of classed discourses. It was clear that accounts of engaging with 'alternative' food was not simply a behaviour, a choice that one made on account of holding a particular belief about what was 'good' – but instead seemed to belong to an interconnecting set of other practices, and indeed feelings about what was or was not appropriate. Indeed, judgements about what was or was not appropriate become entangled in positioning work. It is

then not inappropriate – given the extent to which these participants employed the classificatory as well as moral language of class – that this positioning work be seen as employing discourses of class. Crucially, the language of class prevalent across this sample is telling of how class cultures may affect the trajectory of such practices of 'alternative' consumption in becoming normal. In other words, working class consumers may continue to feel discomfort, feel disconnected from or indeed continue to be excluded from such practices of 'alternative' consumption. At this time, it remains to be seen whether or not a discomfort with 'alternative' food practice will result in the rejection of wider forms of sustainable consumption on the grounds that this practice is for 'them' (the middle classes) and not 'us' (the working classes).

To bring the analysis of class back in with the proverbial bathwater is to seek nuanced ways of understanding the complex web of interconnections that may affect the trajectories of 'alternative' food practice. This is not to say that an analysis of class can explain all, but that its exclusion of late has led to somewhat misguided and ineffectual interventions in seeking to develop genuinely alternative means of consuming. This thesis operationalises a Bourdieusian toolkit of concepts in order to understand the role of class in accounting for 'alternative' food practice. This toolkit has successfully lent itself to the exploration of relative position taking in the field of 'alternative' food consumption. Efforts to conceptualise and empirically examine its applicability to a practice of consumption has provided an understanding of conventions and dynamics that govern the complex practice of 'alternative' food consumption, and indeed how classed practices and classed discourses play out within them.

Beginning with an interest contemporary consumer practices, the thesis concludes by suggesting that sociology in particular has much to contribute to debates circulating the topic of vast global environmental change. Focusing on the different social practices that interlock on an everyday basis, rather than on external drivers to 'behaviour change' seems a fruitful basis from which to gain a nuanced insight into the social world that now faces momentous environmental challenges. This study contends that while important contributions have been made by the social sciences, the socio-cultural dynamics of climate change have up until now been largely neglected. Indeed, this thesis argues that efforts to realise sustainability in the face of global environmental change must first accomplish a nuanced understanding of the cultural dynamics that underpin everyday life. The social sciences and sociology in particular

are empirically, methodologically and theoretically well equipped to do so. Through the study of the class cultures that surround 'alternative' food consumption, this thesis makes a contribution to this very endeavour.

Bibliography

Abbott, A. (2001) *Chaos of Disciplines*, Chicago, Chicago University Press.

Adams, M. and Raisborough, J. (2008) What Can Sociology Say About Fair Trade? Class, Reflexivity and Ethical Consumption, *Sociology*, 42 (6) pp. 1165-1182.

Adler, P.A. (1985) *Wheeling and Dealing*, New York, Columbia University Press.

Ajzen, I. (1991) The Theory of Planned Behaviour, *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 50 pp. 145-154.

Altheide, D. L. (1976) *Creating Reality*, Beverley Hills CA, SAGE.

Arce A, Marsden T, (1993) The Social Construction of Food: A Research Agenda, *Economic Geography* 69 pp. 293-312.

Ashley, B. Hollows, J. Jones, S. and Taylor, B. (2004) *Food and Cultural Studies*, Oxon, Routledge.

Atkinson, P. (1983) 'Eating Virtue' in A. Murcott, (Eds.) *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food*, Aldershot, Gower Publishing Company Ltd, pp. 9-17.

Atkinson, P. A. and Hammersley, M. (1994) 'Ethnography and Participant Observation' in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London, SAGE, pp. 248-261.

Atkinson, P. and Coffey, A. (2002) 'Revisiting the Relationship Between Participant Observation and Interviewing' in J. F. Gubrium and J. A. Holstein (Eds.) *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Methods*, Thousand Oaks CA, SAGE, pp. 801-814.

Atkinson, P. And Coffey, A. (2011) 'Analysing Documentary Analysis', in D. Silverman (Eds.) *Qualitative Research*, Third Edition, London, SAGE, pp. 77-92.

Barthes, R. (1973) *Mythologies*, London, Paladin.

Barthes, R. (1975) 'Towards a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption' in C, Counihan and P, Van Esterik (Eds.) *Food and Culture: A Reader (Second Edition)*, Oxon, Routledge, pp. 28-35.

Bauman Z. (1982) *Memories of Class, The Pre-history and After-life of Class*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bauman, Z. (1988) *Freedom*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

Bauman, Z. (2001) *The Individualized Society*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Beardsworth, A. and Keil, T. (1997) *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society*, London, Routledge.

