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**FOOD AND MEN IN CINEMA**  
**AN EXPLORATION OF GENDER IN BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES**

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**FOOD AND MEN IN CINEMA:  
AN EXPLORATION OF GENDER IN BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES**

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The goal of this dissertation is to examine how popular movies, often called “blockbusters” when referring to their international success at the box office, portray masculinity and men’s interactions around food and eating. The common and mundane objects, attitudes, and practices that revolve around food play an important role in men’s personal development and social interactions. More specifically, the research is aimed at investigating how food representations in film embrace, naturalize, or question cultural assumptions about masculinity and gender relations. The theoretical framework of the research is based on the following concepts, as developed in recent literature from masculinity studies, food studies, and film studies:

1. Masculinities are socially and historically constructed, plural, and in constant transformation. The cultural assumption of a univocal and stable masculinity is an ideological formation.
2. Food is pervasive and finds itself at the center of frequent and significant social interactions that mark various aspects of subject identity, including gender.
3. In films, masculinities are made visible and become part of a shared repository constituting the social activity that can be defined as collective fantasy of imagination.

On the base of these theoretical propositions and of the available literature in the relevant fields, I developed two hypotheses:

1. Food-related scenes provide an apparently neutral and natural space for representations of masculinity to be conveyed. For this reasons these scenes tend to be overlooked by viewers, despite their frequency.
2. The analysis of food-related scenes can help us identify a set of recurrent traits that outline diverse masculinity models offered to audiences around the world.

In order to test my hypotheses, I identified a sample constituted by of all the movies (excluding cartoons) that earned more than 250 million US dollars outside the United States between 1990 and 2007. I applied content analysis - a methodology often used in media and communication studies – to this sample, pinpointing and quantifying all the food-related scenes I observed in each movie. Furthermore, by coding these scenes according to recurrent categories based on theme and content, I was able to gauge their statistical frequency in order to determine the most recurring ones, which can also be considered the most relevant in the cultural perceptions of masculinity.

The analysis of the sample, which consists of 58 movies, originated a taxonomy of 151 coding categories (“situational scripts”) that cover 940 food-specific scenes (“occurrences”) involving men and food. The analysis also allowed me to identify 5 broad narrative arcs (“interpretive types”) describing the development (or lack thereof) of the male protagonists in the 58 movies. The examination of the function of the scenes within the different story lines indicates that most food-related occurrences in the movie sample play a narrative or descriptive function in the plot development, with very few occurrences as key nodal scenes. This distribution suggests that food-specific scenes, due to their secondary role, are perceived as natural and normal, thus becoming virtually invisible to the viewers. This invisibility allows actors, scriptwriters, and filmmakers to display cultural elements deriving from widespread models of masculinity that in other, more relevant or spectacular parts of the movies would not be expressed so freely.

Whatever the reason for the presence of food scenes, their apparent ordinariness and familiarity offers an apt environment for the representation of values, attitudes and behaviors that reflect widely accepted and culturally sanctioned templates of what a man should be like and act like.

Most food scenes offer images of strong, determined, and powerful males, ready to assert themselves over other men and over women. The physical appearance of the protagonists (usually fit or athletic) reinforces their role as fighters and often as winners. Most movies in the sample feature white male leads, with characters of other races and ethnicities often pushed to the sides of the action or used as props. White, adult, middle or working class masculinities are thus equated with mainstream, acceptable, hegemonic masculinities. The absence of scenes featuring women around food without men confirms the role of food as a tool for control and negotiation among genders and their established social roles. The data also show that food is often featured in scenes where men share and celebrate, underlining its social significance and its function as a cultural marker to identify groups and to exclude outsiders. However, the emotional and more intimate values connected to food and ingestion are not totally erased, revealing aspects of masculinity less connected to power and social performance but still relevant for the males' personal lives. It is also intriguing that many scenes refer to the fear of being ingested, showing deeply ingrained insecurities.

In sum, food related scenes involving men in the movie sample on one side reiterate well-established models of masculinity, while on the other they reveal aspects of fragility and anxiety that otherwise would not be traceable in other kinds of scenes, especially in action movies.

**Fabio Parasecoli**

**ESSEN UND MÄNNER IM KINO:  
EINE ERKUNDUNG DES GESCHLECHTS IN BLOCKBUSTER FILMEN**

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Das Ziel dieser Doktorarbeit ist zu untersuchen, wie populäre Filme, die wegen ihres internationalen Erfolgs an der Kino Kasse oft als „Blockbuster“ bezeichnet werden, Männlichkeit und das männliche Zusammenspiel in Bezug auf Nahrung und die Nahrungsaufnahme darstellen. Die gewöhnlichen und banalen Gegebenheiten, Verhaltensweisen und Praktiken bezüglich des Themas Nahrung spielen eine wichtige Rolle in der persönlichen Entwicklung und den gesellschaftlichen Kontakten von Männern. Insbesondere soll diese Forschungsarbeit Aufschluss darüber geben, wie die Darstellung von Nahrung im Film kulturelle Annahmen über Männlichkeit und Geschlechterrollen übernimmt, einbürgert oder in Frage stellt.

Die theoretischen Rahmenbedingungen dieser Forschungsarbeit basieren auf folgenden Leitbildern, wie aus der jüngsten Literatur mehrerer Studien über Männlichkeit, Lebensmittelkunde und Film hervorgeht:

1. Männlichkeiten sind gesellschaftlich und geschichtlich erdacht, vielfältig und in konstantem Wandel. Die kulturelle Annahme einer eindeutigen und beständigen Männlichkeit ist ein ideologisches Gebilde.
2. Nahrung ist überall vorhanden und befindet sich im Zentrum häufiger und bedeutender gesellschaftlichen Kontakte, die viele Aspekte der Subjektidentität einschließlich der Geschlechterthematik, auszeichnen.
3. In Filmen werden Männlichkeiten sichtbar und vergleichbar gemacht. Sie werden Teil einer gemeinsamen Fundgrube, die die gesellschaftliche Denkweise formt, die als gemeinsame Vorstellung der Imagination definiert werden kann.

Auf der Grundlage dieser theoretischen Aussagen und der verfügbaren Literatur der entsprechenden Fachgebiete habe ich zwei Hypothesen entwickelt:

1. Szenen, die mit Nahrungsmitteln in Zusammenhang stehen, liefern einen scheinbar neutralen und natürlichen Raum, um Darstellungen der Männlichkeit zu vermitteln. Aus diesem Grund, neigen Zuschauer dazu, diese Szenen, trotz ihrer Häufigkeit, zu übersehen.
2. Die Analyse der Szenen, die mit Nahrungsmitteln in Verbindung stehen, kann uns helfen, eine Reihe von wiederkehrenden Charaktereigenschaften zu ermitteln, die diverse Modelle der Männlichkeit skizzieren, die dem Publikum der ganzen Welt dargeboten werden.

Um meine Hypothesen zu prüfen, legte ich eine Auswahl fest, zusammengestellt aus allen Filmen (ausgenommen Cartoons), die außerhalb der Vereinigten Staaten zwischen 1990 und 2007 mehr als 250 Millionen US Dollar eingebracht haben. Ich wendete auf diese Stichprobe eine Inhaltsanalyse an, eine Methode, die oft in den Medien oder Kommunikationsstudien verwendet wird, indem ich alle Szenen der Filme, die mit Nahrungsmitteln in Verbindung stehen, genau festlegte und quantifizierte.

Darüber hinaus konnte ich durch das Kodieren der Szenen, entsprechend wiederkehrender Kategorien in Bezug auf Inhalt und Thematik die statistische Häufigkeit messen, um die am häufigsten wiederkehrenden Szenen auszumachen, die auch als die wichtigsten in der kulturellen Auffassung der Männlichkeit betrachtet werden können.



Die Analyse der Probe, die sich aus 58 Filmen zusammensetzt, brachte eine Taxonomie/Klassifizierungslehre bestehend aus 151 Kodierungsrubriken („situationsbezogene Filmszenen/Skripte“) hervor, die 940 nahrungsmittelspezifische Szenen („Ereignisse“) erfassen, die Männer und Nahrung einbeziehen. Die Analyse machte es mir möglich, 5 klare Handlungsbögen („interpretative Ausführung“) zu erkennen, die die Entwicklung (oder den Mangel an Entwicklung) des männlichen Hauptdarstellers in den 58 Filmen beschreiben.

Die Untersuchung der Funktion der Szenen innerhalb der verschiedenen Handlungsstränge lässt darauf schließen, dass die meisten nahrungsmittelbezogenen Ereignisse der Filmauswahl eine narrative oder beschreibende Funktion im Handlungsverlauf haben, mit nur sehr wenigen Ereignissen als Schlüsselszenen. Diese Verteilung deutet darauf hin, dass nahrungsmittelspezifische Szenen, durch ihre untergeordnete Rolle, als natürlich und normal wahrgenommen werden und dadurch für den Zuschauer praktisch unsichtbar werden.

Diese Unsichtbarkeit erlaubt es Schauspielern, Drehbuchautoren und Filmemachern kulturelle Elemente, die von weit verbreiteten Männlichkeitsmodellen abstammen, welche in anderen, relevanteren oder spektakuläreren Teilen des Films nicht so frei ausgedrückt würden, vorzuführen. Was auch immer der Grund für das Vorhandensein von Essensszenen sein mag, ihre scheinbare Normalität und Vertrautheit bieten eine passende Umgebung für die Darstellung von Werten, Einstellungen und Verhaltensmustern, die weithin akzeptierte und kulturell sanktionierte Muster dessen, wie ein Mann sein sollte und wie er sich verhalten sollte, widerspiegeln.

Die meisten Nahrungsmittelszenen vermitteln Vorstellungen von starken, entschlossenen und leistungsstarken Männern, die bereit sind, sich gegenüber anderen Männern und gegenüber Frauen zu behaupten. Die körperliche Erscheinung der Hauptdarsteller (normalerweise sind sie fit und athletisch) bestärkt ihre Rolle als Kämpfer und häufig als Gewinner. Die meisten Filme der Auswahl besitzen männliche Weiße in der Hauptrolle, wobei Charaktere anderer Rasse und Volkszugehörigkeit häufig an den Rand der Handlung gedrängt oder als Requisite benutzt werden. Weiße, erwachsene, dem Mittelstand- oder der Arbeiterschaft angehörige Männlichkeiten sind deshalb mit durchschnittlichen, vertretbaren, hegemonialen Männlichkeiten gleichgestellt. Das Fehlen von Szenen, die Frauen ohne Männer im Zusammenhang mit Nahrung darstellen, bestätigt die Rolle von Nahrung als ein Werkzeug der Kontrolle und der Gesprächsführung unter den Geschlechtern und deren etablierten gesellschaftlichen Rollen.

Die Messwerte zeigen auch, dass Nahrung häufig in Szenen dargestellt wird, in denen Männer miteinander zelebrieren und zusammen essen. Dies hebt die gesellschaftliche Bedeutung und Funktion des Essens als kulturellen Marker hervor, der Gruppenidentität verstärkt, während Außenseiter ausgeschlossen werden. Dennoch sind die gefühlsbetonten und eher intimen Werte, die mit Nahrung und der Nahrungsaufnahme verbunden sind, nicht vollkommen ausgelöscht. Sie enthüllen Aspekte der Männlichkeit, die weniger mit Macht und der gesellschaftlichen Leistung verbunden sind, aber immer noch von Bedeutung für das männliche Privatleben sind. Es ist auch interessant, dass viele Szenen sich damit beschäftigen, dass die Männer Angst haben, aufgeessen zu werden. Diesem Motiv unterliegen tiefe verwurzelte Unsicherheiten.

Mit einem Wort, Szenen in diesen ausgewählten Filmen, die Männer und Nahrung repräsentieren, wiederholen auf der einen Seite etablierte Modelle der Männlichkeit, während sie auf der anderen Seite Zerbrechlichkeit und Beklemmung enthüllen, die sonst in anderen Szenen nicht auffindbar sind, insbesondere in Action Filmen.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

*In a globalized world, we must pay attention also to very large-scale structures. An understanding of the world gender order is a necessary basis for thinking about men and masculinities globally. Hegemony in contemporary gender order is connected with patterns of trade, investment, and communication dominated by the North.*

(R. W. Connell 1998:3)

### I. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Revealing Food in Movies

The list of movies where men are represented around food is endless: among the most popular, we can mention *Big Night* (1996), *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover* (1989), *Eat Drink Man Women* (1994), and *Ratatouille* (2007). The common element in all these movies is that they are all about men, providing food, working in the kitchen, eating, cooking, learning how to cook, or gorging themselves. Men prepare food in comedies (*Spanglish*, 2004), gangster movies (*Goodfellas*, 1990), and romantic dramas (*Mostly Martha*, 2001). They eat alone and with other men before a killing spree (*The Godfather*, 1972) and after multiple murders (*Pulp Fiction*, 1994). In numberless movies, adult and young men share the family table, destroy it, make it into a battlefield, or impose their rule over it.

Women have been prominent in recent movies where food appears visibly, but men are always lurking around, ready to steal the scene and make it theirs. Cinema

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representations of men around food are now almost as frequent as women's. Is this just the consequence of a renewed – or sometimes brand new – interest in food in all media or rather indication of a wider, deep-reaching reflection in popular culture about what makes a man a man? After all, there have been – and there still are – many debates about the crisis of traditional masculinities, from daytime talk shows and self-help books, to activist gatherings and scholarly publications.

The purpose of this dissertation is precisely to examine how food representations interact in a specific medium – film – to establish, question, reinforce, reproduce or destroy cultural assumptions about masculinity and gender relations. However, I have chosen to examine movies that do not necessarily focus on food as their main theme. In fact, one of the goals of this work is to ascertain if food can be used as a viable key to interpret images and cultural constructions of masculinity even when it is almost invisible, hidden in plots that exalt and highlight traits of manhood that are far from domesticity and daily life. I aim to identify common elements or themes that are likely to have acquired worldwide visibility, and that as a consequence might arguably play some role in the way masculinities are perceived, constructed, and embodied in the global exchanges and fluxes of communication, media material, visual elements, concepts, values, and practices that constitute contemporary pop culture.

Food's social, economic, and political relevance cannot be ignored. Ingestion and incorporation constitute a paramount component of our connection with reality and the world outside our body. Food influences our lives as a relevant marker of power, cultural capital, class, ethnic and religious identities. It has become the object of a wide and ever-growing corpus of scholarly and popular studies: from marketing to history, from nutrition to anthropology. Yet, many layers of meaning related to food in its connection with masculinity are often left unexplored.

### **Blockbusters as Text**

Why looking at movies? First of all, they are meant to entertain, and many people love them and watch them regularly both in the theaters and at home, thanks to VCR, DVD, and more recently DVR, which lets viewers record movies from their TVs and enjoy them at their leisure. In today's ever changing technological worlds, Playstations

and iPods now allow us to watch movies while waiting for a train or holding on to the hangers of a subway car. We cannot underestimate the impact of this barrage of media communication on the ways we experience and represent ourselves as individuals and as members of social groups.

Looking at cinema can help us shed new light on these aspects, including when analyzing movies that do not necessarily have men or food or both as their main theme. Actually, at times, the most revealing material is found where we would not necessarily look for it, arguably because scriptwriters, filmmakers, and actors feel freer about performing traits of masculinity that under other circumstances would be erased and made invisible. In other words, when the spotlight is not on them, men in movies may reveal a lot about themselves when engaged in production, acquisition, and consumption of food, which has the potential to be used to uncover social and power relations that would otherwise not be noticeable.

My analysis concentrates on blockbusters, that is to say Hollywood high budget productions that can boast record box office sales all over the world. In these movies, men are heroes and often superheroes, busy conquering the object of their affection, saving the world, and even battling the forces of evil, with mixed results. To examine these representations of men and manhood, I have further restricted my sample to movies that between 1990 and 2007 have grossed more than 250 million dollars outside the US, which happens to be the country of origin for all of them. With the exclusion of feature length cartoons, which are a very identifiable kind of movie with their own internal rules that address a specific audience, I ended up with a sample of 58 Hollywood movies, which I have examined quantitatively and qualitatively by applying content analysis methods. As I will explain extensively in the methodology section of the research (Chapter 4), the sample constitutes a homogeneous cluster in that, from the chronological point of view, the movies were all produced and distributed in less than 20 years. In terms of long-term transformations and continuity of a cultural concept such as masculinity, it is reasonable to assume that such a limited lapse of time does not present major fractures. The debates in film studies literature (Chapter 3) suggest that noticeable changes in Hollywood representations of masculinity took place in the 1970s and the 1980s, partly as a consequence of the Vietnam war and the following social unrest; however, since then it

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would appear that the movie industry has been cautious in defying well-established models of manhood, which at any rate are more diverse and complex than in the past, reflecting changes in social perceptions of men and their roles, as Chapter 2 will indicate.

By 1990 VCRs were common enough, and rental companies such as Blockbuster established enough, that movies could reach wider and wider sections of potential audiences all over the world. Nowadays, it is easy to have access to 20 year-old movies, especially blockbusters, which circulate in many copies. On the other hand, due to technological innovations like computers, DVDs, DVRs, and iPods, we can safely presume that the newer movies in the sample are likely to have achieved levels of popularity and spectatorship that make them equivalent to the older movies in terms of their impact on viewers and their cultural environment. Moreover, many of the stories and characters represented in the movies I examined were already familiar to large sections of the audiences. For instance, the tragedies of the Titanic and Pearl Harbor are events that boast worldwide notoriety. Some movies are adaptations of very famous comic-book series (*Spider-Man*), literary sagas (*The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*), TV shows (*Mission Impossible*, *Transformers*), or novels (*I Am Legend*, *The Da Vinci Code*). A few are remakes of classics such as *King Kong*, *Willy Wonka*, the *War of the Worlds*, and *Casino Royale*. Others are based on original scripts but, like *Star Wars* or the *Matrix*, have reached cult status in pop culture. Whatever their origin, many characters have become extremely popular all over the world and have appeared in other media.

For this reason, from the theoretical point of view, I have treated the sample of 58 movies as an expression of a single “code”, in the sense introduced by the French critic Roland Barthes in *S/Z* (Barthes 1974). As film theorist Kaja Silverman explains,

A code represents a sort of bridge between texts. Its presence within one text involves a simultaneous reference to all of the other texts in which it appears, as to the cultural reality which it helps to define – i.e. to a particular symbolic order... The codes which manifest themselves through connotation function endlessly to repeat what has been written in other books and portrayed in other films, and so to reproduce the existing cultural order. Repetition does the same thing for that order as constant re-interpellation does for the subject. It creates the illusion of stability and continuity (Silverman 1983: 239).

The concept reflects the early 1970s considerations on ideology by the French sociologist Louis Althusser, who also influenced the debate on gender and masculinity by suggesting that gender, patriarchy, family and even sexual desire reveal their character of ideological formations. They aim in fact at reproducing the existing cultural and social order within institutions such as the state, the school, the workplace, and the army (Althusser 1971: 211).

All ideology represents in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production (and the other relations that derive from them), but above all the (imaginary) relationship of individuals to the relations of production and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live (Althusser 1971: 164-65).

For these apparatuses to work at their best, as Althusser maintained in “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” oppression and the ideology that sustains it must keep their mechanisms and modus operandi invisible, to the point of being perceived as natural and normal (Althusser 1971: 127-188).

Barthes’ codes would then constitute an incarnation of ideology in communication. To explain their mechanisms, Barthes had previously developed the concept of “myth” as a special kind of “sign” that in its entirety (signifier and signified) becomes a mere signifier for another sign and is given a different meaning. Barthes famously analyzed a magazine cover representing a young black man in a French uniform saluting, with his eyes uplifted, the French flag. The basic meaning of the picture, the content that all viewers more or less shared (its “denotation”), was just that: a black soldier saluting a flag. At the same time, different meanings (or “connotations”) could be given to this picture; depending on the context it could represent nationalism, French pride, the attachment of the colonized to the colonizer, and so on (Barthes 1972: 109–59). This shift of meaning becomes more noticeable when the same image is used in different media, for instance if a CD cover image becomes a poster, or the inspiration for a musical video, and then it is borrowed in a movie. In *S/Z*, Barthes went further, stating that denotations, far from being natural and straightforward, are actually authoritative, while at the same time

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making codes look neutral and innocent.

Denotation is not the first meaning, but it pretends to be so: under this illusion, it is ultimately no more than the last of the connotations (the one which seems both to establish and to close the reading), the superior myth by which the text pretends to return to the nature of language, to language as nature (Barthes 1974: 9).

The French author identifies five kinds of codes, interwoven in all kinds of texts: the semic (or semantic), which denotes places and persons; the hermeneutic, which articulates and resolves questions and enigmas in the story; the proairetic, which establishes stable sequences of actions to determine “what happens”; the symbolic, that formulates binary oppositions that are central to the organization of the cultural order to which they belong; and the cultural (or referential), which repeats what has always been already read, seen, done, experienced, and which refers to shared knowledge about the way the world works (Barthes 1974). Since my research focus is on issues of masculinity, I will particularly focus on those codes that Barthes defined as symbolic and cultural, and to the way they are expressed, reinforced, and sometimes resisted in the “text” composed by the 58 movies in the sample.

Barthes had already provocatively put forward the propositions that texts – in their traditional interpretation as individual “works” – are actually a cultural illusion. In the famous 1968 essay “The Death of the Author”, often read as a precursor of postmodern theory and a founding text for cultural studies, he stated:

The birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author and that as a matter of fact there is no author speaking, but just language. A text consists of multiple writings, proceeding from several cultures and entering into dialogue, into parody, into contestation; but there is a site where this multiplicity is collected, and this site is not the author, as has hitherto been claimed, but the reader: the reader is the very space in which are inscribed, without any of them being lost, all the citations out of which a writing is made; the unity of a text is not in its origin but in its destination, but this destination can no longer be personal: the reader is a man without history, without biography, without psychology; he is only that someone who holds

collected into one and the same field all of the traces from which writing is constituted (Barthes 1986: 54).

As a consequence, the single work must be distinguished by the text. While the work “is a fragment of substance, it occupies a portion of the spaces of books (for example, in a library), the text is a methodological field” (Barthes 1986: 57). It is evident that the concept can be applied also to the study of movies. For Barthes, to understand texts (or movies), we have to give up the myth of origin and filiation, and accept texts in their irreducible plurality; the text “decants the work from its consumption and recuperates it as play, task, production, practice” (Barthes 1986: 62).

This approach is particularly useful if applied to Hollywood cinema as a “text”, whose analysis as a methodological field, besides as a cluster of specific works, is also justified by the shared cultural background and the political environment in which the movies are conceived, the common social and economic structures of production, distribution, and consumption, and also the widespread awareness and expectations in audiences in terms of actors, directors, plots, editing, development, visual style, production value, etc. In this sense, Hollywood blockbuster movies constitute a good example of what Michel Foucault called a “discursive formation” in his 1969 *Archaeology of Knowledge*: a regularity in terms of order, development, correlations, positions and functioning among objects, concepts, modality of enunciation, and thematic choices that identify otherwise invisible patterns. These formations take place within a discourse field, determined by systems of norms, economic and social dynamics, techniques, and ideas that constitute the preconditions of their very existence (Foucault 1972). As Gillian Rose pointed out, discussing the application of Foucault’s discursive analysis to visual material, “it is possible to think of visuality as a sort of discourse too. A specific visuality will make certain things visible in particular ways, and other things unseeable, for example, and subjects will be produced and act within that field of vision” (Rose 2001: 137).

### **Representations and Performances of Masculinity**

All these questions will be explored within the realm of a specific human experience, that of production, acquisition, and consumption of food, and its



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representations in cinema. Even when food and eating are not the main theme of a movie, scenes that take place around the table or in various situations involving food can reveal interesting elements about gender relationships that are not necessarily as evident in other contexts. Eating is a realm of personal and social experience that is usually considered a mere expression of “natural” instincts and mundane needs and that, precisely for this reason, is not politically and culturally sensitive. However, food's neutral and often uncontested character can reveal aspects of cultural and social dynamics that are otherwise better concealed.

We cannot underestimate food's pervasiveness and its influence on our lives and behaviors as a relevant marker of power, cultural capital, class, gender, ethnic and religious identities. However its meanings, uses, and cultural values are not static and set once and for all, but rather they are socially and historically constructed. Many factors influence the ways we experience, consume and produce food. Among them, we cannot underrate the impact of media, especially in contemporary and global societies where the influence of communication, the movement and displacement of singular individuals and whole populations, the circulation of ideas, goods, money, and technology make habitus and sociological distinctions, in the sense established by Pierre Bourdieu in *Distinction*, much more fluid (Bourdieu 1984). Among contemporary means of communication, the visual ones, especially TV and movies, have acquired a particular relevance in the definition and construction of contemporary subjectivities in contemporary Western societies. Media and psychoanalytic studies, each from different and specific points of view, have argued how images and visual elements are crucial in the constitution and the development of the human subject in its individual and social dimensions. In this ever-changing context, food becomes a sign in itself, influencing the ways we perceive, represent and perform ourselves as gendered individuals and as members of social groups.

Within this theoretical framework, my goal is to give a second look to well known American movies, which are seen all over the globe and provide templates for masculine postures, gestures, values, ideals, and behaviors to men of all cultures. I have analyzed these films to observe common and mundane objects, images, and practices, to show how much food shapes men's lives and their identities, and what role it plays in various kinds

of power relations, including gender. However, despite much discussion about the alleged crisis of traditional masculinity, not only in academia but also in society at large, it is methodologically imperative to maintain a distinction between the images projected by pop culture, media and commercial entities, in our case mainly based in the USA, and the realities of the everyday lives of men in all walks of life within the USA and in other parts of the world (Hall 2005: 9). Although the two dimensions are certainly linked, and exert a reciprocal influence, it is important not to take those connections for granted, but rather to examine them in their historical, social, and psychological aspects, analyzing their development and assessing their effects. Film representations are not mere reflections of reality. However, they can play an ideological role in reinforcing power structures and cultural assumptions even when they appear to be critical of the present reality. Under other circumstances, they can constitute subtle provocations and real attacks against social status quo as viewers know it and perceive it.

Representations acquire special relevance when they are inscribed as norms, ideals, and expectations onto bodies that try to make sense of their daily lives in families, armies, factories, and kitchens. And for men, masculinity is one of the most relevant psychological, cultural and social aspects in their subject formation, although it no longer constitutes a mystical, immutable, and monolithic quality that all males acquire at a certain point in their life, holding on to it as an instrument to affirm their individuality and their role in the world.

But was it ever that? Or was it rather a smokescreen, a cover for deep differences and tensions, even in the darkest times of patriarchal domination? Is masculinity based on biology or rather is it just another category – like age, race and class – within systems of power relations that influence and are influenced in turn by many other social, political, and economic structures and networks? Is manhood an apparatus to ensure control over society at large and over women in particular, or is it rather a way to solidify hierarchies among the men themselves? Is masculinity defined in absolute opposition to women, or can it be rather considered part of a gender continuum that includes different, but sometimes overlapping categories? And, more generally, what are the differences between gender, sex, and sexuality, and as a consequence between men, males, manhood, and masculinity?

### **The Global Circulation of Representations**

Moving to the specific topic of the dissertation, masculinities in movies have been the object of analysis and study, but so far the representations of connections among men, masculinities and food has not elicited much attention. As I have already mentioned, I will contend instead that representations of food, its production and consumption in media interact with the way individuals represent and experience their gender, their identities, and even their own bodies. Anthropologist Ajun Appadurai noticed in his 1996 *Modernity at Large* how imagination and fantasy have become a fundamental social practice, playing an important role in shaping everyday life for many people all over the world and interacting with other sphere of cultural, social, and political life (Appadurai 1996). Following this line of reasoning, I will argue that mass media, and in particular US-made blockbuster movies, offer to many individuals and communities throughout the world new filters through which they can perceive and represent their daily lives. Movies and other forms of visual media are particularly relevant because they provide both visual and aural elements and narrative components (almost like floating pieces of plots, characters, and dialogue) that can be borrowed by individuals, subcultures, and whole communities to make sense of the everyday experience. As a consequence, new narratives, changing identities, and possible practices reflected, created, and made visible by mass media become part of a shared global patrimony that participates in the constitution of contemporary subjectivities.

In contemporary media, caught up in a new dimension of time determined by necessities of capitalist production, transnational financial exchange and high speed information highways, the duration and the “shelf life” of pop culture items in general – and visual and narrative elements in particular – have evolved, making their observation and analysis quite complicated, if not frantic. Following the development of movies and then TV, CD, VHS, DVD, the Internet, the iPod, mobile phones and hand-held computers, more and more elements are added by the minute to the big, bubbling cauldron of visual pop culture. Media industries are always developing new products to boost their sales, while elaborating marketing strategies that translate into new forms of communication, advertising, and cultural dynamics. Although transitory, or maybe

precisely because of their fleeting quality, the present contingencies need to be taken into account, understood and put into perspective to achieve a better grasp on contemporary events. It is increasingly more difficult to keep up with current occurrences, trends, and customs, also because much of the diffusion of movies, TV shows, and music now happen through illegal, and hence not measurable, forms such as bootlegging and sharing of computers files. It is almost impossible to have precise statistical data about the actual number of people that might have been exposed to a certain film: the box offices of movie theaters worldwide, the sales of tapes and DVDs, the paid acquisition of files through on-line stores such iTunes probably represent just a fraction of the circulation of media products.

Furthermore, the images and representations that constitute the network of meaning, values, and practices created by mass media, although global in diffusion are quite localized in their origin. A few movies industries, first of all Hollywood in the United States, provide most of the material for the worldwide creation, exchange, and fruition of visual cultures, assuming a hegemonic position that is often contested but nevertheless acknowledged. The sheer number of movies produced in a certain place is not necessarily reflected in their worldwide impact: the clearest example is the Bollywood industry: arguably the most productive in the world, its influence on the global imagination is still limited to few stylistic elements and some dance moves that get borrowed all over the planet and integrated in the most different contexts.

Against this complex background, it would seem quite difficult to find any point of reference allowing a coherent analysis of the construction and the negotiation of representation of masculinities, or even the formation of a recognizable repertoire of hegemonic images. It could be argued that a model of masculinity created for instance within the social context of the USA could quite plausibly play some role in influencing local cultural dynamics due to sheer weight of the Hollywood film industry and its dominance in pop culture. On the other hand, one could object that these representations are unlikely to cause any actual transformation in the embodied experience of men in other parts of the world that lead very different lives in enormously different social structures, economic environment, and political systems. In this context food provides what can be perceived as a universal experience: men all over the world need to get food,

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prepare it, consume it, maybe share it, and dispose of the leftovers. The dishes and the ingredients might change, the specifics of customs and habits might also differ, the abundance of food or the lack thereof might be apparent, but the whole humankind share the fundamental experience of the biological need to eat. As the physical necessity assumes a cultural dimension that in its naturalness and normality seems to provide stable meanings and social practices, food, its production and its consumption can offer a privileged point of view to look the way various models of masculinity are created, negotiated, questioned and, sometimes, eliminated in the encompassing, worldwide webs of meaning established by the global network of mass media.

However, as Stuart Hall argued, there are huge margins for disruption in communication processes between the encoding mechanisms on the side of the production and the decoding processes on the side of the final users of the message: in other words, media producers often find their message failing to get across to their audiences, when it is not completely distorted or accepted quite selectively, depending on their cultural, social, and political environment (Hall 1980). The issue is further complicated by the fact that movies are becoming more and more similar to other consumer goods also in their form of purchase such as pay-per-view and subscription services etc (Morley 1995).

Film theorists Stam and Spence warned against rigid interpretations of audience understanding of the movies: “The film experience must inevitably be infected by the cultural awareness of the audience itself, constituted outside the text and traversed by sets of social relations such as race, class and gender. We must allow, therefore, for the possibility of aberrant readings, reading which goes against the grain of the discourse. Although fiction films are persuasive machines designed to produce specific impressions and emotions, they are not all-powerful; they might be read differently by different audiences” (Stam and Spence 1983: 19)

Only empirical sociological research, through surveys and spectatorship analysis – well beyond the scope of this work – will be able to ascertain how this repository of images, sounds and narrative elements turns into actual projections, ideas, values, and practices in different part of the world.

## **The Social Life of Pop Culture**

For the purpose of this research, I have defined pop culture as the field of social practice including all the forms of cultural phenomena, material items, practices, social relations, and even ideas and values that are conceived, produced, distributed, and consumed within a market-driven environment, with or without the specific economic goal of reaping a profit. For example, many subcultures develop their own forms of cultural expressions not to make money, but to create a space of resistance to the mainstream, market-controlled cultural industries. However, by becoming the object of criticism and protest, they become visible points of reference and are eventually broken down, subsumed and used in mainstream pop culture, at least in some of their components.

The imaginary and fantasy, as expressed in pop culture, have become a global field of social practice, interacting with other fields such as academic research, economic production, social activism, and political debates to mention a few. Mass media, and in particular movies, offer to many individuals and communities throughout the world new filters through which they can represent, interpret, and sometimes critically examine their daily lives. For this reason mass communication plays an important role in the development of modern politics, as it is particularly evident in the propaganda machines of totalitarian regimes.

Pop culture represents a major repository of visual and narrative elements, ideas, practices, and discourses that influence our relationship with the body (including the way we experience and feel it, in other words our “embodiment”), with food production and consumption, and, of course, with the whole social and political system allowing or hindering individuals from getting what they need on a daily basis. When watching movies, men find themselves negotiating the models offered by US blockbusters with their lived reality, their cultural and social context, their economic status (including access to products and lifestyle proposed by an increasingly globalized consumer culture), and their position in local and national power structures. In many ways, the images from movies constitute what Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe defined as “floating signifiers”, that is to say elements of signifying networks whose meaning and place within the larger cultural system are constantly submitted to an ongoing negotiation

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among various forces in the community that expresses itself through those very signifying networks (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 93-148). Nevertheless, these negotiations require some stable anchorage that protects society from implosion and eventual destruction, providing stability to the social discourse as a whole.

The impossibility of an ultimate fixity of meaning implies that there have to be partial fixations – otherwise, the very flow of differences would be impossible. Even in order to differ, to subvert meaning, there has to be a meaning... Any discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a center. We will call the privileged discursive points of this partial fixation, nodal points. Lacan has insisted on these partial fixations through his concept of *points de capiton*, that is, of privileged signifiers that fix the meaning of a signifying chain. This limitation of the productivity of the signifying chain establishes the positions that make predication possible – a discourse incapable of generating any fixity of meaning is the discourse of the psychotic” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 112).

The results are signs that often maintain the same signifiers (with limited adaptation to the local culture) but carry widely different connotations at the level of the signified. This is what happens, for instance, when a certain gesture or posture from a Hollywood actor in an action movie is copied and adapted by a Bollywood actor in a romantic musical comedy, and then is borrowed again in the West in a totally different context, or in another media. The recent *The Guru of Sex* (2002), directed by Daisy von Scherler Mayer, is a comedic reflection on these themes: an Indian dancer conquers the most exclusive Manhattan socialite circles with his sex counseling, passing himself for a Hindu guru but actually using ideas and visual elements from hard-core American porn and the musical *Grease*. Another amusing example of trans-cultural borrowing of masculinity templates can already be found in the 1954 Italian comedy *Un Americano a Roma* (An American in Rome), by Steno: right after the Americans have left Rome after defeating the Nazi occupation, a young man is so influenced by the images absorbed by American movies that he acts like a tap dancer, speaking a made up English and even trying to substitute spaghetti and wine with yogurt, mustard and milk.

Floating signifiers can migrate easily across media, in an increasingly integrated communication world where digital technology allows fast transmission of cultural elements. The French theorists Jean Baudrillard wrote extensively on these topics, most of the time in a very critical voice. What happens when this transmutation from media to media and from context to context becomes as fast and intense as in today's pop culture? Baudrillard advanced the hypothesis of a reality based on "matrices, memory banks, and command models" that can be reproduced an infinite number of times and where real and imaginary are blurred into a new dimension, the hyperreal, totally unanchored to reality. The age of simulation thus begins with a liquidation of all referents – worse: by their artificial resurrection in systems of signs, a more ductile material than meaning, in that it lends itself to all systems of equivalence, all binary oppositions and all combinatory algebra. It is no longer a question of imitation, nor of reduplication, nor even of parody. It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself (Baudrillard 1983a: 4). The growing impact of media on contemporary societies has generated autonomous fields of meaning where facts, events, and trends are largely determined by the media themselves, in a phenomenon the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu called "the circular circulation of information" (Bourdieu 1998: 23). The relevance of a piece of news or of a show does not lie in what it refers to, but to the fact that it simply exists, creating a widespread effect of auto-referentiality where images and information bear little or no connection with what used to be called reality (Baudrillard 1983b: 93–109; Baudrillard 1988: 12).

In this process, certain signifiers bounce around, reflected and distorted, acquiring different and even controversial meanings. However, their presence or omnipresence as signifiers, as elements of communication regardless of their actual sense, is reinforced. Their life might be shorter, but their temporary interaction with the rest of the communication network is much more intense: the ripples travel faster and wider in the global meaning pond (Parasecoli 2008). Signifiers, always incomplete, open, and negotiable, acquire different meanings when they are integrated in different cultural, economic, social, political, and even material contexts, all the while somehow acquiring a life of their own to become what historian Lydia Liu has called "a super sign".

We are catapulted in the realm of what I call the super-sign – a linguistic



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monstrosity that thrives on the excess of the presumed meanings by virtue of being exposed to, or thrown together with, foreign etymologies and foreign languages. The super-sign escapes our attention because it is made to camouflage the traces of that excess through normative etymological procedures and to disavow the mutual exposure and transformation of the language. . . . Properly speaking, a super-sign is not a word but a hetero-cultural signifying chain that crisscrosses the semantic fields of two or more languages simultaneously and makes an impact on the meaning of recognizable verbal units. . . . The super-sign can thus be figured as a manner of metonymical thinking that induces, compels, and orders the migration and dispersion of prior signs across different languages and different semiotic media (Liu 2004: 13).

If we substitute images and visual elements for language, we can see that the definition actually works very well in the realm of cinema, including when analyzing representations of masculinity.

Most scholars working on gender issues now agree that masculinities, historically and culturally determined, can be analyzed in their formation, development, transformation and, sometimes, demise. At any given time, it is possible to identify a limited set of masculinities that, through different forms of social interactions and ideological dynamics, assume a hegemonic position, in the sense that they are considered as respectable, prestigious, and desirable within the cultures and societies in which they exist. These dominant ideals of masculinities, expressed in codified images, practices, and behaviors turning into floating signifiers in the increasingly globalized social field of imaginary production, tend to overshadow alternative models that can either disappear or resurface under different forms in various cultural contexts. Single individuals all over the world embody these masculinities and their representations, making them part of their daily practices, ideals, and values though repeated conscious or non-conscious performances that are intrinsically submitted to the judgment of the surrounding communities and societies. How the set of representations – whose identification is the goal of this dissertation are actually embodied and lived in different contexts and cultures – can become the object of further research.