Beck, U. (1992) *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, London, SAGE.

Belasco, W. (2008) *Food: The Key Concepts*, Oxford, Berg.

Bell, D. and Hollows, J. (2007) Mobile Homes, *Space and Culture* 10 (1) pp. 22-39.

Bendix, R. and Lipsett, M. (1953, 1967) *Class, Status and Power: Social Stratification in Comparative Perspective*, Second Edition, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bennett, T. Savage, M. Silva, E. Warde, A. Gayo-Cal, M. Wright, D. (2009) *Culture, Class, Distinction*, Oxon, Routledge.

Benton, T. (1996) *The Greening of Marxism*, London, The Guildford Press.

Bhaskar, R. (1975, 2008) *A Realist Theory of Science*, London, Verso.

Bhaskar, R. (1986, 2009) *Scientific Realism and Human Optimism*, Oxon, Routledge.

Billig, M. (1999) Whose terms? Whose Ordinariness? Rhetoric and Ideology in Conversation Analysis, *Discourse and Society*, 10 (4).

Blaxter, M. (1990) *Health and Lifestyles*, London, Tavistock.

Blaxter, M. and Paterson, E. (1983) 'The Goodness is Out of It: The Meaning of Food to Two Generations' in A. Murcott (Eds.) *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food*, Aldershot, Gower Publishing Company Ltd, pp. 95-105.

Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Oxon, Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1986, 2011) Forms of Capital, in I. Szeman and T. Kaposy (Eds.) *Cultural Theory: An Anthology* Oxford Blackwell, pp. 81-94.

Bourdieu, P. (1989) Social Space and Symbolic Power, *Sociological Theory*, 7 (1) pp. 14-25.

Bourdieu, P. (1990) *The Logic of Practice*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1992) 'The Practice of Reflexive Sociology: The Paris Workshop' in P. Bourdieu and L. Waquant (Eds.) *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Cambridge, Polity Press, pp. 217-253.

Bourdieu, P. and Waquant, L. (1992) *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Bryant, L. R. and Goodman, M. K. (2004) Consuming Narratives: The Political Ecology of Alternative Consumption, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 29 (3) pp. 344-366.

Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods*, Third Edition, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Bryson, B. (1996) Anything But Heavy Metal, *American Sociological Review*, 61 pp. 884-99.

Bugge, A. and Almas, R. (2006). Domestic Dinner: Representations and Practices of a Proper Meal Among Young Suburban Mothers. *Journal of Consumer* Culture 6 (2) pp. 203-228.

Caplan, P. Keane, A. Willetts, A. and Williams, J. (1998) 'Studying Food in its Socio-cultural Context: Approaches from an Anthropological Perspective' in A. Murcott (eds) *The Nation's Diet: The Social Science of Food Choice*, Harlow, Addison Wesley Longman Ltd, pp. 168-182.

Carey, L. Bell, P. Duff, A. Sheridan, M. And Shields, M. (2011) Farmers' Market Consumers: A Scottish Perspective, *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 35 pp. 300-306.

Chouliaraki, L. and Fairclough, N. (1999) *Discourse in Late Modernity: Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Clark, T. N. and Lipsett, S. M. (1991) Are Social Classes Dying? *International Sociology* 6 (4) pp 397-410.

Cloke, P. Johnson, S. and May, J. (2005) Discourse of Charity in the Provision of Emergency Services for Homeless People, *Environment and Planning A*, 37 (3) pp. 385-402.

Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996) *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*, London, SAGE.

Cohen, N. (2011) *Green Business: An A-Z Guide*, Thousand Oaks CA, SAGE.

Counihan, C. and Van Esterik, P. (2008) *Food and Culture: A Reader* (Second Edition), Oxon, Routledge.

Coveney, J. (2004) A Qualitative Study Exploring Socio-economic Differences in Parental Lay Knowledge of Food and Health: Implications for Public Health Nutrition, *Public Health Nutrition* 8 (3) pp. 290-297.

Crompton, R. (1998) *Class and Stratification: An Introduction to Current Debates* Second Edition. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Darmon, N. and Drenowski, A. (2008) Does Social Class Predict Diet Quality? *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 87 pp. 1107-17.

Dawson, L. L. and Prus, R. C. (1995) Postmodernism and Linguistic Reality versus Symbolic Interactionsim and Obdurate Reality, *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, 17 pp. 105-124.

DeSolier, I. (2005) TV Dinners: Culinary Television, Education and Distinction, *Continuum: Journals of Media and Cultural Studies*, 19 (4) pp. 465-481.