## II. CORE QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

As I have already stated, the general goal of the dissertation is to examine how food and gender representations interact in movies – more specifically, within a defined subcategory category, the global blockbusters – to establish, question, reinforce, reproduce or negate cultural assumptions about masculinity and gender relations that might offer values, practices, visual cues, and behavioral templates to men all over the world to interpret and embody their own manhood. The research has been conducted within the shifting and often eluding context of the contemporary global industry of pop culture production, following the diffusion of representations of men around food from their creation to their diffusion and their impact on other cultural environments in the various forms of adoption, negotiation, adaptation or resistance. By so doing, the dissertation also analyzes the role and relevance of food, its production and consumption, not only in the personal and psychological experience of gender, in particular masculinity, but also in various manhood’s historical and cultural constructions.

Based on the current scholarly debates and theoretical developments in the film of gender and masculinity studies, food studies, and film studies, which I will explore in Chapters 2 and 3, my research has been structured around the following theoretical premises:

1. Food constitutes an important field of social practice. Food production and consumption, despite their connection with biological needs, are far from being natural: they are instead culturally and socially constructed, and as such submitted to development, changes, and negotiations. Since food must be produced, transformed, acquired, cooked, consumed, and disposed of, its social, economic, and even political significance cannot be underestimated. Food also influences our lives as an important marker of the racial, ethnic, religious, class, cultural, and gender dimensions of our subject identities.

2. Masculinity – as a fundamental element in the construction and the experience of men’s identities – is historically constructed and determined by cultural, social, economic, and political factors. As a consequence, there are no unique standards of masculinity, but rather many competing models that can be analyzed in their defining

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traits.

Within this framework, I set out to test the following hypotheses:

1. Food-related visual and narrative elements in mainstream movies offer an apparently secure and ideologically irrelevant space that allows usually invisible issues concerning masculinity and its performances in various setting to be revealed. These public exposures often happen in unobtrusive ways that do not challenge the viewers, especially when food does not play an important role in the plot.

2. Film, as one of the most pervasive means of mass communication and expression of popular culture, offers spaces for a continuum of masculinities to find expression through visual and narrative representations. Mainstream cultural industries, including blockbuster movies, offer hegemonic and subaltern masculinity templates to audiences for their entertainment, while at the same time reinforcing or questioning their personal and social ideas about what men are or are supposed to be. By analyzing movies, it should then be possible to establish a limited set of representations of men in their interactions around food that can provide insight into the cultural construction of masculinities.

### **III. THE RESEARCH**

My research has developed along the following steps:

1. Review of secondary literature. In order to define the theoretical framework of the analysis, and to clarify and substantiate the hypotheses illustrated above, in Chapters 2 and 3 I have outlined the development of the contemporary concept of masculinity and its current uses in scholarly inquiries. I have then summarized how food studies and film studies have interacted with research on masculinity, among themselves and other related disciplines.

2. Identification of the movie sample. As I will elaborate more extensively in the methodology section (Chapter 4), I have identified a sample of movies whose analysis can offer answers to the research questions and test my hypotheses. They respond to the following requirements:

- a. The movies have been released between 1990 and 2007.
- b. The movies have been distributed worldwide.

c. The movies have grossed over \$250,000,000 at the box office during their theatrical runs outside the United States.

3. Content analysis. After identifying the sample, I have screened the all movies, in their original version. The procedures adopted to carry out the content analysis of the material will be illustrated in the methodology section (Chapter 4). I have integrated the data analysis with a qualitative examination of the themes and the plot of each movie, with particular attention to masculinity and food. I have kept a log of my work (available in Appendix A), which indicates the step-by-step development of the research.

4. Interaction with key informants. In order to test my research design and my findings, I have submitted the results of the content analysis, the methodology, and the bibliography to key informants, chosen on the basis of their expertise in one or more of the three fields of study that are most relevant to this research: food, film, and gender (See Appendices G and H).

5. Focus groups. I have also organized two focus groups with food studies students, where I presented my research and findings for discussion.

6. Examination and discussion of the data. In Chapter 6 I finally discuss the data from the content analysis, together with the qualitative reflection on the movies and the feedback from the key informants and the focus groups.

#### **IV. OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS**

The findings of the content analysis seem to substantiate the hypothesis that food-related scenes in the sample constitute a safe, unobtrusive, almost invisible space that is perceived as secondary in the general narrative economy of the movies, and that for this reason they can reveal aspects about masculinity that otherwise would not be easily traceable.

Furthermore, through the content analysis both of the sample movies as a whole and more specifically of the food-related scenes, I was able to identify recurrent traits that suggest prevalent models of masculinity. In the movie sample, men build their identities as individuals by affirming themselves over other men and women, calling at the same time for confirmation and reassurance about their masculinity from peers and women

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through performance and social activities, both confrontational and convivial. Men use interactions around food, considered as a source of relaxation and energy, as an arena to assert their power and role, in terms of both social and gender relations. At the same time, food scenes reveal emotions and fears that contrast with the otherwise solid representation of manhood projected in the movies.

As the literature in gender, film, and food studies suggests, masculinities appear to be plural and in constant evolution, with food as a still unexplored cultural field of personal expression and social interaction.

## CHAPTER 2

### MEN, MANHOOD, AND MASCULINITY

#### I. DEFINING MEN AND MASCULINITY

Citizens of Western and also non-Western societies are increasingly reliant on practices, institutions, and narratives provided by media and pop culture to make sense of their everyday lives. In this ever shifting context, what are the diverse meanings of the masculinity? Is it possible to define manhood or is “masculinity” (both in the singular and the plural) just another of the grand meta-narratives of modernity that François Lyotard declared dead in his infamous manifesto? (Lyotard 1984)

As a preliminary exploration of the topic, I will try to trace the origin, the development, and the current state of the debates on male subjectivities. I will focus mainly on the United States, where all of the movies that I analyze in the dissertation were created, financed and produced, with the goal of clarifying the cultural, social, and political background that gave expression to the various masculinities represented in American blockbuster cinema.

In the popular publishing industry, if on one hand books such as *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* (Gray 1992) still try to find the eternal manhood, those unchanging essential traits that make a man a man, on the other hand a self-help book like *The Many Faces of Men: The Definitive Guide to the Male Species* (Whitehead 2004), which identifies more than 20 types of men, tends to reflect the more contemporary discourse pointing to the existence multiple masculinities.

When it comes to scholarly debates, even the terminology is contentious (Clatterbaugh 1998). In 1989, Arthur Brittan proposed a distinction between masculinity, referring “to those aspects of men’s behavior that fluctuate over time”; masculinism, which justifying and naturalizing male domination constitutes the ideology of patriarchy; and patriarchy as a social, economic, and cultural system (Brittan 1989: 3-4).

Jonathan Rutherford observes that the very use of the term “masculinity” instead of manliness in recent discussions is in itself the sign of a paradigmatic shift from a

conception of manhood as a social role based on patriarchy, to one that is “oppositional, critical, and deconstructive”. “It has been a revolutionary term because it has named men as a gender rather than as an unquestioned norm. Masculinity brought men into a new type of gendered subjecthood which was open to self reflection, criticism, analysis and debate” (Benwell 2003: 1). For R.W. Connell, however, the term itself is far from being clearly defined, showing at least four interpretations: the essentialist, which believes in the existence of a solid natural core (whatever that can be); the positivist, which defines masculinity based on what men (identified by their sexual characters) in a community empirically are and do; the normative, which instead points at what men ought to be, based on a variety of cultural and social standards; and semiotic, which analyses masculinity as an effect of discourse (Connell 1995: 68-71). For Judith Kegan Gardiner, masculinity is a fantasy, just like feminism.

Masculinity is a nostalgic formation, always missing, lost, or about to be lost, its ideal form located in a past that advances with each generation in order to recede just beyond its grasp. Its myth is that effacing new forms can restore a natural, original male grounding. Feminism, in contrast, is a utopian discourse of an ideal future, never yet attained, whose myths celebrate alliances that manage conflicts within comprehensive metanarratives and narratives of comprehension. Both fantasies risk simplifying the political... Both are myths of power; masculinity of the natural congruence of male self with social privilege and feminism of a perfectly self-regulating collectivity (Gardiner 2002: 10-11).

At any rate, at least in most Western societies, men are in different measures forced to acknowledge the gendered reality that had so far been invisible and taken for granted as a fact of life, asking themselves questions about manhood and maleness (Whitehead 2001). As Michael Kimmel has stated: “The search for a transcendent, timeless definition of manhood is itself a sociological phenomenon – we tend to search for the timeless and eternal during moment of crisis, those points of transition when old definitions no longer work and new definitions are yet to be firmly established” (Brod and Kauffman 1994: 46). R. W. Connell also warned us to refrain from considering the very existence of a reflection on masculinity as a universal condition, reminding us that

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the very concept of individuality and personal agency as we understand them are fairly recent, since they developed in early modern Europe, and inviting us to frame it as a consequence of a supposed gender instability which is local and historically defined, and not a universal condition. As a matter of fact – as the author argued – “one response to such instabilities, on the part of groups whose power is challenged but still dominant, is to reaffirm *local* gender orthodoxies and hierarchies. A masculine fundamentalism is, accordingly, a common response in gender politics at present” (Connell 1998: 3-4). The resurgence of female infibulation in certain parts of Africa, the imposition of the burkha by the Taliban, or certain forms of women’s subjection in Christian and Jewish fundamentalist communities, can also be interpreted as a reaction to these Western debates.

At the other end of the spectrum of opinions, John MacInnes proclaimed the end of masculinity, which he defined as “an ideology produced by men as a result of the threat posed to the survival of the patriarchal sexual division of labor by the rise of modernity” (MacInness 1998: 45). For MacInness, once faced with the revolutions and technological innovations inherent to modernity, and the consequent rise of a society based on impersonal (and supposedly less gendered) markets, masculinity loses any reason to exist. However, the fact that a debate actually exists both in the popular media and in academia, would seem to point to a crisis of traditional concepts and practices defining masculinity in the West, although the very existence and the relevance of this possible crisis has been in turn the object of scholarly and civil arguments.

The supporters of the crisis theory, both in the masculinist and feminist camp (MacInnes 1998; Faludi 1999; Clare 2000), consider it as one of the most relevant characteristics of post-industrial consumer societies, brought about by the disappearance of life-long careers for men; the expansion of service-oriented industries that do not necessarily require male employees; the changes in the legislations concerning family, inheritance, and even sexual behaviors; the growing demands from subaltern groups such as homosexuals and ethnic minorities; the advancement of women in the private and public sphere and the consequent growing disapproval of traditional masculinist behaviors at the cultural, social, and political level (Godenzi 1999). Men seem to run away from traditional responsibilities as heads of the family and as breadwinners,



towards other roles and a willingness to engage in domestic life and in child rearing (Gerstel and Gallagher 2001, Osnowitz 2005; Wall and Arnold 2007). This state of affairs has been interpreted as a “legitimation crisis” more than an actual crisis of patriarchy and masculinism, the ideology that sustains it; men can refuse any change in the situation, acknowledge the structural inequalities without doing anything at the personal level, or alternatively suffer of an “acute gender identity crisis” without abandoning his gender commitments (Brittan 1989: 182- 184).

Those who deny the existence of a crisis point out that Western societies, where consumerism affects both men and women, are far from any “postfeminist” state of affairs, since men are still in most key political and economic positions and, at a more private level, continue to perform traditional masculinities (Aronson 2003; Hall and Salupo Rodriguez 2003). At a more theoretical level, the concept of crisis implies that there is a coherent and unchanging system of gender relations and a single, clearly defined, and univocal core masculinity that is under attack. It is easy to show how the present state of affairs and the consequent cries of alarm are nothing new. At least starting in last century, worries about men and their role have been voiced every time wide social changes or historical upheavals took place. The rise of institutions like the Boys Scouts in the US or the public school system in Britain can be considered as expressions of this pattern (Whitehead and Barrett 2001: 8).

## **II. HISTORICAL MASCULINITIES**

Historians have turned their attention to masculinity issues, proposing various periodizations, of which in this context it is possible only to give the most cursory glance. In this framework of analysis, the crisis we are supposedly witnessing can be considered as the last episode, as just one more avatar in the ongoing and uninterrupted transformation of concepts, values, and behaviors defining manhood in Western societies, a process that, starting from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, has been influenced also by media and fashion. While it is possible to attempt a historical overview of different models of masculinity, it is also necessary to avoid excessive generalizations, as R.W. Connell pointed out:

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The history of masculinity, it should be clear, is not linear. There is not master line of development to which all else is subordinate, no simple shift from ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’. Rather we see, in the world created by the European empires, complex structures of gender relations in which dominant, subordinated and marginalized masculinities are in constant interaction, changing the conditions of each others’ existence and transforming themselves as they do (Connell 1995: 198).

Moreover, it is paramount to steer clear from what Robert Solomon defined as the “transcendental pretence” that considers white, middle-class men as the representatives of the whole human kind, its nature, and its history (Solomon 1980: xii).

Connell indicates the period between 1450, the beginning of European exploration, and 1650, as the beginning of new concepts of personhood heralded by the birth of secular culture and the critique of the traditional morals of the Catholic Church during the Renaissance and the Protestant reformation. The creation of overseas empires brought to the forefront men as an instrument of conquest and control of new territories, where patriarchal family structures were considered necessary to establish the new communities. The consequent expansion of trade and the growth of commercial cities in the 17<sup>th</sup> century saw customs, traditions, and reciprocal duties being replaced by contracts based on laws, and the affirmation of Max Weber will later define as “spirit of capitalism”, limited of course to male entrepreneurs only. At the same time, the formation of absolute states increased the social relevance of hereditary landed gentry that managed local administration and guaranteed military contributions, thus establishing a new kind of relationship between manhood, violence and power that according to Andrew Schehr is one of the origins of imperialism.

The numbering system of discrete integers, if itself not inherently phallicentric, lends itself to support a model of territoriality, of phallic power, of definitions of self that depend on a discrete division between self and other. Indeed the system of integral numbers as the equivalent for phallic exchange is the basic element of the entire ideological system and economic system of the West. Modern Western men, the quintessential accountants of culture and history, number heads, territory, space. They divide the world into

what is their and what is tributary to them, such as ‘their wives’ and ‘their children’, both fitting into the real of the proper, and some territories of the other, uncounted, unmanned until such an other becomes an object to be acquired (Schehr 1997: 5-6).

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the development of the “polite” society led to the gradual formation of masculinity that included paradigms varying from the genteel and refined gentleman to the rougher country landlord that focused on activities such as hunting (Fletcher 1995), also leaving room for alternative male models, like the libertines and the clients of the Molly houses in London, whom it would be imprecise to define as homosexuals. At the time homosexual acts were not considered to be the manifestation of a deviant personality medically distinguished from normal men, but rather the expression of the low instincts present in all men (Arru 2001: 73; Hekma 2006). Etiquette, refinement and politeness, besides breeding and birth, seemed to define the modern man of the middle and upper classes, whose principles were distilled in the journal *The Spectator* published by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele since 1711 (Benwell 2003: 4). This ideal found expression, for example, in taverns and coffee houses in Britain or in the French “restaurant” culture (Mennell 1996; Spang 2000). Its focus on politeness and appearance, however, was soon interpreted as a form of deception; as a reaction, a new ideal of man that followed and revealed his heart and feelings was promoted in England by philosophers such as David Hume and writers like Laurence Sterne and Samuel Richardson (Benwell 2003: 4). Qualities such as frankness and straightforwardness became appreciated traits of masculine civic virtue and public service in Britain (Wilson 1995). In France, intellect and rationality guided the bourgeois reaction against the affected masculinities performed at the court and in high society. In the meanwhile in the United States, during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, according to Michael Kimmel (Brod and Kauffman 1994: 45-60) two models of manhood were prevalent, both inherited from Europe: the “Genteel Patriarch”, the figure of the elegant and refined landowner, and the “Heroic Artisan”, inspired by the strong and independent yeoman farmers and urban craftsmen. At the same time, the medical and scientific concepts underlying sex differences were slowly changing: while male and female bodies were considered before as part of a continuum that somehow made hermaphrodites more

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acceptable, now a stable and well defined opposition between the sexes emerged (Laqueur 1990).

While Romanticism marked the triumph of passion in literature and art, the industrial revolution was spreading from England to the rest of Europe and the United States, requiring men who could take the lead in the fast paced changes. Kimmel identifies this new model with the “Self-Made Man” in the US, who derives status, wealth, and overall success from his capacity to navigate the capitalist markets (Kimmel 1996). He is the embodiment of the economic actor in Adam Smith’s theories. However, since social order was not permanent, but rather an arena for competition, self-made men were under the constant pressure to reaffirm themselves: they could either accept the challenge or flee to the new spaces opened by the expansion to the West.

The grand theme here is the transition from a genteel masculinity grounded in land ownership to a bourgeois masculinity attuned to the market. The new commercial society was made possible by, and in turn reinforced, a new manhood (Arru 2001: 68).

With the development of industrial economies and the increasing rationalization of war through bureaucracy, technology, and standing conscript armies, the nineteenth century affirmed the ideology of “separate spheres” dividing men and women not only practically through division of labor, but also qualitatively (Block 1978). The public sphere corresponded to work, production, and wage earning; the private to family life and reproduction, based on marriage and parenthood. Work was elevated to the status of a calling for middle-class men, who then brought at home the same adherence to order and control that was the basis of success in business (Davidoff and Hall 1987). However, the social importance of public reputation was contrasted by the private moral call articulated by religious and temperance movements toward self control (especially in sexual matters) and the continuous examination of one’s conscience. This is also the time when sociology was born out of the necessity of understanding the rapid social changes that were accompanying the transition to modern industrial societies in Western Europe; for this reason Kimmel defined classical social theory as a “hidden meditation of manhood” (Cheal 1991; Brod and Kauffman 1994: 46).

The crisis of World War I and the following establishment of totalitarian regimes in Europe brought about an exaltation of a heroic but ordered and obedient masculinity, busy fighting, producing, and reproducing for the good of the Fatherland, which eventually led to the conflagration of World War II (Spackman 1996). Things seemed to change during the conflict, when women successfully accomplished jobs and tasks that had traditionally been carried out by men. However, from the late 1940s on, men came back home and reclaimed their positions, despite women's resistance, a phenomenon more visible in the US than in Europe, at the time undergoing a massive reconstruction. It was not until the 1960s that European women, taking advantage of unprecedented urbanization processes and internal migrations from the countryside to the city, were able to break free from the traditional roles they covered in their place of origin and find new identities in the city. In the whole of the Western world, the introduction of birth control, the changes in family, heritage, and property laws, the access of women to jobs in the developing service and tertiary sectors introduced an epochal transformation that is still in the making and that has seen women occupying more visible positions of power and influence in society, while at times men accept domestic roles that were unacceptable in the past .

Starting with the 1970s, it was generally conceded that men were "in crisis", unable to cope with the changes in society, pulled on one side by a consumer culture that defined their success and status based on the hedonistic possession of objects and the capacity to follow fads and fashions, on the other by the loud calls for self-realization and exploration of one's true identity. As a reaction, media and advertisers started promoting fantasies of masculinities expressed in heroic and warlike forms (Jeffords 1989; Benwell 2003: 2-3). The 1999 iconic movie *Fight Club* by David Fincher is probably one of the best expressions of these tensions (Hall 2005: 41-48).

### **III. THE ORIGINS OF THE DEBATE**

If masculinity is culturally and historically constructed, so are the very concepts that try to define it and the sciences and practices that have attempted to understand it (together with gender in general). For some scholars, despite its beginnings as a critical endeavor, Western science itself is gendered in its methodologies, its belief in the

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possibility of achieving unbiased and rational results, and the prevalence of men in its productive structures. This would also explain its hegemonic role in media, education, and culture and its entitlement to have the final word on all kinds of issues (Keller 1985; Smith 1990; Harding 1991; DeVault 1999). R. W. Connell underlines the political and social implications of any attempts at defining masculinity: “Every day life is an arena of gender politics, not an escape from it: gender terms are contested because the right to account for gender is claimed by conflicting discourses and systems of knowledge” (Connell 1995: 3). As a consequence, the various approaches in analyzing masculinity and the debates derived from their clashes are heavily influenced by the social and intellectual environments in which they originate. While Adams and Savran underline “the fault line between scholars of masculinity in the humanities and social sciences, with the former focusing on cultural representations and inner life, the latter on structures, organizations, and behaviors,” Connell focuses three main projects that developed during last century: psychoanalysis, social psychology, and social sciences (Adam and Savran 2002: 3; Connell 1995).

Since psychoanalysis has addressed questions of gender since the beginning of the twentieth century, it can constitute a good point of departure for an overview of the development of the masculinity debate. As a discipline, it developed at first out of clinical practice, and only later it gave origin to interpretations and models that have had and still have a clear influence on the very concept of human nature in Western societies, beginning with Sigmund Freud’s work. Freud based his early reflection on masculinity on the dynamics of the Oedipus complex: boys desire their mothers and hate their fathers out of jealousy, but fear of retaliation and castration leads them to identify with their fathers. Freud’s approach needs to be interpreted within the wider context of the masculinity culture of his time.

That this image of the Oedipal subject comes about most clearly in the nineteenth century, during an era in which the constraints on the subject are put into question and the integral nature of his subjectivity begins to be challenged is an irony of an ideological system that sees the liberty of the subject as a sign of his (and, only derivatively, her) free will and the

construction of a system as a reflection of some collective sum of the free wills of its integral parts” (Schehr 1997: 6).

As a matter of fact, Freud’s position on analyzing the origin and development of masculinity marks the end of its cultural perception as an immutable and natural essence. His sensibility to the complexities of the human psyche led him to consider “normality” and neurosis on the same continuum, and to put forth the hypothesis that humans are fundamentally bisexual, suggesting that before the Oedipal phase boys also desire their fathers out of narcissistic identification. “The matter is made more difficult to grasp by the complicating circumstance that even in boys the Oedipus complex has a double orientation, active and passive, in accordance with their bisexual constitution; a boy also wants to take his mother’s place as the love-object of his father – a fact that we describe as feminine attitude” (Freud 1927: 135).

Toward the end of his reflection, Freud identified the basis for the patriarchal organization of culture and society in the super-ego, an agency that derives from the internalization of parental prohibitions and completes the famous topography of the personality that also includes the ego and the id. Freud’s insights led to further inquiry into gender and masculinity. Alfred Adler developed the concept of “masculine protest”, triggered both in men and women by an inferiority complex about one’s weaknesses and often taking the character of aggressive overcompensation and feelings of superiority (Adler 1956). In the late 1920s Melanie Klein, who first applied psychoanalytic methods to very young children, came to the conclusion that infants develop a fear of the maternal breast, caused by its possible retaliations against their own cannibalistic drives, which is at the origin of long-lasting ambivalences about desire and affection (Klein 1928; Mitchell 1987; Parasecoli 2008: 49-50). In 1932, Karen Horney proposed that the pre-Oedipal fear of the mother, the parent with whom infants have their first interaction, is the ultimate cause of men’s attempts at devaluing women (Horney 1932).

Starting in the 1930s, under the influence of the contemporary political upheavals, psychological considerations on masculinity often found a place within larger reflections about the very nature of power. By 1933 Wilhelm Reich, through his analysis of the whole character of a person rather than of a specific symptom, focused on the close relationship between authoritarian dynamics in the family and social structure of

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oppression (Reich 1970). Building on Eric Fromm's work, in *The Authoritarian Personality*, the Frankfurt School examined the involvement of men in the reproduction of patriarchal structures of authority and oppression of the less powerful, including women and homosexuals. Men might not be interpreted as a class since they cannot collectively identify with each other due to status, race, and age differences (among others); rather, they share a collective interest in maintaining the economic and institutional status quo (Adorno et al 1950). The influence of Marxism in the debate of masculinity goes well beyond the Frankfurt School. In 1987, while using Marxist theories and methods to critique patriarchy and men's appropriation of women's labor, Jeff Hearn also adopted some of the methodological stands of feminism to make a critique of orthodox Marxism and its exclusive focus on class relations and economic-based mechanisms of oppression. If it was true that men oppressed women, as feminist thinkers had made clear, it was also undeniable that men oppressed other men, and it was necessary to examine the social construction of masculinity by studying their relationship not only with production, but also with reproduction (Hearn 1987).

### **IV. THE IMPACT OF FEMINISM**

The discussion on masculinities found a fertile terrain also in the so-called second-wave feminism, a phase of women's activism that starting in the 1960s focused on addressing all the de facto inequalities, after the first wave at the turn of the century had dealt mainly with legal issues, such as the right to vote. Especially in the 1960s and 1970s, feminists fought hard to expose the male-dominated power structures that were trying to hold them back. The movement gained political influence in academia at first through activism, and later with the establishment of Women's studies programs: the first was set up in 1970 in San Diego State University, followed closely by the City University of New York. The rise of the feminism criticism and activism posed all kinds of question about what it means to be a woman (often drifting towards forms of essentialism that implied the existence of an universal female identity), and why women often find themselves exposed to violence, exploited or, at any rate, stuck in oppressed and secondary positions in many societies. Along this process of analysis and critique, which lead to questioning the structures, the power relations, and the myths that sustain



patriarchal society, both men and women also ended up wondering what it actually means to be a man. Looking for a single source to explain male dominance through different ages and cultures, feminists focused at first on male sexuality, on anatomical difference and on the phallus as a sign of power.

The term patriarchy was widely adopted to indicate the system of power that allowed men to dominate society, and as an analytical tool to uncover its inner mechanisms. As a result of this situation, the criticism against patriarchal society was often leveled at the “traditional” man, a sort of essentialist abstraction that many males willingly identified with and that psychologist Robert Brannon wittily defined into four slogans:

1. ‘No Sissy Stuff!’ One may never do anything that even remotely suggests femininity. Masculinity is the relentless repudiation of the feminine.
2. ‘Be a Big Wheel.’ Masculinity is measured by power, success, wealth, and status. As the current saying goes, ‘He who has the most toys when he dies wins.’
3. ‘Be a Sturdy Oak.’ Masculinity depends on remaining calm and reliable in a crisis, holding emotions in check. In fact, proving you’re a man depends on never showing your emotions at all. Boys don’t cry.
4. ‘Give’em Hell.’ Exude an aura of manly daring and aggression. Go for it. Take risks. (Brannon 1976)

Among all the masculine traits that were held responsible for the women’s plight, from a psychological point of view, we can mention preference to action over discussion, to rationality over emotion, to companionship over intimate relationships, to simplicity over complexity, to success in the profession and in the world at large over involvement with the family and the children. Real men were supposed to value and be ready to fight for the respect from their male peers, to strive to show their primacy in fields that required strength and ability such as business, sports, and even womanizing; to despise weakness and feminine traits in general, included those that could be recognized in homosexuals. From the social point of view, men were accused of creating and maintaining social structures that allowed them to enjoy a political primacy and to exploit women as human beings in general but more specifically as mothers, as wives, as sexual

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objects, and as workers who would never be permitted to reach any position of relevance. Men were also held responsible for political relationships based on force and violence, which justified the presence of institutions such as the state, the police, and the army whose results were oppression and war.

Paradoxically, these broad generalizations that feminists were trying to use as political weapons were actually cherished by many men who cultivated (and in many ways still do) this kind of masculinity as the essential and unchanging core of their identity. It is clear that this sort of approach, although politically valuable in fighting patriarchy, often led to consider masculinity as a natural and monolithic essence shared by all men, whose traits were considered eternal and totally free from any external influence. Somehow, men *had* masculinity, this quality that they were born with and that put them in a dominant position in society. On their end, at the time most men did not seem to have any interest in making visible and analyzing, let alone questioning, their privilege and its sources. In many ways, the feminist criticism against a supposedly uniform and unchanging masculinity often justified men in naturalizing what they liked to think about themselves and their identity.

This approach to masculinity was probably also the result of a certain involution of psychoanalysis. Freud, despite his personal bias, maintained throughout his career and his writing a fine-tuned attention to the intricacies and the fragilities of the human psyche. Uncritically adhering to the Oedipal theories, many practitioners interpreted the male development as unidirectional and unproblematic, heading without any contradiction towards an orthodox masculinity that expressed itself in heterosexuality, marriage, and “normality” (Bieber 1962). This vision of a universal and abstract opposition between masculine and feminine had one of his most renowned theorists in Carl Jung. He somehow ascribed masculinity to what he defined the “persona”, that part of the self that is the result of social and cultural interaction, and that developed in an unstable balance, if not in contrast, with the more feminine “anima”, the repository of all repressed elements and of the “archetypes”, timeless unconscious images collectively shared by all human beings (Jung 1964, 1966, 1981, 1982). This approach will later inspire authors like Marshall Bethal in his analysis of Greek mythology (Bethal 1985) and Robert Bly in his search of the “deep masculine” that needs to find a renewed

balance with the feminine, excessively upheld by modern feminists (Bly 1990). Jung's influence, however, can be detected also in the theories about "gender identity" elaborated by Robert Stoller who, challenging Freud's reflections on the initial bisexuality of all humans and probably influenced by Erik Erikson's concept of "identity" as the outcome of a conflict due to "role confusion" in the teenage years (Erikson 1968), in *Sex and Gender* (Stoller 1968) advanced the hypothesis of a "primary femininity" that in boys gives way to a masculine core gender identity consolidated by various biological (including choice of the infant's sex at birth), psychological and social influences. For Stoller perversions are simply the expression of the reaction against unhealthy interactions between parents and children in their formative years that need to be normalized (Stoller 1975).

Psychological and psychoanalytical theories became an arena of heated arguments when feminists, following the famous example of Simone de Beauvoir with her 1949 seminal work *The Second Sex* (Beauvoir 1972) and drawing on the reflections of precursors like Melanie Klein and Karen Horney, started looking at the male biases of most theorists and practitioners with the intent of elaborating new approaches that could be fully embraced by women. In Europe, authors like Luce Irigaray (Irigaray 1985), Hélène Cixous (Cixous 1991) and Juliet Mitchell (Mitchell 1975) developed their theories of femininity in dialogue and in response to the work of Jacques Lacan, who in his seminars had indicated in the *Name of the Father* and in the *Phallus*, located at the core of the whole symbolic dimension, the very root of any possible culture and communication, and in the complex concept of *jouissance* (pleasure beyond cultural norms) a specific feminine experience (Lacan 1998, 2002). On the other side of the Atlantic, Dorothy Dinnerstein, pointing at the connection between personal development and gender relations, argued that male aggression and their tendency to violence are the inevitable outcome of the women's almost exclusive monopoly on childrearing (Dinnerstein 1976). Nancy Chodorow focused instead on the family dynamics, especially the pre-Oedipal separation from the mother that in males – who realize their difference from their mother and the necessity of a radical separation from her to assert their sense of independency and agency – originates the identification with the father and creates the need for boundaries and distinction. Boys, deprived from their original emotional

attachment, are thus defined by this very trauma, which forces them to refuse and devalue all traits in themselves and in their environment that reminds them of their mother, such as tenderness, nurturance, and compassion. The consequence is also a sense of superiority towards women, who seem to embody all these characteristics and are intrinsically similar to their mother. (Chodorow 1978).

## **V. SEX ROLES AND EVOLUTIONARY SOCIOBIOLOGY**

Psychoanalysis was not the only field where feminists were trying to overturn deeply engrained cultural prejudices. Another contentious field was social psychology, at the time asserting its claim at defining gender, and in particular masculinity, through the concept of “sex roles”, which found echo also outside academia. According to these theories, gender is the result of the internalization, through socialization processes, of the set of scripts and expectations that every society attributes to each sex. It is easy to see how sex roles could implicitly reaffirm the existence of predetermined and well-defined natural sex differences on which they are based. Different positions developed on this topic. Talcott Parsons, generally considered among the founders of that school of sociology that came to be known as structural functionalism, moved away from this excessively deterministic approach to sex roles and looked at the more general sociological principle of structural differentiation to ensure the smooth functioning and the reproduction of social structures. Parsons thus distinguished among function-based and complementary “instrumental” (masculine) and “expressive” (feminine) functions that express themselves in gender “personalities”.

Relative to the total culture as a whole, the masculine personality tends more to the predominance of instrumental interests, needs, and functions, presumably in whatever social system both sexes are involved, while the feminine personality tends more to the primacy of expressive interests, needs, and functions. We would expect, by and large, that other things being equal, men would assume technical, executive, and “judicial” roles, women more supportive, integrative, and “tension-managing” roles. (Parsons and Bales 1956: 101).

Sex-role theory implicitly endorsed a view of gender according to which a smooth and drama free internalization of sex role was a very positive outcome of good socialization and of consensus between members of a society in maintaining social order. By so doing, it tended to ignore deviant behavior, which were left unexplained. But already in the 1950s some authors, especially women, were pointing at the cracks in this approach. This was the case for Helen Hacker, who using Parsons's language pointed at the growing conflict within males, from which society is increasingly demanding performances related to both instrumental and expressive functions (Hacker 1957). On the same page was psychologist Ruth E. Hartley, who in the article "Sex-Role pressures and the Socialization of the Male Child" – in some way anticipating Nancy Chodorow's reflection – had pointed out the contradiction between the closeness of young boys to mothers and a feminine world, and on the other hand the demands placed on them to act masculine and independent (Hartley 1959). For Hartley, any privilege young boys might have in the family came at a very high price in terms of psychological pressure (Messner 1998).

In the 1970s, some male writers also employed the sex-role categories to examine men's efforts to conform to social expectations, the consequences on their psyche of such tensions, and the results of the lack of conformity, for instance, in educational underachievement and juvenile delinquency. This is what Whitehead and Barrett have defined as the first wave in the development of the sociology of masculinity (Whitehead and Barrett 2001: 15). Joseph Pleck, for instance, analyzed the differences between "traditional" and "modern" male roles and the cost of the attempts to conform to them (Pleck 1976). As we will see, his work was closely connected with the men's movements that were surfacing at the time as his critique of sex-role functionalism with its oppressive potential, its lack of historical analysis and its inherent conservatism indicates (Pleck 1981). This sort of reflection, introducing a historical dimension in the analysis of masculinity, and thus the potential for change, already anticipates the fundamental idea that gender is culturally and socially determined, which was further expanded and reinforced also by female authors like Gayle Rubin (Rubin 1975) and the British sociologist Ann Oakley's with her 1972 *Sex, Gender and Society*. In this book, by analyzing foreign cultures from Amazon pigmy communities to communist USSR,

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Oakley showed how men's and women's roles were far from being a natural necessity (Oakley 1985).

These theories developed in the 1970s in clear opposition against the growing influence of evolutionary psychology and sociobiology, which try to explain psychology, human behavior, and society in terms of adaptations, the result of natural selection processes that took place in response to solve recurrent problems in human ancestral environments. In other words, the relevance of history and change was limited to a remote, almost mythical past that still determines our present – and immutable – biological setup. Within this general framework, sex differences, both anatomical and psychological, are considered as the consequences of these adaptations, cannot be but innate and natural. For instance, according to Robert Trivers, two sexes develop a “battle of the sexes” regarding how much to invest in their offspring, how many of them to have, and which ones to favor to increase the chances of reproduction and gene transmission (Trivers 1972). Richard Dawkins introduced the theory that behaviors, ideas, values are transmitted through “memes”, learned mental elements which replicate and spread from individual to individual in the social and cultural spheres, submitted to the same evolutionary adaptive pressures that lead to the success and transmission of certain memes and the disappearance of others (Dawkins 1976). According to evolutionary biology, individuals are only in part responsible for their impulses, behaviors and mindsets, which are instead natural and timeless elements determined by biological factors and adaptive processes, fixed from the time of origin of the first humans (Goodman, Heat and Lindee 2003; Lancaster 2003). In other words, hormones and ingrained instincts would be responsible for male aggression and violence. The inconsistencies of this approach as a justification of male violence have been exposed by, among others, Arthur Brittan, who observed how evolutionary sociobiology is based on analogy, directly comparing human and animal behaviors, on a supposed “average man”, which presupposes that human nature is timeless and unchanging, and on a fundamental reductionism focusing on the influence of a deep “level of analysis” that can explain all phenomena. (Brittan 1989: 12-13)

It was clear that to push gender issues forward, it was necessary to move away from the sex role languages, which was in many ways too close to the biological and social determinism lurking in evolutionary psychology and sociobiology.

## **VI. GENDER RELATIONS AND HEGEMONIC MASCULINITIES**

Starting from 1980s, academia showed a slow transition of focus from homogeneous and formally equal, but clearly opposed sex roles to complex gender relations, in a shift that considers masculinity as inherently relational, “a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality, and culture” (Connell 1995:71). This approach leaves room for changes that do not necessarily come from outside, but originate within the dynamics intrinsic to gender relations. Feminists and pro-feminist men started suggesting that the concept of patriarchy was too essentialist, abstract from historic and cultural changes, biologically determined, monolithic, and dismissive of women’s agency (Atkinson 1979; Rowbotham 1979). In what Whitehead and Barrett have defined as the second-wave in the sociology of masculinity (Whitehead and Barrett 2001: 15), masculinity identity was explored in terms of power, that is to say in its political and social effects in multiple arenas, such as sexuality, family, the state, capitalist work etc, where changes were possible as the result of the interplay between structures and praxis, between expectations and actual behaviors (Craib 1987; Walby 1990). Inspired by the work of Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci on cultural and political hegemony (Gramsci 200), the concept of “hegemonic masculinity” was introduced to explain power dynamics not only towards women, but also among men.

‘Hegemony’, then, always refers to a historical situation, a set of circumstances in which power is won and held. The construction of hegemony is not a matter of pushing and pulling between ready-forming groupings but is partly a matter of the formation of those groupings. To understand the different kinds of masculinity demands, above all, an examination of the practices in which hegemony is constituted and contested – in short, the political techniques of the patriarchal social order... First, hegemony means persuasion, and one of its important sites is likely to be the

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commercial mass media... Second, hegemony closely involves the division of labor, the social definition of tasks as either ‘men’s work’ or ‘women’s work’, and the definition of some kinds of work as more masculine than others... Third, the negotiation and enforcement of hegemony involves the state” (Carrigan, Connell and Lee 1985: 83-97).

In the fulgurating definition given by Michael Kimmel, “The hegemonic definition of manhood is a man in power, a man with power, and a man of power” (Brod and Kauffman 1994: 45-60). In this approach, sexual and biological differences, and the body in general, do not constitute the base for masculinity, but rather are an object of cultural and social practices, taking different meanings in different contexts.

The concept that a determined type of masculinity might be dominant for a certain time within a culturally and historically specific pattern of gender relations and institutional power, presupposes two main elements: first of all, there can be multiple masculinities at the same time, defined by many factors such as age, class, race, and geography. among others (Brittan 1989). This in turn implies that different masculinities will find themselves in relationships not only of competition, dominance and subordination (Segal 1990), but also of complicity with each other – in order to partake of the benefits deriving from patriarchy and befalling on all men – and sometimes of marginalization, as the result of the attempt to deprive certain categories (homosexuals, ethnic minorities etc) of these benefits (Connell 1995: 76-81). The second element is that these masculinities do not constitute a fixed typology of static characters, but they are rather the result of mutating relationships and require a dynamic analysis. They are culturally and historically contingent.

Hegemony does not happen in a void, but it is the result of specific social arrangements, power structures and institutions. For this reason, this kind of approach has been applied to the most diverse social interactions and environments, from cultural production (Lehman 2001; Holdmlund 2002; Benwell 2003; Stibbe 2004; Rogers 2005), to domestic violence (Schrock and Padavic 2007) and to various environments and institutions like the army (Barrett 1996), fraternities – both straight (Kiesling 1997) and gay (Yeung, Stomblor and Wharton 2006), summer camps (McGuffey and Rich 1999), sports (Messner 1992; Klein 1993; Anderson 2002), the web (Kendall 2000), the



workplace (Dellinger 2004), upper management (Collison and Hearn 1994; Baxter and MacLeod 2005; Connell and Wood 2005), and even international politics (Elias 2008). Greater attention has also been paid to non-hegemonic masculinities (Gerschick and Miller 1994). “Masculine hegemony refers not only to the various groupings of men and the ideals they uphold. It refers also to the process by which those groups and ideals form the organizational situations and constraints that shape and construct these ideals and groups” (Barrett 1996: 130). However, the analytical tool of the “hegemonic masculinity” was criticized since it does not clarify the question of the autonomy of the gender relations.

If the gender system has an independence of structure, movement and determinations, then we should be able to identify counter-hegemonic forces within it; if these are not identifiable, then we must question the autonomy of the gender system and the existence of hegemonic masculinity as central and specific to it. On the other hand, if gender systems are not autonomous, then the question “why, in specific social formations, do certain ways of being male predominate, and particular sorts of men rule?” remains to be answered, and the resistances to that order remain to be identified (Donaldson 1993: 644).

Moreover, a certain tension existed between the analysis and exploration of the multiplicity and diversity of masculinities and the fact that men still share common interests and maintain the reins of power in most societies (Collinson and Hearn 1994). Among feminists, Tania Modleski expressed a clear uneasiness about not only considering masculinity as an object of feminist research and debate, but also about the presence of men engaged in feminist debates: the risk was to exclude women as subject and object of feminism, especially under the growing influence of the antihumanist positions inherent to poststructuralism (Modleski 1991). Many questions about power and its effects on gender relations still remained opened, as R.W. Connell himself noted when in the late 1990s he wrote about the “patriarchal dividend”, the material pay-offs related to men’s dominant position in the gender order that often made their participation in feminist projects often fail (Connell 1997; Pease 2002). In a more recent evaluation of the development of the concept, Connell has pointed to the necessity to enrich it with

reference to psychology, social struggles, embodiment, and globalization (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Weis 2006).

## VII. THE POST-STRUCTURALIST TURN

From the late 1980s, the debate on masculinity started being influenced also by postmodern and poststructuralist theories, originating what Whitehead and Barrett consider the third wave in the sociology of masculinity. (Whitehead and Barrett 2001: 15; Petersen 2003). Masculinity was now considered as a result of discourse, or more of “a diversity of discourses among which there is no necessary relations but a constant movement of overdetermination and displacement” (Mouffe 1992: 372), as one of the multiple subject positions constituting the individuals, as generated by the constitutive tension between subjection to power and resistance/agency (Butler 1997b), as an effect of performance and “identity work” in the form of self-regulation and self-discipline aimed at receiving validation from dominant power structures and ideologies (West and Zimmerman 1987; Jefferson 1994, 1998; Garlick 2003; Deutsch F. 2007), and as an effect of exclusionary processes that define men in opposition to various “abjected others” (Kristeva 1982; James 1997; Fausto-Sterling 2000; Heasley 2005), to the point to be defined as a “homosocial enactment” aimed at gaining an acknowledgement of one’s manhood from other men (Brod and Kauffman 1994: 45-60; Flood 2008).

One of the consequences of the male need to separate themselves from the non-masculine and to prove one’s masculinity vis-à-vis other men, is the refusal of intimacy with other males and, taken to its extreme, homophobia (Rogers 2005). Already in 1985, in her groundbreaking *Between Men*, frequently indicated as one of the founding texts of queer theory, literary critic Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argued that in literature homosocial desire between men had to be reconfirmed in its heterosexual nature by women, who somehow channel these illicit desires, located on the homosocial continuum that structures patriarchy, into acceptable ones (Sedgwick 1985). Sedgwick stated that “the exchanges upon which patriarchal societies are based take place exclusively among men... This means that the very possibility of a sociocultural order requires homosexuality as its organizing principle. Heterosexuality is nothing but the assignment of economic roles” (Sedgwick 1992: 192). Interestingly, a similar dynamic was observed

by Roger Lancaster in his study of Nicaraguan machismo, interpreted not only as a tool to oppress woman, but also as part of ongoing exchanges between men to affirm one's supremacy, where women only figure as intermediaries; this entails a perception in which homosexual acts per se do not brand a man as gay, as long as he maintains the active position: a very far shot from the "homosexual panic" that accompanies masculinity in the US Anglo-Saxon culture (Lancaster 1992).

These reflections were heavily influenced by the theories developed by the French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault, who focused on the concept of discourse, the system of ideas, values, attitudes, practices and institutions that constitute the field of what can be thought and talked about, while maintaining and legitimating power relationships (Foucault 1972; Foucault 1977; Foucault 1980). Furthermore, Foucault considered power as diffused and ubiquitous, not necessarily connected with specific institutions (Foucault 1977, 1980).

Power must be understood in the first instance as a multiplicity of force relations . . . as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens or reverses them: as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunction and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulations of the law, in the various social hegemonies (Foucault 1990: 93).

Following this approach, sociology of sexuality has come to overlap in many ways with the sociology of culture when it analyzes ideas and assumptions about sex, the transmission and reproduction of gender, and the naturalization of gender through internalization; in other words, the sociology of sexuality is the study of how power works through culture (Moon 2008). However, as Foucault had already pointed out, wherever there was power, there was also resistance. In the study of masculinities, scholars started looking beyond hegemonic masculinities (in the plural) to examine subordinate and marginal masculinities and the forms of opposition they express. Growing attention was paid to oppositional masculinities that did not adhere to the

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patriarchal model, but rather embraced their diversity, also from the sexual point of view (Sedgwick 1990; Silvermann 1992). By 1984, in a critique of the sexual prohibitions within the feminist movement that reconsidered sexual deviancy as oppositional to patriarchy, Gayle Rubin had urged scholars to distinguish sexuality from gender as two different domains of social practice, untangling the normative relationship between bodies, acts, and identities (Rubin 1984). Judith Butler, examining gay female impersonators, had also pointed out how sex is not a neutral precondition of gender, but a gendered cultural category reflecting power structures and “instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts” (Butler 1990: 140). The relevance of performance in the use of sex and sex characteristics as expressions of gender is particularly relevant for transsexuals (Dozier 2005; Schilt 2006).

Sandy Stone has taken the argument further affirming how transsexuals do not actually need to pass from one sex to another, thus accepting the cultural naturalization of sex, but can identify with a position beyond constituted oppositions (Stone 1991). Moreover, it was pointed out that masculinity does not belong to men and the male body only, but it can constitute a subject position for women too such as adolescent tomboys, adult lesbians, or drag kings (Halberstam 1998; Shapiro 2007).

The poststructuralist approach found many critics. By 1989, Arthur Brittan argued that male sexuality couldn't be interpreted exclusively as discourse. Its privileges need to be explained in terms of gender relationships embedded in political and institutional inequalities. Furthermore, discourse is embodied in actual experiences and behaviors: “Behavior and discourse are not insulated from each other... Men are not simply passive embodiments of the masculine ideology. They rape with their bodies, they ‘read’ pornographic literature, and they ‘hire’ pornographic videos. They ‘do’ all these things as active participants” (Brittan 1989: 68).

Under the influence of a renewed interest in the body in anthropology, sociology, and philosophy (Ruthrof 1997, Bermudez, Marcel and Eilan 1998, Welton 1999, Grogan and Richards 2002, Howes 2003, Reischer and Koo 2004, Wolputte 2004), growing interest has been expressed towards theories of embodiment, examining the “feel” and bodily experience of various masculinities as they vary historically and culturally (Bordo 1999). Psychoanalysis is sometimes proposed as a tool to get a better grasp on personal

experiences that cannot be reduced to social discursivity (Gadd 2003; King 2003). Also feminist theorists have looked back at the ideas about male sexuality and power, looking beyond the stereotypes, the myths, and the bravado often shown by men.

Male sexuality is most certainly not any single shared experience for men. It is not any single or simple thing at all – but the site of any number of emotions of weakness and strength, pleasure and pain, anxiety, conflict, tension and struggle, none of them mapped out in such a way as to make the obliteration of the agency of women in heterosexual engagements inevitable (Segal 1990: 216).

Greater attention has been paid to the male body as the site of non-phallogentric eroticism and pleasures, which in refusing the categories and distinctions imposed by patriarchy can offer new venues for the expression of alternative masculinities (Bersani 1987, Thomas 1996, Schehr 1997). Age has also been indicated as a possible category of analysis that, by including developmental aspects, can help undo the logic of dichotomies and oppositions between genders and within genders (Gardiner 2002: 90-118, Ciabattari 2001).

In the meantime, under the pressure of the attention paid to racial and ethnic minorities, it was becoming increasingly clear that the object of much reflection about masculinity, and gender in general, were white men, and mostly Anglo-Americans at that. Research on race and ethnicity has brought new perspectives to the debate, starting with the 1982 study by Robert Staples about black masculinities, a reflection carried on more recently among feminists like Hazel Carby (Carby 1987), bell hooks (hooks 1995), Angela Davis (Davis 1998) and male scholars such as Kobena Mercer (Mercer and Julien 1988; Mercer 1994), Phil Harper (Harper 1996), Marc Anthony Neal (Neal 2005) and Robert Reid-Pharr (Reid-Pharr 2007). Also research on Latino and Asian masculinities is producing very stimulating results (Gutmann 1996; Mirandé 1997; Muñoz 1999; Chopra 2006).

Anthropology began examining masculinity issues in other cultures (Geertz 1972). One of the most quoted works in this field was *Manhood in the Making*, by David Gilmore, where the author analyzes men in various parts of the world looking for common elements that could define a general concept of masculinity

“I will speak here of tendencies or parallels in male imagery around the world, a ubiquity rather than a universality. As we proceed, I will attempt to provide some tentative answers to why these widespread resemblances in male images, this replicate ‘deep structure of masculinity’, as some researchers have called it, should exist in otherwise dissimilar cultures... I will argue that manhood ideals make an indispensable contribution both to the continuity of social systems and to the psychological integration of men into their community. I regard these phenomena not as givens, but as part of the existential ‘problem of order’ that all societies must solve by encouraging people to act in certain ways, ways that facilitate both individual development and group adaptation. Gender roles represent one of these problem-solving behaviors” (Gilmore 1990: 3)

However, Gilmore’s attempt is heavily influenced by the conceptual limitations of sex role theories (men, naturally distinguished by their sex, have to strive to fit into the roles that society prescribes to them) and in many ways tries to apply Western categories and concepts to examine other environments that are far from being “natural” but are in the first place historically influenced by the West and in a continuous dialogue with it that often expressed itself in forms of resistance. As a reaction, new approaches were applied in the examination of non-Western masculinity, with the goal of avoiding the use of Western interpretive grids in different cultural contexts so that desire and sexual pleasures, practices, and identity are not defined everywhere in the same terms and meanings, simply referring to the same biological basis (Lancaster 1992, Krishnaswamy 1998; Ghossoub and Sinclair-Webb 2000).

Anthropology has been turning its attention on itself as a discipline, a methodology, and a practice, examining also the conditions of its cultural production and the culturally and historically determined character of its approach to masculinity (Bonnell and Hunt 1999, Davison 2007), establishing a positive dialogue with new disciplines such as cultural studies and postcolonial studies, especially in research focusing on the cultural politics of body and gender (Gremillion 2005).

### VIII. MALE REACTIONS

Scholarly debates somehow influenced the debates in society at large, and were influenced by them in turn, since one of the goals of the academic reflections I illustrated was actually to make a difference in people's life, and not only to achieve a better theoretical understanding of issues. One of the objectives of feminist research was, after all, to prove how cultural beliefs about sex and gender have the strength to maintain or change social relations (Ridgeway and Correll 2004). It is then understandable how, besides feminist activism, a fundamental factor that changed both scholarly approaches and public perceptions about masculinity was the development of a visible homosexual subculture, expressing itself in rise of the Gay Liberation Movement and demonstrating its political potential, starting from the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City (D'Emilio 1983; Weeks 1977, 1981, 1985).

While academia was creating new approaches to examine masculinities, media and popular culture were developing their own debates, often taking a different direction while using concepts and terms borrowed from scholarly works. In the early 1970s, as a response to feminism and the gay movements, some men embraced a critical approach to sexism, misogyny and homophobia, while proposing non-exploitative masculinities (Kimmell 1997). For instance, in 1970 the magazine *Liberation* publishes Jack Sawyer's article *On Male Liberation*, challenging men to free themselves from the stereotypes and the roles that limit their humanity and to give way full emotional expression.

If men cannot play freely, neither can they freely cry, be gentle, not show weakness – because there are “feminine”, not “masculine.” But a fuller concept of humanity recognizes that all men and women are potentially both strong and weak, both active and passive, and that these human characteristics are not the province of one sex (Sawyer 1970).

Sawyer's piece has often been considered the beginning of the men's liberation movement, mostly taking roots in colleges and universities where young men were exposed to feminist theories and activism. Over time, the movement acquired a more systematic outlook. In 1974 Warren Farrell, serving at the time on the New York chapter of the National Organization of Women, argued in *The Liberated Man* that men should actually work together with feminists to destroy patriarchal oppression, a social system

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for which they had to take full responsibility and that was lethal for the men themselves (Farrell 1974). Farrell also raised the problem of the shallowness of men's friendships with other men: under the pressure deriving from the demands imposed on them to society, which push them to be concentrated on success and maintaining the patriarchal order, men create relationships that never reach a deep level of intimacy, preferring rather activities such as sports where they can be together to bond by sharing a common experience that is however external to their inner lives. The theme was picked up in various academic and non-academic books (Fasteau 1975; Pleck and Sawyer 1974; Nichols 1975, Snodgrass 1977). The anti-sexist perspective was further developed by the psychologist Herb Goldberg in 1976, with *The Hazards of Being Male: Surviving the Myth of Masculine Privilege* (Goldberg 1976). He suggested that men can be victim of patriarchy just as women, since they have to face very strong social and cultural expectations about their traditional roles. As a matter of fact, in a world where women could claim masculine roles, men were stuck in rigid roles that stifled them. Over time, Goldberg made his theories popular through the publication of a series of very successful books: *The New Male* (Goldberg 1980), *The Inner Male* (Goldberg 1987), *The New Male-Female Relationship* (Goldberg 2000), and the popular *What Men Really Want* (Goldberg 1991), written for a female audience and spawning a mini-book, *Men's Secrets: What every Woman should know*, sold in chain stores such as K-Mart (Goldberg 1994).

Since the beginning, the various men's movements (which had often limited the scope of their action to middle-class white men, leaving out blue collar workers or men from other ethnicities) suffered from the tension between acknowledging men as enjoying institutional power and their victimization by that same power. Moreover, basing their judgment of their personal experience and feelings, many males argued that it is not true that men dominate Western societies, unable to see the difference between individual and social power, their individual positions and the collective advantage that men have over women as a group. The tension eventually caused a split between an antisexist movement, that was ready to work with feminists to destroy patriarchal privilege, and those currents that gave birth to men's rights organizations that focused on the damage of present power relations to men. Farrell himself moved toward this



direction, assuming positions that were systematized in his 1993 *The Myth of Male Power: Why Men are the Disposable Sex* (Farrell 1993), a book that delves into men's cultural, legal, and social issues, from paternity to the job market and army conscription. Farrell distanced himself from his feminist beginnings to celebrate masculinity, rejecting any kind of sexism displayed by women against men and questioning the image of male as oppressor, a myth that makes women feel angry and exploited, and men unappreciated and hated.

As scholar Michael Messner aptly observes, “by the late 1970s, men's liberation had disappeared. The conservative and moderate wings of men's liberation became an anti-feminist men's right movement, facilitated by the language of sex roles. The progressive wing of men's liberation abandoned sex role language and formed a profeminist movement premised on a language of gender relations and power” (Messner 1998: 255). Some men's groups focused on inequalities in the job market, like the Builders Laborers Federation in New South Wales, Australia, or the Canadian Steelworkers Union, which pushed for the reform of hiring processes, while others tackled issues of male violence against women, like those working for the White Ribbon Campaign, again in Canada, resulting from the actions and commemorations organized after a massacre of women in 1989 at the University of Montreal (Connell 1997: 68).

In 1979, Richard Haddard, co-founder in 1977 of the organization Free men, wrote the manifesto *The Men's Liberation Movement: A Perspective*, where he argues that gender roles are culturally constructed, and for that reason women should take responsibility just as men for perpetuating certain gender stereotypes when raising their children. According to Haddard, male and female sex roles, all having advantages and disadvantages, are ultimately limiting and inhibiting (Haddard 1979). This approach, however well meaning, described a certain symmetry between men's and women's situations: by representing them as somehow “separate but equal”, it overlooked all issues of social inequality, material exploitation, and power (Lopata and Thorne 1978). At the same time, some men were using the language and concepts provided by sex role theory and evolutionary sociobiology to come to terms with the accusations leveled against them by feminists.

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In 1973 the chairman of the sociology department at City College of New York, Steven Goldberg, in his *The Inevitability of Patriarchy*, clearly stated that biological difference between men and women cannot but produce male domination, since “in every society a basic male motivation is the feeling that the women and children must be protected. But the feminist cannot have it both ways: if she wishes to sacrifice all this, all that she will get in return is the right to meet men on male terms. She will lose” (Goldberg 1977). However, twenty years later, in his second book *Why Men Rule: a Theory of Male Dominance*, Goldberg made clear that he had not been trying to defend patriarchy, but just analyzing reality, with no moral judgment: “There is nothing in this book concerned with the desirability or undesirability of the institutions whose universality the book attempts to explain. For instance, this book is not concerned with the question of whether male domination of hierarchies is morally or politically 'good' or 'bad'. Moral values and political policies, by their nature, consist of more than just empirical facts and their explanation. 'What is' can never entail 'what should be', so science knows nothing of 'should'. 'Answers' to questions of 'should' require subjective elements that science cannot provide.” (Goldberg 1993: 1). Theories that underlined the role of biological elements in defining men found an eager audience. Richard Doyle’s 1976 *The Rape of the Male* (Doyle 1976), argued that core masculinity cannot be changed, and that men in fact cannot be held responsible for their nature; on the other hand, they can work to reconcile their inner essence with the changes in society, from divorce to affirmative action. The book established the author as one of the leading men’s and father’s rights advocates. In 1977, he founded Men’s Equality Now International (MEN International) and edited the organization’s newsletter *The Liberator* until 2004. Socio-biological determinism was also sustained by David Barash, who in *Sociobiology and Behavior* (Barash 1977) and in *The Whispering Within: Evolution and the Origin of Human Nature* (Barash 1979), explained that traditional gender traits and behaviors developed as they have to ensure the maximum efficiency in reproduction.

Many men coalesced around groups that claimed their masculine identity and role did not receive social recognition, to the point of stigmatization, while calling all men to unity and a newfound dignity by emphasizing the experiences and interests that made them different from women, rather than looking for common elements and social justice.

Some hints of a men's backlash against feminism had already appeared in the early 1970s. The first organization dedicated to men's equality, Men's Defense, was already founded in 1972, followed by Men's Right Inc. in 1977, and the Coalition of Free Men, spearheaded in 1980 by Herb Goldberg. These movements were limited mostly to white men; however, it would be an interesting subject for further research to assess the possible influence of the attitude and the language of the Black Panthers, in particular Huey P. Newton, and their reference to the need for a reaffirmation of male dominance in the black community to actively oppose white supremacy (Reid-Pharr 2007). Men's rights advocates tended to build their arguments on stereotypes and anecdotes that were far from scientific, and to claim that men were the actual victims of many social plights, from domestic violence (with men abused by women) to divorce settlements, to discriminatory attitudes (Anderson and Umberson 2001).

Despite the activities in activist circles, in the media and in academia, the men's rights movement expanded significantly as an institutionalized and organized cultural phenomenon, mostly among white men, only in the early 1980s (Kimmell 1995), starting in the United States with the so-called mythopoetic movement, founded and guided by the poet and activist Robert Bly, who later systematized the principles of the movement in the volume *Iron John* (Bly 1990). The main argument was that feminism and the recent changes in social and economic structures had emasculated men; the lack of a male presence in the education of young boys, due to the fact that fathers were often out of their home for work, led to the loss of man-to-man training and nurturing, the only way to hand down effective masculinity to the younger generations. However, men tried to find themselves again by tapping on their inner, innate male power through all sorts of rites of passage, which unfortunately often took the form of binge-drinking or drug use: these are often the outlet where young men can also express their anger and their shame at not being able to fulfill their roles any longer. Men's groups are necessary to provide males with safe places to express their emotions, and recreate meaningful relationships among them. Men were also invited to rediscover those fundamental archetypes of masculinity that the recent crisis had endangered (Moore and Gillette 1990). The mythopoetic approach was embraced by groups like the Minnesota Men's Council, which published

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*Manalive*, and the Golden Gate Men's Council in San Francisco with its publication, *Journal*.

If on one hand many men felt the need to reclaim a solid and stable masculinity that acknowledges both the diversity of the male psyche and the validity of male spiritual values and existential necessities, on the other hand “New Age” sensibilities influenced certain circles, encouraging men to embrace their weaknesses and vulnerability and to vent their feelings of alienation and inadequacy that deserved consideration through male bonding and spiritual interrogation, possibly conducted in direct contact with natural wilderness.

“In the Mendocino woods each year since 1982, nearly 100 men have gathered to spend a week together drumming, reciting poetry, learning aikido, playing volleyball, telling stories, making masks, listening to presentations by men like Robert Bly and psychologist James Hillman, and dancing a wild samba late into the night.... many men today act out of the *puer aeternus* (eternal youth) archetype, which can benefit from being balanced by the archetype of the *senex* (old man). But younger men now are often very hostile to older men. The *puer* lives a provisional life, often with a great deal of creativity, but he tends to lack discipline, commitment, groundedness, and the ability to persevere.” (Bliss 1987)

As men’s organizer Shepherd Bliss points out, these gatherings had to overcome many factors – including fear, competition, and homophobia – with the goal of creating models of male feelings and side-to-side (as opposed to face-to-face) intimacy.

The conservative backlash found an echo also in evangelical groups giving birth to “ex-gay” movements, where religious ministers “healed” gay men of their plight (Robinson and Spivey 2007), in campaigns against gay-rights (Stein 2005) and above all to the Promise Keepers non-denominational organization, founded in 1990 by Bill McCartney, then the head football coach at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and still based in Denver, Colorado (Heath 2003). Its goal is to introduce men to Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and then helping them to grow as Christians by adhering to the organization’s core beliefs as outlined in the Seven Promises.

### PROMISE 1

A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PROMISE 2

A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.

PROMISE 3

A Promise Keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity.

PROMISE 4

A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values.

PROMISE 5

A Promise Keeper is committed to supporting the mission of his church by honoring and praying for his pastor, and by actively giving his time and resources.

PROMISE 6

A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

PROMISE 7

A Promise Keeper is committed to influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (see Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:19-20)

The organization's most visible event to date was the open-air gathering named "Stand in the Gap: A Sacred Assembly of Men" which took place at the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on October 4, 1997 and was televised live nationally by C-SPAN. The event was an attempt at repeating the success of the Million Man March, organized by the controversial Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan in Washington, DC on October 16, 1995, an event mostly attended by African-American males, which, beyond the sexist and racist opinions of Farrakhan, offered criticism to conservative policies detrimental to working class citizens and ethnic minorities (Reid-Pharr 2001: 164-175).

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In the 1990s we witness a multiplication of models of masculinity, partly as a response to slow shift of gay culture into the mainstream, and of the efforts by marketers and media to create new segments of male consumers ready to buy products that before would not been deemed as masculine (Kacen 2000; Benwell 2004). The growing visibility of gay lifestyles in the 1980s has further complicated the traditional perceptions of homosexuality. Gay subcultures focusing on body building, athleticism, the military and various kinds of fetishism, from policeman and firefighters to bikers and bears (hirsute, sometimes overweight men) scrambled many common assumptions about the connections between masculinity and sexual preferences (Henner 2005). The epitome of these trends is what writer Mark Simpson defined as the “metrosexual man” in an article on salon.com. The piece’s subtitle was: “He's well dressed, narcissistic and obsessed with butts. But don't call him gay.”

The typical metrosexual is a young man with money to spend, living in or within easy reach of a metropolis -- because that's where all the best shops, clubs, gyms and hairdressers are. He might be officially gay, straight or bisexual, but this is utterly immaterial because he has clearly taken himself as his own love object and pleasure as his sexual preference. Particular professions, such as modeling, waiting tables, media, pop music and, nowadays, sport, seem to attract them but, truth be told, like male vanity products and herpes, they're pretty much everywhere.

For some time now, old-fashioned (re)productive, repressed, unmoisturized heterosexuality has been given the pink slip by consumer capitalism. The stoic, self-denying, modest straight male didn't shop enough (his role was to earn money for his wife to spend), and so he had to be replaced by a new kind of man, one less certain of his identity and much more interested in his image -- that's to say, one who was much more interested in being looked at (because that's the only way you can be certain you actually exist). A man, in other words, who is an advertiser's walking wet dream (Simpson 2002).

The concept was immediately picked up by the marketing industry, eager to bank on these new sensitive, well groomed, and rapaciously consuming men’s dreams and

aspirations (RSCG Worldwide Marketing 2003). The cultural visibility of these new models is proved by the success of shows such as “Queer Eye for the Straight Guy” and its various international spin offs in Europe and Australia, where five gay “lifestyle experts” specializing in food, fashion, decoration and such, help a straight guy to achieve his goals, which could range from looking good for his family to getting a date. Despite these developments, especially visible in Western urban consumer cultures, the concept of stable gender roles as a set of behavioral, performative norms seems to maintain a certain weight in certain circles of the advertising industry, which still widely uses them as a marketing tool (An and Kim 2006).

It is against the background of these academic, political, and social debates that film scholars developed their analysis of the representations of men in movies, the main topic of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

### FOOD, MEN, AND MOVIES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

*It is not cinema that examines the criminal world to pick the most interesting behaviors. It actually happens the other way around... The camorra gangsters need to create a criminal image for themselves; since they often do not have one, they find it in movies. Articulating their persona on a recognizable Hollywood mask, they take a shortcut to make everybody acknowledge them as fearsome characters... Cinema, and especially American cinema, is not considered a far away territory where aberrations manifest themselves, a place where impossibilities come true, but rather the closest proximity.*

(Saviano 2006: 272-275; my translation)

In his frightening account about the activities and the expansion of organized crime around Naples, Italy, Roberto Saviano devotes a whole chapter to the surprising dynamics that allow local gangsters to borrow themes, behaviors, looks, and gestures from the Hollywood imagery. Movies like *The Godfather* (1972), *Goodfellas* (1990), and *Pulp Fiction* (1994) constitute relevant cultural references for real-life bosses looking for their own personal identity, to the point of fashioning their homes as Tony Montana's mansion in *Scarface* (1983) or their female body guards as the yellow-clad Uma Thurman in *Kill Bill* (2003).

One of the goals of this work is to ascertain the role of the film industry in providing a repertoire of recognizable attitudes, values, and “body techniques” – in Marcel Mauss's definition (Mauss 1973) – for the construction and the embodied



experience of contemporary masculinity. My hypothesis is that food, even when not featured as a main theme in movies, can reveal important elements of these cultural models. It is often American blockbuster movies that provide this material. An early example of this phenomenon, specifically involving food, is provided by *Un Americano a Roma* (1954), which ironically depicts the US influence on Italian youth during the post-war reconstruction. In a paradigmatic scene, a young baseball fan Nando Moriconi, played by actor Alberto Sordi, tries to eat the food that he sees in Hollywood movies, such as mustard, yogurt, and milk. Disgusted by those products, he leaves them to “mice and roaches” and reverts to his reassuring and beloved spaghetti with wine, exemplifying the contrast between local realities and Hollywood representations, but also the power and influence of these images.

### **I. A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH**

This work focuses on two other main elements besides men: food and movies, which have both become the object of specific and autonomous fields of academic research. Before proceeding with the methodological section of this work and the actual illustration and discussion of my findings, I will try to outline how food studies and film studies have interacted with the study of masculinity, among themselves and other related disciplines.

In order to formulate hypotheses and elaborate methods to conduct a cultural examination of representations of food and masculinity in movies, I have found myself straddling the uncomfortable dichotomy between humanities and social sciences. As I will explain further in the methodology section, content analysis has provided me with the conceptual and practical tools for the actual analysis of American blockbuster movies and the material they offer to global audiences. In applying content analysis methods and adapting them to moving images, I have employed approaches borrowed from social sciences (especially sociology, political science, and statistics). However, I have also applied theoretical insights from qualitative methodologies such as semiotics and discourse analysis to frame my research questions, and then to discuss the quantitative results offered by the content analysis.

In the previous chapter, I have already outlined the development of the study of

masculinity as a field of academic research, also in its interaction with the social and political debates that have accompanied its transformations in the past 40 years. Masculinity studies, despite a certain lack of consensus on the goal of the inquiry, have made men, manhood, and masculinity explicit objects of analysis, revealing their quality of changing and historically and culturally constructed categories. The new theoretical approach has underlined the existence of different kinds of masculinities defined not only by gender and sexuality, but also by age, race, ethnicity, and class. Within this framework of analysis, the examination of patriarchal structures has showed patterns of men-on-men oppression and exploitation, which then reverberates in complex ways in the relationship with women and in society at large, not secondarily in the theoretical and methodological sexist assumptions of many academic disciplines. Some authors have been recognized for establishing the new field of research, among which are Harry Brod (Brod 1987, Brod and Kaufmann 1994), R.W. Connell (Connell 1995, 1998, 2000, 2003; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005), Michael Kimmel (Kimmel 1995, 1996, 2000; Kimmel, Hearn and Connell 2005), Judith Halberstam (Halberstam 1998), Stephen Whitehead (Whitehead and Barrett 2001, Whitehead 2002, 2006), and Judith Gardiner (Gardiner 2002, 2005). The recent publication by Routledge of the *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinity* is a further sign of the establishment of the new field within academia (Flood, Gardiner, Pease, and Pringle 2007).

As the list of these names reveal, so far the new field has developed mostly in the English-speaking world, and only recently the research is expanding in other academic circles. For example in Italy, my country of origin, scholars like Angiolina Arru and Sandro Bellassai are introducing the conceptual tools of gender studies in the analysis of masculinity (Arru 2001; Bellassai 2004, 2005). However, since the dissertation focuses on a set of movies that originated in the Hollywood film industry, I have particularly referred to studies in the English-speaking world, in order to get a better understanding of the context where the representations that constitute the object of my work have been produced.

As I have made clear in the previous chapter, it is virtually impossible to deal with masculinity without acknowledging the role that women's studies, gender studies, and queer studies have played in the identification of masculinity as its own field of research.

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The contributions of feminist theorists both as analytical approach and as political activism have been and still are crucial to the understanding of gender and sexuality not only in the formation of subject identities but also as an arena for power struggles that inform the whole of society, its structure and its cultural, political, and economic production and reproduction. The rise of feminist criticism and activism has posed all kinds of questions about what it means to be a woman, and why women often find themselves exposed to violence, exploited or, at any rate, stuck in oppressive and secondary positions in many societies. Along this process of analysis and critique, which has led to questioning the structures, the power relations, and the myths that sustain patriarchal society, both men and women also ended up wondering what it actually means to be a man. Challenging the universalizing claims of psychoanalysis and biology, the critique of gender and sexuality as historically contingent constructions is also at the core of queer studies, which focuses on sexual orientation and gender identity by refusing the essentialist dichotomy between male and female from the sexual point of view, and between masculinity and femininity from the cultural and social point of view. Queer theory, building on post-structuralism, race critical theory, postcolonial studies, and literary theory, has focused on the critique of fixed and universal identities, considering them limiting and binding (Valocchi 2005).

Working at the intersection of masculinity, representations, food, and movies, it is also necessary to resort to performance studies, a field that developed as an interdisciplinary effort among theater, dance, anthropology, folklore, philosophy, cultural studies, and sociology, and that has also been influenced by feminism, psychoanalysis, gender studies, queer, postcolonial, and critical race theory. This discipline examines events, behaviors, and practices as performances that construct, reveal and reinforce identities and agencies both at the individual and at the social levels (Bell 1999). Performance thus creates meaning and shapes social life.

Already in the late 1950s, sociologist Erving Goffman argued in *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* that social interactions can be viewed as a "performance," influenced by the specific environments where they take place; in other words, individuals and groups aim to create "impressions" in their audiences, aimed at attaining the desired goals of the actors. Of course, all actors can be part of the audience and be

performers at the same time, originating “stage” identities that work very much as a function of interaction with others and that somehow bridge structure and agency, negotiating the possibilities of each single person within each set of social constraints (Goffman 1959).

In the 1980s, feminist theorist Judith Butler further expanded this line of thought to show how individuals actually learn to perform certain traits and behaviors that end up constituting their subjectivity and their perception of the self. In my opinion, these building blocks of individual and social identities are acquired through various processes of identification with images, values and practices found in the family, in the social environment, in all kinds of communities but also, more recently, in media and pop culture, including movies. I will refer to theories borrowed from contemporary critical theory and political science (by authors such as Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau, Antonio Gramsci, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe) to explain how individuals and societies negotiate these elements to create powerful and hegemonic discourses on gender and masculinity, and how on the other end these same discourses always give origin to internal contradiction and forms of resistance.

This approach can also be applied to the analysis of food. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has written extensively about the performative aspects of food preparation and consumption, showing how food production, acquisition, and consumption constitute an important arena for the performance, reproduction, introjection but also critique of different templates of gender. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1997, 1998, 1999, 2006). A special issue of the journal *Performance Research*, aptly titled “On Cooking”, edited in 1999 by Richard Gough (Gough 1999), showed how these methodologies and theories can foster a better understanding of performances of masculinity around food. Growing attention has been paid to food both by scholarly research on performance, and by performance arts. Just to mention two recent examples, in the spring 2008 the “Umami Food & Arts Festival” took place in New York City, with various artists performing and showing their work in several Manhattan venues (Avery 2008). In the winter 2008-09, the MACRO (Contemporary Art Museum of Rome) organized “Girovagando”, where the exhibition space was organized as a “kitchen” where famed chefs performed, a “dining room” for the visual arts, and a “living room” for music and other performances (Macro 2008).

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I have found the concepts of performativity and “bodily acts” as developed by feminist theorist Judith Butler very useful in examining those aspects of gender and identity constructed through and reinforced by performance, voluntary or involuntary (Butler 1990, 1993, 1997a). Many behaviors and practices are actually learned through processes of acculturation and socialization during childhood, and they are very specific to each different environment. The 1935 seminal study by anthropologist Marcell Mauss about the “techniques of the body” has been followed by research unveiling the constructed and cultural nature of many occurrences in body language, body posture, proximity, and movement (Mauss 1973). The naturalization of these mandatory practices is in turn the consequence and the constitutive matter of social control in the sense developed by Michel Foucault, who considered subjects and their social interactions as constructed by systems of ideas, values, attitudes, and behaviors which together constitute “discourse,” the field of which can be thought and talked about, while maintaining and legitimating power relationships (Foucault 1970, 1972).

Power and the principles it promotes are not always imposed on the subject from the outside, but are materialized through norms and regulations in the body itself. Although we perceive our body as natural – we are actually taught to perceive it as such – it would be naive to assume that these crucial elements of the embodied experience are irrelevant of any power agency (as diffused as it can be). Power needs to be reinforced with legitimacy, so that its subjects voluntarily adhere to its dictates and rules. The only way to do this is to employ the narratives, prescriptions, objects, and practices, including the “techniques of the body,” that facilitate the transmission and diffusion of symbols and ideas in the public space of communicative and material exchanges. These elements all share an ideological function, in the sense that they tend to propose, legitimize, and strengthen specific values and goals for society at large. They also reinforce the ideals of order and rationality that still constitute the core of most political orders. These subtle forms of control are usually excluded from the public discourse to create the illusion of the neutrality and naturalness of a body that, instead, constitutes the battlefield for cultural, social, and political struggles. To be fully effective, power relationships need to be embodied and performed by the individual subjects.

We cannot exclude food and ingestion from power struggles. The way we

categorize and experience our physical needs, the way we choose, store, prepare, cook, ingest, digest, and excrete food, are far from being neutral or natural. Masculinity is also performed, regulated and reinforced by daily gestures and practices that often risk being overlooked because of their supposed naturalness. In this sense, when it comes to movies, we watch and analyze a “performance of a performance.” The effort made by actors to mimic behaviors in a credible way, or at times their effort to exaggerate and amplify certain gestures in ironic and self-conscious manners, can help us unpack the performative nature of many aspects of masculinity, also when it comes to food and eating in individual, family, and social contexts.

In approaching representation of food and masculinity in movies, I have also used the tools offered by semiotics to analyze food as a cultural system of signs and as a code able to generate a continuous production of signs. Although the cultural character of food is nowadays rarely questioned in academia, nevertheless the resources of a semiotic approach to food are still quite untapped. In spite of the classic work by Roland Barthes (Barthes 1972) on this subject, just to mention one, food is not usually analyzed through this methodology. Probably the main reason is that semioticians have often tried to apply categories and concepts deriving from linguistics, where systems are based on binary oppositions and signification is articulated on clearly definable levels. Food, as a code, undoubtedly presents substantial differences with language. Nevertheless, I think it can prove extremely fruitful to analyze food in semiotic terms, which implies that each element must be considered as a sign, composed of a signifier and a signified (or expression and content). The cohesion of a culinary system, compared to a linguistic one, is far less binding. A semiotic community will be able to engage in meaningful symbolic action, but the meanings of signs can never be fixed, revealing themselves instead as variable, contested, and even incomplete. Food would not seem to have any specific and independent meaning, if taken separately from the social and cultural habits that surround it, which at any rate are closely connected with it to form a complex set of connotations.