Deacon, D. Bryman, A. and Fenton, N. (1998) Collision or Collusion? A Discussion of Unplanned Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 1 pp 47-63.

Delamont. S. (1983) 'Lobster, Chicken, Cake and Tears: Deciphering Wedding Meals' in A. Murcott (Eds.) *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food*, Aldershot, Gower Publishing Company Ltd, pp. 141-151.

Denzin, N.K. (1970) *The Research Act in Sociology*, Chicago, Aldine.

DeSoucey, M. (2010) Gastronationalism: Food Traditions and Authenticity Politics in the European Union, *American Sociological Review*, 75 (3) pp. 432-455.

DeVault, M. (1991) *Feeding the Family*, London, The University of Chicago Press Ltd.

Devine, F. Savage, M. and Crompton, R. Ed. (2005) *Rethinking Class: Culture, Identities and Lifestyle,* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Devine, F. Savage, M. Crompton, R. and Scott, J. (2005) *Rethinking Class: Identities, Cultures and Lifestyles* (Eds.) London, Palgrave.

Dingwall, R. (1997) Accounts, Interviews and Observations, in G. Miller and R. Dingwall (eds.) *Context and Method in Qualitative Research*, London, SAGE.

Douglas, M. (1972) Deciphering a Meal, *Doedalus* 101 (1) 61-81.

Douglas, M. (1975, 1999) *Implicit Meaning, Second Edition, Selected Essays in Anthropology*, London, Routledge.

Douglas, M. and Isherwood, B. (1979) *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*, New York, Basic Books.

Edley, N. and Wetherell, M. (1997) Jockeying for Position: The Construction of Masculine Identities, *Discourse and Society,* 8, pp. 203-217.

Elias, N. (1978) 2000 *The Civilising Process- Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, Oxford, Blackwell.

Erikson, R. and Goldthorpe, J. (2010) Has Social Mobility in Britain Decreased? Reconciling Divergent Findings on Income and Class Mobility, *British Journal of Sociology*, 61 (2) pp. 211-230.

Finch, J. (2007) Displaying Families, *Sociology* 41 (1) pp. 65-81.

Fine, G.A. (1987) *With the Boys*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Fiske, J. (2011) *Reading the Popular*, Second Edition, Oxon, Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006) Five Misunderstandings About Case Study Research, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12, pp. 219-245.

Fox, K. (2004) *Watching the English: The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour. London*, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd.

Gabriel, Y. and Lang, T. (2006) *The Unmanageable Consumer*, Second Edition, London, SAGE.

Gans, H. J. (1999) Participant Observation in the Era of 'Ethnography', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 28 pp. 540-548.

Gee, J. P. (2005) *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, Oxon, Routledge.

Giddens, A. (1979) *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis*, Berkley CA, University of California Press.

Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.

Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and Self- Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Goffman, E. (1959) *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Doubleday Anchor Books, New York.

Gold, R. (1958) Roles in Sociological Field Observation, *Social Forces*, 36 pp. 217-223.

Goldthorpe, J. H. (1980) *Social Mobility and Class Structure*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Goodman, D. and Goodman, M. K. (2007) 'Entry for the *Encyclopaedia of Human Geography'* [Online], Available at http://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c4/98/59/DGMKGAFNJulyFinal.pdf [Accessed 6 June 2011].

Gorz, A. (1994) *Capitalism, Socialism, Ecology,* London, Verso.

Gronow, J. and Warde, A. (2001) *Ordinary Consumption*, London, Routledge.

Guthman, J. (2003) Fast Food/Organic Food: Reflexive Tastes and the Making of 'Yuppie Chow', *Social and Cultural Geography,* 4 (1) pp. 45-58.

Guthman, J. (2008) Bringing Good Food to Others: Investigating the Subjects of Alternative Food Practice, *Cultural Geographies*, 15, pp. 431-447.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. A. (1983) *Ethnography, Principles in Practice*, London, Tavistock.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. A. (1995) *Ethnography, Principles in Practice*, Second Edition, London, Tavistock.

Harrison, R. Newholm, T. and Shaw, D. (2005) *The Ethical Consumer*, London, SAGE.

Hartley, J. in Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (2004) *Essential Guide to Qualitative Research in Organizational Research,* London, SAGE.

Hinrichs, C. (2000) Embededness and Local Food Systems: Notes on Two Types of Direct Agricultural Market, *Journal of Rural Studies* 16 pp. 295-303.

Hobsbawm, E. J. (1983) in E. J. Hobsbawm, and O.T. Ranger (Eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Hochschild, A.R. (1983) T*he Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, California, University of California Press.

Holloway, L. and Kneafsey, M. (2000) Reading the Space of a Farmers' Market: A Preliminary Investigation from the UK, *Sociologia Ruralis* 40 (3) pp. 285-299.