The influence of linguistics (and, indirectly, of Platonism) leads us to look for a sign-content similar to what we could call a concept, or an idea: something we can provide a definition for, with precise features logically arranged like in a dictionary. Instead, since food is closely connected to practice, its signified is rather a function, a

praxis, and a socially sanctioned one. All the semantic traits that refer to food, although clearly defined by differences and oppositions, due to their nature and their close connection with the personal experience of every semiotic subject, do not have either the character of necessity or the strict coherence of linguistic models. A specific food cannot be decoded only on the basis of its taste and flavor. Since its content is a practical function and a cultural unit, each food-sign is also a part of other signifying networks, and the full width of its denotations and connotations cannot be grasped without analyzing its interaction with other discourses. In order to achieve this, I have also analyzed those visual and narrative signs in movies that refer to masculinity, particularly in the context of production, acquisition, and consumption of food. I argue that viewers are able to read certain elements referring to masculinity in the movies through the use of their cultural codes, but these elements are likely to assume different senses within different signifying networks, creating in turns new signs that are then reabsorbed in the global circulation of meaning.

For this reason, I have often referred to semiotic concepts when uncovering the connections, the mechanisms, and even the malfunctions in that extensive, intrusive, and all encompassing web of meanings, images, and language that constitute movies as a cultural dimension and as entertainment, especially in its representations of eating and ingestion.

## **II. FOOD STUDIES**

Although in my research I resorted to disparate disciplines such as gender studies, performance studies, cultural studies, and semiotics, I have chosen representations of individual and social acts of food consumption and ingestion as the main point of view from which to analyze men and masculinities, which is the general approach of food studies.

Food studies, still in its infancy as an autonomous field, promotes and practices the analysis of cultural, social and political issues concerning the production, distribution, representation, and consumption of food from a variety of disciplines and critical perspectives. The new area is developing at the crossroads of philosophy, anthropology, history, sociology, gender and queer studies, economics, agricultural science, ecology,

nutrition, semiotics, performance, and media studies. The specificity of the new discipline consists of using food, consumption, and ingestion (and their centrality in the human experience) as its main focus to uncover aspects of the human experience that would otherwise be overlooked.

A few widespread institutions have been instrumental in establishing the budding field as a legitimate area of research, among which are The Department of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health at New York University, the programs in Gastronomy at Boston University and the University of Adelaide, the Institut Européen d'Histoire et des Cultures de l'Alimentation, the Slow Food's University of Gastronomic Sciences, the Master in Food History at the University of Bologna, The FOST (Social & Cultural Food Studies) at Vrije Universiteit in Brussel, and more recently the programs in Food Systems at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Gastronomy at Université du Québec à Montreal, and the Anthropology of Food at the SOAS of London and at the University of Indiana in Bloomington. Some academic presses, such as University of California Press, University of Illinois, and Berg have created food series in their catalogs, enhancing the perception of Food Studies as a free-standing discipline. The growing interest in food related curricula has also been noticed by the mainstream media (Black 2008).

The new field has not established a central dominant paradigm or a canonic corpus of work, and so far those involved argue that this diversity of methodologies and theories makes them lively and open to new perspectives and dynamic debates. As in the case of Gender Studies, American Studies, Latino/a Studies, and Cultural Studies in the past, Food Studies is not (yet) a discipline with a history tied to a hegemony of ideas and topics, but a collaborative endeavor that includes also individuals outside academia, such as journalists, chefs, activists, and politicians.

However, some authors and in particular some books are widely and consistently mentioned as seminal and founding: there is a growing consensus in this sense about Jack Goody's *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class* (Goody 1982), Sidney Mintz's *Sweetness and Power* (Mintz 1985), Stephen Mennell's *All Manners of Food* (Mennell 1996), Warren Belasco's *Appetite for Change* (Belasco 1993), David Bell and Gill Valentine's *Consuming Geographies* (Bell and Valentine 1997), the special issue of the journal *Social Research* on food and culture (Mack 1999), and in Europe the work of scholars



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such as Piero Camporesi, Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari (Camporesi 1989 and 1994; Flandrin 1992; Flandrin and Montanari 1999; Montanari 1993). We cannot overlook the relevance of the two editions of the *Food and Culture Reader*, edited by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, in creating a group of texts that new students in food studies become familiar with and perceive as groundbreaking, such as Levy Strauss's writing about the culinary triangle, Mary Douglas's analysis of a meal, or Marvin Harris's discussion of food practices (Counihan and Van Esterik 2008).

A few attempts have been made to systematize and illustrate the diversity of approaches and themes within the new discipline. Among the best examples we can mention Stephen Mennel, Ann Murcott's and Anneke von Otterloo's *Sociology of Food* (Mennel, Murcott, and von Otterloo 1992), Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil's *Sociology on the Menu* (Beardsworth and Keil 1997), Bob Ashley, Joanne Hollows, Steve Jones, and Ben Taylor's *Food and Cultural Studies* (Ashley, Hollows, Jones and Taylor 2004), Warren Belasco's *Food: The Key Concepts* (Belasco 2008).

Although I have not directly based my dissertation on any of the mentioned works or authors, I acknowledge their deep influence on my approach to food as a specific point of view through which to analyze reality, and its relevance to the human experience. However, food studies have until quite recently focused on women and their relationship to food in its procurement, preparation, service, and consumption. Much research has often been aimed at uncovering patterns of exploitation and social injustice that hinged on the act of eating, on food, and on body image. Great examples of this kind of approach are the work of Marjorie DeVault on family as the locus for the gendering of specific roles (DeVault 1991 and 1999), Caroline Bynum's examination on the relationship between food and women in the Middle Ages (Bynum 1987), Joan Jacob's Brumberg's historical investigation on eating disorders (Brumberg 1988), Susan's Bordo study on the female body (Bordo 1993), and Margaret Kelleher's research on the feminization of famine (Kelleher 1997). In many ways, Arlene Avakian's collected volume of women's writing (Avakian 1997), Carole Counihan's anthropological fieldwork in Italy (Counihan 1999 and 2004), Laura Shapiro's study on the origins of home economics (Shapiro 2001) and Janet Theophano's research on cookbook (2002) highlighted the kitchen and food preparation as the locus where women could express themselves, communicate, and

develop valuable skills, even within the strictures of the patriarchal order. This new approach has proved particularly fruitful in food studies: among others, we can mention Amy Bentley's *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Bentley 1998), Sherrie Inness's *Pilaf, Pozole and Pad Thai: American Women and Ethnic Food* (Inness 2001b), Laura Shapiro's *Something from the Oven* (Shapiro 2004), Psyche Williams-Forsion's *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs: Black Women Food, and Power* (Williams-Forsion 2006), and Arlene Avakian and Barbara Haber's *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women And Food* (Avakian and Haber 2005).

Food studies already has developed a theoretical framework and a critical language for the analysis of the relationship between food and women, also as a remedy to scholarship that in general was occupied with men's lives and deeds and create huge gaps in social knowledge. On the other hand, the systematic reflection about food and masculinity has just started, despite a few important precedents.

### III. FOOD AND MASCULINITY

The exploration of the connections between food and masculinity has interested various disciplines, among which are history, sociology, anthropology, and art criticism. As early as 1984, Jay Mechling paid attention to the attitudes towards food shown by young boy scouts (Mechling 1984), inaugurating a research on the role of food in the formation of masculinities that he continued over the years (Mechling 2005). In the Nineties, with the development of masculinity as an independent object of study, scholars started focusing on various aspects of the complex relationship between men and food. Anne Bolin examined bodybuilders' eating habits (Bolin 1992), Gary Alan Fine concentrated of men in professional kitchen, while Stephen Mennell, applying Norbert Elias's theory of the civilization process on food related issues, outlined the historical relationship between men, eating, and power (Mennell 1996). As early as 1989, in his *Le Goût du nouveau*, literary critic and food historian Alberto Capatti dedicated a chapter to the role that bachelors played in establishing a bourgeois cuisine in public establishments in France between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the *Belle Epoque* (Capatti 1989). Great attention has been paid to the masculinization of cooking in that period, both in Europe

and in the US, when in the most industrialized Western societies home cooking, until then a quintessential female domain, felt the need to become more scientific to acquire respectability (Shapiro 2001; Mennell 1996). Restaurant cooking was also systematized and organized by August Escoffier, following the example of Carême. Professional cooking in high end grand hotels and the restaurants often attached to them became a respectable profession, thus excluding women that however kept on working in less prestigious establishments, like bistros and other family-managed eateries (Capatti and Montanari 1999; Trubeck 2000; Schehr and Weiss 2001; Parkhurst Ferguson 2004; Rambourg 2005).

Also philosophers have turned to food and men. Particularly interesting are the works of Michel Onfray (Onfray 1989, 1995), above all his *Sculpture de soi: la morale esthétique* (Onfray 1991); Gisèle Harrus-Révidi's considerations on ingestion, incorporation, and orality in *La psychanalyse de la gourmandise* (Harrus-Révidi 1994); Elspeth Probyn's analysis of the connection between food and sexuality in *Carnal Appetites: Food Sex Identities* (Probyn 2000); and Allen S. Weiss's reflections on the relationship between gender, art, taste, and cuisine in the edited volume *Taste Nostalgia* (Weiss 1997) with essays ranging from Rossini's culinary passions to the gendering of figs and in *Feast and Folly: Cuisine, Intoxication, and the Poetics of the Sublime* (Weiss 2002). Feminist philosopher (and now editor of the journal *Food Culture & Society*) Lisa Heldke, who already in the seminal *Cooking, Eating, Thinking* edited with Deane Curtin (Curtin and Heldke 1992) had made an argument about the theoretical value of the cooking experience, in *Exotic Appetites* reflects on the connection between the enjoyment of ethnic cuisines and white male colonialist attitudes (Heldke 2003). In the recent collection *Food and Philosophy*, edited by Fritz Allhoff and Dave Monroe, a few essays deal with issues of masculinity, in a stimulating even if indirect fashion, among which Michael Shaffer's and Jeremy Igger's exploration of gastronomic expertise and food criticism, and Glenn Kuehn's musing about his personal path between philosophy and professional cooking (Allhoff and Monroe 2007).

The development of food studies as an autonomous discipline, together with the growing interest in food among both academic and commercial publishers, has also stimulated work in the field of food and masculinity. In 2001, a few essays in the

collection *Kitchen Culture in America*, edited by Sherrie A. Inness, explicitly addressed the topic (Inness 2001a). One of the first attempts to make the point on the research on the subject within food studies was a 2005 special issue of the journal *Food & Foodways*, edited by Alice Julier and Laura Lindenfeld. In the introduction, they aptly stated:

Although we have ample nutritional studies that document difference in men's and women's consumption patterns, we lack an understanding of how gender and food operate together as fields of experience that shape contemporary lives. Indeed, most of the knowledge we have about men and food tends to reproduce and respond to a set of ideological discourses about gender difference, without much reference to empirical, ethnographic, or historical data... When men are considered in relation to food, it tends to be only as a superficial comparison, to suggest that this terrain is of less relevance and certainly less depth than for women. (Julier and Lindenfeld 2005: 3).

In the special issue, topics ranged from an analysis of different models of masculinities when related to food and family life (Sobal 2005) to eating habits in a New York City firehouse (Deutsch 2005), from the involvement of men in milk safety at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Block 2005) to representation of male nutritional issues in men's fitness magazines (Parasecoli 2005a) and in Japanese food programming (Holden 2005). There is a clear attempt to go beyond the observation of men cooking for special events such as outdoor barbecues, turkey carving for the holidays, or cooking Sunday breakfast (Adler 1981; Hollows 2002; Deutsch 2003; Roth 2005a; Buerkle 2007), in order to examine men's behaviors, beliefs and values in everyday context (Wilk 2006a). Essays have been published on the gender division of food-related labor in double-career couples (Aarseth and Olsen 2008), on the eating habits of single men (Sellaeg and Chapman 2008), of specific categories such as carpenters and engineers in Finland (Roos, Prättälä and Koski 2001), and in particular situations like prison (Valentine and Longstaff 1998) or competitive eating (O'Connor 2006). Food consumption has been analyzed as a marker of gender, and in particular masculinity, in immigrant and mobile communities (Ray 2004; Wilk 2006b; Currarino 2007). Men's dieting – both for body image and health reasons and ideological or religious reasons – has also attracted the attention of

scholars, who have shown how food is deeply involved in cultural and power struggles (Griffith 2000; Crowley 2002; Drummond 2002; Bentley 2004; Parasecoli 2005c).

Due to its undeniable visibility, great attention has been paid to the presence of male chefs in the newly popular TV food programming and in food-related media in general (Miles 1993; Adema 2000; Hollows, 2003; Lindenfeld 2003; Roberson 2005; Brownlie and Hewer 2007; Ray 2007; Hansen Rousseau 2007; Parasecoli 2008; Swenson 2009). Successful male chefs on screen seem to reinforce the common perception of the legitimacy of supposedly highly trained men in professional kitchens, engaged in artistic, creative, and specialized endeavors, as opposed to the female involvement with food that is marked by nurturance, daily chores, and subsistence

The wide spectrum of research is probably the direct consequence of the lack of systematic research until recently. Under the influence of gender and cultural studies, food studies has embraced a conceptualization of masculinity that avoids the essentialism of sex roles, based on supposedly intrinsic differences, but rather considers it as a historical and social construct that is performed in social interaction.

#### **IV. FILM STUDIES**

Why study men and film, and more specifically men in film? Analyzing the representations of masculinities in movies can help us to achieve a better understanding of functions, roles, and expectations for males in contemporary societies. Moreover, it can offer us and also to get a tighter grasp on what masculinity as a gender is and how men (and women) imagine it and perform it in their every day lives. In other words, do movies help reinforce a common perception of what a real man is, with specific attributes, qualities, and behaviors, or do movies actually propose different kinds of masculinities, contributing to break down and recompose alternative definitions of manhood under the influence of commercial, artistic, or even political reasons? Do movies promote a single unrivaled masculinity, or many competing masculinities? Pop culture, including media and movies, turns out to be one of the arenas where new values, changing identities, and possible practices become part of a shared patrimony that participates in the constitution and transformation of contemporary masculinities (Craig 1992).

As anthropologist Arjun Appadurai has noticed, imagination and fantasy have turned into relevant and all-encompassing social practices, with a strong influence on how people all over the world perceive, interpret, and live their lives.

In the past two decades, as the deterritorialization of persons, images, and ideas has taken on new force... more persons throughout the world see their lives through the prisms of the possible lives offered by mass media in all their forms (Appadurai 1996: 53-54).

Pop culture, including movies and other visual representations, becomes a cultural field and a shared repository where contemporary subjectivities are built through new narratives, shifting identities, and templates for behavior, to the point that these new forms of collective imagination can stimulate agency and prompt social mobilization. In this sense, imagination can play a political role, since it can turn into an organized space of negotiation and discourse that is “neither purely emancipatory nor entirely disciplined”. (Appadurai 1996: 4)

It is easy to observe how in pop culture images borrowed by movies, created by filmmakers, cinematographers, light technicians, costume designers, and actors among others, influence the audience’s perceptions and expectations about themselves (Parasecoli 2008). In turn, filmmakers, scriptwriters and all those involved in the production of a movie try to express elements that can be significant and relevant to their audiences, often adapting their work to the supposed needs and requirements of movie-goers. It is precisely these ongoing exchanges that explain how the overall media system, as a totality with its internal relationships, oppositions and differences, can adjust and vary over time. In the case of movies, it is important to figure out what elements remain the same to keep the visual or narrative element recognizable, and what changes; what significations attached to the meaning are stable and what develop over time.

To unpack the complex representations of masculinity and manhood around the production and consumption of food, critical media theory has analyzed media effects from the social and political point of view, examining how the corporate ownership of media production and distribution affects society through representation and images, and how filmmakers and the film industry try at the same time to negotiate an independent position from which it can adopt a critical gaze over the environment from which they

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originate. In particular, within the field of communication and media studies, methodologies from film studies and film theory offer a solid and useful conceptual framework for understanding film's relationship to individual viewers, society at large, and other media and arts.

In the examination of representations of men and masculinities, it would be impossible to not take notice of analytical tools developed in the 1970s by film theorists that have been influenced by psychoanalysis, gender studies, literary theory, semiotics and anthropology, such as Christian Metz (Metz 1974, 1982), and feminist theorists Laura Mulvey (Mulvey 1975), Kaja Silverman (Silverman 1983, 1992) and Griselda Pollock (Pollock 1999, 2006).

This approach was partly a development of reflections on visual arts as an extension of Jacques Lacan's theory on the Imaginary, the activity connected to the formation of the subject, its ego, and its identity through processes of identification with external visual elements. Based on his psychoanalytical experience, Jacques Lacan developed a theory that he defined as the "mirror stage." According to Lacan's observations, between 6 and 18 months of age, infants are particularly taken with their own images as they see them reflected in mirrors. We all have enjoyed watching small babies playing in front of mirrors, making faces, discovering their own body and movements. Adults often join them in the games while holding them. For Lacan, this intense interest is stimulated by the fact that the images reassure babies about the control they can actually exert over their own body, perceived as uncoordinated and out of control. The reflection, on the other hand, appears complete and coordinated in their actions. The images that surround us as infants and children, easily accessible and reassuringly undivided, provide us with the first safety net from anxiety. The relief infants experience by looking at their own reflected image leads them to identify with it: the image is chosen as a preferential self, much more complete and self-sufficient than the one experienced through their own developing body. The mirror image becomes the core around which the ego is constructed, the center of that aspect of the subjective experience that Lacan labeled as "Imaginary," the dimension of identification with visual images.

This ego is nevertheless external to the self. It can be considered ideal in that it is

built around what we would like to be, to respond to what the world around us considers us to be: good looking, strong, with our daddy's eyes. For this reason Lacan calls it the ideal-ego, functioning as a lighthouse in the building of a functioning individual. This first identification process is at the same time reassuring but also alienating, since the ideal-ego is somehow fictional and located outside of the bodily self. Lacan ascribes to this element the frequent ambivalence that even as adults we all experience towards images of heroes or persons we identify with. More or less consciously, we want to be like them, but at the same time we hate them because we know we cannot be like them.

Lacan's theories on the role of the visual dimension in the construction of the subject stimulated a wide debate about its application to visual arts, in particular painting and cinema. The discussion at first coagulated around the concept of "suture", introduced by Lacan's closest associate (and son-in-law) Jacques-Alain Miller as a tool to achieve a better comprehension of Lacan's sometimes obscure writing, and especially his "logic of the signifier". Lacan had used the term "suture" in one of his seminars (SXI 107/117) to indicate a dynamics of "pseudo-identification", a "junction between the Imaginary and the Symbolic." According to Miller, "suture names the relation of the subject to the chain of its discourse; we shall see that it figures there as the element which is lacking, in the form of a stand-in. For, while there lacking, it is not purely and simply absent. Suture, by extension – the general relation of lack to the structure – of which it is an element, inasmuch as it implies the position of a taking-the-place-of" (Miller 1966: 40). Suture defines the relation of the subject to the chain of language, discourse and the symbolic order, bridging the gap between the speaking subject and the "I" of any utterance, which as a signifier in a signifying chain is already part of language and discourse, that is to say of a culture that is fundamentally other from the subject, its needs, and its drives. This gap had been pointed out also by linguist Emile Benveniste, who distinguished between the speaking subject (*le sujet de l'énonciation*) and the subject of the speech (*le sujet de l'énoncé*), the latter being a signifier whose meaning emerges only within discourse (Benveniste 1966). "The subject of the enounced and the subject of the enunciation never fully come together, are always in the distances of the symbolic, the subject not one in its representation in language" (Heath 1981: 85). It is the consciousness of the ego, the result of identification and imaginary projections, that fills the gap affirming to be the "I"



of language and discourse. Moreover, “the child acquires the sexed place indicated by the pronoun positions of “he” and “she” and everything that is predicated socially and culturally on them” (Gledhill 1978), while language and culture are organized around a central symbol, the signifying of authority and order: the phallus, as opposed to the anatomic penis, and actually its substitute in those castration anxieties which constitute the Oedipal trauma, becomes the anchor for patriarchy.

However, applying a Lacanian approach to the matter, when they are introduced to language, difference, and law, children lose any illusion of complete plenitude: desire is the result of the children’s striving to go back to a mythical, never actually existent, unity between subjects and reality. Movies, built on visual stimulation, seem to offer to desiring subjects a way out of the constraints of language, reverting to imaginary and identification mechanisms.

The debate about suture developed in France also under the influence of Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser’s discussion on ideology (already mentioned in the previous chapter, and Althusser’s school fellow at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris) and its “interpellation” of the subject, that is to say the process by which ideology addresses the (abstract) pre-ideological individual thus effectively producing him as subject proper, “always-already” a subject. “The system of suture functions not only constantly to re-interpellate the viewing subject into the same discursive positions, thereby giving that subject the illusion of a stable and continuous identity, but to re-articulate the existing symbolic order in ideologically orthodox ways” (Silverman 1983: 221). Althusser’s theory allowed to bring back class and relations of productions into the formation of both the subject and the social groups.

In his 1972 *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger focused on the connection between power and image, pointing out how starting from the 18<sup>th</sup> century private patrons used to order paintings as a form of conspicuous consumption to show their wealth, with women as their frequent theme, often represented naked and in passive postures. While for instance in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch paintings objects were represented as a reminder of the patron’s riches, in the discrete and severe style influenced by the Reformation, with the expansion of commercial and industrial activities and the development of masculinities based on business and success, women became the symbol of men’s power and properties (Berger

1972).

From Jean-Pierre Oudart's 1969 essay *La Suture*, the political and psychoanalytical approaches came together in the use of the concept of suture in film criticism, where it indicates the techniques used by film to make viewers forget the camera that is really doing the looking and to stitch them into the story-world of a film as "subjects-within-the-film". As a consequence, viewers experience the film world as an enclosed world unto itself, of which they make sense and to which they respond according to "the film's own terms." Viewers can identify with a specific character, but in reality they are always really identifying with the point of view of the camera, unconscious of the fact that they are looking with and through the camera, as well as according to how the film has been edited together from various selected takes to create an imaginary, artificial, and constructed reality. Through this the dynamics, techniques, codes, and conventions become invisible to the viewer (Oudart 1969; Schefer 1969; Dayan 1974; Rothman 1975; Heath 1981; Butte 2008). In the words of theorist Kaja Silverman,

The more the operations of enunciation are revealed to the viewing subject, the more tenacious is its desire for the comfort and closure of narrative – the more anxious it will be to seek refuge within the film's fiction. In so doing, the viewing subject submits to cinematic signification, permits itself to be spoken by the film's discourse. For the theoreticians of suture, the viewing subject thereby re-enacts its entry into the symbolic order (Silverman 1983: 213).

Feminist scholar Laura Mulvey applied the concept of suture and Lacanian theory to movies, basing her reflection on the observation that in classic cinema narratives men are in the center of the plot; women often the male action's prize, and the camera looks at them from a point of view that stimulates a sort of voyeuristic pleasure in the male audience, the "male gaze", which perceives the woman as passive and controlled by men. In the Lacanian approach, which centers culture and language around the fundamental signifier of the phallus, what is the role of women? Are they totally excluded? And how can female sexuality be expressed? The logical conclusion is that women exist in language, whose mastery belongs to men, only to be talked about, and in movies to be looked at. Mulvey's seminal 1975 essay "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema" bridges

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psychoanalytic theory, film criticism, and feminism, affirming that cinema contributes to the establishment of subject identity. She affirmed she intended to “use psychoanalysis to discover where and how the fascination of film is reinforced by pre-existing patterns of fascination already at work within the individual subject and the social formations that have molded him. It takes as a starting point the way film reflects, reveals and even plays on the straight, socially established interpretation of sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle” (Mulvey 1975: 6). She focuses on a particular form of pleasure, scopophilia, which already Freud had identified as deriving pleasure from looking or from being looked at.

According to Mulvey, this voyeuristic pleasure compensates for the fundamental male ego insecurities deriving from the castration complex: women are “fetishized” and neutralized, turning from a source of danger and fear (“she first symbolizes the castration threat by her real absence of a penis and second thereby raises her child into the symbolic”) to a reassuring element. In this view of spectatorship, film is considered as a reinforcement of traditional gender relations that nevertheless functions unconsciously, thus providing the basis for ignorance to gender oppression and subordination. “Just as a shot of the character within the fiction engaged in the activity of seeing functions to cover over the camera’s coercive gaze, so the representation of the male subject in terms of vision has the effect of attributing to him qualities which in fact belong to that same apparatus – qualities of potency and authority... The female subject of the speech or narrative – i.e. the female protagonist of the fiction – signifies the absence of the phallus (of control, power, privilege). As usual, her body provides the means for representing this deprivation. She simultaneously attracts the gaze – appeals to the senses – and represents castration” (Silverman 1983: 223). Moreover, Mulvey contends that the voyeuristic nature of cinema is also evident in the way films are watched: the screening situation in a movie theater provides the perfect climate for looking at another person as an object of sexual stimulation, fulfilling a scopophilic function, that is providing pleasure through the gaze: the physical projection of the image mirrors the psychological process of projecting repressed desires onto the actors within the diegesis (Mulvey 1975).

Mulvey’s work has been interpreted as a feminist application of the concept of suture. “Suture can be understood as the process whereby the inadequacy of the subject’s

position is exposed in order to facilitate (i.e: create the desire for) new insertions into a cultural discourse which promises to make good that lack. Since the promised compensation involves an ever greater subordination to already existing scenarios, the viewing subject's position is a supremely passive one, a fact which is carefully concealed through cinematic sleight-of-hand. This sleight-of-hand involves attributing to a character within fiction qualities which in fact belong to the machinery of enunciation: the ability to generate narrative, the omnipotent and coercive gaze, the castrating authority of the law" (Silverman 1983: 232).

Since the mid 1980s, the film theory based on Lacan's work and feminist studies elicited harsh critiques from scholars such as David Bordwell and Noel Carroll, who based their research on cognitive theory (Carroll 1993; Bordwell and Carroll 1996; McGowan 2003). These scholars argue that it is necessary to start from solid data and empirical evidence and to abandon dogmatic tenets in order to express universal claims.

Outside empiricist circles, Mulvey's essay engendered a debate also within feminism and in film criticism both about the relevance of psychoanalysis in movie analysis and the role of resistance and ideological struggle (Flitterman 1978; Willians 1981; Hammett 1997). If cinema is dominated by the male scopophilic place, is there any room for a "feminine gaze"? And how about gay men, who do not get any pleasure from the female body? For instance, Jacqueline Rose pointed out that the female position is both negative, as the symbol of castration and lack of power, and positive, as a point of resistance within the film system, since she often occupies the reverse shot in the shot/reverse shot editing and thus represents the desire to return to a pre-oedipal space free from castration, sexual difference, and the phallus (Rose 1977). Christine Gledhill, instead, argued that to unpack the oppressive mechanisms of film, it is not enough to replace stereotypes and offensive images with real female characters: it would be necessary to define what the "reality" of women, which are varied and always shifting. Moreover, women cannot accept what they see in a movie as a reflection of reality and of an eternal, unchanging world, but always as a mediated representation (Gledhill 1978). In 1981 Mulvey herself expressed some afterthoughts about her first essay, expanding her line of reasoning to incorporate "popular narratives, whether film, folk-tale or myth" and examining the structure of their plots along the lines proposed in Vladimir Propp's

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*Morphology of the Folktale* (Propp 1968). In a new appraisal of the active/passive dichotomy as it unfolds in all kind of narratives, women need not always be subjugated but they can resist the usually fetishized image of the female (Mulvey 1981). Critic Gaylyn Studlar, while still applying psychoanalytic theories, opposed Mulvey's thesis that visual pleasure derives from a dominant, sadistic perspective, suggesting rather that both male and female audiences obtain visual pleasure from a passive, masochistic perspective, where the audiences enjoy the feeling of powerless generated by overwhelming cinematic images (Studlar 1993).

A few years later, Miriam Hansen focused the attention of criticism also on mainstream Hollywood's actors and their relationship with female audiences. Studying Rodolfo Valentino, she found out how his success happened when women spectators started having a relevance to the industry as a consequence of their increasing social and economic visibility in American society, and as potential commercial targets. In her point of view, the actor destabilized hegemonic masculinity with "connotations of sexual ambiguity, social marginality, and ethnic/racial otherness". Valentino's films pose many questions:

If a man is made to occupy the place of erotic object, how does this affect the organization of vision? If the desiring look is aligned with the position of a female viewer, does this open up a space for female subjectivity and, by the same token, an alternative conception of visual pleasure?... Each of these films reiterates a familiar pattern in staging the exchange of looks between Valentino and the female characters. Whenever Valentino lays eyes on a woman first, we can be sure that she will turn out to be the woman of his dreams, the legitimate partner in the romantic relationship; whenever a woman initiates the look, she is invariably marked as a vamp, to be condemned and defeated in the course of the narrative... The legitimate female figure is deprived of the initiative of the erotic look and relegated to the position of scopic object within the diegesis. In relation to the spectator, however, she shares this position of scopic object with Valentino himself. Valentino's appeal depends, to a large degree, on the manner in which he combines masculine control of the look with the feminine quality 'to-be-

looked-at'...The notion of ambivalence appears crucial to a theory of female spectatorship precisely because the cinema, while enforcing patriarchal hierarchies in its organization of the look, also offer women an institutional opportunity to violate the taboo of female scopophilia... scopophilia could be distinguished from a socially more complicit voyeurism, as defined by the one-sided regime of the keyhole and the norms of genitality (Hansen 1986: 587-89).

Valentino thus highlights problems with Mulvey's difficulty in explaining identification and pleasure in female audiences watching mainstream films where the heroes are mostly male.

With the 1980s, following the development of masculinity as an autonomous field of study, also movie scholars started paying attention to representation of men in movies, the role of movies in identity formation and in creating, negotiating, and challenging cultural values and expectation. The new interest, marked by the groundbreaking work by Richard Dyer on gay movies and movie stars (Dyer 1977 and 1979) and by Steve Neale on masculinity as spectacle in mainstream cinema (Neal 1983 and 1986), focused also on how representations of men in movies were closely connected with the general cultural environment in which those movies were produced. Masculinity, also in film criticism, came to be considered as culturally constructed and historically determined. For instance, Susan Jeffords unpacked the "remasculinization" of American men after the transformations in gender relations in the 1960s and 1970s. Analyzing war movies and TV shows depicting the Vietnam war, she realized how men were seen as oppressed and as needing social attention, thus moving them to the margin of power relationships to hide their actual social predominance. "The masculine bond insists on a denial of difference – whether black or white, wealthy or poor, high school or college-educated, from north or south, men are the 'same' – at the same time that the bond itself depends for its existence on an affirmation of difference – men are not women" (Jeffords 1989: 59-60).

Bingham (1994) and Cohan and Hark (1993) concentrated their analyses on the different models of masculinity offered by Hollywood male stars, and their intrinsic spectacularity. Following the same line of reflection, and focusing on yuppie

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representations, Fred Pfeil pointed out the success of tales of redemption where white professional men discovered that success is not as important as love and family life (Pfeil 1995). In a later essay on Tom Hanks, Pfeil noticed how in American cinema, besides the rampaging angry white males embodied in the star image of Bruce Willis, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mel Gibson, and Sylvester Stallone, a new alternative profile of man is emerging. This new man, as empowered and hegemonic as ever, displays three main features: “boyishness, and the particular form of homosociality that accompanies it; second, his sexual passivity or mutedness; and third, the extent to which he quite literally plays out his various roles as a distinctly happy and creative worker within the professional-managerial class” (Pfeil 2002: 121). With the increased interest in the body and embodied experience, some authors, such as Peter Lehman (Lehman 1993 and 2001) focused on the visual representation of the male body in media and pop culture. Peter Schehr, for instance, argues that

At least since romanticism, and until very recently, the ideas and ideals of masculine beauty have been marginalized.... To appear as beautiful, or, more conservatively, as handsome – which the dictionary defines as “manly, dignified, and impressive” – is to be suspected of femininity, delicacy, effeminacy, marginality, foppery, or dandyism, the criticism changing according to the era and its political climes. The point is this: in any period during the last three centuries or so, masculine beauty has, in the West, at least until the advent of film, been by and large consigned to a realm in which its presence was suspect... Sign of the feminine within the masculine, beauty needs to disappear from the construction of the man, of manliness, and indeed of masculinity as a whole. To feminine beauty and delicacy correspond the constructions of power: a man is built by his deeds, a woman by her attributes (Schehr 1997: 78-79).

In his study on the representations of whiteness, Richard Dyer notices that until the 1980s, it was rare to see naked white male bodies. Nakedness, after all, equals vulnerability: men can reveal their fundamental similarity to women, their imperfections, their lack of strength, especially compared to non-white bodies, in a word the difference between their actual bodies and social ideals and expectations. However from 1950s

white bodybuilders start appearing on the screen. They constitute a visual reference to the classic Greek and Roman ideals of beauty, and they suggest cultural closeness to a certain American life-style, that Dyer defines as “Californian”, that focuses on health and energy. At the same time they express physical power and individuality (a sculpted, hard, tanned, often smooth body does reaffirm its uniqueness of mass, definition and proportions), while stressing the value of pain necessary to achieve desired results and the victory of mind over matter (Dyer 1997).

Reflections on Hollywood male stars developed in part as a result of the examination of non-white masculinities in movies within the theoretical frame of postcolonial and race studies (Boulanger 1974; Leab 1976; Cripps 1977; Wall 1980; Bogle 2003). It soon became clear that it was not enough to concentrate on plots, negative stereotypes, and positive images, but it was necessary to look closely at the specific cinematic aspects such as style, editing, and even shot framing, which originated persistent and influential visual representations. Robert Stam and Louis Spence, in their 1983 essay on *Colonialism, Racism, and Representation*, stated:

The cinematic and television apparatuses, taken in their most inclusive sense, might be said to inscribe certain features of European colonialism. The magic carpet provided by these apparatuses flies us around the globe and makes us, by virtue of our subject position, its audiovisual masters. It produces us as subjects, transforming us into armchair conquistadores, affirming our sense of power while making the inhabitants of the Third World objects of spectacle for the First World’s voyeuristic gaze. Colonialist representation did not begin with the cinema: it is rooted in a vast colonial intertext, a widely disseminated set of discursive practices (Stam and Spence 1983: 238).

Robyn Wiegman noticed from the 1980s a widespread move toward “representational integration” in the US movie industry, as a response to accusations of racism (Wiegman 1995). By making men of ethnic minorities visible on screen, Hollywood aimed on one hand to hide the ongoing power struggles between different ethnicities, visualizing democratic fraternities and constructive complementarity, on the other to widen the basis of potential consumers. One of the most common expedients carrying on this imaginary integration has been the interracial male bonding narrative, a variation on the very



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common buddy formula. However, Wiegman points out that in this interracial dynamics the white star performs traditional hard and assertive masculinities, while the African American co-star often plays more emotional and nurturing roles, thus assuming feminine traits, even when occupying the reassuring and socially constructive position of cop and guardian of patriarchal order as husband and father. Major stars such as Eddie Murphy, Danny Glover, Will Smith, and Morgan Freeman have played these kinds of roles, which movies such as *Six Degrees of Separation*, starring a young Will Smith, try to unpack by highlighting their inconsistencies and contrived resolutions (Gillan 2001).

These tame representations of black masculinities have effectively muted the cultural relevance of blaxploitation movies, which from the early 1970s had become extremely popular with black audiences. However, since production and distribution were still in white hands, many themes and visual features from this genre were quickly absorbed by mainstream cinema, which at the same time discarded elements such as solidarity and consciousness rising (Benshoff 2000; Lyne 2000).

Neutralizing the fear about militant black masculinities that had come to the forefront with the Civil Right Movement and with the Black Panther Party, these new black characters are a more modern and sophisticated version of what Donald Bogle defined as the “huckfinn fixation”:

The essential fixation for the exploration of the huckfinn fixation is quite simple: a good white man opposes the corruption and pretenses of the dominant white culture. In rejecting society, he (like Huck Finn) takes up with an outcast. The other man (like Nigger Jim) is a trusty black who never competes with the white man and who serves as a reliable ego padder. Traditionally, darkness and mystery have been attached to the American Negro, and it appears as if the white hero grows in stature from his association with the dusty black. Blacks seem to possess the soul the white man searches for (Bogle 2003: 140).

A recent example of these dynamics has been identified in the character of the black convict in the movie adaptation of the Stephen King’s Novel *The Green Mile*, played by Michael Clarke Duncan. The innocent black man is unjustly persecuted, but he still manages to help his white buddy, in this case a prison guard played by Tom Hanks.

Critic Linda Williams has noticed how this narrative arch has been present in American pop culture since the beginning, together with the other time of the dangerous black male (Williams 2002). The reflection about the intersection of masculinity, race, and ethnicity continues to be fruitful, tracing the historical development and the social transformation of themes, narratives, and images (Gennari 1996; Chan 1998; Nickel 2004). Continuing in this direction, during the past two decades many film scholars have written influential works on various aspects of masculinity in film, often adopting the approach of historical and cultural studies (Kirkham and Thumim 1993; Nixon, 1996; Studlar 1996; Cohan 1997; Holmlund 2001; Clum 2002; Reich 2004; Chopra-Gant 2005; Baker 2006). The development of the study of masculinity as an autonomous field has definitely spurred a new interest in the presence and representations of men in movies, with theoretical approaches that are developing away from their feminist origins (Powrie, Davies and Babington 2004; Baker 2006). For instance, James Bond's diet in Ian Fleming's novels has become the object of scholarly analysis (Biddulph 2009). The attention to gender issues – and in particularity masculinity – as represented in movies has also become part of college curricula, as contemporary film and media studies textbooks seem to indicate (Gauntlett 2002; Buckland 2003; Benschhoff and Griffin 2004; Hall 2005).

## **V. A FOOD FILM GENRE?**

Keeping within the theoretical framework of film studies and film criticism, it is important to examine the debate about the existence of the “food film” genre, a category that could obviously play an important role in food studies. This discussion will introduce the topic of the presence and role of food in movies.

Film criticism has often employed the analytical tool of the genre, interpreted as a group of movies that present a recognizable set of similar narrative elements, images, setting, mood, format and relationship to the audience (Nichols 1976: 111-217; Nichols 1985: 165-301; Chapman 2003: 159-194). The genre would thus provide templates for the film industry and filmmakers, while at the same time creating expectations and interpretive grids for the viewers (Browne 1998; Neale 1999 and 2002). In this sense, genres can constitute a powerful ideological weapon, as Ryan and Keller observed, to enforce on audiences boundaries, proper behaviors – both public and private – and even

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social and political beliefs (Ryan and Keller 1988: 77-78). Some American genres seem to have provided templates for performance of masculinity to generations of movie-goers, all while getting their inspiration in terms of story lines and characters from contemporary and historical events. This is the case for classic Western movies, where the rugged and loyal masculinity of cowboys was often pitted against the devious and cruel nature of Native Americans and Mexicans (Simmons 2003; Rickman and Kitses 2004; Benschoff and Griffin 2004: 96-115; McGee 2006; Ben-Shaul 2007:45-50), or gangster movies, both in the United States and in Hong Kong (Mason 2003; Shadoian 2003; Nochimson 2004; Silver and Ursini 2007)

Theorists have debated about the definition of genres, oscillating between considering them as social conventions based on the accepted cultural consensus within audiences, or identifying them by using elements that are specified in advance (Grant 2006). In other words, as Robert Stam pinpointed, the main question is whether genres really exist in the world or they are just the constructions of critics and theorists; and, as a consequence, if the study of genres should be prescriptive or descriptive (Stam 2000). Other authors have used genre analysis to examine the film industry response to cultural changes (Langford 2005).

Is the theorization on genres useful when dealing with food in film?

As early as 2001, in his study on food in Kubrick's movies, Mervyn Nicholson distinguishes between movies where food is used just as a prop to enhance the realism of the action, the setting, or the characters, and movies where food as a symbolic element "charged with cinematic power and resonance" plays a central role (Nicholson 2001: 279). Drawing on what she defines as the "neo-genre" theory by authors like Rick Altman and Steve Neale (Altman 1999; Neale 1999 and 2002), which has transformed classic genre theory to include elements such as audience response and spectatorship, Laura Lindenfeld employs the "food film" as a category of analysis, identifying some elements that are internal to the movies' visual and narrative structure, and others that depend on audience reception. In the first category, she lists food employed as the main narrative engine, as an instrument of conflict resolution, and as the turning point in the plot. In other words, food plays the role of a central character within the economy of the movie. Lindenfeld also notices how "food is often the vehicle through which utopian states

manifest themselves in the films” (Lindenfeld 2003: 6). Other remarkable common factors are the sexualized, sensual visual style and the enhanced shooting techniques applied to food (close-ups and such), an aesthetics often defined as “food porn” (O’Neill 2003; Cockburn 1977) for its seeming obsession with the material qualities of food and its lack of final consumption and physical participation from the audience, just like in porn movies.

Lindenfeld argues that the production of food movies is the result of the hegemonic US culture’s anxiety about food and eating, both soothed and perpetuated in the media (Fox 2005), and that the genre as a whole employs narratives about food and identity to express and negotiate race, class, and gender tensions – a point expanded on by Helene Shugart, who saw in many food films popular with white audiences “exoticisation, fetishisation, and ultimate consumption of the Other in ways that certainly showcase and reinforce conventional patterns of power and privilege, especially as relevant to race/ethnicity” (Shugart 2008: 71-72). As for the specific topic of masculinity and food in film, by analyzing mainstream movies like *Eat Drink Man Woman* (Ang Lee, 1993), *Heavy* (James Mangold 1995) and *Eat your Heart Out* (Adlon 1997), Lindenfeld points out how these works all while representing male characters as gentle nurturers and thus seemingly challenging hegemonic images, they actually reassert traditional tropes of masculinity and power structures.

Furthermore, the most recent of these “food movies”, especially the American productions, quote previous ones in terms of narrative and visuals, performing an intertextuality that can be considered as a relevant aspect in the definition of a genre. This connection is particularly evident in US remakes of foreign movies, for example *Mostly Martha* (2001) and *No Reservations* (2007) and, or Oscar winning Ang Lee’s *Eat Drink Man Woman* (1994) and *Tortilla Soup* (2001). Discussing the elements external to the movies, Lindenfeld points out how both viewers and critics employ the definition “food movie”, thus implying a clear cognitive category and, to a certain extent, a defined audience that enjoys independent and foreign movies and appreciates refined dining.

In the edited volume *Reel Movies*, Anne Bower also identifies an emerging genre of food movies. In her analysis, the most relevant elements are food’s star role in terms of camera attention, the specific settings (kitchen, dining rooms, restaurants etc.), and the

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film narrative arch, which will “consistently depict characters negotiating questions of identity, power, culture, class, spirituality, or relationship through food” (Bower 2004: 6). At any rate Bower notices that “what is and what isn’t within the genre of “food film” is, of course, somewhat subjective, with each viewer deciding individually that a film’s use in food is so dominant and pervasive as to put it within this classification rather than just in the class of films using food as but one of many elements contributing to a movie’s setting, characterization, plot, or theme” (Bower 2004: 6). The genre is too recent to be sure if it will maintain itself over the years, or it will be transformed through a process of variation and invention.

Touching on the genre issue, film scholar Cynthia Baron states: “One hopes that the writing on thematic and iconographic constants will increase attention to narrative and audiovisual detail in filmic representations of food, rather than serving to exclude various films or various filmic strategies from analysis” (Baron 2006: 103). As a consequence, she instead points out the relevance of the way food is woven into the plot in terms of order of scenes, time allotted to characters and story elements referring to food, narrative voice, general mood, and cinematic choices (editing, framing choices, camera movements, lighting, *mise-en-scène*). On the other hand, James Keller’s *Food, Film, and Culture*, when describing food films, insists on the filmmakers as chef and/or artist and their role as cinematic hunger artists, who “exploit the audience’s visceral response to the imagery of food in a fashion similar to the manipulation of sex on screen” (Keller 2006: 5). However, Keller warns against “the reductive assumption that food in film always signifies desire”, since there are many kinds of appetite (Keller 2006: 8). Much of the book is inspired by literary criticism methodologies, focusing on the “roles that culinary narratives and images can play in cinema”, and in particular in what the author defines as the “food film sub-genre”, a sub-genre that is not clearly defined and is almost taken for granted.

## VI. FOOD AND MOVIES

Whether one agrees or not on the existence of a “food film” genre, a growing – but still limited – corpus of scholarly work has focused specifically on the presence and role of food in movies, partly following similar reflections in the field of literary criticism

(Biasin 1993). Cynthia Baron identifies the reason why so little scholarship on food actually deals with movies in the fact that “most scholarship on food as a cultural construct has often been concerned with questions of personal expression, a realm that is ostensibly at odds with the realm of modern mass media forms like film” (Baron 2006: 98-99). However, she foresees a growth of interest for the topic.

Film scholars can see foodways as a compatible theoretical model because research into foodways cuts across outmoded divisions between text and context; the categories of study confound simple oppositions between individual expression and norm-based behavior in mass culture... The range of considerations that can be examined under the rubric of foodways illuminates key connections between food studies and contemporary film studies. The diverse methods for studying foodways are comparable to the network of factors that film scholars consider in their studies of film practice. For example, historical research in film examines esthetic, economic, cultural, and technological developments. Studies of individual films examine various factors in film history, national cinema, genre, auteur (director), ideology, and formal design. Research on production and reception is conducted in accord with assumptions in studies of political economy, interpretive frameworks of reception, and ethnographic field studies. Equally important, food studies’ focus on the choices individuals make in relation to cuisine, etiquette, taboo, and symbolism parallels contemporary film studies’ interest in understanding textual operations and the choices made by moviegoers... Interestingly, the predominance of studies of food in film, and the fact that many food scholars have concentrated on studying films as texts—rather than researching film viewing as a cultural activity intimately linked to food behaviors—could cause the integral methodological connections between the two disciplines to be overlooked. Still, the critical approaches they share should eventually become apparent. (Baron 2006: 99-100)

Despite the fact that various authors had written before on the topic in articles and essays, the first full-length book to do so was arguably *Reel Meals. Set Meals: Food in*

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*Film and Theatre*, published by Gaye Poole in 1999. Poole analyzed food as a "polysemous signifier that can articulate in concrete terms what is very often internal, vague or abstract" (Poole 1999: 2). As a physical matter passed between characters on the stage and on screen and as a catalyst that brings people together, food is able to convey symbolic meaning and provide dramatic focus in performance. The author also examines the connection between public consumption and issues of power and class, and finally delves into the most intimate matters of sex and the body. In the chapter "Feeding the actors, feeding the audience" he also uses his experience as an actor to address technical and logistical problems created by the presence of food on stage, such as delivery while chewing and observation of turn taking. In his research, Poole resorts not only to movies that would fall under the "food movie" genre as identified by Lindelfeld, such as *Tampopo* (1986), *Babette's feast* (1987) or *The cook, the thief, his wife and her lover* (1989), but also to movies that do not necessarily focus on food but where eating and food preparation play a role in crucial scenes, from *Witness* (1985) to *Schindler's list* (1993) and *Pulp fiction* (1994).

In her *Food in Film: A Culinary Performance of Communication*, following Poole's choice of using movies that do not necessarily focus on food, Jane Ferry looked closely at representations of food within the larger framework of film narratives in order to uncover its role in cultural meanings and social interactions. Her work "explores how eating scenes articulate conflict or cooperation, inform an individual's or group's place in society, and express personal identity. By underscoring the culinary images, this study shows how film provides clues as to the power and meaning that food imposes both externally (social, economic, political environment) and internally (intrapersonal environment of an individual and interpersonal environment within a social group)" (Ferry 2003: 1). For instance, she uses three non "food movies to discuss concept of pollution and purity: *Mystic Pizza* (1988), *Ordinary People* (1980) and *Better Off Dead* (1985), using Mary Douglas's anthropological theories to "mark the symbolic boundaries of secular defilement" in the opposition between domestic and public eating" (Ferry 2003: 61)

Many scholars have focused on single movies, adopting methodologies from cultural studies, film and literary criticism to examine food's role in determining

narrative style, plot, characters, and cultural and symbolic elements interacting with personal identities and social dynamics. In *Reel Food*, Anne Bower presents a collection of essays that “help us see that the semiotic use of food are even more multivalent and powerful than the concentration of ‘food films’” alone would allow us to understand” and “make clear that the consumption of food can stand for the consumption of any aspect of culture – whether cultural traditions, cultural hybridity, the hyperconsumerism of our postmodern Western world, or some aspects of gender conflict or definition” (Bower 2004: 7). The collection is divided in three sections, each focusing on a different aspect: national and ethnic identities, gender, and the presence of food in movies that audiences would not perceive as “food films”.

Zimmermann and Weiss, in their aptly titled *Food in the Movies*, focus how edible matter, eating and ingestion are used in all kinds of film as a prop, “something that’s there while people do other things, like talk about love, family problems or matters more sinister” or something the plot revolves around (Zimmermann and Weiss 2005: 1); as a transitional device “something to get from one point in time to another”, like when we see somebody starting to eat and then the camera cuts to an empty plate (Zimmermann and Weiss 2005: 2); or as a symbol or metaphorical object. Following this concept, they organize the book on themes and categories such as belly laughs, killer meals, food for thought, romantic and unromantic meals. However in the last chapter “Visual Feast” they do acknowledge the presence of something that could be defined as “food genre”, a conclusion that Zimmermann has reiterated in a more recent article, which also offer an interesting excursus in the history of the presence of food in movies (Zimmermann 2009). Zimmermann and Weiss’s 2005 book ends up being a great reference tool, because the authors have unearthed food scenes in all kinds of movies, but does not offer much from the critical point of view.

Over time, some movies have attracted more attention than others when it comes to discussions on food in film. Among these, the most discussed in academia are the already mentioned *Tampopo* (Niel 1988; Griem 2003; Serper 2003; Ashkenazi 2004), *Babette’s Feast* (Farrell Leontiou 1994; Rashkin 1995; Wright 1997; Maisto 1999; Keller 2006), *The cook, the thief, his wife and her lover* (Bourget, Ciment and Bohringer 1989; Smith 1990; Angel and Sofia 1996; Arcy 1999; Fink 2000; Johnston 2002; Armstrong 2004;



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Keesey 2006), *Eat Drink Man Woman* (Ma 1996; Griem 2003), but also *Like Water for Chocolate* (1992) (Castrillón 1993; Jaffe 1993; Finnegan 1999; Wu 2000; Benjamin-Labarthe 2003; López-Rodríguez 2004; Counihan 2005), and *Big Night* (1996) (Iammarino 1997; Coyle 2004; DeAngelis and Anderson 2005; Keller 2006). The list could go on with *Fried Green Tomatoes* (1991) (Buren 1998) *Mostly Martha* (Novero 2004; Lindenfeld 2009), *The Leopard* (1963) (Simeti 2007), and *Tortilla Soup* (Lindenfeld 2007).

In terms of auteurs and the presence of food in their movies, the most studied seem to be Charlie Chaplin (Boyer 1990; Guneratne 1990; Hite 2001; Orgeron and Orgeron 2001) and Woody Allen (LeBlanc 1989; Reisch 1996; Menegaldo 2003). However, other filmmakers have attracted the critics' attention, among which are Alfred Hitchcock (Stromgren 1990; Greven 2004), Stanley Kubrick (Nicholson 2001), and Ingmar Bergman (Poirson-Dechonne 2003)

The number of works on food and film has increased visibly in the past few years. Some have examined the phenomenon itself (Bal 2005; Martin 2005; Shugart 2008), others have focused on particular aspects like gender (Wardrop 1994; Berglund 1999; Bell-Metereau 2001; Wooden 2002; Baron 2003), the American ambivalence towards food abundance (Boswell 1990), ethnicity and race (Barr 1996; Negra 2002; Eleferiou-Perrin 2003; Ruberto, 2003; Abrams 2004; Roth 2005b; Parasecoli 2008), national cinemas (Madureira 1998; Williams B. 1999; Gantrel 2002; Lelievre 2003; Schmidt 2003; Novero 2004; Barnard 2004), or genres like film noir (Telotte 1985) and science fiction (Forster 2004; Retzinger 2008; Parasecoli 2008).

In the path of cultural, media, and film studies on audience and spectatorship (Hagen and Wasko 2000; Waller 2002; Jancovich, Faire, and Stubbings. 2003), the connection between eating and film viewing has elicited some interest, especially movie theater concessions, marketing campaigns involving movies and fast-food, and snacking at home (Cooper 1987; Stenger 1997; Lyons 2004; Hastie 2007). Quoting Poole (1999), Cynthia Baron states that “What unites the two lines of research—the studies of food in film and the work on food and film viewing—is the shared understanding that food and food behaviors can be discussed in semiotic terms and that food is a signifier “that can articulate in concrete terms what is very often internal, vague, or abstract” (Baron 2006:

95). From the semiotic point of view, there is still work to be done about the specific processes of cinematic signification and identification involving food in film. For instance, what processes of identification with characters and objects are activated in the viewer when food is involved in the cinematic action? Eating is a truly universal activity, and its emotional and cultural power is enormous. It is able to elicit visceral reactions and strong feelings. Does the recognition of food and actions related to it help viewers to identify with the characters and events they see on the screen, making the movie experience more intense?

As early as in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin had discussed in the essay “The Mimetic Faculty” the physical and almost tactile nature of cinema, which he defined as “a sensuous and bodily form of perception” (Benjamin 1978). However since the 1960s, under the influence of structuralism, semiotics, and psychoanalysis, film theory demonstrated scarce interest towards the spectator’s body and its reactions, often writing them off as a metaphorical expression and focusing rather on their cognitive aspects. “This subject, however, was not to be confused either with a physical spectator sitting in an auditorium, or with the individual who had to be imagined standing, as it were, ‘behind’ the camera. The subject of psycho-semiotics, in other words, was a textually constructed subject – a formulation which in itself begged many questions, not least whether it is appropriate to speak of a film as text at all” (Buckland 1995: 10). The interest in visual pleasures as a result of the voyeuristic gaze implied the distance between the film and the viewer. Even pragmatics – the branch of semiotics that analyzes how signs are interpreted in specific contexts – focused on the cognitive work of the spectator. For instance, Roger Odin examined the institutions and the determinations imposed by discursive practices that lead the viewer to interpret a movie in certain ways rather than others (Odin 1995).

It is within the feminist critic to the Lacanian approach outlined by Laura Mulvey that we find one of the first calls to put the body back into the theoretical reflection about movies. In her 1981 essay “Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess” Linda Williams defined horror, porn, and melodrama as “body genres”, focusing on violence, sex, and emotion, which provide physical jolts and “sensations that are on the verge of respectable” (Williams 1981: 701). Williams wonders whether the body of the spectator

is caught in an almost involuntary mimicry of the emotions and sensations shown by the body on the screen, when exposed to these “body genres”. Since the early 1990s, a reflection about the body’s participation in the movie watching experience has developed in film and media theory, reinforcing academia’s growing interest in embodiment (Crary 1992; Sobchack 1992; Shaviro 1993; Williams 1999; Marks 1999 and 2002; Rio 2000). Among others, Vivian Sobchack has offered a very stimulating new approach to the issue, analyzing the experience of what she refers to as “the kinesthetic subject”, whose senses are blurred.

Even at the movies our vision and hearing are informed and given meaning by our other modes of sensory access to the world: our capacity not only to see and to hear but also to touch, to smell, to taste, and always to proprioceptively feel our weight, dimension, gravity, and movement in the world. In sum, the film experience is meaningful not to the dies of our bodies but because of our bodies. Which is to say that movies provoke in us the “carnal thoughts” that ground and inform more conscious analysis.

Thus, we need to alter the binary and bifurcated structures of the film experience suggested by previous formulations and, instead, posit the film viewer’s lived body as a carnal “third term” that grounds and mediates experience and language, subjective vision and objective image – both differentiating and unifying them in reversible (or chiasmatic) process of perception and expression (Sobchack 2004: 60).

Does a similar phenomenon happen with the so called “food movies?” And how do food-related scenes influence receptions of movies that do not necessarily focus on food? Interestingly, in her reflection Sobchack does refer to “food movies” such as *Tampopo*, *Babette’s Feast* and *Like Water for Chocolate*.

In *Food, Film, and Culture*, James Keller argues that “the cinematic hunger artists manipulate gustatory imagery in order to increase the sensory response of the film audience to a medium that cannot access smell or taste, but, nevertheless, seeks to create a full sensory response to a strictly visual and auditory medium. Food cinema thus invokes the gustatory appetite in a fashion similar to the arousal of the libido through romantic and sexual imagery, accessing the full sensory experience of the actor and,

subsequently and vicariously of the audience” (Keller 2006:1). However, for Keller the spectators’ involvement seems to be condemned to be purely metaphorical.

(The filmmaker) has no access to the audience’s palates, but can only invoke appetite and desire in a strictly visual and auditory medium, the most important ingredients in the gustatory experience – smell and taste – remaining inaccessible to the audience. Thus food can only ever be metaphor in film as it can never be consumed by the audience, save in a visual or auditory sense... The audience members know that they cannot have a taste of onscreen food, and they must suspend disbelief in order to convince themselves that the film sustenance is actually substantive for anyone, even the actors... Nowhere is the manipulation of appetite and desire more blatant than in food cinema. The director mobilizes the audience’s appetites, steering the resulting energies into contexts extraneous to the pursuit of nourishment. The inclusion of culinary imagery in film creates a tension within the viewer, exciting the appetite but refusing fulfillment, drawing out desire and attaching it to objects unconnected to the slaking of one’s thirst or the gluttoning of one’s appetite (Keller 2006: 3-5).

In all the literature that has been the object of review in this chapter, with a few exceptions such as the essays in Keller’s *Food, Film, and Culture* (Keller 2006) on *La Grande Bouffe* (1973) and *Kitchen Stories* (2003), the topic of this dissertation, food and masculinity in film, has received very little attention, if not as an afterthought in works focusing on gender in general, genre, ethnicity, and authorship. This quite visible absence of reflections on the subject seems to confirm that for a long time it was considered “natural” and “normal” that the relationship between men and food was left outside of filmic narrations and representations. This attitude was the consequence of the lack of interest in masculinity issues in general, and in the relationship between men and food in particular. As I have illustrated in this chapter, under the influence of feminist intellectuals and activists, until recently gender studies and food studies had mainly focused on women’s issues, and most theoretical developments had somehow left men and masculinity on the side lines. Due to the growing attention of gender studies, film

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studies, and food studies on masculinity it is quite likely that this gap will be soon filled.

Moreover, in the specific case of cinema, it is clear that not only more and more movies have food and ingestion as their main theme, but also audiences are increasingly getting used to see men in food-related situations and environments. A similar phenomenon is now visible also in other media above all magazines and television: the attention on eating and cooking now makes cooking and dealing with food preparation and production an interesting venue for up-an-coming talent, as several shows, news segments, and Internet videos seem to indicate. Within this framework, this work on men and food in movies aims at posing new questions, at shedding light on issues that have so far been investigated only partially, and eventually at proposing some suggestions for future research. To do so, I am also exploring the possibility to apply content analysis to movies and to moving images in general, an approach that that not been widely explored so far. For this reason, my next chapter is completely dedicated to illustrate the methodology that I have adopted, its origin, its current applications, and its potential for research in the fields of communication, gender studies, and food studies.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

One of the goals of this work, as already stated in the introduction, is to test the possibility of establishing a limited set of recurrent representations of men in their interaction with food in a coherent set of movies. Food-related visual and narrative elements should reveal to us aspects of masculinities that would otherwise be perceived too ideologically and culturally challenging to become the object of direct attention. These representations, once they become the object of global communication, are likely to interact at the local level with the different cultural environments to create new and original representations and models of masculinity, whose existence and nature could become the topic of further research, based on audience analysis and reception surveys. This, however, lies outside the scope of this work.

In order to test my hypotheses, I have chosen to use content analysis, which has the potential to bridge the gap between the humanities and the social sciences, relying on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Although we can find a fair number of examples of content analysis used to examine visual media such as photography or advertising, the methodology has been less frequently applied to moving images and, above all, to feature-length movies. The reasons for this absence are various, first and foremost the fact that film criticism has developed mostly within the humanities, as I discussed in the literature review. Discourse analysis, semiotics, interpretive criticism, history, and psychoanalysis are among the approaches applied to the analysis of film. In the social sciences, interesting debates have developed in the realm of cognitive research, and very stimulating work has been done in the study of production structures, distribution mechanisms and audience reception. The qualms in applying content analysis to movies may also derive from the objective difficulties in segmenting visual materials which, by nature, are not discrete; as a consequence, it is necessary to make arbitrary

choices on the level of analysis and on how to determine what kind of signifying units are to be considered.

### **I. DEFINITION OF THE DATA SAMPLE**

The first main methodological issue hinged on the identification of a coherent sample of movies. Since the goal is to examine widespread mainstream representations of masculinity around food, I have identified a sample of movies that responds to the following requirements:

- a. The movies were released between 1990 and 2007.

This span of time defines the range of the sample, which is contemporary enough to be still relevant in current debates about food and masculinity, and long enough to allow an analysis of how themes, images, and representations in pop culture develop over time. Moreover by 1990 VCRs were widespread enough and rental companies such as Blockbuster established enough, that movies could reach wider and wider sections of potential audiences worldwide. The more recent diffusion of digital instruments of reproduction such as computers, DVDs, DVRs, iPods and other kinds of portable digital players have made the global impact of these movies even faster and more effective. Due to these technological innovations, we can safely presume that the newer movies in the sample are likely to have achieved levels of popularity and size of audience that make them equivalent to the older movies in terms of impact on audiences and their cultural representations. For this reason I have chosen a synchronic approach to the sample rather than a diachronic one.

- b. The movies have been distributed worldwide. All the movies were viewed all over the Americas, in Europe, and Japan. Most of them have been distributed also elsewhere, including developing countries.

Since I am looking at a cultural industry that has truly reached a global status, the sample excludes movies that are relevant only to the audiences of specific countries, to ensure that the representations of masculinities offered in the sample movies, wherever they are produced, are actually familiar to audiences all over the world. Several on-line databases provide this kind of information, such as [www.IMDB.com](http://www.IMDB.com),

[www.boxofficeguru.com](http://www.boxofficeguru.com), [www.screenscene.de](http://www.screenscene.de), [www.boxofficeprophets.com](http://www.boxofficeprophets.com), [www.showbizdata.com](http://www.showbizdata.com), and many others.

c. The movies have been seen by large audiences in all the countries where they were released.

For this reason, to be included in the sample the movies need to have grossed over \$250,000,000 at the box office during their theatrical runs outside the United States, which could be safely assumed as their main place of origin. This ensures that the representations of masculinity offered in those movies are likely to be the most familiar to the global audiences, in absolute terms. I established the threshold at \$250 million because only a few dozen movies in the history of cinema have grossed that much money. In everyday parlance, these movies are often defined as “blockbusters”, a popular expression whose etymology is unclear and that refers to extremely successful movies. For that reason they have acquired a special status in global pop culture in terms of relevance and influence not only over other movies, but also over other cultural industries such as fashion, TV, and music. It seems reasonable to rely on on-line industry databases such as [imdb.com](http://imdb.com) that offer worldwide box office information.

I have excluded feature-length cartoons from the sample, since these movies use a very different media language and have developed along different lines than the other movies in the sample. Until a few years ago, they were specifically geared towards very defined audiences, mostly composed of children. Although in the past few years also adult audiences have started showing interest for this visual media, as the new category in the Academy Awards demonstrates, this new approach is still quite recent. Although cartoons constitute a very interesting sample to understand how pop culture influence the construction and embodiment of gender roles in children, I have left feature-length cartoons outside the scope of my present research.

On July 8, 2008, I accessed the all-time non-USA box office list of movies on the Internet Movie Data Base (IMDB 2008), which gave me a sample of 85 movies that responded to the requirement b. and c. and that have grossed over \$250 million dollars all over the world.

Among these 85 movies, 58 were released between 1990 and 2007 (requirement a.).



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The resulting sample that became the object of my analysis was composed of the following movies, listed in order of box-office revenue.

1.	Titanic (1997)	\$1,234,600,000
2.	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003)	\$752,200,000
3.	Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001)	\$651,100,000
4.	Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End (2007)	\$649,000,000
5.	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2007)	\$645,000,000
6.	Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (2006)	\$637,300,000
7.	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (2002)	\$604,400,000
8.	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005)	\$602,200,000
9.	The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002)	\$581,200,000
10.	Jurassic Park (1993)	\$563,000,000
11.	Spider-Man 3 (2007)	\$548,900,000
12.	The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001)	\$547,100,000
13.	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (2004)	\$540,100,000
14.	The Da Vinci Code (2006)	\$539,700,000
15.	Independence Day (1996)	\$505,000,000
16.	Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace (1999)	\$491,314,983
17.	Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith (2005)	\$468,200,000
18.	The Matrix Reloaded (2003)	\$454,200,000
19.	The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (2005)	\$447,100,000
20.	Casino Royale (2006)	\$420,600,000
21.	Spider-Man (2002)	\$417,900,000
22.	Spider-Man 2 (2004)	\$410,200,000
23.	The Lost World: Jurassic Park (1997)	\$385,300,000
24.	Transformers (2007)	\$382,000,000
25.	The Sixth Sense (1999)	\$368,000,000
26.	War of the Worlds (2005)	\$357,100,000
27.	Armageddon (1998/I)	\$353,000,000
28.	Forrest Gump (1994)	\$350,000,000

29.	Troy (2004)	\$348,000,000
30.	Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (2003)	\$347,800,000
31.	The Day After Tomorrow (2004)	\$341,200,000
32.	The Last Samurai (2003)	\$340,900,000
33.	Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones (2002)	\$337,600,000
34.	Men in Black (1997)	\$337,100,000
35.	Mission: Impossible II (2000)	\$330,000,000
36.	King Kong (2005)	\$329,000,000
37.	I Am Legend (2007)	\$327,600,000
38.	Night at the Museum (2006)	\$320,200,000
39.	Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991)	\$312,000,000
40.	Ghost (1990)	\$300,000,000
41.	The Golden Compass (2007)	\$294,000,000
42.	The Bodyguard (1992)	\$289,000,000
43.	The Matrix (1999)	\$285,000,000
44.	Pretty Woman (1990)	\$285,000,000
45.	The Matrix Revolutions (2003)	\$284,800,000
46.	Mission: Impossible (1996)	\$271,600,000
47.	Die Another Day (2002)	\$271,000,000
48.	Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines (2003)	\$267,900,000
49.	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005)	\$265,400,000
50.	Die Hard: With a Vengeance (1995)	\$265,000,000
51.	Saving Private Ryan (1998)	\$263,200,000
52.	Mission: Impossible III (2006)	\$262,000,000
53.	Ocean's Eleven (2001)	\$260,900,000
54.	Gladiator (2000)	\$258,264,745
55.	The Mummy (1999)	\$258,100,000
56.	Twister (1996)	\$253,000,000
57.	Pearl Harbor (2001)	\$251,900,000
58.	Se7en (1995)	\$250,000,000

The sample ensured homogeneity since, not surprisingly, all the movies were produced in the US, and more specifically in Hollywood (none of the movies were independently produced). On the other hand the movies belonged to different genres, avoiding the danger that the results be biased by the visual characteristics, the narrative formulas and the audience expectations of a specific kind of movie.

The size of the sample can also counter postmodern and post-structural objections, often found in cultural studies, about the single artifact (in this case the single movie) as “a site of determinable meaning from which concrete, systematic cultural explications can appropriately emerge” (Thomas 1994:683). The sample as a whole, both in terms of quantity and temporality, should ensure the possibility of detecting social and cultural meanings that are collectively expressed and shared in specific artifacts, in this case the movies.

## **II. CONTENT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY: ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS**

The second step in the analysis of the movies consisted in choosing a methodology among the many available both in the humanities and in social sciences. Due to the large size of the sample and its homogeneity in terms of origin and production, I decided to employ content analysis.

According to the *SAGE Dictionary of Social and Cultural Research Methods*, content analysis is defined as “a method of analyzing the contents of documents that uses quantitative measures of the frequency of appearance of particular elements in the text. The number of times that a particular item is used, and the number of contexts in which it appears, are used as measures of the significance of particular ideas or meanings in the document. In content analysis, the contents of a document are analyzed by the frequency with which particular categories of meaning are used. The aim is to identify clear and coherent categories that highlight salient aspects of the message conveyed and to use objective and reliable methods of calculating their relative significance in the overall message. The categories used will vary from study to study, according to the nature of the material and the theoretical presuppositions of the researcher.” (Scott 2006: 40). In the *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Carl Roberts also points out the quantitative nature of this methodology: “Content analysis is a class of

techniques for mapping symbolic data into a data matrix suitable for statistical analysis. When the term is used, one refers to the content analysis of cultural artifacts (e.g., books, architectural styles, discourse on prime-time television, etc.). That is, one refers to a mapping of non-numeric artifacts into a matrix of statistically-manipulable symbols. Thus, content-analysis involves measurement, not ‘analysis’ in the usual sense of the word” (Roberts 2001: 2697). Of course, for this author, analysis only refers to qualitative, non-numeric analysis, as the term is often used in humanities. For Amir Marvasti, “as a qualitative approach, content analysis is widely used by researchers. Its potential to transform large segments of descriptive data into quantified categories is embraced by sociologists who are interested in more ‘objective’ and formulaic methods of data analysis” (Marvasti 2003: 94).

The method was first developed after World War I as an instrument to gauge the impact and accuracy of the new mass media. During World War II it was further employed to detect propaganda, mainly in radio broadcast (Lasswell 1946). One of the first systematic discussions on the methodology was provided by Bernard Berelson in 1952 (Berelson 1952). Over time, also following the development of computers, the focus of the analysis shifted from the simple presence and frequency of words and expressions to concept and semantic relationships (de Sola Pool 1959). The method has been applied to fields of research as disparate as news reporting (Adams and Schreiberman 1978; Lavie and Lehman-Wilzig 2005; Reason and Garcia 2007), TV commercials (Craig 1992), censorship (Horton 1986), political communication (Atkinson 2006; Strömbäck and Luengo 2008), organization (Reger and Pfarrer 2007), library and information studies (White and Marsh 2006), hospitality (Baloglu and Assante 1999), greeting cards (Kaur-Kasior 1987), medical texts (Llewellyn 1996), and psychology (Gottschalk and L alas 1989; Gottschalk 1995).

Unlike interpretive and qualitative approaches, which in social sciences are often considered as too personal and often compared to literary and art criticism (Slater 1998: 233-4), content analysis is based on quantitative methods, explicitly formulated rules and procedures that ensure replicability (also defined as “iterability”) and validity, two aspects that are particularly important in social sciences. In other words, it should theoretically avoid the multiple interpretations of the same text that are inevitable when

qualitative methods based exclusively on the personal knowledge and culture of the commentators are applied (McKee 2003: 118). Ball and Smith even stated that the use of the same categories and rules on the same data set by different analysts should give identical results by minimizing the influence of individual disposition and preconceptions (Ball and Smith 1992: 21). Also Klaus Krippendorf affirmed: “Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorf 1980: 21). Neuendorf defines it even more precisely as “a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity-intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented” (Neuendorf 2002: 10).

As Rose Gillian aptly points out in her work on visual methodologies, the need for replicability and validity raises questions about the representativeness of the available data and sampling procedures. Drawing on Krippendorf (1980) and Weber (1990) Rose identifies four main procedures:

1. random: the researcher must number each image in the sample and then pick a significant amount of images by using a random number table;
2. stratified: sample from subgroups already existing in the data set;
3. systematic: select every *n*th image in the data set (every second image, for instance);
4. cluster; choose groups at random and sample from them only. (Rose 2001: 57-58)

As indicated in the previous section, I chose the sample based on criteria that are extrinsic to the data set, depending on year of release, distribution, and audience. Within that sample, I obtained my data set in a systematic way, marking every image, situation, or interaction that had men and food in it.

The following step consisted in devising categories for coding the images, a crucial step because the categories should be as objective as possible, based only and exclusively on what is clearly recognizable and distinguishable in the text or, in the case of movies, in the images. They should also be “analytically interesting and coherent” (Slater 1998: 236)

A fundamental problem that the researcher immediately encounters in applying content analysis to images is that “what is really there” is less objectively identifiable than in texts. Content analysis has been mostly employed in the study of language-related texts, as the authors of the *Colorado University On-line Writing Guides* indicate:

Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. Researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then make inferences about the messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of which these are a part. Texts can be defined broadly as books, book chapters, essays, interviews, discussions, newspaper headlines and articles, historical documents, speeches, conversations, advertising, theater, informal conversation, or really any occurrence of communicative language... To conduct a content analysis on any such text, the text is coded, or broken down, into manageable categories on a variety of levels--word, word sense, phrase, sentence, or theme--and then examined using one of content analysis' basic methods: conceptual analysis or relational analysis. (Busch et al. 2005)

However, despite its origin in textual research, content analysis and its methods have been widely applied on visual communication, from TV shows (Smythe et al 1953; DeFleur 1964; Seggar and Wheeler 1973; Hartley 1978) to advertising (Sarpavaara 2007). The methodology has also been used to measure the impact of violent TV shows on audiences, and in particular children, originating an approach called “cultivation theory”, according to which television has long-term effects on the attitudes and mindsets – more so than on the behaviors – of viewers, which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant (Gerbner 1970; Gerbner and Gross 1976; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, and Shanahan 2002). Attention has been paid also to food related issues in commercials and children’s TV (Kaufman 1980; Story and Faulkner 1990; Korr 2008). The adaptation to non-verbal material is not direct and without problems, since words do not need a definition, they are easily detectable, and there is a long tradition of linguistic analysis that provides refined instruments (Roberts 1989). On the other hand,

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visual materials are more complicated to categorize and to code, and several signifying elements are present in the same image at one time. In their analysis of around 600 photographs in the *National Geographic* magazine, Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins investigated how its photographers, editors, and designers select images and text to produce representations of Third World cultures and non-Western people, all while validating the middle-class values and beliefs of their readers. In so doing, they faced the conundrum of creating categories of visual analysis that allowed them to catalogue and analyze the pictures, which inevitably entailed the risk of reducing the complexity and the richness of the material.

Although at first blush it might appear counterproductive to reduce the rich material in any photograph to a small number of codes, quantification does not preclude or substitute for qualitative analysis of the pictures. It does allow, however, discovery of patterns that are too subtle to be visible on casual inspection and protection against an unconscious search through the magazine for only those which confirm one's initial sense of what the photos say or do (Lutz and Collins 1993: 89). They underline the fact that content analysis can capture elements and patterns that otherwise would stay invisible to the analyst, due to the bulk of the material examined, and that are probably invisible to most viewers.

Interestingly, some exciting developments in the ability to categorize and code moving images are taking place in the field of computer science and digital technologies, as it had already happened with textual material in the past (Franzosi 1990). Visual information capturing and processing research focuses on the problem of how efficiently to capture, store, access, process, represent, describe, query, search, and retrieve visual contents, originating branches of research known as content-based visual information retrieval (CBVIR) and semantic-based visual information retrieval (SBVIR) (Srinivasan 2005; Zhang 2006). I have not used these techniques and the related software because at least at the present stage they can only recognize elements such (objects, colors, shapes): my research, on the other hand, focuses on the actions of the characters, on their connections, and their emotional subtexts.

In order to ensure rigor and consistency to large-scale qualitative projects and to satisfy the prerequisites of reliability, validity, generalizability, and replicability, the

coding categories must be as clearly defined and unambiguous as possible. For instance, Rose notices:

Different coders might interpret what seem to be the same codes in different ways. In order to avoid this possibility, according to content analysis, the coding categories must be completely unambiguous. They must be so clearly defined that different researchers at different times using the same categories would code the images in exactly the same way. This, it is claimed, makes the coding process replicable. A content analysis should take various steps to ensure this replicability. Codes must be defined as fully as possible and a pilot study should ensure that two different coders using the same codes produce the same results from the same set of images. If they do not, the codes must be refined so that they do. Further tests of coder reliability may also take place during the research process. (Rose 2001: 62)

Once the coding categories are established, researchers can proceed to actually coding their sample. It is a long, tedious, at times boring, but also fundamental process; it requires extreme attention and a systematic approach from the researcher.

### **III. APPLIED METHODOLOGY: DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES**

Once I chose to apply content analysis methods to my sample, I had to create procedures that responded to my specific needs in terms of data set, research questions and hypotheses.

Hsieh and Shannon have identified three approaches in contemporary application of content analysis, regarding coding schemes, origins of codes, and threats to trustworthiness: conventional, directed, and summative. In the conventional approach, to avoid using preconceived categories, the study starts with observation and the codes are derived from data and defined during data analysis. In the directed approach, the goal is to validate or expand an existing theoretical framework or theory, which can help focus the research question; study starts with theory as guidance and the codes – deriving from theory and relevant research findings – are defined before and during data analysis. The summative approach, finally, involves counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content in text, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context; study starts from



keywords deriving from interest of researchers or review of literature and identified before and during data analysis. (Hsieh and Shannon 2005)

As I will explain further, I opted for a mix of the conventional and directed approach when dealing with food-specific scenes, which I defined as “occurrences”. The summative approach was not advisable, since before I started the analysis I did not know precisely what I would encounter in the movie samples in terms of interactions between men and food. As in the conventional approach, I established categories as I proceeded with the viewing of the sample, but like in the directed approach I filtered the mass of visual information to create only coding categories that were relevant to discuss the theoretical points underlying the research question and the hypotheses.

To ensure the exhaustiveness of my data set as a filtering tool for the movie sample, I decided to create coding categories to classify the food-specific occurrences as I examined the movies, instead of creating them beforehand. I believe this process works better with moving images, where the variables are often subtler and more complex than in the case of static images (pictures, photographs, advertisements and such). One of my research hypotheses is in fact that food related scenes involving men are almost invisible in blockbuster movies, and that precisely because of that invisibility they are less ideologically coded and thus more able to reveal interest aspects of cultural construction of masculinities. For this reason, I believe it was crucial not to exclude a priori any occurrence of representations of men and food.