Hollows, J. and Jones, S. (2010) At Least He's Doing Something: Moral Entrepreneurship and Individual Responsibility in Jamie's Ministry of Food, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13 (3) pp. 307-322.

Holstein, J. A. and Gubrim, J. F. (1995) *The Active Interview*, Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE.

Hupkens, C. L. H., Knibbe, R. A. and Drop, M. J. (2000) Social Class Differences in Food Consumption: The Explanatory Value of Permissiveness and Health and Cost Considerations, *European Journal of Public Health*, 10 (2) pp. 108-113.

Ilbery, B. and Kneafsey, M. (1999) Niche Markets and Regional Speciality Food Products in Europe: Towards a Research Agenda, *Environment and Planning A* 31 pp. 2207-2222.

Jackson, J. E. (1990) I am a Fieldnote: Fieldnotes as a Symbol of Professional Identity, in R. Sanjek, (Eds.) *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*, Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, pp. 3-33.

Jackson, T. (2006) *The Earthscan Reader in Sustainable Consumption*, London, Eartchscan.

Jacoby, J. and Ochs, E. (1995) Co-construction: An Introduction, *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 28 pp. 171-183.

Johnston, J. and Baumann, S. (2007). Democracy versus Distinction: A Study of Omnivorousness in Gourmet Food Writing, *American Journal of Sociology* 113 (1) pp. 165-204.

Johnston, J. and Baumann, S. (2010) *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction on the Gourmet Foodscape*, Oxon, Routledge.

Jorgensen, D. L. (1989) *Participant Observation: A Methodology for Human Studies*, London, SAGE.

Junker, B. (1960) *Field Work*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Kierans, C. and Haeney, J. (2010) The 'Social Life' of Scouse: Understanding Contemporary Liverpool Through Changing Food Practices, *Cultural Sociology* 4 (1) pp. 101-122.

King, A. (2000) Thinking with Bourdieu against Bourdieu: A 'Practical' Critique of the Habitus, *Sociological Theory*, 18 (3) pp. 417-433.

Kirk, J. and Miller, M. L. (1986) *Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research*, London, SAGE.

Klein, N. (2000) *No Logo*, London, Flamingo.

Kluckhohn, F. R. (1940) The Participant Observer Technique in Small Communities, *The American Journal of Sociology*, 46 (3) pp. 331-343.

Kneafsey, M. Cox, R. Holloway, L. Dowler, E. Venn, L. and Tuomainen, H. (2008) *Reconnecting Consumers Producers, and Food: Exploring Alternatives*, Oxford, Berg.

Kuhn, T. S. (1970) The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Chicago, Chicago University Press.

La Trobe, H. (2001) Farmers' Markets: Consuming Local Rural Produce, *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 25 (3) pp. 181-192.

Lamont, M. (1992) *Money, Morals and Manners: The Culture of the French and American Upper-Middle Classes*, London, University of Chicago Press Ltd.

Lang, T. (2005) Food Control or Food Democracy? Re-engaging Nutrition with Society and the Environment, *Public Health Nutrition* 8(6A) pp. 730-737.

Levi- Strauss, C. (1966) The Culinary Triangle. *Partisan Review* 33 pp. 586-95.

Levi, M. and Linton, A. (2003) Fair Trade: A Cup at a Time*? Politics and Society,* 31 (3) pp. 407-432.

Lien, M.E. (2004) The Politics of Food: An Introduction in M.E. Lien and B. Nerlich *The Politics of Food* (Eds.) Oxford, Berg, pp. 1-17.

Littler, J. (2009) *Radical Consumption: Shopping for Change in Contemporary Culture*, Buckingham, Open University Press.

Livingstone, S. M. and Lunt, P. K. *Mass Consumption and Personal Identity: Everyday Economic Experience*, Buckingham, Open University Press.

Lodziak, C. (2000) On Explaining Consumption, *Capital and Class* 24 (3) pp. 111-133.

Low, W. and Davenport, E. (2005). "Has the Medium (Roast) Become the Message?" *International Marketing Review* 22 (5) pp. 494-511.

Lupton, D. (1996) *Food, the Body and the Self*, London, SAGE.

Macnaghten, P. and Urry, J. (1998) *Contested Natures*, London, SAGE.

Marsden, T. (2011) Sustainability Science and a New Spatial Imagination: Exploring Some Analytical and Methodological Considerations, in A. Franklin and P. Blyton (Eds.) R*esearching Sustainability: A guide to Social Science Methods, Practice and Engagement*, London, Earthscan, pp. 297-315.