However, when classifying the movies as a whole (without focusing on food-specific occurrences) in terms of gender, body image, race/ethnicity, social status, and age group of the characters, I adopted the pre-determined categories that were the equivalent of keywords for text material from the functional point of view. For instance, when examining the gender I classified the characters in male, female, and unable to determine, three categories that I determined independently from the specific content of the movie. I applied also similar “descriptors” to define the characters in the food-specific occurrences.

My content analysis consisted of the following procedures:

a. Screening and writing synopses

After identifying the sample and determining the methodology for the analysis, I screened the all movies in their original English language version. I watched them in a mostly random order, although I tried to watch the movies belonging to a series one after the other. That has not always been possible because of the availability of the movie at the time.

I screened all the movies privately and in one sitting. I have watched them either on DVD or on an iPod, both of which allowed me to pause the movie to take notes.

As I screened each movie I wrote a synopsis, where I marked all the food-specific occurrences of the coding categories that I established, so that the reader can verify each of them in their exact position and in their adherence to the coding categories. The synopses of the movies (with the food scenes in evidence) are available in Appendix B.

b. Defining “situational scripts” as coding categories

As I watched each movie and write its synopsis, I identified interactions of any kind between male characters and food and created coding categories, which I defined as “situational scripts,” to describe and classify them. The situational scripts I established define recurring narrative elements (interactions among characters, between characters and objects, between characters and environment, between characters and events) that are objectively recognizable independently from the characters, who at times are not even human, and from the specific plot development, setting, style, and editing of each movie. Since situational scripts depict actions and interactions involving characters and food, regardless of their relevance or relative visibility, a single scene – that is to say a coherent series of images before a change occurs when the continuity of action or character interaction is interrupted – can present several subsequent or contemporary situational scripts, each marking a different food-specific occurrence. For instance, in the same scene we can see the main characters discussing their plans around food in a restaurant while other characters serve food or have drinks in the background.

I am fully aware of the weight that film theory attributes to contextual elements (cinematic industry, production, distribution and exhibition) and to visual elements such as lighting, camera position, and editing in determining the emotional impact of the moving image. However, I decided to overlook the formal elements to concentrate on the

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events described in the movies, as conveyed to the audience in terms of textual and intertextual elements such as images, sounds, and narration (Stam and Spence 1983).

I established as many situational scripts as necessary to mark and classify all the food-related occurrences I identified in the sample. For each new movie I screened, I used the situational scripts I had already established when possible, or I established new situational scripts when necessary. After watching all the movies in the sample, I ended up with a quite large but defined taxonomy of coding categories (situational scripts) organized on a spreadsheet that allowed me to verify in what movies the occurrences corresponding to a certain situational scripts could be found (see Appendix C).

I decided not to focus on specific foods when defining my coding categories, like in Korr's analysis of children's TV shows (Korr 2008) or in Bell, Berger, Cassady and Townsend's examination of food, alcohol, exercise and sport in popular films (Bell, Berger, Cassady and Townsend 2005: 30). All kinds of dishes and food are consumed in the food-specific occurrences in the sample because the movies are set in very diverse times and places; focusing on what is actually eaten would have led to a description of the scenes rather than a classificatory taxonomy, which is more useful in terms on analysis. I chose instead to concentrate on eating acts and on other food-related actions, activities, and verbal interactions, describing their general characteristics rather than their specific objects or topics. I consider this approach more effective in the analysis of blockbuster movies, where the attention of the audience is often concentrated on dynamic action. For example, I have not created the coding categories "sandwich" or "men/boys eat a sandwich" but rather the situational script "men/boys have a snack", whereby snack means any kind of food that can be consumed in the socially established modality of the snack. As I proceeded in screening the whole sample, sometimes I slightly changed the definition of situational scripts I had already established so that they could cover both the old and the new food-specific occurrences I encountered, thus avoiding an excessive number of coding categories; at the same time, this process also increased the level of abstraction of the situational scripts (see Research Log in Appendix A).

This abstraction allowed me to apply the situational scripts to very different food-related occurrences, since it does not matter what the characters eat but how, with whom, in what situation. Moreover, to make something countable in content analysis it is crucial

to apply a certain degree of abstraction, which necessarily entails a loss of details. Reaching a balance between the abstractness of a typology and the specificity of the single content element is always a question of theoretical and practical choices (see also conversation with Dana Polan in Appendix H). As Kathleen Carley aptly pointed out, “Choosing the right level of generalization is in many ways an art form dictated both by theoretical concerns and by the type of analysis in which the researcher wishes to engage” (Carley 1993: 83).

Furthermore, in creating the situational scripts, I adopted what has been defined as an instrumental analysis of the food-specific occurrences, that is to say an approach that interprets occurrences in terms of the researcher’s perspective based both on theory and manifest content, rather than adopting the intended diegetic meanings of the characters appearing in the scene or the additional meanings imparted by actors, filmmakers, or producers. Since instrumental analysis methods are used to “identify individual and societal characteristics about which society’s members may be unaware” (Roberts 2001: 2698), they can give better results in testing my hypothesis that representations involving men and food often convey meanings that, although being displayed in plain view, are often ignored by the viewers. This does not imply that the content is latent, or not immediately visible to the audience. As Berelson had already observed in 1952:

Content analysis assumes that study of the manifest content is meaningful. This assumption requires that the context be accepted as a “common meeting ground” for the communicator, the audience, and the analyst... In other words, the assumption is that there is a common universe of discourse among the relevant parties, so that the manifest content can be taken as a valid unit of study (Berelson 1952, 19).

However, despite the immediate visibility of the content, it is now widely accepted that audiences often interpret communication aimed at them in ways that are quite unexpected, even contrary to the intentions of the producers of the message (Hall 1980). To make sure that how content is factually understood it would be necessary to organize surveys structured around the categories of the content analysis (Kepplinger 1989:181).

In the case of the application of content analysis to images, and in particular to moving images, I decided not to distinguish between a strong occurrence of a situational

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script, which expresses it fully, and a weak one. Although statistical analysis actually offers the tools to manage the scale “strong-to-weak”, I opted for a yes/no approach, also because at the coding level it becomes more difficult to reliably identify and code a scale of strong-to-weak variables. Instead, as I will explain, I marked each food-specific occurrence according to its diegetic role in the plot of the movie.

Furthermore, coding categories tend to neutralize the expressive content and the emotional impact of a scene or a sequence (Rose 2001: 66-67). In his 1978 study on television analysis, John Hartley pointed out that although content analysis should start from the manifest content, regardless of interpretation and audience response, readings should “progress from the manifest content to the latent content” (Hartley 1978: 21). Harri Sarpavaara, for instance, in his study of food advertising on Finnish TV, moves from the analysis of the visual elements to a wider discussion about Dionysian and Apollonian sensibilities, applying Roland Barthes’ semiotic approach to the quantitative data. To counter the possible objection that coding categories tend to ignore the expressive content and the psychological impact of a scene or a sequence (Rose 2001: 66-67), the situational scripts I established sometimes include recognizable emotional and social elements that can differentiate similar actions from the qualitative point of view. For example, “men/boys drink self-destructively alone,” “men/boys drink self-destructively in public establishment,” “men refuse or destroy alcohol to promote or to show reform,” “men/boys eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect,” “men/boys drink/eat unusual quantity or unusual substances to show power” constitute different situational scripts.

To increase objectivity, I submitted my data set, including the coding categories, not only to my advisors, but also to key informants, as shown in the appendixes. One of the defining traits of my coding categories –the situational scripts – is that they are inherently “relational” (see communication with key informant Alice Julier, Appendix H), since many of them compare up and against others in which one or two key "variables" are different, notably the presence or absence of women. More width and depth would have been ensured to the analysis by applying similar situational scripts to occurrences where only women do the same actions as in the situational scripts involving men, to show how frequently and in what form they occurred in comparison to same

situational scripts for men. Unfortunately, because of the very nature of the movies in the sample (in blockbuster movies women are often secondary characters) the number of occurrences involving women interacting with food without men was non-existent and did not allow any sound and statistically informative comparison with the occurrences involving men. In my research, however, the very absence of scenes involving exclusively women and food became a matter of qualitative reflection. As Rose pointed out, “numbers do not translate easily into significance. There is a tendency in content analysis to assume that if something occurs very often, it is more important than something that occurs rarely. As Weber (1990: 72) and Ball and Smith (1992) note, this is not necessarily the case. Something that is kept out of the picture may nonetheless be extremely significant to its meaning” (Rose 2001: 66). At any rate, I believe that this sort of comparative content analysis could be applied and found extremely useful in different samples of movies where women play more relevant roles.

c. Establishing “diegetic functions” and “descriptors”

Within this coding framework, I marked each food-specific occurrence according to its weight and diegetic function in the wider economy of the movie plot. These diegetic functions are inspired to the roles that food can play in literary narratives, as illustrated for example by Gianpaolo Biasin (1993). Each occurrence was mark as Introductory (I), when a new character is presented; Descriptive (D), when the food-related interaction is aimed at describing a situation, a place, or a point in time, often as part of the background and of the mise-en-scene; Key (K), constituting a crucial node where something important for the development of the plot happens; and Narrative (N), when food is used as a tool to move the plot along or to describe characters.

I have further analyzed each food-specific occurrence – regardless of the situational scripts under which it fell or its diegetic function – by marking it according to certain traits describing the male characters involved in it. I defined these additional categories of interpretation, which I labeled as “descriptors”, at the beginning of the viewing of the sample and remained the same all along. They reflect yes/no (0/1) categories: in other words, the descriptors are turned on or not.

They refer to three aspects:

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1. *Race and/or Ethnicity* of the male character (or characters) in the occurrence, each marked as White (wh), Middle Eastern (me), Black (bl), Asian (as), Hispanic (hi), Native American (na), or Unable to Determine (x) either because the race/ethnicity was unclear or because the character was not human. If an occurrence presented more than one male character, each of them was described.

2. *Social status* within the movie's diegesis (fictional world), so that the definition was purely relational, describing the position of male characters regarding each other. Each character was marked as Lower Class (L: class, unemployed, thieves etc), Working Class (W: men engaged in manual jobs including soldiers, farmers and artisans), Middle Class (M: clerical jobs, shop owners, middle management, middle chain of command in army), Upper crust (U: nobles, land owners, top managers, upper echelons of command in army), and Unable to Determine (x) either because the status was unclear or because the character was not human. If an occurrence presented more than one male character, each of them was described.

3. *Age*. The definition is purely relational to describe the position of male characters in relation to each other. Each character was marked as Child (C), Teenager (T), Young (Y), Adult (A), Old (O), and Unable to Determine (x) either because the status was unclear or because the character was not human. If an occurrence presented more than one male character, each of them was described.

In the spreadsheet in Appendix C and in the Synopses in Appendix B, each occurrence is marked in the same way: the diegetic function first, followed by the descriptors referring to race/ethnicity, social status, and age. For instance, if an occurrence is marked KwhWY, it means that it is a key scene with a white working class young man. NwhUCblLO means that the occurrence is a narrative scene with a white upper class child and a black lower class old man.

It would have been possible, of course, to determine other classes of descriptors for the male characters (moral position in the diegesis, pleasant/unpleasant, etc), but I had to limit the scope of my observation. In order to keep it manageable I chose the ones that, based on the literature review, were likely the more relevant for my research question and hypotheses.

d. Revision of the coding categories

Drawing on Hosti (Hosti1969) in his study on visual analysis, Gillian Rose proposes that the coding categories should be: “1 exhaustive. Every aspect of the images with which the research is concerned must be covered by one category. 2 exclusive. Categories must not overlap. 3 enlightening” (Rose 2001: 60). In his 1969 study, Hosti also mentioned comprehensiveness – the categories must be able to cover all the occurrences in the data set – and independence, in the sense that the classification of any one occurrence must not affect the classification of any others. At any rate, as Jane Stokes underlines, “the method is only as sophisticated as the categories which the researcher defines – so researchers have to be very careful to found their categories in theoretical research” (Stokes 2003: 58). In other words, mechanical application of the method can originate meaningless or excessively descriptive data.

For this reason, once I finished viewing the 58 movies in the sample, writing their synopses, observing them from the quantitative point of view, and completing the spreadsheet containing all the occurrences, I reviewed all the situational scripts to make sure that there were no overlaps of coding categories. Since I had created my coding categories as I proceeded in the viewing of each movie and I observed new occurrences, I had made a conscious effort to avoid establishing new coding categories that could be subsumed into already existing ones; furthermore, when necessary, I had slightly changed the already existing coding categories so that they could be more comprehensive and describe also the new occurrence without losing their exclusiveness. However, I found some situational scripts that were minimally different from others. In those cases, I collapsed two or more extremely similar situational scripts into one, to ensure exhaustiveness, exclusiveness, and comprehensiveness of the coding categories (see Research Log, in Appendix A).

However, since gender relations constitute an important aspect of masculinity, I decided to maintain separate situational scripts even when two situations were the same but one involved only men, and the other involved women as well. For instance I kept “men are served food” and “men are served food by a woman” as two different situational scripts.



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I ended up with a taxonomy of numerous situational scripts that responded to the prerequisites of being replicable, exhaustive, and enlightening in relation to my research questions and hypotheses (Appendix C). However, the large number of situation scripts suggested the opportunity of the establishment of wider categories, encompassing several situational scripts referring to the same food-related experiential dimensions that might be able to provide some additional insight about the representation of masculinity. I labeled these broad classifications, available in Appendix I, as “general categories,” on common elements shared by several situational scripts in terms of the overall theme, of the type of actions that take place, of the relationships between the characters and food, and of their emotional undertones.

### e. Analysis of the movie in their entirety

Besides carrying out the analysis of food-specific occurrences, I also examined the movies in their entirety, focusing on aspects that were likely to reveal relevant elements in the representations of masculinity in the sample, and not only in the relation of men with food.

For each movie, I noted the gender of the protagonists, of the protagonists’ primary and secondary buddies, of their antagonists, and of their romantic interests. I have also described the body image of the protagonists, of the protagonists’ buddies and of their antagonists. I classified the body types as *Normal* (the actor might have an athletic body but it is not showed or it has no relevance for the character), *Slim* (the actor is underweight and physically weak), *Athletic* (the actor is clearly athletic and this quality is relevant for the character), and *Overweight* (the actor is overweight and physically weak).

I particularly concentrated on the protagonists, marking also their race/ethnicity, social status, and age using the same descriptors I employed in the analysis of the food-specific occurrence. This information was then cross-referenced with the descriptors, the situational scripts, and the general categories of the food-specific occurrences.

### f. Further qualitative analysis

The content analysis of the sample allowed me to identify the frequency of recurrent elements both in terms of narrative and of the characters involved. However,

several authors have indicated that content analysis is never and can never be purely quantitative. Alan McKee (2003), for instance, adopts a very critical stance on purely quantitative approaches to content analysis.

There is always an element of subjective guesswork in research about sense-making. In content analysis, this occurs when the questions for the project are chosen (see observations by Dana Polan in Appendix H); when the texts are decided on; when the categories that will be counted are designed; and, most importantly, in the interpretation that is made in the final report – content analysis research rarely presents lists of numbers without commentary. The biggest difficulty with content analysis is precisely that its insistence on scientific rigor – replicability and numerical reporting – can mean that it produces information which is far removed from the likely practices of sense-making for any given text. The researcher might interpret a text in a way that is quite ‘mad’ to non-academics (McKee 2003: 129).

The *SAGE Dictionary of Social and Cultural Research Methods* also points out some of the intrinsic limitations of the method:

Although content analysis is built around the construction and use of objective and reliable procedures, the validity of its conclusions are no more unambiguous than those of more qualitative approaches. Any judgment of context relies on a body of background knowledge and assumptions. Content analysis discloses, at best, the ‘internal’ meaning of a document: it discloses the meaning that the text would convey to a reader who employed reading techniques similar to those used by the researcher. For most readers and audiences this is not the case... Content analysis may disclose the range of possible received messages, rather than specifying any one as the message. Nor can content analysis give a completely valid picture of the intended message. (Scott 2006: 41)

Martin Bauer underlined instead the hybrid nature of the methodology:

Content analysis is the only method of text analysis that has been developed within the empirical social sciences. While most classical content analyses culminate in numerical descriptions of some features of the text corpus, considerable thought is given to the ‘kinds’, ‘qualities’ and ‘distinctions’ in

the text before any quantification takes place. In this way, content analysis bridges statistical formalism and the qualitative analysis of the materials. In the quantity/quality divide in social research, content analysis is a hybrid technique that can mediate in the unproductive dispute over virtues and methods (Bauer 2000: 132).

As early as 1969, Ole Holsti had asserted that “whether stated explicitly or not, many of the most rigorously quantitative studies use non-numerical procedures at various stages in the research” The author mentions how interpretive approaches are used to select categories on which the quantitative measurements are based, for example reading over a sample of data to get a “feel for the types of relevant symbols or themes” or to “identify any idiosyncratic attributes which, if not taken into account, might adversely affect the results” (Holsti 1969: 11).

For the above-mentioned reasons, after screening the movies I also wrote a qualitative commentary about the general plot of each movie, its male character or characters, and the general function food plays in it (see Appendix B). These commentaries highlight elements that were excluded from the quantitative analysis, such as character development, script structure, and visual elements that present connections between masculinity and food in terms of settings, cinematography, costumes, body images and body language. From the methodological point of view, the commentaries are often based on semiotics and discourse analysis, as discussed in the introduction and in the literature review.

The commentaries allowed me to reflect on qualitative aspects of the movies, which in turn helped me to create further interpretative types that focused on the overall narrative arches from the point of view of the male protagonists, describing their general behavior, their psychological profile, and their development (or absence thereof) as the plot advances. Since these types refer to general storyline of the movie as a whole, they are quite broad. However, as most Hollywood blockbusters, the movies in the sample present narrative arcs and character traits that are quite formulaic and that at times – as the literature review pointed out – acquire an almost archetypical status. In this sense, in my research it was more effective to avoid the genre definitions that are usually employed in movie criticism and to replace them with my interpretive types. At times a

movie can fall under more than one type, since the protagonists can be involved in more than one narrative arc, expressing different aspects of his character development.

The interpretive types I identified are:

*The Hardcore Warrior*

The protagonist displays a secure and obvious masculinity that does not need to be proven: unadulterated, rough, and sometimes physically violent. His enemies are not necessarily evil, but live according to the same code as he does.

*The Involuntary Hero*

The protagonist is somehow forced in a heroic role against his will. He acquires or discovers powers, or is given tasks that will bring good results, but at the same time will allow him to discover himself and grow as an individual and as a man.

*The Danger Fighter*

The protagonist does not undergo any relevant emotional or psychological development in the movie. Although a normal person (or even an antihero), he is ready to do what is expected of him or required of his role or to get revenge. He uses his skills to fight evil in the specific form that he encounters.

*The Irreducible Gambler*

The protagonist fights his enemies not for a greater good but for his own convenience. He is daring, sometimes irresponsible, focused on his goal with almost compulsive determination. However, unlike the warrior, his masculinity is not violent or rough; he prefers to use his ingenuity, recurring to tricks if necessary.

*The Romantic Lover*

The protagonist enjoys or finds romantic love, which becomes a fundamental motivation. His masculinity is gentle and understanding, but can become focused and determined if that is required to defend or help his love interest.

#### **IV. RESEARCH LOG**

I have kept a log of my work, including the date of viewing of the movies, the date of creation of the situational scripts, if it has been necessary to create a new situational script to cover a new image/situation in a new movie, the way the situational scripts have been changed or modified to accommodate similar occurrences, etc. I have then marked

the subsequent phases of the research, in particular the development of the statistical analysis. The log is available in Appendix A.

## **V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

After completing the examination of the data set gathered from the content analysis of the movie sample, and cross-referencing the results with the qualitative analysis focused on the interpretive types, I proceeded with the discussion of the results. The application of Zipf's law – the empirical law formulated using mathematical statistics that states that words and phrases mentioned most often are those reflecting important concerns in every communication – to data gathered through the analysis of the movies allowed me to identify (by sheer recurrence) the most common and pervasive themes, images, and narrative elements representing the relationships between food and men and their connection with common models of masculinity. The discussion of the results is presented in Chapter 6.

## **VI. INTERACTION WITH KEY INFORMANTS**

Since I was the only coder doing the content analysis, as Kimberly Neuendorf has pointed out, it was necessary to prove its consistency in terms of “intercoder reliability”, which in content analysis means that I should verify the amount of agreement among myself and two or more other coders. Robert Philip Weber noted in his 1990 *Basic Content Analysis*: "To make valid inferences from the text, it is important that the classification procedure be reliable in the sense of being consistent: Different people should code the same text in the same way" (p. 12). With the aim of testing my research and work process, I submitted the content analysis data, the methodology, and the bibliography to key informants, asking for feedback on research design and content. I have chosen the key informants on the basis of their expertise in one or more of the three fields of study that are most relevant to this research: food, film, and gender. They were sociologist Alice Julier (University of Pittsburgh, Women's Studies), sociologist Barbara Katz-Rothman (City University of New York, Graduate Center), Allan Weiss (New York University, Performance Studies and Cinema Studies), Dana Polan (New York University, Cinema Studies), and Janet Chrzan (University of Pennsylvania,

Anthropology). Depending on accessibility, the informants have been contacted through telephone, email, and personal meetings (See Appendix H).

Also I discussed the methodology and the content of the dissertation at the Feast and Famine seminary, an academic gathering that takes place in the New York University Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health. A wide range of guests participated, among which Paul Freedman (Yale University), Michael Lacombe (Adelphi University), Amy Bentley (NYU) and Gabriela Petrik (NYU); nutritionists Marion Nestle and Lisa Sasson (NYU); food historians Betty Fussell and Ann Mendelson. Their observations have been transcribed in Appendix G.

## **VII. FOCUS GROUPS**

I have also organized two focus groups with students in Italy to discuss my research and findings. The application of content analysis has allowed me to highlight the most common themes and occurrences representing the connection between food and masculinity in the sample movies. However, this kind of analysis can only illustrate the material provided by the institutions that produce cinema in the US, especially in the case of blockbuster movies. This dissertation can be considered the beginning of an ongoing research that could explore the actual perceptions of spectators all over the world and their private and creative uses of the images, ideas, values and behaviors provided by the movies. After outlining the system of signs provided by the movie industry, it would be necessary to analyze what Michel de Certeau defined as “another production, called consumption”.

(It) is devious, it is dispersed, but it insinuates itself everywhere, silently and almost invisibly, because it does not manifest itself through its own products. But rather through its ways of using the products imposed by a dominant economic order... These “ways of operating” constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production (de Certeau 1985 xii-xiv).

Future surveys and interviews could provide the information we need to assess the actual impact of certain movies, or of specific scenes, on audiences. For this reason I

decided to organize the focus groups to discuss and corroborate some of the findings in my research. Of course, the focus groups had several limitations, because they took place in a specific country, Italy, with people of a specific age cohort and with an interest in food issues, even if one of the two groups was mainly composed of non-Italians from more than ten countries. However, as I will explain in Chapter 6, both focus groups yielded stimulating results.

### **VIII. LIMITATIONS**

No research is neutral, and no point of view is ever objective. As RW Connell, one of the founders of masculinity studies, stated: “Our concept of masculinity seems to be a fairly recent historical product, a few hundred years old at most. In speaking of masculinity at all, we are ‘doing gender’ in a culturally specific way. This should be borne in mind with any claim to have discovered transhistorical truths about manhood and the masculine” (Connell 1995: 68). I think it is necessary to consider my subject position in order to calibrate any bias in my research and in my analysis of its results. The research log is useful to assess my mental processes and the way my methodology has developed over time. Furthermore, my background in the humanities has inevitably emerged above all in the movie notes, with the construction of the content taxonomy counterbalancing it. As for the movie sample, which was constructed as objectively as possible, it is still exclusively composed by American movies, but it should not be surprising that the Hollywood industry is dominant all over the world.

## CHAPTER 5

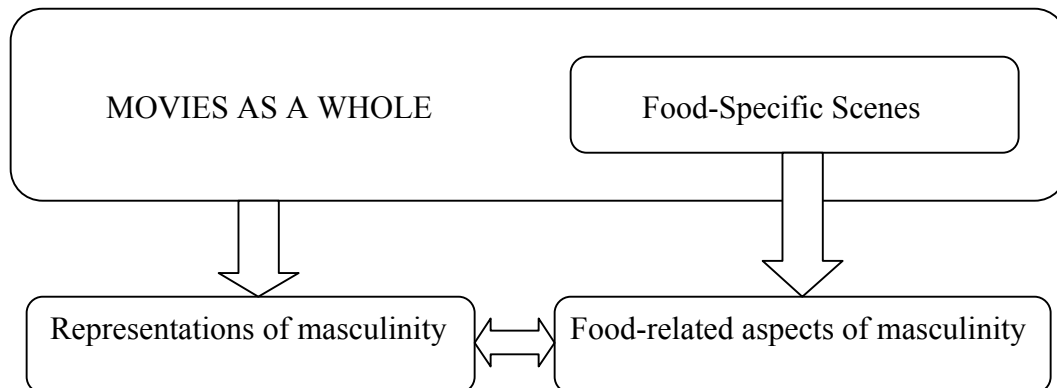
### PRESENTATION OF DATA

#### I. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we have discussed how content analysis can be applied to movies, and what kind of methodological and practical challenges this approach implies. It is now time to verify if the data gathered through the content analysis of the movie sample actually yield information about the kinds of masculinities represented in Hollywood blockbusters, and if the focus on food-specific scenes can shed a different light on the topic, or at least clarify some aspects of it. Following the study of the methodological aspects of the research, this chapter is dedicated to the presentation of the actual data and to their quantitative analysis. The data will then be examined and discussed from both the quantitative and the qualitative point of view in Chapter 6.

I have organized the presentation of the data as illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Presentation of the Data**



Based on the synopses and the examination of the 58 movies in the sample (available in Appendix B), I first focus on the movies in their entirety, without limiting the analysis to food-related scenes, to present the data referring to general content, narrative arcs, gender and other visible traits (including body types) of the main characters, with the aim of outlining the most significant elements in the representations



of the various kinds of masculinities present in the sample.

I then move onto a closer analysis of all the food-specific scenes in the 58 films, highlighting the data referring to aspects of masculinity that are discernible in the representation of interactions between food and all male characters, including secondary characters and even extras. This allows me to focus on what happens around food also away from the main action. I have identified 940 food-specific scenes (from now on, “occurrences”) distributed across all 58 movies I have examined, concentrating in particular on the following aspects:

1. Who are the men involved in the occurrences;
2. What they actually do in the occurrences: men’s actions, attitudes, and emotions related to food;
3. How the occurrences move the plots and their role in the general narratives of the movies.

The occurrences, however, are very diverse in terms of where they take place, what time period, and even of the actual foods involved. To make sense of this complexity, I have classified the 940 occurrences using a taxonomy of recognizable circumstances, actions, and interactions (from now on, “situational scripts”) that transcend the background, the location, the period, and the food consumed in the different scenes. I have thus identified 151 situational scripts that I have then clustered in 14 general categories according to their theme and their main focus, in order to identify the most relevant aspects in the representation of the relationship between men and food in the 58 films constituting the sample. Content analysis proves to be a suitable method to record the frequency – and as a consequence the cultural relevance – of food-related occurrences involving male characters, regardless of the subject matter, the cinematic style, and the main story line of the various movies.

Finally, the data that refers to the food-related aspects of masculinity is cross-referenced to the data on the overall representations of masculinity identified in the movie sample.

It is useful to underline once again that, masculinity being the main focus of this work, the data illustrate representations of men, throwing light on their demographics, their activities, and the narrative functions of the scenes where they appear. When women

are present in food-specific scenes, it is in relation to the men and their actions; for this reason, no data are available about female demographics in terms, for instance, of class, race, and age, information that is on the contrary available about men.

**Table 1. Overview of Data Set**

Total Number of Movies	58
Total Number of Food-Related Occurrences (scenes)	940
<i>of which also Feature Women</i>	<i>153</i>
Total Number of Situational Scripts	151
<i>of which also Feature Women</i>	<i>35</i>
Total Number of General Categories	14
<i>of which also Feature Women</i>	<i>11</i>

As shown in Table 1, among the 940 food-specific occurrences showing male characters, only 153 also involve female characters; among 151 situational scripts that have been used to classify the occurrences, only 35 also involve women; among the 14 general categories in which I clustered the situational scripts according to their theme, 11 involve female characters. I did not consider children as a separate category and distributed them instead among either male or female characters. In the 58 movies, no food-related occurrences featuring only women, without the presence of a man, were identified.

## **II. MASCULINITY REPRESENTATIONS IN THE MOVIES AS A WHOLE**

### **II.1. Gender of Critical Characters**

A fundamental element to assess is the actual presence of men in the sample, together with their identities. Who are the characters actually involved in these narrations? What kind of roles do men and women play, and as a consequence, what gender representations do these movies present to audiences?

Initial – although almost obvious – observations are attained by examining the

gender of the protagonists of the movies, of their main buddies (the characters that share a special bond of friendship and participates more closely in his or her adventures), of their secondary buddies (the characters that are part of the circle of friends or companions of the protagonists but that do not enjoy the special role of the main buddies), of their antagonists (the main enemies of the protagonists), and of their love interests.

**Table 2. Gender of Protagonists in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

<b>Gender of Protagonist(s)</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Male	56
Male and Female	1
Female	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

As can be expected in mainstream Hollywood productions, most of the movies in the sample present protagonists that are male. As shown in Table 2, out of 58 movies, only one has a female protagonist with no male counterpart (*The Golden Compass*), while another has also female protagonists together with male ones (*The Chronicles of Narnia*, where the main heroes are four young siblings, two males and two females, but the symbolic masculine role offering guidance and generous courage is attributed to a male adult lion). It is significant that both movies have children or teenagers as protagonists; in a sense, since they are still growing their gender roles are not completely established, so even the males do not embody a fully developed masculinity. On the other hand, when the sample movies have adults as protagonists, these are invariably male. As shown in Table 3, the gender distribution is slightly different when it comes to the protagonists' main buddies, who are characters usually playing a major role in the sample movies and for this reason quite noticeable for audiences.

**Table 3. Gender of Main Buddies in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

<b>Gender of Main Buddies</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Male	34
Male and Female	16
Female	5
Gender Unclear	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

Main buddies can also be female, especially when there is more than one buddy accompanying the adventures of the protagonists. These female characters share some of the male protagonist's traits that are usually associated with masculinity, such as intelligence, courage, and wit, while providing an emotional counterbalance to the main character, frequently insensitive or on his way toward the achievement of greater sensitivity. For instance, in the *Harry Potter* series, the young wizard at the center of the action is sided by two schoolfellows, also wizards in training, a male and a female, with the female displaying more strength, intelligence, and endurance than the male buddy. The gender of a few characters is unclear, a possibility not uncommon in fantasy or science fiction movies where some of the characters belong to alien civilizations or are imaginary creatures.

Examining the gender of the protagonists' secondary buddies, as shown in Table 4, we notice that female characters become rarer, while there is an increase of the characters whose gender is unclear. As we move away from the focus of the action, there is more room for non-male individuals and creatures. Since the attention of the viewers is scarcely concentrated on them, they are less relevant in the distribution of gender roles.

**Table 4. Gender of Secondary Buddies in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

<b>Gender of Secondary Buddies</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Male	30
Male and Female	8
Female	1
Gender Unclear	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

When it comes to the protagonists' main antagonists, we see from Table 5 that women almost disappear, as though having a female antagonist would tarnish the masculinity of the main character.

Two of the female arch nemeses are featured, again, in the two movies with children as protagonists: the estranged mother of the female main character in *The Golden Compass* and a powerful evil witch in *The Chronicle of Narnia*. Both characters

are not infrequent in traditional legends and children stories.

**Table 5. Gender of Main Antagonists in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

<b>Gender of Main Antagonist</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Male	43
Male and Female	1
Female	3
Gender Unclear	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

The third female antagonist is actually an android with female appearances who displays the same – if not greater – powers than the male-like android. The only adult female fighting against a bona fide male hero is the international weapon smuggler in *Mission Impossible*, but she shares this role with an adult male, who is the actual mastermind behind the plot aimed at destroying the protagonist. The antagonists whose gender is unclear are nevertheless mighty and fearsome, often monstrous, or gifted with extraordinary powers.

It goes without saying that when it comes to the romantic interest of the protagonists, all of them are females. As shown in Table 6, all the relationships in the sample are heterosexual. In 19 out of the 58 movies in the sample, there is no romantic interest at all. It is acceptable for the protagonists to be so occupied with their adventures that the narrative arch does not include a romantic interest; in other cases, the protagonists (including the two movies where the main characters are female) are too young to experience any romantic involvement.

**Table 6. Gender of Love Interest in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

<b>Gender of Love Interest</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Female	39
Male	0
Male and Female	0
No Love Interest	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

The character categories discussed above are the most visible in the movie plots, and for that reason they tend to receive special attention from audiences. It can be

inferred that the distribution of gender among the various categories of characters offers clear models to the viewers about who is appropriate to be at the centre of significant action and who can only aspire to play secondary roles. This distribution often reflects hegemonic gender relations so ingrained in most Western cultures that they are almost completely naturalized and, as a consequence, invisible.

## II.2. Other Demographics of Protagonists

Similarly, it is possible to examine the protagonists in terms of race/ethnicity, social class status, and age group, to ascertain what sort of male leads are the most common in the movie sample. I focus on the protagonists since they are the most visible among the whole set of characters, placed at the core of the main story lines, and the most likely to trigger dynamics of identification in the audience. I use the same categories of race/ethnicity, social status, and age that I have employed to code the male characters in 940 food-specific occurrences (see Section III in this Chapter).

**Table 7. Race/Ethnicity of Protagonists in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

Race/Ethnicity of Protagonists	Number of Films
White	54
White and Black	3
Black	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

From the point of view of race and ethnicity, Table 7 shows that the great majority of the 58 movies in the sample feature white protagonists, either alone or with a black co-protagonist. There is only one instance of a black lead: Willy Smith in *I Am Legend*, the post-apocalyptic nightmare where the African-American star plays a general who becomes the only survivor in New York City after a virus turns all of his inhabitants into zombie-like monsters. Smith has co-leading roles in *Men in Black*, where he interprets a rookie agent working for an organization controlling aliens of earth, and in *Independence Day*, where he is again in the military, in this case the USA Air Force, once again fighting aliens. The other black star in a co-leading role is Morgan Freeman, who in *Se7en* plays a retiring policeman who trains a much younger rookie while investigating a series of brutal homicides. In the sample we do not have actors of other

ethnicities playing leading roles.

**Table 8. Social Status of Protagonists in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

<b>Social Status of Protagonists</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Middle Class	34
Working Class	12
Upper Class	6
Working, Middle, and Upper Class	4
Lower Class	1
Lower and Upper Class	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

When it comes to social status, as shown in Table 8, the majority of protagonists are from the middle class, arguably to allow viewers from all walks of life to identify with them. Working class and upper class protagonists are less common, and even rarer are lower class characters, with the exception of the immigrant played by Leonardo DiCaprio in *Titanic* and Charlie, the poor boy in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*; both of them prove the nobility of their soul, the former by sacrificing himself to save his love's life, the latter being ready to give up riches to stay with his poor family.

**Table 9. Age Group of Protagonists in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

<b>Age Group of Protagonists</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Adult	23
Adult and Young	9
Young	7
Teenager	7
Children	4
Adult, Young, and Old	4
Adult and Children	2
Young and Old	1
Adult and Teenager	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

The age distribution among lead characters, as shown in Table 9, indicates a clear prevalence of adults, followed by young and teenagers. The two extremes of the age spectrum, children and older men, are less frequent, suggesting a lesser interest of Hollywood into these age groups as protagonists.

Overall, the protagonists of the 58 movies in the sample, which constitute the main focus of the viewers' attention since they are at the center of the action, appear to offer a prevalent model of manhood that can be described as white, middle class, and adult. As we will see further down, this also contributes to the kind of hegemonic masculinity that emerges from the content analysis of food-specific occurrences representing men and food.

### **II.3. Body Images of Critical Characters**

Since this research focuses on food, I also examined the body image of critical characters in the movies, namely protagonists, main buddies, and antagonists. The protagonists in particular becomes the focal point of the viewer's attention, and offers potentially influential models of masculinity in terms of physical appearance. Strong male bodies have traditionally served as metaphors for sexual potency, power, productivity, dominance, independence, and control. Furthermore, as literature in gender studies and food studies has pointed out, control over one's appetite is often identified as a masculine trait: as a consequence, an overweight body might signify lack of decisiveness or even of moral fiber. This does not imply that men should not eat: in fact, real men need big quantities of rib-sticking food, but the goal of ingestion is not the satisfaction of craving, but providing fuel for male-appropriate, energy consuming activities (Parasecoli 2005a). Body images of female critical characters are also relevant: in fact, masculine traits can also be attributed to women. In the sample movies, when female characters appear as protagonists and above all as main buddies or antagonists, they are involved in actions that are usually carried out by males; they display bodies that, although not necessarily athletic, are able to meet the expectations that the audiences might project onto them in terms of narrative and plot. These courageous and strong women are never shown giving in to their appetites and indulging in their cravings; we never see them neither gulping down ice-cream or chocolate, a common stereotype in romantic comedies, nor cooking for themselves or others. I have not examined the body types of the romantic interests of the protagonists, who are all women. Because of their role in the narrative, they are neither expected to act as men nor to display masculine traits. As a consequence, their being fit or voluptuous is aimed at highlighting their



sensuality and their desirableness, thus underlining the worth and attractiveness of the male characters with whom they are in a romantic relationship.

I classified the characters as normal (the actor might have an athletic body but it is not showed or it has no relevance for the character), slim (underweight and physically weak), athletic (the actor is clearly athletic and this quality is relevant for the character), and overweight (overweight and physically weak). As I pointed out in Chapter 4, the men represented as strong and positive characters are muscular, athletic, and in good shape, or at least display a normal body type, allowing them to achieve their goals either in terms of physical action or of romantic involvements. In the sample movies there are no overweight men that are powerful and solid, such as “bears” or sumo wrestlers; characters displaying body types that differ visibly from normal or athletic standards of masculinity are either weak or negative.

**Table 10. Body Type of Protagonists in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

Body Type of Protagonist(s)	Number of Films			
	Male	Female	Male & Female	Total
Athletic	26			<b>26</b>
Normal	28	1	1	<b>30</b>
Normal and Athletic	1			<b>1</b>
Overweight	1			<b>1</b>
Slim	0			<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>58</b>

As shown in Table 10, most protagonists fall under the categories of normal and athletic. *Independence Day* introduces several main characters played by actors with normal and athletic body images. There are no slim weaklings featured as protagonists. The only one exception is *King Kong*, where the main character, an unscrupulous filmmaker played by actor Jack Black, is slightly overweight and not physically fit. Interestingly, he shows questionable moral traits, using food and other people’s hunger to lure them to join his reckless plans. The female main characters in *The Golden Compass* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* present normal bodies. Although they are not athletic or muscular, they demonstrate a good level of agility and fitness in the actions in which they are involved.

When it comes to the main buddies' body images, we see a clear increase of normal bodies, as shows in Table 11. Since these characters are not at the center of the narrative, but rather highlight the protagonists' traits, they display less assertive masculine traits, expressed also by less muscular and in shape bodies.

**Table 11. Body Type of Main Buddies in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

Body Type of Main Buddies	Number of Films				
	Male	Female	Male & Female	Gender Unclear	Total
Normal	26	4	13	0	<b>43</b>
Athletic	7	0	3	0	<b>10</b>
Body Type Unclear	0	0	0	3	<b>3</b>
Normal and Athletic	1	1	0	0	<b>2</b>
Overweight	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Slim	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>58</b>

In *Independence Day* we find buddies with both athletic and normal bodies, due to the high number of characters in the choral action. When it comes to female main buddies, they most fall under the normal body type, with the exception of one of James Bond's female companions in *Die Another Day*, a very athletic secret agent played by actress Halle Berry who, however, manages to maintain an extraordinary level of sexiness and femininity.

Just like the main buddies, also the antagonists show various kinds of body types, including slim and overweight, as shown in Table 12.

**Table 12. Body Type of Main Antagonists in 58 Top International Best-Selling Movies, 1990-2007**

Body Type of Main Antagonists	Number of Films				
	Male	Female	Male & Female	Gender Unclear	Total
Normal	26	2	1	0	<b>29</b>
Athletic	11	1	0	0	<b>12</b>
Body Type Unclear	0	0	0	11	<b>11</b>
Athletic and Slim	3	0	0	0	<b>3</b>
Overweight	2	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
Slim and Overweight	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>58</b>

Some movies have more than an antagonist, sometimes displaying different body images. Antagonists with normal or athletic bodies who display masculinity traits that underline their strength and prowess bring forth the physical abilities of the protagonists, who are able to contrast and defeat them. Enemies with slim or overweight bodies, on the other hand, provide perfect contrasts to the physical fitness of the main characters. The antagonists whose gender is unclear are often mighty and fearsome, thus ensuring a proper counterpart to the protagonists.

#### **II.4. The Interpretive Types**

Gender, race/ethnicity, age, and body image (secondarily, also the visible element of social status) of the main characters are very apparent elements that play a fundamental role in conveying different models of masculinity to movie audiences. This is true also when masculine traits and attitudes are displayed by female characters playing roles that call them to actions usually carried out by men. However, for the movies in the sample as well as for most mainstream Hollywood productions, the scripts, cinematography, acting, direction style, special effects, editing, and even sound tracks are intentionally engineered to draw attention not only to the physical and visible traits of the main characters, but also and above all to their acts and their dynamic involvement in the development of the story lines, which in their unfolding are able to convey vibrant examples of masculinity in action. These activities may arguably be perceived and interpreted by large audiences all over the world in a direct, most immediate fashion, thus offering templates of masculine behaviors, attitudes, and values that need to be examined.

The data gathered through the screening and the content analysis of the sample suggest that the movies' broad narrative arcs can be classified under five "interpretive types," illustrated in Table 13. The complete list of the movies with their interpretive types is available in Appendix I. As explained in Chapter 4, an interpretive type refers to the general storyline of the movie as a whole, based on the wide narrative arc describing the behavior, the psychological profile, and the development (or absence thereof) of the main male characters. Interpretive types are obviously broad categories, but the movie sample, composed only of Hollywood mainstream blockbusters, lends itself to this kind of classification, in particular due to the formulaic nature of the plots and the characters,

as the film studies literature shows in the debate over genres.

**Table 13. Description of Interpretive Types**

<b>Interpretive Type</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Movies</b>
Involuntary Hero (H)	The main character is somehow forced in a heroic role against his will. He acquire or discovers powers, or is given tasks that will bring good results, but at the same time will allow him to discover himself as an individual and as a male. The character shows psychological development in the plot.	31
Romantic Lover (R)	The main character enjoys or finds romantic love, which becomes a fundamental motivation. His masculinity is moderate, kind, and understanding, but the character can become focused and determined if that is required to defend or help his love interest.	16
Danger Fighter (F)	The main character does not undergo any relevant emotional or psychological development in the movie. Often a normal person (or even an antihero), he is pulled into the action by the circumstances but he is ready to do what is expected of him or required of its role or to get revenge.	14
Hardcore Warrior (W)	The main character displays a secure, autonomous, and assertive masculinity that is always in display and without need to be proven or approved. His enemies are not always evil, living according to the same code as he does.	12
Irreducible Gambler (G)	The main character fights his antagonists not for a greater good but for its own convenience. He is daring, sometimes irresponsible. However, unlike the warrior, his masculinity is not violent, preferring to use his ingenuity and cunning.	5

It is possible that the same movie presents multiple story lines and refers either to different main male characters (co-protagonists) each following his own development and events, or to a single male protagonist who is involved in various narrative arcs at the same time. We offer *Independence Days* as an example of the first case, a choral movie with several main characters each with his own story line. On the other hand, in *Pretty Woman* the main male character achieves his personal growth along two interweaving narrative arcs, one regarding his activity as financial tycoon, the other focusing on his romantic relationship with a prostitute. Similarly, the protagonist of the *Spider-Man* trilogy slowly discovers himself and grows both as a male adult and a super-hero, all while living a tormented love story with his girlfriend.

Alternatively, several characters follow the same narrative arc. For example, in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy all the male protagonists are on a quest, trying to complete the mission they have taken on but also achieving, at the same time, personal growth and a deeper understanding of their place in the world. In this case, despite the presences of several male main characters, the movies fall under only one interpretive type.

As shown in Table 13, the “Involuntary Hero”, which appears in 31 movies, is the most common interpretive type. Its prevalence can be explained by the fact that those protagonists are represented as average guys who find in themselves the strength to grow and overcome difficulties, which makes it easier for viewers to identify with them. Furthermore, this kind of narrative arc offers more possibilities for the directors, the scriptwriters, and the actors to explore the characters, giving them and the plot more depth. As examples of this interpretive type, we mention the *Harry Potter*, the *Lord of the Rings* and the *Spider-Man* sagas. In these series, a loser finds new power and unwillingly grows both as a man and as a hero, learning to use his strengths and to build relationships with others. In *Forrest Gump*, the namesake character, a simpleton with developmental impediments, slowly discovers his physical abilities, which make him a ping pong champion first, and a runner later; above all, the character learns how to live with his limitations while discovering romantic love and paternal affection.

The interpretive types of the “Romantic Lover,” the “Danger Fighter,” and the “Hardcore Warrior” appear in a similar number of movies (16, 14, and 12, respectively), suggesting that action-packed flicks and love stories are equally important for the Hollywood industry, although geared toward different audiences and allowing different kinds of identification processes. Good instances of the “Romantic Lover” narrative arcs are movies like *Titanic*, *Ghost*, the *Body Guard*, or *Pretty Woman*: in each of them, the male lead is pushed into action, introspection, and also personal growth by his involvement with a woman and his desire to get close to her. On the other hand, the main characters in the “Danger Fighter” types are less nuanced and their motivation much more practical and straightforward, often driven by duty, like in the case of *Men in Black*, where the two characters have to fight intergalactic dangers, *Seven*, where the detectives are up against a serial killer obsessed with the seven capital sins, *Armageddon*, where an oil driller sacrifices himself to place an atom bomb on an asteroid that is threatening

planet Earth, and *Saving Private Ryan*, where a small group of combatants is sent behind enemy lines to find a soldier whose three brothers had died in action. The characters falling under the “Hardcore Warrior” narrative types show characters that have made fights and battles their life their profession and, often, the center of their lives, frequently pushed by revenge, like the Roman general in *Gladiator*, whose family is massacred by the Emperor, Achilles, who abandons himself to massacre to avenge a dead friend in *Troy*, and the Jedi knights that fight against the dark side of the mystical Force in *Star Wars*.

The “Irreducible Gambler” narrative arc, instead, appears only in 5 movies, probably because the protagonists in these movies are often very cynical and unsympathetic, which can hinder empathy from the viewers. We mention the band of thieves in *Ocean’s Eleven*, bend on robbing several Las Vegas casinos, the filmmaker in *King Kong*, who lures innocent people in his adventures in order to finish his movie and does not hesitate to bring back the huge ape to New York City to make money. However, James Bond, the secret agent 007, is the character that epitomizes this type, also because in many ways he has become a point of reference in pop culture.

**Table 14. Distribution of Interpretive Types across the Movie Sample**

<b>Interpretive Types</b>	<b>Number of Films</b>
Fighter	9
Fighter, Hero	1
Fighter, Lover	2
Gambler	2
Gambler, Lover	1
Hero	20
Hero, Fighter	1
Hero, Lover	8
Lover	2
Warrior	5
Warrior, Fighter	1
Warrior, Gambler	2
Warrior, Hero	1
Warrior, Lover	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

While most interpretive types can appear together in the same movie, some seem

to be non-compatible. As shown in Table 14, there is no movie that presents both the Hero and the Gambler, or the Fighter and the Gambler narrative arcs. This seems to confirm the difficulty for Hollywood blockbuster to deal pair the Gambler type, whose protagonists are often morally questionable, with other narratives that are usually centered about decent and strong characters.

### **III. MASCULINITY REPRESENTATIONS IN FOOD-SPECIFIC SCENES**

Having assessed which masculinities are presented in these movies, we proceed to analyze what kinds of men – regardless their roles as protagonists, secondary characters, or even extras – are represented in their interaction with food, what kind of activities, behaviors, and emotional states they are involved in, and how these interactions between men and food play in the general economy of the movie plots. Does the analysis of food-specific scenes offer additional or distinctive insights into the representation of men in the sample movies? Do the data offer sufficient information to identify and outline a defined set of masculinity models in the sample?

#### **III.1. Demographics Breakdown of Male Characters in Food-Specific Occurrences**

As mentioned in Chapter 4, each of the 940 food-specific occurrences found in the sample (i.e food scenes) was coded using what I defined as “descriptors”, which record the race/ethnicity, social class status, and age group of all the male characters, even when they appear only briefly and do not play any primary role. For each occurrence, the presence of each class, race, or age group was marked only once, also when there was more than one character belonging to the same group. These descriptors provide us with further information about how representations of masculinity are constructed around men’s interaction with food.

The results of the analysis of the descriptors marking the ethnicity of the male characters involved in the food scenes are indicated in Table 15. The total number of the descriptors referring to race and ethnicity is higher than the 940 coded occurrences, because many occurrences feature characters belonging to more than one ethnic/racial group. For instance, if an occurrence features both and black characters, it has been marked with two different ethnic/racial descriptors.

**Table 15. Race/Ethnicity descriptors of Male Characters in Food-Specific Occurrences**

<b>Race/Ethnicity Descriptors</b>	<b>Number of Descriptors Recorded (n=987)</b>	<b>% of Total Number of Descriptors Recorded</b>
White	816	82.7
Black	73	7.4
Asian	28	2.8
Hispanic	14	1.4
Middle Eastern	9	0.9
Native American	1	0.1
Unable to Determine	46	4.7
<b>Total of Race/Ethnicity Descriptors Recorded</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The overwhelming prevalence of white characters is evident. Interestingly, there are more aliens, fantasy creatures, and characters that were filmed so that their race or ethnicity was not recognizable (Unable to Determine), than representatives of actual non-white ethnicities. Further down, this set of data will be cross-referenced with the analysis of the actual food-related actions men are involved in, and their narrative roles in the plots.

When it comes to social status as described in terms of social class, the distribution is more uniform, as shown in Table 16.

**Table 16. Social Class Status Descriptors of Characters in Coded Food-Specific Occurrences**

<b>Social Class Status Descriptors</b>	<b>Number of Descriptors Recorded (n=968)</b>	<b>% of Total Number of Descriptors Recorded</b>
Lower Class	12	1.3
Working Class	330	34.1
Middle Class	377	38.9
Upper Class	218	22.5
Unable to Determine	31	3.2
<b>Total of Class Status Descriptors Recorded</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The characters' social status was determined based on their role within the diegesis (fictional world) of the movies; the descriptors are purely relational, describing the position of the characters compared to each other and not in any absolute terms. Also in this case, the total number of the class-related descriptors is higher than the coded



occurrences because some of the food-specific scenes feature characters belonging to more than one social group. I marked social status as:

- Lower class (unemployed, thieves etc);
- Working class: manual jobs (including soldiers, farmers and artisans):
- Middle class: clerical jobs, shop owners, middle management, middle chain of command in army);
- Upper class: nobles, owners, top managers, upper echelons of command in army.

Besides lower class characters, who are almost absent, the other characters involved in food scenes belong to the working, middle, and upper classes, with the latter class being less represented. Further ahead, we cross-reference this set of data with other descriptors and with the situational scripts in order to achieve a better understanding of the role of social status in the definition of masculinity around food.

The distribution of characters across different age groups is also less uniform compared to the one relative to race and ethnicity, as shown in Table 17. As in the case of race/ethnicity and social status, the total number of age-related descriptors is higher than the occurrences because some scenes present more than one character.

**Table 17. Social Age Group Descriptors of Characters in Coded Food-Specific Occurrences**

<b>Social Age Group Descriptors</b>	<b>Number of Descriptors Recorded (n=971)</b>	<b>% of Total Number of Descriptors Recorded</b>
Child	109	11.2
Teenager	40	4.1
Young Adult	194	20.0
Adult	554	57.1
Older Adult	69	7.1
Unable to Determine	5	0.5
<b>Total of Social Age Groups Descriptors Recorded</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The characters were marked as child, teenager, young adult (when contrasted with other older adults), adult and older adult (when contrasted with other younger adults). The definition of age is purely relational, describing the position and the role of characters in relation to each other and not the absolute age of the character, in particular for the older adults.

Adults are by far the most common characters involved with food scenes (57.1%),

followed by young adults (20.0%), children (11.2%), older adults (7.1%) and teenagers (4.1%). The relatively high numbers of scenes involving children is explained easily by the fact that several movies in the sample feature children as main characters (the *Harry Potter* series, the *Chronicle of Narnia*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* among others).

### III.2. Diegetic Functions of the Food-Specific Occurrences

Before presenting the data referring to the actual activities, behaviors, and emotional states of the male character in the food-specific scenes (i.e. occurrences), it is useful to illustrate the diegetic functions of these 940 occurrences in the economy of the 58 movie plots. “Diegetic” refers to the world and the events that the characters themselves experience, encounter, or carry out in the movie. Further ahead, we will cross-reference the diegetic function of the food-specific occurrences with the race/ethnicity, class, and age of the men represented.

Each of the 940 occurrences was classified as to its role and purpose in the fictional world of the movie and in the unfolding of the movie plot. Options included the following four diegetic functions:

- Narrative: The occurrence moves the plot along, or analyzes characters, but does not amount to a key node in the narrative arc;
- Introductory: The occurrence is used to present a new character;
- Key: The occurrence constitutes a fundamental narrative node within the general movie story line, where something important for the development of the plot happens;
- Descriptive: The occurrence describes a situation, a place, or a point in time, mostly as part of the background and of the mise-en-scene in the fictional world, but without direct effect on the development of the narrative arc, and with little or no interest for the characters present in it.

Table 18 shows how many occurrences were coded with each of the four classifications illustrating the function in the story line. No occurrence was identified with more than one function.

The scenes featuring food and men are prevalently narrative (73.5% of occurrences): food often does not play a primary role but has the function to push the

action forward or to convey psychological, social, and cultural traits of the characters. About 10% of the occurrences introduce new male characters, while the rest are either key to the plot (about 9%) or merely descriptive (around 8%).

**Table 18. Diegetic Functions of the Food-Specific Occurrences**

<b>Diegetic Function of the Food-Specific Occurrences</b>	<b>Number of Occurrences (n = 940)</b>	<b>% of Total Number of Occurrences</b>
Narrative	691	73.5
Introductory	96	10.2
Key	82	8.7
Descriptive	71	7.6
<b>Total Occurrences</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Representations of masculinities in their interaction with food are relevant enough to be used as a story-telling tool and to move plots forward, but not significant to the point of being used often in key scenes or in scenes where new characters are introduced. This suggests that the movies in the sample deny any relevant role of food in the definition or in the performance of dominant masculinities. The distribution of diegetic functions in the sample is even more significant when compared to the purpose of food-specific scenes in so-called “food movies,” where the main characters are women or where men are professionally involved with food, like in the case of chefs or restaurateurs, as discussed in the literature section. In those movies, food scenes are very often located at nodal points of the plot, pushing the story in new, unexpected, or different directions. The only movie in the sample where food-specific scenes seem to carry out the same function is *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, due to the relevance of food to the plot as a whole.

As we will see, the narrative function of the occurrences will provide interesting insights when cross-referenced with the data about the kind of actions they represent.

### **III. 3. Men and their Actions: The Situational Scripts**

What kinds of food-specific scenes involving men are most frequent in the movie sample in terms of content?

**Table 19. Most Frequent of 151 Total Situational Scripts**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Situational Scripts (n = 28)</b>	<b>Occur- rences</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>Cumul ative %</b>
1	Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	45	4.8	4.8
2	Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	43	4.6	9.4
3	Man/boy drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work	42	4.5	13.9
4	Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community	40	4.3	18.2
5	Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten	29	3.1	21.3
6	Man/boy serves food or drink	24	2.6	23.9
7	Men/boys drink to pass time and relax	20	2.1	26.0
7	Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	20	2.1	28.1
8	Men/boys discuss or reminisce or ask about foods they like	18	1.9	30.0
8	Man/boy consumes food alone to show independence or superiority	18	1.9	31.9
9	Men/boys stuff their face or drink much out of greed	17	1.8	33.7
9	Men offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation or to get close to others	17	1.8	35.6
9	Man/boy prepares or offer special food (celebratory) or sign of welcome	17	1.8	37.4
10	Men/boys show disgust or disparage another's food or meal or way of eating	16	1.7	39.1
10	Man/boy gives or offers another Food the other wants food the other wants or needs	16	1.7	40.8
11	Men/boys produce food (farmers, fishermen hunters etc)	15	1.6	42.4
11	Man/boy drinks Self-destructively alone	15	1.6	44.0
11	Men/boys want or ask for drink, food or meal out of hunger or need	15	1.6	45.6
12	Man/boy prepares meal or drink	14	1.5	47.1
13	Men/boys drugged or poisoned or killed with food or around food	13	1.4	48.4
13	Man/boy receives special food (celebratory) or sign of welcome	13	1.4	49.8
13	Men/boys ask a woman for food or drink	13	1.4	51.2
14	Men/boys get consolation or physical healing or satiety from food or drink	11	1.2	52.4
14	Man/boy eats meal or drink to start his day or before starting an activity	11	1.2	53.5
14	Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink	11	1.2	54.7
15	Men/boys throw food as a sign of protest or disagreement or in a brawl	10	1.1	55.8
15	Men/boys drop food stop eating or spit drink or throw up out of surprise or fear	10	1.1	56.8
15	Men/boys use food to threaten, damage, demoralize make fun or control woman	10	1.1	57.9

Applying Zipf's law – the empirical principle formulated using mathematical

statistics that states that words and phrases mentioned most often reflect important concerns in every communication – to the content analysis of the food-specific scenes, sheer recurrence should identify the most common and pervasive themes, images, and narrative elements representing the relationship between food and men (Gelbukh and Sidorov 2001).

To determine which food-related events and actions appear more frequently, I utilized intense observation of the 58 movies in the sample to identify specific narrative configurations that I defined as “situational scripts“. These situational scripts, which in most cases present themselves more than once in the same or in different films, amounted to a total of 151, each describing a recognizable circumstance in terms of relationships among the characters, interactions between characters and their environment, actions, verbal exchanges, and emotional undertones.

I coded all the 940 food-specific occurrences in the movie sample using the 151 situational scripts. The description and the frequency of all the situational scripts identified in the movie sample can be found in Appendix J. Table 19 lists the 28 most frequent situational scripts, ranked by decreasing number of occurrences. I focus on these 28 situational scripts because they differ from the other scripts in terms of frequency, as shown also in Table 20, where the 151 scripts are organized in clusters based on the number of occurrences per script (over 40, 30-39, 21-29, 10-20, 1-9).

In Table 20, it is easy to notice that there is a hiatus between the 4 situational scripts with 40 or more occurrences, and those with 29 or less.

**Table 20. Distribution of Occurrences among the Situational Scripts**

<b>Occurrences per Script</b>	<b>Scripts</b>	<b>% of Total Scripts</b>	<b>Total Occurrences</b>	<b>% of Total Occurrences</b>
Over 40	4	2.7	170	18.1
30-39	0	0.0	0	0.0
21 - 29	2	1.3	53	9.9
10-20	22	14.6	320	29.8
1 - 9	123	81.4	397	42.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>100.0</b>

We then find one script with 29 occurrences, one with 24. We note that most occurrences fall under scripts with 20 or less occurrences each, and that most scripts

present 9 occurrences or less, with the highest numbers of scripts offering only 1 or 2 occurrences (68 situational scripts out of a total of 151, with each script accounting for 0.1% to 0.2% of the total number of occurrences).

This overall distribution of the 940 occurrences among the 151 situational scripts identified in the sample highlights the eight most frequent situational scripts, which detach themselves very clearly from the others.

Among these, we clearly observe the highest density in the first 4 situational scripts, which by themselves include 170 occurrences, that is over 18.0% of the total number of occurrences in the sample movies.

The four scripts in the first group are:

- “Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans” (45 occurrences, 4.8% of the total 940); as an example, we refer to the frequent scenes in the *Harry Potter* series where the young wizards get together around sumptuous and unusual meals or foods to read the paper, scheme against their enemies, or try to solve enigmas; under the same script we find several scenes in *Ocean’s Eleven*, where the thieves and misfits summoned by the protagonist in order to rob a few Las Vegas casinos gather around food to figure out what to do and work out their differences of opinions;
- “Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman” (43 occurrences, 4.6% of the total 940); we mention the recurrent instances in the *Spider-Man* series where the photographer Peter Parker, hiding his identity as a superhero, is served tea and meals by his old aunt, who raised him and provides him with emotional anchorage;
- “Man/boy drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work” (42 occurrences, 4.5% of the total 940); the scenes in *Seven* where two policemen consume coffee or pizza food to take a pause during the investigation of gruesome crimes offer a good case in point;
- “Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community” (40 occurrences, 4.3% of the total 940); we cite the festive occasions when alcohol is shared in epics such as *Troy* or

the *Lord of the Rings* series.

The density in the distribution of occurrences in the first four situational scripts is made more evident by the fact that no scripts present between 30 and 39 occurrences.

The second cluster includes two scripts, covering a total of 53 occurrences:

- “Men/boys are eaten or in danger of being eaten” (29 occurrences, 3.1% of the total 940); we mention the scenes in *Men in Black* where the two protagonists, two secret agents in charge with fighting evil creatures from outer space, are threatened to be devoured by a huge roach-like monster, which actually ends up swallowing one of them. Similar scenes are found also in *King Kong*, where a group of adventurers lands on an island inhabited by prehistoric animals that try to eat them, while in *The Mummy* and *I Am Legend* the heroes risk to be devoured by more human creatures, respectively a mummy and people infected by a mortal disease.
- “Man/boy serves food or drink” (24 occurrences, 2.6% of the total 940); in these scenes the men who serve the food, often servants or professional waiters, do not participate in the shared consumption; we mention, among others, the dinner scenes in *Titanic* and *Pretty Woman*.

The two scripts with 20 occurrences (each representing 2.1% of the total 940) are also worth mentioning; all the other scripts represent less than 2% of the total occurrences. These two scripts are:

- “Men/boys drink to pass time and relax”; in these scenes, in movies from James Bond’s *Casino Royale* and *Die Another Day* to *Pearl Harbor*, men with a glass or a bottle in their hand, just shoot the breeze and unwind among other men, not celebrating anything in particular.
- “Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman”; this script covers situations in movies as different as *Forrest Gump*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, and the *Day after Tomorrow*; in all of them, men try to approach the women they like by inviting them for a meal, or simply to share some food.

The examination of the four most frequent scripts highlights how men gather around food to reinforce a sense of community and the fraternal networks that appear to

be central to their identity. Food is also functional in men's enactment of power, including non-violent forms of domination of women. However, the fifth script seems to introduce a different element in the representation of masculinity: men are afraid of being eaten, revealing a deep ambivalence when it comes to food and ingestion that needs to be further unpacked. The sixth most frequent script introduces men in subaltern positions, who are nevertheless fundamental in the establishment of power relations and for other men to assert their masculinity. The following two most frequent scripts reinforce consumption as an opportunity for men to relax and display social power, and food as instrument to exert various forms of control over women.

**Table 21: Diegetic Function of the Occurrences in the most frequent Situational Scripts**

Rank	Situational Scripts	Diegetic Functions									
		I <sup>1</sup>		D <sup>2</sup>		K <sup>3</sup>		N <sup>4</sup>		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	8	17.8	1	2.2	7	15.6	29	64.4	45	100.0
2	Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	2	4.7	0	0.0	5	11.6	36	83.7	43	100.0
3	Man/boy drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work	6	14.3	2	4.8	2	4.8	32	76.2	42	100.0
4	Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect or community	0	0.0	5	12.5	5	12.5	30	75.0	40	100.0
5	Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten	1	3.4	0	0.0	3	10.3	25	86.2	29	100.0
6	Man/boy serves food or drink	1	4.2	8	33.3	0	0.0	15	62.5	24	100.0
7	Men/boys drink to pass time and relax	4	20.0	3	15.0	0	0.0	13	65.0	20	100.0
8	Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	3	15.0	0	0.0	2	15.0	14	70.0	20	100.0

Notes. 1: Introductory, 2: Descriptive, 3: Key, 4: Narrative

It is useful to cross-examine the frequency of scripts in relation to their narrative functions in the movie story lines and the demographics of men represented in them.

Table 21 examines the diegetic functions (Introductory, Descriptive, Key, and Narrative, cf. Table 18) of the occurrences falling under the eight most frequent scripts, which have already been examined above.



Overall, we note that most scenes under the eight most frequent situational scripts are mostly used in a narrative function. This distribution indicates that food is often used in the sample movies as a tool to push the plot forward and to provide situations that allow characters to interact with each other, but without distracting the viewers' attention from the main story line and its development.

However, by comparing Table 21 with Table 18, which presented the percentage of frequency of the four diegetic functions in the total sample of 940 occurrences (10.2% for Introductory, 7.6% for Descriptive, 8.7% for Key, and 73.5% for Narrative), we observe that occurrences included in the first, second, fourth, fifth, and eighth ranked situational scripts are used in key scenes more frequently than the whole sample average. This recurrence indicates the particular relevance of the situations these scripts describe for the development of the story lines and of the male characters. Making plans around food, celebrating community, being served by women or trying get close to them, and being afraid to be eaten appear to constitute important arena where men construct their masculinities. The fact that the latter situational script (fear of being eaten) appears so often in nodal scenes underline the importance of the psychological ambivalence that men reveal when it comes to food, which will be discussed in the following chapter. The fourth script (men/boys eating or toasting together), however, is also used frequently as a background element that brings forth the actions of the main characters, a diegetic function shared also by the two scripts describing men drinking to relax and men serving food. The fact that men serving food appear in an unusually high number of scenes used in a descriptive function (33.3%) is a particular interesting piece of information: while the presence of men in subaltern positions is frequent and important for the solidity of power relations, nevertheless these men are often pushed in the background, allowing the main characters to shine. Four scripts appear frequently in introductory scenes, which present new male characters for the first time: men sharing news and making plans around, men relaxing and drinking, men taking a break from work, and men trying to get close to a woman. The first appearance of a new character has arguably a strong influence on the way audiences perceive him: the scripts most frequently used in introductory scenes reinforce a model of strong, relaxed, productive masculinity that enjoys the company of women, but also of other men.

In order to analyze these models of masculinity also in terms of race/ethnicity, social class status, and age, it is possible to cross-reference the situational scripts with the demographic breakdown of the men involved in the occurrences they describe.

Table 22 illustrates the distribution of racial/ethnic groups in the most frequent situational scripts. Race and ethnicity are indicated not only for the protagonists, but also for those characters they appear only briefly or do not play any primary role.

For each occurrence, the presence of each racial/ethnic group was marked only once, also when there was more than one character belonging to the same group. The table limits itself to the most frequent categories: white, black, Middle Eastern, Asian, and Hispanic.

There are no Native Americans or other ethnicities represented in the eight highest ranking situational scripts. “Other” indicates characters whose ethnicity is unclear, do the way they are dressed or shot in the frame, and non-human characters.

As already pointed out for the movie sample as a whole, white men are the most visible, followed by black men, as indicated in Table 15. The same distribution is confirmed by a more focused analysis on the eight most frequent situational scripts. The only unusual element is constituted by an extraordinary presence of Middle Eastern characters (17.2%) in scenes representing men eaten or being eaten, much higher than in the sample as a whole and in the other situational scripts. This anomaly is explained by the frequency of Middle Eastern men devoured by a mummy in the eponymous movie, which takes place in Egypt.

Taking note of the prevalence of white characters – followed by far by black ones – in the most frequent scripts and in the whole sample, one may wonder in what kind of situational scripts we find other ethnicities. By analyzing the demographic breakdown in all the remaining situational scripts (cf. Appendix B), we see that non white-characters become more visible particularly in situational scripts dealing with the more material aspects of food manufacture; for instance, under the situational script “men/boy produce food”, 6 out of 15 occurrences show Asians (around 40% of all occurrences under that specific script); under the script “Men/boys talk about food production”, 4 out of 9 scenes occurrences feature black men (44%).

**Table 22. Race/Ethnicity in the Occurrences in the most frequent Situational Scripts**

Rank	Situational Scripts	Race/Ethnicity of Characters													
		White		Middle Eastern		Black		Asian		Hispanic		Other <sup>1</sup>		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	41	91.1		0.0	3	6.7		0.0		0.0	1	2.2	45	100.0
2	Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	40	93.0		0.0	2	4.7	1	2.3		0.0		0.0	43	100.0
3	Man/boy drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work	39	92.9		0.0	1	2.4	1	2.4		0.0	1	2.4	42	100.0
4	Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community	36	90.0	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5	1	2.5		0.0	40	100.0
5	Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten	23	79.3	5	17.2	1	3.4		0.0		0.0		0.0	29	100.0
6	Man/boy serves food or drink	20	83.3		0.0	2	8.3		0.0	1	4.2	1	4.2	24	100.0
7	Men/boys drink to pass time and relax in public establishment	20	100.0		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0	20	100.0
8	Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	19	95.0		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0	1	5.0	20	100.0

Notes. 1: characters whose race is unclear, and non-human characters

Also, among the 8 occurrences under the situational script “men/boys prepare food as a job”, 6 represent non-white characters (75% of all occurrences under that script). This visibility of non-white ethnicities in situational scripts that feature activities connected with food preparation, which is noticeably different from the overall distribution of race and ethnicity in the aggregate sample, reveals interesting elements about the relationship between race and masculinity in food-specific scenes. While food consumption, a visible aspect of power, is mostly carried out by white and – far second – by black males, other ethnicities are represented as being more involved in the production, thus assuming a subaltern position in social structures and in power relations.

**Table 23. Social Class Status in the Occurrences in the most frequent Situational Scripts**

Rank	Situational Scripts	Social Class Status of Characters											
		L <sup>1</sup>		W <sup>2</sup>		M <sup>3</sup>		U <sup>4</sup>		X <sup>5</sup>		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans		0.0	11	24.4	22	48.9	9	20.0	3	6.7	45	100.0
2	Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	13	30.2	13	30.2	16	37.2	1	2.3		0.0	43	100.0
2	Man/boy drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work		0.0	5	11.9	28	66.7	7	16.7	2	4.8	42	100.0
4	Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect or community		0.0	19	47.5	15	37.5	5	12.5	1	2.5	40	100.0
5	Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten		0.0	11	37.9	11	37.9	6	20.7	1	3.4	29	100.0
6	Man/boy serves food or drink		0.0	20	83.3	4	16.7		0.0		0.0	24	100.0
7	Men/boys drink to pass time and relax in public establishment		0.0	7	35.0	5	25.0	8	40.0		0.0	20	100.0
8	Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman		0.0	7	35.0	6	30.0	6	30.0	1	5.0	20	100.0

Notes. 1: Lower Class; 2: Working Class; 3: Middle Class; 4: Upper Class; 5: Unable to Define

When it comes to social class status, Table 23 shows how lower class characters

are absent from the most frequent situational scripts, confirming a distribution that was evident also across the sample as a whole, as illustrated in Table 16. However, we notice the exception of the script describing men being served food or drink by women, where lower class men are featured conspicuously. Their overall under-representation in the sample indicates that lower class men are not perceived as relevant models of masculinity but nevertheless, when they are visible on screen, their presence is used to underline the even more subaltern position of women. In other words, even a lower class man is man enough to deserve being taken care of by women. As women and masculinity studies literature has often indicated, shared gender interests trump class contrasts

As already noticed when analyzing the demographic breakdown of the whole movie sample, men in the most frequent food-related scripts also tend to be working or middle class, probably to allow audiences from all walks of life to identify with the characters and the action. Upper class men are less visible in the most frequent scripts than in the sample in its totality: in particular they are not shown being served by women (their power position arguably allows them to be taken care of by other men) and – of course- they do not serve food or drinks. These observations confirm the use of food and drink as a tool in the negotiation of power relations among men and between men and women.

The relational quality of the masculinities represented in the sample is substantiated also by the age of the characters. Table 24 shows that adults are the most visible characters, followed by young men, as we had already noticed in the breakdown of the demographics in the movie sample as a whole.

The script describing men serving food, showing them in a subaltern position, is the only one where most characters are elderly: this would indicate a weaker position of the older generations in power relations, which seems to go against the position held by aged men in traditional societies. Children are totally absent from scenes describing men taking a break during work, drinking to pass time, and using food to get close to women, activities that are usually perceived as proper for adults only. Interestingly, very few children are shown as afraid of being eaten, a fear that seems to be more common among adults.

**Table 24. Age in the Occurrences in the most frequent Situational Scripts**

Rank	Situational Scripts	Social Age of Characters													
		C <sup>1</sup>		T <sup>2</sup>		Y <sup>3</sup>		A <sup>4</sup>		O <sup>5</sup>		X <sup>6</sup>		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	6	13.3	3	6.7	5	11.1	27	60.0	3	6.7	1	2.2	45	100.0
2	Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	4	9.3	1	2.3	12	27.9	23	53.5	3	7.0		0.0	43	100.0
2	Man/boy drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work		0.0		0.0	4	9.5	33	78.6	5	11.9		0.0	42	100.0
4	Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect or community	4	10.0	3	7.5	16	40.0	16	40.0	1	2.5		0.0	40	100.0
5	Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten	1	3.4		0.0	3	10.3	25	86.2		0.0		0.0	29	100.0
6	Man/boy serves food or drink	3	12.5	1	4.2		0.0	3	12.5	15	62.5	1	4.2	24	100.0
7	Men/boys drink to pass time and relax in public establishment		0.0		0.0	6	30.0	14	70.0		0.0		0.0	20	100.0
8	Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman		0.0	2	10.0	7	35.0	11	55.0		0.0		0.0	20	100.0

Notes. 1: Child; 2: Teenager; 3: Young; 4: Adult; 5: Old; 6: Unable to Define

The situational scripts with less than 20 occurrences each reveal some interesting information. In the 20 scripts covering between 10 to 18 occurrences each, the most common situations represent men using food to focus on themselves and to realize their desires, their appetites, and their goals, also in contrast with others (“Men/boys discuss or reminisce or ask about foods they like” and “Man/boy consumes food alone to show independence or superiority” both with 18 occurrences; “Men/boys stuff their face or drink much out of greed” and “Men/boys offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation or to get close to others” both with 17 occurrences; “Men/boys show disgust or disparage another's food or meal or way of eating” with 16 occurrences).

However, men are also shown while employing food to nourish and take care of others' needs, revealing a softer edge to otherwise quite rigid prevalent models of masculinities offered in the movie sample ("Man/boy prepares or offer special or celebratory food as sign of welcome" with 17 occurrences and "Man/boy gives or offers another food the other wants food the other wants or needs" with 16). The 123 situational scripts covering 9 occurrences each or less represent such a wide range of food-related events and circumstances that we will analyze them in an aggregate examination of all 151 situational scripts identified in the movie sample (see section III.5), where they will be clustered according to common and recurrent themes under what I define as "general categories," broad classifications based on the overall theme, of the type of actions that take place, of the relationships between the characters and food, and of their emotional undertones.

#### **III.4. Gender Relations and Women's Role**

So far the content analysis has focused on men, the main object of this research. However, in many scenes men interact with food in the presence of women, or interact with women around food. The investigation of these scenes provides a better understanding of the role of women and of the function they play in the representation of masculinity and of gender relations in the movie sample.

It is interesting that in the movie sample there are no scenes where women interact with food without the presence of men. This peculiarity is understandable since, as shown above, most of the main characters, main buddies, and even antagonists are male, and the narration mostly focuses on them and their adventures. However, it is also relevant that women are sometimes present when food is featured, even if the action is centered on male characters.

Out of the total of 940 occurrences, only 153 (16.3% of the total) involve women, distributed on a total of 42 situational scripts (out of a total of 151 situational scripts). The complete list of the situational scripts involving women identified in the movie sample can be found in Appendix J. This distribution suggests that women are involved in many activities focusing on food; however, a closer examination of the actual situational scripts suggests that they are often relegated to subaltern roles within the

landscape of masculinity represented in the sample movies.

Table 25 lists the situational scripts also involving women that present two or more occurrences each, ranked by frequency of occurrence. The table also shows the ranking of those same scripts in the sample as a whole. Comparing the two rankings, it is evident that the most frequent scripts that also involve women are less frequent in the totality the sample. For instance, the script “Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman” ranks second if we consider exclusively the scripts where women are represented, while it only ranks seventh in the entire sample.

**Table 25. Situational Scripts Involving Women**

<b>Ranking by Frequency</b>	<b>Situational Scripts Involving Women</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Whole Sample Ranking</b>
1	Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	43	28.1	2
2	Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	20	13.1	7
3	Men/boys ask a woman for food or drink	13	8.5	13
4	Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink	11	7.2	14
5	Men/boys use food to threaten, damage, demoralize make fun or control woman	10	6.5	15
6	Men/boys serve food to a woman	7	4.6	18
7	Men/boys compliment woman on food she makes or serves	5	3.3	20
7	Man/boy uses situation of communal consumption of food to get close to woman	5	3.3	20
8	Men/boys invite woman to dinner or to a drink	4	2.6	21
9	Men/boys explain food to a woman	3	1.9	22
9	Men/boys share food or meal with a woman	3	1.9	22
9	Men/boys are promised food by a woman as a consolation or comfort	3	1.9	22
10	Men/boys decline invitation from a woman to eat or drink	2	1.3	23
10	Men/boys tell a woman they will order food for her	2	1.3	23
10	Men/boys drink or toast with a woman to celebrate	2	1.3	23

Looking at the distribution of occurrences, it is not surprising that the most frequent situational script represents women serving food to men (43 occurrences, 28.1% of the total), which is also one of the 4 most frequent scripts in the whole sample. The second most frequent, with 20 occurrences (13.107% to the total) features men offering food or drinks to women in order to get close to them. In the third (13 occurrences, 8.5% of the



total) men ask for food or drinks from women, while in the fourth male characters are called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink (11 occurrences, 7.2% of the total). In the fifth most frequent script (10 occurrences, 6.5% of the total), men use food to threaten, damage, demoralize, and make fun or control women.