McCracken, G. (1990) *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

McIntosh, W. A. (2010) Writing the Food Studies Movement, *Food, Culture and Society*, 13 (2) pp. 169-179.

Mellor, J. Blake, M. and Crane, L. (2010) When I'm Doing a Dinner Party I don't Go for the Tesco's Cheeses: Gendered Class Distinctions, Friendship and Home Entertainment, Food, *Culture and Society* 13 (1) pp. 116-134.

Mennel, S. Murcott, A. and van Otterloo, A. H. (1992). *The Sociology of Food: Eating, Diet and Culture*. London, SAGE.

Mennell, S. (1985) *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France form the Middle Ages to the Present*. Oxford, Blackwell.

Merton, R. K. Fiske, M. and Kendall, P. (1956, 1990) *The Focused Interview: A Manual of Problems and Procedures*, New York, Free Press.

Micheletti, M. (2003) *Political Virtue and Shopping: Individuals, Consumerism and Collective Action*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

Micheletti, M. Follesdal, A. and Stolle, D. (2004) *Politics, Products and Markets: Exploring Political Consumerism Past and Present*, New Jersey, Transaction Publishers.

Miele, M. (2006) 'Consumption Culture: The Case of Food', in P. J. Cloke, T. Marsden and P. Mooney (eds) *Handbook of Rural Studies*, London, SAGE, pp. 344-354.

Miller, D. (1998) *A Theory of Shopping*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Mintz, S. (1985) Time, Sugar and Sweetness, *Marxist Perspectives* 2 (4) pp. 56-73.

Morgan, K. (2010) Local and Green, Global and Fair: The Ethical Foodscape and the Politics of Care, *Environment and Planning A*, 42 pp. 1852-1867.

Murcott, A. (1983) *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food*, Aldershot, Gower Publishing Company Ltd.

Murcott, A. (1998) *The Nation's Diet: The Social Science of Food Choice,* Harlow, Addison Wesley Longman Ltd.

Nestle, M. (2010) Writing the Food Studies Movement, Food, *Culture and Society*, 13 (2) pp. 159-168.

O'Connor, J. (1996) The Second Contradiction of Capitalism in T. Benton (Eds.) *The Greening of Marxism*, London, The Guildford Press.

Outhwaite, W. (1987) *New Philosophies of Science*, London, Macmillan.

Pahl, R. (1989) Is the Emperor Naked? Some Comments on the Adequacy of Sociological Theory in Urban and Regional Research, *International Journal Urban and Regional Research* 15, pp.127-9.

Payne, G. and Grew, C. (2005) Unpacking Class Ambivalence: Some Conceptual and Methodological issues in Accessing Class Cultures, *Sociology* 39 (5) pp. 893-910.

Peirce, C. S. (1931) *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, London, Oxford University Press.

Peräkläya, A. (2011) Validity in Research on Naturally Occurring Social Interaction, in D. Silverman (eds.) *Qualitative Research*, Third Edition, London, SAGE, pp. 365-382.

Peterson, R. A. (2005) Problems in Comparative Research: The Example of Omnivorousness, *Poetics* 33 (5) pp. 257-82.

Peterson, R. and Kern, R. (1996) Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore, *American Sociological Review* 61 pp. 900-907.

Phillips, N. And Hardy, C. (2002) *Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction*, London, SAGE.

Pretty, J. Ball, A. S. Benton, T. Guivant, J. Lee, D.R. Orr, D. Pfeffer, M.J. and Ward, H. Eds. (2007) *The SAGE Handbook of Environment and Society*, London, SAGE.

Prior, L. (2003) *Using Documents in Social Research*, London, SAGE.

Prynne, C. J. Paul, A. A. Mishra, G. D. Hardy, R. J. Bolton-Smith, C. and Wadsworth, M. E. J. (2002) Sociodemographic Inequalities in the Diet of Young Children in the 1946 British Birth Cohort, *Public Health Nutrition*, 5 (6) pp. 733-745.

Reckwitz, A. (2002) Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5 (2) pp. 243-263.

Reed, M. (2000) The Limits of Discourse Analysis in Organizational Analysis, *Organization*, 7, pp. 524-530.

Redclift, M. (2009) The Environment and Carbon Dependence: Landscapes of Sustainability and Materiality, *Current Sociology* 57 (3) pp. 369-388.

Redclift, M. And Woodgate, G. (2000) *The International Handbook of Environmental Sociology*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

Riessman, C. K. (1993) *Narrative Analysis*, CA, SAGE.

Renting, H. Marsden, T. and Banks, J. (2003) Understanding Alternative Food Networks: Exploring the Role of Short Food Supply Chains in Rural Development, *Environment and Planning A*, 35, pp. 393-411.

Ritzer, G. (1993) *The McDonaldization of Society: Revised New Century Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE.

Rubin, H. J and Rubin, I. S. (1995) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, Thousand Oaks CA, SAGE.

Sage, C. (2003) Social Embededness and Relations of Regard: Alternative 'Good Food' Networks in South-West Ireland, *Journal of Rural Studies*, 19, pp. 47-60.

Sanjek, R. (1990) *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*, New York, Cornell University Press.

Saunders, P. (1990) *Social Class and Stratification*, London, Routledge.

Saussure, F. (1383) *Course in General Linguistics*, Chicago, Open Court.

Savage, M. (2000) *Class Analysis and Social Transformation*, Buckingham, Open University Press.

Savage, M. (2005) Working Class Identities in the 1960's: Revisiting the Affluent Worker Study, *Sociology*, 39 (5) pp. 929-946.

Savage, M. (2010) *Identities and Social Change in Britain Since 1940: The Politics of Method*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Savage, M. and Silva, E. and Warde, A. (2010) Dis-identification and Class Identity in E. Silva and A. Warde (Eds.) *Cultural Analysis and Bourdieu's Legacy: Settling Accounts and Developing Alternatives*, Oxon, Routledge, pp.60-74.

Savage, M. Bagnall, G. and Longhurst, B. (2001) Ordinary, Ambivalent and Defensive: Class Identities in the Northwest of England, *Sociology*, 35 (4) pp. 875-892.

Savage, M. Barlow, J. Dickens, P. and Fielding, A.J. (1992) *Property, Bureaucracy, and Culture: Middle Class Formation in Contemporary Britain*, London, Routledge.

Sayer, A. (2011) Habitus, Work and Contributive Justice, *Sociology*, 45 (1) pp. 7-21.

Sayer, A. (1999) Bourdieu, Smith and Disinterested Judgement, *Sociological Review*.

Sayer, A. (2005a) *The Moral Significance of Class*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Sayer, A. (2005b) Class, Moral Worth and Recognition, *Sociology*, 39 (5) pp. 947-963.

Schatzki, T. (1996) *Social Practices: A Wittgensteinian Approach to Human Activity and the Social*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Schatzki, T. (2002) *The Site of the Social: A Philosophical Account of the Constitution of Social Life and Change*, Pennsylvania State Press, PA.

Schegloff, E. A. (1997) Whose Text? Whose Context? *Discourse and Society*, Vol 8 (2).

Sennett, R. and Cobb, J. (1972) *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, London, Norton and Company.

Seyfang, G. (2004) Consuming Values and Contested Cultures: A Critical Analysis of the UK Strategy for Sustainable Consumption and Production, *Review of Social Economy*, 62 (3) pp. 323-338.

Shortridge, B. G. and Shortridge, J. R. (1998) *The Taste of American Place.* Oxford, Blackwell.

Shove, E. (2010) Beyond the ABC: Climate Change Policy and Theories of Social Change, *Environment and Planning A*, 42, pp. 1273-1285.

Silva, E. (2006) Homologies of Social Space and Elective Affinities: Researching Cultural Capital, *Sociology* 40 (6) pp. 1171-1189.

Silva, E. and Warde, A. (2010) *Cultural Analysis and Bourdieu's Legacy: Settling Accounts and Developing Alternatives*, Routledge, Oxon.

Silva, E. Warde, A. and Wright, D. (2009) Using Mixed Methods for Analysing Cultre: The Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion Project, *Cultural Sociology* 3 (2) pp. 299-316.

Silverman, D. (1997) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, London, SAGE.

Skeggs, B. (1997) *Formations of Class and Gender*, London, SAGE.

Skeggs, B. (2004) *Class, Self, Culture*, London, Routledge.

Slater, N. (1993) *Real Fast Food*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Slocum, R. (2008) Thinking Race through Corporeal Feminist Theory: Divisions and Intimacies at the Minneapolis Farmers' Market, *Social and Cultural Geographies* 9 (8) pp. 849-869.

Smith, A. (1759, 1984) *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Indianapolis, Liberty Press.

Soper, K. (2007) Re-thinking the "Good Life": The Citizenship Dimension of Consumer Disaffection with Consumerism, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 7 (2) pp. 205-229.

Southerton, D. (2002) Boundaries of 'Us' and 'Them': Class, Mobility and Identification in a New Town, *Sociology*, 36 (1) pp. 171-193.

Spradley, J. (1979) *The Ethnographic Interview*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Wilson.

Sprokkereef, A. Larkin, E. Pole, C.J. and Burgess, R.G. (1995) The Data, the Team and the Ethnograph, *Studies in Qualitative Methodology*, 5 pp. 81-103.

Stake, R. E. (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*, Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE.

Stoecker, R. (1991) Evaluating and Rethinking the Case Study, *The Sociological Review* 39, pp. 88-11.

Tomlinson, M. and Warde, A. (1993) Social Class and Change in Eating Habits. *British Food Journal* 95(1) pp. 3-8.

Urry, J. (2011) *Climate Change and Society*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Van Dijk, T.A. (2001) Critical Discourse Analysis, in D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen and H.E. Hamilton (Eds.) The Handbook of Discourse Analysis, Oxford, Blackwell, pp. 352-371.

Veblen, T. (1899, 1994) *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Dover Thrift Editions, Toronto, General Publishing Company Ltd.

Vicinus, M. (1974) *The Industrial Muse: A Study of Nineteenth-Century British Working-Class Literature*, London, Croom Helm.

Wainwright, S. P. (2011) Is Sociology Warming to Climate Change? *Sociology*, 45 (1) pp. 173-177.

Waquant, L. (1992) Toward a Social Praxeology: The Structure and Logic of Bourdieu's Sociology, in P. Bourdieu and L. Waquant (eds.) *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Cambridge, Polity, pp. 1-47.

Warde, A. (1994) Consumption, Identity Formation and Uncertainty, *Sociology* 28 (4) pp. 877-898.

Warde, A. (1997) *Consumption, Food and Taste: Culinary Antinomies and Commodity Culture*, London, SAGE.

Warde, A. Martens, L. and Olsen, W. (1999) Consumption and the Problem of Variety: Cultural Omnivorousness, Social Distinction and Dining Out, *Sociology* 33 (1) pp. 105-127.

Warde, A. and Martens, L. (2000) *Eating Out: Social Differentiation, Consumption and Pleasure*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Warde, A. (2005) Consumption and Theories of Practice, *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 5 (2) pp. 131-153.

Warde, A. (2011) Cultural Hostility Reconsidered, *Cultural Sociology*, 5 (3) pp. 341-366.

Warde, A. Wright, D. and Gayo-cal, M. (2005) Understanding Cultural Omnivorousness: Or, the Myth of the Cultural Omnivore, *Cultural Sociology*, 1 pp. 143-163.

Weitzman, E. A. and Miles, M. B. (1995) *Computer Programmes for Qualitative Data Analysis*, Thousand Oaks, CA, SAGE.

Welsh Assembly Government (2009) *Food Tourism Action Plan: 'Food and Drink for Wales'*, Crown Copyright.

Welsh Assembly Government (2009) *Local Sourcing Action Plan: 'Food and Drink for Wales'*, Crown Copyright.

Welsh Assembly Government (2009) *One Wales, One Planet: The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Assembly Government,* Crown Copyright.

Welsh Assembly Government (2010) *Food for Wales, Food From Wales 2010/2020: Food Strategy for Wales*, Crown Copyright.

Whitmarsh, L. (2011) Commentary, *Environment and Planning A*, 43 pp. 258-261.

Wood, L. and Kroger, R. (2000) *Discourse Analysis: Methods of Studying Action in Talk and Text*, London, SAGE.

Williams, R. (1958) Culture is Ordinary, in I. Szeman and T. Kaposy (Eds.) *Cultural Theory: An Anthology,* Oxford, Blackwell, pp. 53-60.

Yearley, S. (2009) Sociology and Climate Change After Kyoto, *Current Sociology*, 57 (3) pp. 389-405.

Yin, R. K. (2003) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, London, SAGE.

Young, J. and Willmott, P. (1957) *Family and Kinship in East London*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Zepeda, L. (2009) Which Little Piggy Goes to Market? Characteristics of US Farmers' Market Shoppers, *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 33 pp. 250-257.

Zukin, S. (2008) Consuming Authenticity: From Outposts of Difference to Means of Exclusion, *Cultural Studies* 22 (5) pp. 724-728.

Zweig, F. (1961) The *Worker in an Affluent Society: Family Life and Industry*, London, Heinemann.

Appendix 1: List of Participants

Participants who are included in the thesis are marked in bold.

Name	RCFC/RFM	Gender	Age Group	Occupation
Catherine	RFM	Female	31-40	Manager
Rhys	RFM	Male	31-40	Graphic Designer
Adam	RFM	Male	21-30	Student/Works for a Charity
Karen	RFM	Female	51+	University Lecturer
Trevor	RFM	Male	51+	Retired
Valerie	RFM	Female	51+	Art Student (Retired)
Ronald	RFM	Male	31-40	Scientist
Jenny	RFM	Female	31-40	Civil Servant
Robert	RFM	Male	51+	Story-teller
Niamh	RFM	Female	21-30	Physiotherapist
Samantha	RCFC	Female	31-40	Administrator (Maternity Leave)
Julianne	RCFC	Female	51+	Artist (Unemployed)
Bev	RCFC	Female	31-40	Administrator
Victoria	RCFC	Female	51+	Administrator
Gina	RCFC	Female	31-40	Lecturer
Laura	RCFC	Female	21-30	Massage Therapist
Emily	RCFC	Female	21-30	Jehova's Witness
Ken	RCFC	Male	41-50	Unemployed (Engineer)
Vera	RCFC	Female	51+	Administrator
Sheila	RCFC	Female	51+	Sales Assistant
Marina	RCFC	Female	31-40	Housewife

Appendix 2: The Research Sites

The Farmers' Market – Home-made chutneys

The Farmers' Market - The seating area

The Farmers' Market – The olive bar

The Community Food Co-operative – A view of the community centre

The Community Food Co-operative – The produce as it arrives

The Community Food Co-operative – The produce as it arrives

The Community Food Co-operative – 'Bagging up'

The Community Food Co-operative –A vegetable bag

The Community Food Co-operative – A salad bag

The Community Food Co-operative – A fruit bag

Appendix 3: Farmers' Market/Co-op Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a research project being carried out at Cardiff University. Please fill this in during your visit, and return to the ballot box at the coffee stall. Thanks for your time.

1. Sex   Female ☐   Male ☐

2. How old are you? Please tick.

16-25 years ☐   26-35 years ☐   36-45 years ☐   46-55 years ☐   56-65 years ☐   66+ years ☐

3. Please fill in your postcode. [   ]

4. Please state what you consider to be your ethnic and national identity? Please fill in.

Ethnic identity: [   ]   National identity: [   ]

 (e.g. Asian, White, Black **etc)**   **(e.g.** Welsh, English, Irish, British, Egyptian **etc)**

5. How often do you visit this market? Please tick.

Every week ☐   Every month ☐   About twice a year ☐
Every fortnight   Every two or three months   This is my first visit

6. Approximately, which of these categories reflects your gross annual income? Please tick.

	You	Your Partner		You	Your Partner		You	Your Partner
Less than £10,000	☐	☐	£40- 60,000	☐	☐	£80-100,000	☐	☐
£10-20,000	☐	☐	£66-70,000	☐	☐	£100-150,000	☐	☐
£20-40,000	☐	☐	70-80,000	☐	☐	Over 150,000	☐	☐

7. What is your occupation? E.g. waitress, student, lawyer, stay at home parent/carer/home maker/retired.

You	**Your Partner**
[ ]	[ ]

8. On what basis do you do this work?

	You	Your Partner		You	Your Partner
Full Time	☐	☐	Part Time	☐	☐

9. Please state your highest educational qualification.

Highest qualification: [   ]   **Age awarded** [   ] **Year awarded** [   ]
                                               (approx)   **(approx)**

Currently studying for:
(if applicable) [   ]

10. Please state the occupation and highest educational qualification achieved by each of your parents.

	Your mother	**Your father**
Occupation	[ ]	[ ]
Highest qualification	[ ]	[ ]

Appendix 4: Aide Memoir

"I'm going to start the interview proper now, I'm not going to say much, just ask you some open questions as I want to hear about you and your experiences of shopping for food, and in particular about the market how that fits around your other routines. If we wander off into other topics that's great, because I want to get a feel for how food in general fits into your life and of those around you, so please don't feel that we have to stick rigidly to the topic of food and the market"

A little bit about themselves…

Just to start off with, could you tell me a little bit about yourself, what do you like to do, where do you work etc?

Could you tell me a little bit about the area where you live?

What do you like to do in your spare time… what sorts of things do you enjoy, are you interested in? What do you do outside of work in the evenings and weekends?

Reasons for coming …

Can you tell me a little bit about what brings you to the market?

Have you been to any other farmers markets?

Can you tell me a bit about your routine of coming to the market? What sorts of things do you do before coming, during and afterwards?

Can you tell me a little bit about your general routine for shopping for food and groceries in general?

How does the market compare or contrast with the other places you shop?

What have you bought? Is this a typical 'shop' for you?

What would you say makes you come here over anywhere else?

What are your favourite things about coming here?

A little bit about themselves and the other customers/peer group…

Do you see people you know/recognise here?

Do you remember the first time you came to the market? Can you tell me a little bit about what you did, what you thought and generally what that was like?

Farmers markets seem to be getting quite popular these days, why do you think that is? Follow up with getting them to link it with their own thinking about the growth of popularity of markets and spaces of ethical food consumption in relation to themselves.