As we go down in the ranking, which indicate a lower frequency, we notice that the sixth script (7 occurrences, 4.6% of the total) describes men serving food to women, while the seventh shows men complimenting women on the food they prepare, showing more nuanced gender relationships. Despite these last two scripts, while women's role in food-related social activities is clearly acknowledged, food is featured as an instrument of more or less overt control and exploitation from men. When it comes to food and men, women are there to service the men and to reinforce their hegemonic roles. Food is represented in the sample as an instrument of male power, even when it is used in an apparently benign manner.

### **III.5. Making Sense of Men's Actions: The General Categories**

While the most frequent situational scripts offer clear indications about the construction of masculinity about food, their vast number and the fragmented distribution of food-specific occurrences among them suggest to establish wider categories that make better sense of the what men do in the sample as a whole, including the less common scripts, in terms of actions, behaviors, and emotions. Each general category is designed to encompass several situational scripts, in order to identify clear areas where food plays important roles in the representation of masculinity.

I developed the general categories after establishing the situational scripts and completing the content analysis. The general categories are based on common elements shared by several situational scripts in terms of the overall theme, of the type of actions that take place, of the relationships between the characters and food, and of their emotional undertones. The complete distribution of the 151 situational scripts under the 14 general categories is available in Appendix J. In Table 26, the general categories are ranked in descending number of occurrences falling under their heading.

**Table 26: General Categories Ranked by Frequency of Occurrences**

<b>Categories, n =14</b>	<b>Occurrences per Category</b>	<b>% of Total Occurrences</b>	<b>Situational Scripts per Category</b>
Food Sharing	278	29.6	29
Food as Negotiation, Power and Control	173	18.4	35
Food Consumption	135	14.4	17
Food as Emotion and Desire	84	8.9	11
Food Production and Preparation	79	8.4	13
Food Service	38	4.0	4
Cannibalism	34	3.6	5
Food Spilling and Fights	22	2.3	10
Food and Danger	20	2.1	5
Food as Knowledge	19	2.0	6
Food Procurement	19	2.0	4
Food and Hunger	18	1.9	3
Food and Metaphor	13	1.4	3
Food and Money	8	0.8	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>151</b>

While some general categories are quite self-explanatory, others require further clarification. The largest category, “Food Sharing” (29.6%), covers various situational scripts that describe eating in communal forms and as a social activity. The second largest category, “Food as Negotiation, Power, and Control” (18.4%), includes situational scripts where food is used as an instrument of hegemony and manipulation. The third largest category, “Food Consumption” (14.4%), is composed of situational scripts where men consume food by themselves, in all kinds of different situations and settings. The category “Food as Emotion and Desire” (8.9%), where ingestion allows men to get in touch with their psychology and intimate dynamics, is only slightly larger than “Food Production and Preparation” (8.4%), which include scripts where men grow, carry, sell, and prepare food.

Among the smallest categories, “Food service” covers situations where characters serve food to others, in various contexts, while “Cannibalism” embraces all those scripts where the fear of being eaten plays an important role. Two categories hint at physical violence surrounding food consumption: “Food Spilling and Fights,” which refers to the

intentional or unintentional waste of food, often thrown on other people, and “Food and Danger,” which covers circumstances where the character is in danger because of poison in food. In scripts described as “Food and Knowledge,” food appears in its value as a cultural element, which can or cannot be known, and whose familiarity marks the belonging to a specific group: in scripts falling under this general categories, for instance men are accepted into a new community by their introduction to unusual food or dishes, like in the case of the American soldier in *The Last Samurai*, who is taught about foods and their name by the children of the Japanese family that takes care of him, or Harry Potter when, in his first trip to the wizard school, he becomes friend with the child who explains to him the nature of all kinds of strange and magic candy. “Food Procurement” refers to scripts where the characters are looking for food, but without producing or preparing it, while in the category “Food and Hunger” we find scenes where the relationship to food is dictated principally by lack and deprivation, with no explicit reference to any economic and financial element. “Food and Money” covers instead those situations with a clear reference to the commercial and monetary value of the food consumed (or not consumed, to save money). Finally, in the scripts under the general category “Food as Metaphor”, food is used as an image or as a symbol in the communication among characters.

Even from a cursory examination of the data related to the general categories, it is evident that the social dimension plays an important role in men’s eating. At any rate, the act of consuming food, even its more emotional aspects, is definitely more visible in the sample than any form of preparation and service of food, which locates the men involved in them in a subaltern position, even when those activities are chosen voluntarily.

Further information about what kinds of masculinity are represented in the food-specific scenes are obtained by cross-referencing the general categories with the data about the narrative functions of the occurrences falling under those categories and with the demographics of the male characters involved in them, as shown in Tables 27 and 28.

By moving from specific situational scripts to larger general categories, we get a better idea about what is happening around food, who is involved in it, and how those actions move the story line in the sample as a whole. There is a noticeable difference in the number of occurrences between the first five ones and the sixth general category,

which, according to Zipf’s law, means that the first five are the most important in terms of cultural relevance.

The “Food Sharing” and “Food as Negotiation, Power, and Control” general categories distinguish themselves from the others for being the most frequent and for including the highest number of occurrences featuring women, since they include several situational scripts that represent men and women interacting around food. While also in the first general category – about sharing – power relations are always clear (and in favor of men), the second category covers situations where food is overtly used as a tool to negotiate, assert, or negate male authority. From the diegetic point of view, we observe that the occurrences in the first two categories mostly used in a narrative function, in order to move the plot along: the characters are directly involved in actions revolving around food but not focusing on it as the center of the scene.

**Table 27. Narrative Functions of Occurrences in the General Categories**

WHAT IS HAPPENING		Occurrences With Women (n = 153)	HOW THE ACTION MOVES THE NARRATIVE				
			I <sup>1</sup> (%)	D <sup>2</sup> (%)	K <sup>3</sup> (%)	N <sup>4</sup> (%)	Total (%)
Categories	Occurrences (n = 940)						
Food Sharing	278	89	9.0	6.1	10.1	74.8	100
Food as Negotiation, Power and Control	173	39	10.4	2.9	11.0	75.7	100
Food Consumption	135	1	15.6	8.9	5.9	69.6	100
Food as Emotion and Desire	84	3	11.9	2.4	11.9	73.8	100
Food Production and Preparation	79	3	16.5	27.8	6.3	49.4	100
Food Service	38	7	5.9	26.5	0.0	67.6	100
Cannibalism	34	1	2.6	0.0	7.9	89.5	100
Food Spilling and Fights	22	4	0.0	4.5	13.6	81.9	100
Food and Danger	20	1	0.0	5.0	5.0	90.0	100
Food as Knowledge	19	4	0.0	0.0	15.8	84.2	100
Food Procurement	19	0	10.5	5.3	0.0	84.2	100
Food and Hunger	18	0	5.6	5.6	0.0	88.8	100
Food and Metaphor	13	0	15.4	0.0	7.7	76.9	100
Food and Money	8	1	12.5	0.0	12.5	75.0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>153</b>					

Notes. 1: Introductory; 2: Descriptive; 3: Key; 4: Narrative

This utilization of food-related scenes, which is prevalent for all general categories,

seems to support the hypothesis that food allows cultural values, behaviors, and attitudes to be conveyed and reinforced in a very unobtrusive fashion, since it appears in scenes where the attention of the audience is concentrated elsewhere. A visible anomaly is constituted by the high incidence of descriptive scenes representing men engaged in producing, preparing, and serving food. In these scenes, as already observed, food is used to show the subaltern role of certain categories of men, which is the prerequisite for other men to affirm their hegemonic position.

Examining Table 28, we also notice how men engaged in food production and preparation belong to non-white ethnicities in a much larger percentage than for other categories: in other words, activities that do not rank high in the food chain are destined more than other to non-white. A very high percentage of those same activities is carried out by working class men; only the category covering scenes where men serve food has a higher density of working class male characters in them. Working class men appear in large numbers also while expressing emotions and desires through food, when hungry, and when busy looking for food. This is a point that deserves further discussion, since those traits are, according to gender study literature, often attributed to women, who are represented as unable to control their bodies and their yearnings. It is interesting that working class males, who in the social structure occupy lower power positions compared to middle and upper class men, are somehow feminized, as though to reinforce their subaltern roles.

As for lower class men, the bottom feeder, as we already mentioned they are almost completely absent from the sample, but when they are represented they are shown hungry, looking for food, and spilling it, or having food used as a tool to underline their lack of knowledge.

Going back to the most frequent general categories, we notice that middle class men are represented sharing and consuming food more frequently than their working class and upper class counterparts. When it comes to showing emotions and desires in food-related situations, working and middle class men are the most visible, while upper class males appear to be much more in control of their feelings. Interestingly, the most powerful men are also those who better impersonate a model of masculinity that is self-contained, devoid of emotions, and in full control of any situation.

**Table 28. Demographics of Characters Involved in Occurrences Falling under the General Categories**

WHAT IS HAPPENING		DEMOGRAPHICS OF CHARACTERS																	
Categories	Occurrences (n=940)	Race							Class					Age					
		Wh <sup>1</sup> (%)	Me <sup>2</sup> (%)	Bl <sup>3</sup> (%)	As <sup>4</sup> (%)	Hi <sup>5</sup> (%)	Na <sup>6</sup> (%)	X <sup>7</sup> (%)	L <sup>8</sup> (%)	W <sup>9</sup> (%)	M <sup>10</sup> (%)	U <sup>11</sup> (%)	X <sup>7</sup> (%)	C <sup>12</sup> (%)	T <sup>13</sup> (%)	Y <sup>14</sup> (%)	A <sup>15</sup> (%)	O <sup>16</sup> (%)	X <sup>7</sup> (%)
Food Sharing	278	87.4	0	6.8	1.7	0.7	0.0	3.4	1.4	28.5	40.7	27.1	2.3	12.6	5.3	23.6	48.8	9.3	0.4
Food as Negotiation, Power and Control	173	82.9	1.1	5.9	2.7	1.6	0.0	5.8	0.6	30.1	34.7	31.3	3.3	9.7	3.4	18.8	62.5	5.1	0.5
Food Consumption	135	89.9	0.0	5.8	0.7	0.7	0.0	2.9	0.0	22.7	53.9	19.9	3.5	10.1	5.1	16.7	60.1	8.0	0.0
Food as Emotion & Desire	84	83.3	1.2	7.1	1.2	2.4	1.2	2.6	1.2	41.5	45.1	8.5	3.7	18.8	5.0	26.2	45.0	3.8	1.2
Food Production and Preparation	79	57.0	0.0	17.7	16.5	3.8	0.0	5.2	1.3	61.0	23.4	11.7	2.6	4.0	2.7	21.3	69.3	2.7	0.0
Food Service	38	82.9	0.0	5.7	0.0	5.7	0.0	5.7	0.0	73.5	17.6	8.9	0.0	8.6	2.9	20.0	60.0	5.7	2.8
Cannibalism	34	81.6	13.2	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.0	36.8	34.2	23.7	5.3	8.3	0.0	8.3	83.4	0.0	0.0
Food Spilling and Fights	22	83.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.4	4.8	38.1	28.6	23.8	4.7	4.0	8.0	12.0	72.0	4.0	0.0
Food and Danger	20	90.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	4.9	0.0	31.6	52.6	15.8	0.0	10.5	5.3	5.3	73.6	5.3	0.0
Food as Knowledge	19	60.7	0.0	17.9	7.1	0.0	0.0	14.3	6.9	20.7	27.6	27.6	17.2	17.2	0.0	20.7	48.3	13.8	0.0
Food Procurement	19	65.0	5.0	20.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.3	42.1	36.8	15.8	0.0	21.1	0	21.1	42.1	10.5	5.2
Food and Hunger	18	84.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.8	6.2	43.8	18.8	31.2	0.0	5.9	0.0	17.6	58.9	17.6	0.0
Food and Metaphor	13	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.8	46.2	23.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.1	69.2	7.7	0.0
Food and Money	8	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	37.5	12.5	0.0	25.0	25.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>940</b>																		

**Notes.** 1: White; 2: Middle Eastern; 3: Black; 4: Asian; 5: Hispanic; 6: Native American; 7: Unable to Define; 8: Lower Class; 9: Working Class; 10: Middle Class; 11: Upper Class; 12: Child; 13: Teenager; 14: Young; 15: Adult; 16: Old

The age breakdown confirms what the analysis of the general demographics already revealed: a much higher frequency of young and adults characters compared to children, adolescents, and older men. This seems to support the findings of masculinity studies literature pointing at the relevance of age in the power relations among men.

#### **IV. Models of Masculinity**

Does the analysis of men's behaviors in food-specific scene help us to achieve a better understanding of the models of masculinity represented in the movie sample from the point of view of their actions and behaviors? Do the data about situational scripts and general categories provide further information about what kinds of food-related actions, values, and emotions are culturally acceptable the manhood templates represented in the Hollywood blockbusters we examined?

At the beginning of the chapter, I outlined five interpretive types that describe common narrative arcs in the movie sample, corresponding to prevalent models of masculinity and to their development in the story line. As shown in Tables 13, the "Involuntary Hero" narrative arc is the most common in the sample, being present in 31 movies out of 58, followed by the "Romantic Lover" (in 16 movies), the "Danger Fighter" (in 14 movies), the "Hardcore Warrior" (in 12 movies), and finally the "Irreducible Gambler" (in 5 movies). In each movie, the male character or characters follows one or two narrative arcs, as shown in Table 14.

What kinds of representations of men in terms of race/ethnicity, social status, and age are prevalent in each interpret type?

Table 30 cross-references the interpretive types with the race/ethnicity of the characters in the food-specific occurrences in the movies that fall under the narrative arcs described by the interpretive types.

While white characters are predominant in all interpretive types, they are relatively more visible in the "Involuntary Hero" and the "Romantic Lover" narrative arcs, which are arguably the arcs that convey more positive feelings and values. On the other hand, black characters become more visible in the other three narrative arcs, more action-bound and less introspective, and especially in the "Danger Fighter".

**Table 29. Distribution of Race/Ethnicity of Characters in Interpretive Types**

Race/Ethnicity	Hero		Warrior		Fighter		Romantic		Gambler	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
White	578	82.5	152	66.4	131	55.7	348	82.3	131	68.9
Black	51	7.3	32	14.0	61	26.0	38	9.0	28	14.7
Asian	22	3.1	11	4.8	7	3.0	7	1.7	6	3.2
Hispanic	9	1.3	3	1.3	6	2.6	4	0.9	2	1.1
Middle Eastern	2	0.3	1	0.4	8	3.4	1	0.2	1	0.5
Native American	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0
Unable to Define	38	5.4	30	13.1	22	9.4	24	5.7	22	11.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>

**Note:** The sum of the total occurrences for each interpretive type is higher than 940 (number of occurrences in the sample) because some occurrences fall under more than one interpretive type, and there can be more than one character per occurrence.

The latter is not surprising because, as we have already mentioned, it is not uncommon to see black men in roles of agents, soldiers, or fighters; analyzing the race/ethnicity of the main characters in the 58 sample movies, we already observed that when protagonists are black, they appear in those occupations. Other ethnicities, as we already noticed, are featured sparsely across the sample as a whole, while the characters whose race or ethnicity is not clear are quite numerous, a distribution that suggest some difficulty in defining clear distinctions among the characters, especially in movies falling under the Warrior, Fighter, and Gambler narrative arcs, where characters show less emotional involvement in the action.

**Table 30. Distribution of Social Class of Characters in Interpretive Types**

Social Class	Hero		Warrior		Fighter		Romantic		Gambler	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower Class	3	0.4	4	1.5	5	1.8	2	0.4	6	2.6
Working Class	266	38.3	34	12.6	63	23.1	170	37.0	28	12.0
Middle Class	252	36.3	115	42.8	131	48.0	146	31.7	88	37.8
Upper Class	153	22.0	105	39.0	70	25.6	137	29.8	107	45.9
Unable to Define	20	2.9	11	4.1	4	1.5	5	1.1	4	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Note:** The sum of the total occurrences for each interpretive type is higher than 940 (number of occurrences in the sample) because some occurrences fall under more than one interpretive type, and there can be more than one character per occurrence.

Examining the distribution of social class among the characters that appear in food-specific occurrences under the five interpretive types, as it is shown in Table 30, we



immediately find confirmation of the virtual absence of lower class characters from the movies sample as a whole. Interestingly, we notice that while working class characters are more common in the Hero and the Romantic type; this distribution may be explained by greater sentimentality and emotional expression attributed to working class men. The middle class is uniformly visible in all five types, with slightly higher numbers in the Warrior and the Fighter narrative arcs. This presence may suggest a sort of fantasy that depicts middle class men involved in dangerous or risky situations. It is not surprising that upper class men are prevalent in the Warrior and Gambler narrative arcs, where characters are often involved in morally questionable endeavors. But after all, is that not the mark of privilege of the upper crust, at least as perceived by others of humbler origins?

If we proceed with cross-referencing age groups and interpretive types, as shown in Table 31, we find the confirmation of the overall prevalence of adult characters in the sample movies.

**Table 31. Distribution of Age Groups of Characters in Interpretive Types**

Age Groups	Hero		Warrior		Fighter		Romantic		Gambler	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Child	109	15.6	19	7.1	17	5.9	27	5.9	18	7.3
Teenager	41	5.9	5	1.9	7	2.4	16	3.5	5	2.0
Young	154	22.0	30	11.2	65	22.5	137	29.7	23	9.3
Adult	334	47.7	181	67.5	165	57.1	245	53.1	167	67.9
Old	54	7.7	30	11.2	33	11.4	35	7.6	31	12.6
Unable to Define	8	1.1	3	1.1	2	0.7	1	0.2	2	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>100</b>

**Note:** The sum of the total occurrences for each interpretive type is higher than 940 (number of occurrences in the sample) because some occurrences fall under more than one interpretive type, and there can be more than one character per occurrence.

Children and teenagers appear more conspicuously in movies that fall under the “Involuntary Hero” narrative arc; the process of self-discovery and personal development that is central in that kind of narrative is particularly appropriate from growing individuals. When it comes to young men, we see their presence not only in the “Involuntary Hero”, but also in the “Danger Fighter” and the “Romantic Lover” types; in those arcs, growing individuals are exposed to a wider array of existential situations,

including romantic involvement and the fight for causes they consider just. Adults, on the other hands, are more present in the “Hardcore Warrior” and the “Irreducible Gambler”, narrative arcs that often feature greater (and often unjustified) violence and involvement in morally questionable situations. We notice almost the same pattern for older men, slightly more visible than children and teenagers.

Interesting information is also inferred by observing the distribution of the most frequent situational scripts across the interpretive types, as shown in Table 32, in order to ascertain what kind of food-related actions and attitudes are connected to the dynamics templates of masculinity offered by the five types of narrative arcs.

**Table 32. Distribution of Situational Scripts in Interpretive Types**

<b>Situational Scripts</b>	<b>Total Occurrences</b>	<b>Hero</b>	<b>Warrior</b>	<b>Fighter</b>	<b>Romantic</b>	<b>Gambler</b>
Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	45	27	8	8	10	6
Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	43	28	10	5	21	5
Man/boy drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work	42	10	15	11	8	13
Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community	40	24	4	13	12	1
Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten	29	16	1	12	2	2
Man/boy serves food or drink	24	14	3	2	12	5
Men/boys drink to pass time and relax	20	7	9	2	12	4
Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	20	12	3	2	13	4

**Note:** The number of occurrences under each situational script is higher than the total because some occurrences fall under more than one interpretive type

It is not surprising that the greatest number of occurrences in the most frequent situational scripts is found in movies that fall under the “Involuntary Hero” interpretive type, which is the most common in the sample as a whole.

However there are some elements that stand out in this distribution. For instance, the script that describes women serving or giving food to men is particularly frequent in

movies following the “Romantic Lover” arc. As surprising as it may sound, this distribution can be explained by the observation that women do play an important role in those plots, but often a subaltern one, as indicated also by the frequency of the script that features men offering food to a woman to get close to her. In movies of this type, we also notice a high frequency of scenes where men are serving food to other men, or where they relax while drinking, which points to a kind of masculinity that needs to assert itself publicly and possibly against the background of less powerful men.

The script that shows men eating or drinking during a work break is the most frequent in the “Hardcore Warrior” and “Irreducible Gambler” types, which could be explained by the remark that work and productive activities are fundamental for the assertive, uncompromising masculinities that are represented in those kinds of movies. The script that represents men sharing food as a sign of community, on the other hand, is almost absent from these two types, underlining an autonomous masculinity that does not need the approval of its peers to assert itself.

The script revealing the fear of being eaten, fraught with very complex theoretical implications that I will unpack in the following chapter, is relevant only in the “Involuntary Hero,” where men struggle to develop into maturity, and in the “Danger Fighter” types, where on the other hand male characters avoid to express their feelings in order to concentrate on the mission at hand. In both cases, many emotional aspects of their personalities might unconsciously find an outlet in the ambivalence about eating and being eaten. The plots in the movies under the “Romantic Lover” type present men that are relatively in touch with their own feelings and are thus less prone to the anxieties expressed by the dread of being devoured, while the main characters under the “Hardcore Warrior” and “Irreducible Gambler” are frequently too one-dimensional to reveal any actual psychological uncertainty.

How are food related-scenes used in the plots of the different interpretive types?

Table 33 confirms that the vast majority of food-specific scenes in the sample are used in a narrative function, whatever the story line of the movie may be. However, we see a relatively higher frequency of narrative food scenes in the “Romantic Lover” and the “Irreducible Gambler” types.

**Table 33: Diegetic Functions of Food-Specific Scenes in Interpretive Types**

Diegetic Function	Hero		Warrior		Fighter		Romantic		Gambler	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Narrative	462	71.4	114	70.4	115	68.5	282	79.7	101	85.6
Introductory	61	9.4	18	11.1	21	12.5	20	5.6	6	5.1
Key	84	13.0	13	8.0	14	8.3	33	9.3	0	0.0
Descriptive	40	6.2	17	10.5	18	10.7	19	5.4	11	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Note:** The sum of the total occurrences for each interpretive type is higher than 940 (number of occurrences in the sample) because some occurrences fall under more than one interpretive type, and there can be more than one character per occurrence.

Since in narrative scenes food is used to allow characters to interact with other characters in order to move the plot ahead, their prevalence in movies falling under these two interpretive types might indicate a scarce interest in food as a core element of the scene, but its employment as a diegetic tool to focus the audience's attention on the story line itself, all while endorsing or reinforcing food-related behaviors commonly perceived as masculine and gender-appropriate, in a very unobtrusive way.

This interpretation is supported also by a greater use of food in descriptive scenes in movies classified as “Hardcore Warrior”, “Danger Fighter”, and “Irreducible Gambler”, compared to the other two types. Food-related activities fall completely in the background and they do not play any role in the development of the story lines, which helps making food-related behavior less apparent but not less effective in conveying ideas, values, and judgments about what the behavior of real men should be. The total lack of food in key scenes in movies of the “Irreducible Gambler” type would further corroborate this interpretation.

Finally, we cross-reference the masculinities outlined by the interpretive types with the general categories that cover various situational scripts presenting similar food related themes, actions, or emotional undertones, as shown in Table 34.

While scenes about food sharing are evenly distributed among the five types, when it comes to food used to negotiate power and control we notice that those scenes are more frequent in the “Romantic Lover” and the “Irreducible Gambler” types, while they are less frequent in the “Hardcore Warrior” and the “Danger Fighter” narrative arcs. The reason for this distribution is found in the importance of food as a power tool for the

different masculinity models that the types represent. It would seem as though the latter two do not need to assert their masculinity through any kind of negotiation, and less of all through food-related behaviors. Their masculinity is always already there, visible and self-assured. The former two, on the other hand, might need to employ food-related situations in order to reach their goals, regardless if it is a woman or any sort of scheme.

**Table 34. Distribution of General Categories in Interpretive Types**

General Categories	Hero		Warrior		Fighter		Romantic		Gambler	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Food Sharing	194	30.0	60	37.0	50	29.8	115	32.5	33	28.0
Food as Negotiation, Power and Control	129	19.9	24	14.8	23	13.7	85	24.0	29	24.6
Food Consumption	79	12.2	30	18.5	25	14.9	42	11.9	18	15.3
Food as Emotion and Desire	59	9.1	6	3.7	17	10.1	19	5.4	3	2.5
Food Production and Preparation	54	8.3	20	12.3	18	10.7	24	6.8	3	2.5
Food Service	17	2.6	3	1.9	3	1.8	20	5.6	11	9.3
Cannibalism	23	3.6	3	1.9	12	7.1	3	0.8	3	2.5
Food Spilling and Fights	27	4.2	4	2.5	3	1.8	22	6.2	4	3.4
Food and Danger	6	0.9	7	4.3	10	6.0	1	0.3	1	0.8
Food as Knowledge	14	2.2	0	0.0	1	0.6	5	1.4	4	3.4
Food Procurement	15	2.3	1	0.6	4	2.4	2	0.6	0	0.0
Food and Hunger	13	2.0	4	2.5	0	0.0	3	0.8	5	4.2
Food and Metaphor	10	1.5	0	0.0	2	1.2	9	2.5	1	0.8
Food and Money	7	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	1.1	3	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Average number of occurrences per movie</b>	<b>21</b>		<b>13.5</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>22</b>		<b>23.6</b>	

**Note:** The sum of the total occurrences for each interpretive type is higher than 940 (number of occurrences in the sample) because some occurrences fall under more than one interpretive type, and there can be more than one character per occurrence.

This analysis is supported by the very low frequency of scenes where food is used to express emotions and desire in the movies under the “Hardcore Warrior” type. That kind of uncompromising masculinity has little need to explore one’s inner life, in accord with the widespread conception of manhood that does not rely on feelings, as examined in the gender study literature. On the other hand, in the “Danger Fighter” and the

“Involuntary Hero”, whose narrative arcs often present characters with a more nuanced emotional make-up, men leave room for the expression of their more intimate dimension; however those characters are secure enough in their masculinities that this foray into the emotional does not compromise their status as men, as their actions in the various plot clearly demonstrate. It is not surprising to observe a very low frequency of scenes where emotions and desire are expressed through food in characters that appear under the “Irreducible Gambler”, while on the other hand one would expect to find those scenes in greater numbers in movies build around the “Romantic Lover” narrative arc. Going back to the movie themselves to look for an explanation for what would look like an anomaly, we observe that food is not so much used as an expression of men’s needs or feelings, but more frequently as a means to communicate and negotiate with their love interest, even when this happen is a romantic way.

Scenes representing food production and preparations appear with greater frequency in movie whose narrative arc revolves around the “Hardcore Warriors” and the “Danger Fighter”. Looking closer at the occurrences, we see that in the first case, more than 50% are actually descriptive scenes, where men preparing food are only in the background, usually with the function of highlighting the more powerful masculinity of the main characters, with 60% of the occurrences presenting non-white characters, and 47% showing working class characters. In other words, the scenes of food production and preparation have the sole function of underlining the hegemonic masculinity of the “Warrior” which, by default, seems to be white and middle or upper class. We observe a similar distribution for the movies presenting the “Danger Fighter” type, although more nuanced. Also the analysis of the apparently anomaly of a higher frequency of food service scenes in the movies focusing on the “Romantic Lover” narrative arc gives analogous results: men serve food around the main character and his love interest, often giving him the opportunity to shine either in terms of connoisseurship, like for instance in *Pretty Woman* when the young prostitute is educated into high-class manners, on of intelligence and spunk, line in the dinner scene in *Titanic* where the young poor immigrant holds his own at the table of the rich people who are trying to embarrass him.

When examining scenes of food spilling, we observe a relatively higher frequency in movies under the “Romantic Lover” interpretive type; looking at the actual

occurrences we realize that many represent food being accidentally spilled over women, a situation that creates interesting tensions between the characters that allow to push the plot along. As for scenes related to cannibalism, we observe a relatively higher frequency in the “Danger Fighter” type, which is explained by the presence in the sample of movies such as *Men in Black* and *The Mummy*, where the main characters are constantly in danger of being devoured by monsters.

From the presentation of the data, content analysis, as applied in this study, offers important material for a theoretical discussion about the representation of gender in movies. The following chapter will use the data gathered to address the working hypotheses at the origin of this research, to examine how the results of the content analysis support or challenge the existing literature on food, gender, and film, and how the application of content analysis in this specific work offers suggestions for the use of this methodology on moving images, and in particular on feature-length movies.

## CHAPTER 6

### DATA EXAMINATION AND DISCUSSION

#### I. INTRODUCTION

What role does food play in the construction of masculinity in contemporary Western cultures? What is the impact of contemporary media and pop culture in the perception, embodiment, and performance of gender, and in particular masculinity? How are food and men's interactions represented in movies – and particularly in global blockbusters? How do they establish, question, reinforce, reproduce or negate cultural assumptions about masculinity and gender relations? Do these representations offer values, practices, visual cues, and behavioral templates for men all over the world to interpret and embody their own manhood?

These are the general questions that have guided the development of this work, which is built on the theoretical premises – largely shared by the food studies and gender studies literature illustrated in the first three chapters – that food constitutes an important field of social practice and influences the formation of gendered identities; that masculinity, historically constructed and determined by cultural, social, economic, and political factors, is not monolithic; and that competing models of lived manhood can be identified in their defining traits.

However, scholarly debates have only recently begun to focus on the intersection of these premises, namely the role of food and ingestion in the construction and social performance of masculinity in all its different manifestations. While the connection between food and women has been broadly explored, the relationship between men and food has been addressed less frequently, partly because of cultural biases that overlooked the connection between food and masculinity, and partly because many scholars felt that the problems faced by women in the food-related aspects of their lives were much more urgent and politically sensitive. This lack of interest is also apparent in film studies, which nevertheless has extensively examined the role of men in movies and pointed out various cultural, social, and psychological aspects of their presence. On the other hand,



much has been written about women and food in movies. This lack of interest might also be explained by the fact that many movies that focus on food as one of their main themes – regardless of the existence of an actual “food movie” genre – feature women as protagonists. However, this trend has changed in recent years, with the result that we see male characters (in particular professional chefs) at protagonists of popular movies. We can mention international hits such as *Big Night*, *Spanglish*, *Vatel*, or more recently, the cartoon *Ratatouille*. Moreover, men are also present in food movies with female protagonists and often interact with them precisely around eating and ingestion. For instance, in what many consider the quintessential food movie, *Babette’s Feast*, the French female chef that finds refuge from the upheavals of the Paris commune in a protestant community in Denmark, sees her professional skills acknowledged by an upper class general, one of the male guests to the feast on which she spends all the money gained from a lottery. Similarly, in the German movie *Mostly Martha*, the protagonist, a female chef working in an upscale restaurant who finds herself taking care of her niece after her sister’s death, embarks on a path of self-discovery as an individual and as a professional through her interaction with an Italian seemingly unprofessional male chef.

By attempting at bridging these three fields of research (gender, food, and film), my research has the goal of exploring the role of food in the construction of contemporary masculinities (in the plural) and achieve a better understanding of how the relationship between food and men is represented in movies, offering models of masculinity to audiences worldwide, against which they can compare and negotiate their own performances, values, and cultural biases about gender.

As explained in the introduction, I have organized the analysis of the blockbuster movies in the sample (the 58 highest grossing movies between 1990 and 2007) around the following working hypotheses:

1. Scenes involving men around food offer an apparently secure and ideologically irrelevant space in which often invisible issues of masculinity can be revealed in unobtrusive ways that do not challenge the viewers, in particular when food does not play an important role in the plot.
2. Through the analysis of the visual and narrative representations of men and food in movies, we should be able to identify hegemonic and subaltern masculinity

models that may reinforce or question the audiences' personal and social perceptions about what men are or are supposed to be.

Do the data obtained through the content analysis of the movies in the sample allow us to outline these masculinities, and do their relationships with and around food offer any additional insight? This chapter follows in part the organization of the data as presented in chapter 5. I first discuss the models of masculinity that are apparent in the movies as a whole, and I then proceed to analyze the behaviors of men in food-specific scenes. I also try to find an explanation to the seeming invisibility of food and food-specific scenes in the sample movies. I finally offer some methodological observations and indications for further research.

## **II. MASCULINITIES IN BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES**

### **II.1 Movies as a Whole**

It is safe to say that the movies examined in this research offer a good example of the Hollywood high budget productions usually defined as blockbuster, boasting record box office sales all over the world. As widely discussed in the film studies literature, these movies are specifically designed to appeal the largest audiences possible; they have recourse to solid and streamlined plots (often taken from equally successful novels, TV shows, or comic books), to famous actors, and to high production values, frequently including spectacular visual effects, breathtaking settings, and lavish costumes. The story lines often include narrative elements that, although scarcely original, the public at large perceives as familiar, often contemporary incarnations of very old themes and motives that were crucial also in oral and traditional tales and fables, as the Russian literary critic Vladimir Propp illustrated back in the 1920s (Propp 1968).

Most movies in the sample are heroic epics, action-packed adventures, and science-fiction or fantasy sagas. A few are romantic stories, such as the *Bodyguard*, *Ghost*, and *Pretty Woman*. Regardless of the possible genres, it is not surprising that most main characters are male, as the content analysis confirms. More precisely, 56 out of 58 movies in the sample feature a male protagonist. The remaining two do have female lead characters, but they all happen to be children in fantasy tales.

The demographic breakdown of the sample movies, as illustrated in the previous

chapter, shows a clear dominance of male heterosexual protagonists, with a noticeable prevalence of white characters, from a working or middle class social background, in various stages of their adult life. Among all the movies in the sample, there are very few feature black stars such as Will Smith and Morgan Freeman, and no Asian, Hispanic, or Middle Eastern main characters. It is interesting that in the four movies with a black man in a lead role, the characters are either police officers or soldiers. Both represent careers where black men are traditionally present and that, as a consequence, would not offer challenging representations of African-American in unusual occupations. As for Morgan Freeman in *Se7en*, his character is a clear example of what Donald Bogle has defined as the “huckfinn fixation”, where a black man provides a weaker white person the emotional and experiential tools to mature as an individual and to acquire personal strength and clarity. (Bogle 2003: 140).

As for their physical appearance, most male leads in the sample show normal or athletic bodies and are accompanied by a cohort of secondary characters and antagonists that present instead more variety in terms of gender and body type. Great attention has been paid in media studies to the cultural influence of the body images presented and diffused by popular entertainment, and in particular visual media. Enjoying total mastery over the body and its appearance often constitutes a powerful fantasy that has a great influence over the way daily activities are managed and organized in Western societies. With health as primary goal, but often with fitness and good looks as a secondary but not so irrelevant objectives, many citizens in industrialized countries strive to eat correctly, to exercise, and overall to maintain a wholesome and active lifestyle. The image-obsessed media intensify the relevance of these themes, with shows, TV news, books, magazines, and, more recently, podcasts. The enthrallment with the body image is becoming a common feature in male psychology, to the point that the expression “the Adonis complex” has been created, referring to the more pathological, obsessive forms of this phenomenon (Bordo 1999; Connell 1995 and 2000; Pope et al. 2000). Scholarly literature on body images has recently developed within the frame of theories that consider masculinities as constructed in culture and sustained in all kinds institutions (the school, the gym, the army, the workplace). The growing attention to the male body – it has been argued – is, at least partially, a result of the mainstreaming and the

normalization of gay culture (Bronski 1998). Nevertheless, also in heterosexual contexts, strong male bodies have traditionally served as metaphors for sexual potency, power, productivity, dominance, independence, and control. Both discourses are somehow articulated in the contemporary hegemony of the athletic or muscular body type (also known as mesomorphic, as opposed to ectomorphic, slim, and endomorphic, overweight).

Film studies scholars have increasingly paid attention to the presence of different models of acceptable manhood in movies, including mainstream productions: we go from the tough fighter, resulting from what Susan Jeffords defined as the “remasculinization” of men after the upheavals in gender relations in the 1960s and 1970s (Jeffords 1989), to the more nuanced characters that assert a less physical masculinity (Pfeil 2002).

These diverse masculinities are constructed not only through body image, but also in the development of the story line. I have identified five broad categories, defined as “interpretive types,” based on the wide narrative arc and describing the behavior, the psychological profile, and the dynamics of self-discovery (if present) of the main male characters.

The most frequent type is the “Involuntary Hero”, which we find in 31 movies, both alone and together with other types. In this narrative arc, the main characters are represented in a process of personal and social growth, often forced into heroic roles against their will. They acquire or discover powers, or are given apparently impossible tasks; the events in which they get involved allow them to mature as individuals and as males. The prevalence of this interpretive type can be explained by the fact that the protagonists are represented as average and common men who find in themselves the strength to grow and overcome difficulties, which makes it easier for viewers to identify with them. Furthermore, these storylines offer more possibilities for the directors, the scriptwriters, and the actors to explore the characters, giving more depth to the plot.

Movies featuring the “Involuntary Hero” interpretive type include the highest number of food-specific occurrences, as I defined the scenes where men’s actions, attitudes, emotions, or conversations revolve around food; food, both a source of nourishment and security and a tool for deception, can play very contradictory roles, allowing the main characters to explore various aspects of their developing masculinity. For instance, in *Spider-Man*, the protagonist Peter Parker is fed and nourished by his

## Chapter 6

aunt, who has raised him since the death of his parents. In many scenes, food and simple snacks convey love and protection. However, like in every teenager's life, food is also the occasion for dissent and contrasts. While still exploring his new powers, Peter accidentally throws a tray of food against a bully in the school canteen; a fight ensues and Peter wins, throwing the bully against a student that drops another tray of food. Later in the movie, Thanksgiving dinner also turns into an occasion for a fight among the main characters, and for Spider-Man's enemy the Goblin to discover Peter's secret identity. In the third installment of the series, food is a symbol of normalcy (we see Peter's friend Henry eating cotton candy) and bonding, even with sexual undertones (Henry and Peter's love interest Mary Jane cook together and have a good time while Peter grows increasingly estranged). But, just like in the other movies of the series, food sharing can also become the occasion for frustration and humiliation. When Peter decides to propose to Mary Jane in a fancy French restaurant, where he already feels intimidated by the environment and the food, she turns him down by refusing to share with him the glass of champagne where he had dropped the engagement ring. Later on, when Harry decides to hurt Peter, he invites him for coffee and reveals to him that he is actually dating Mary Jane, particularly enjoying the flavor of the cake he is eating, which tastes as sweet as revenge.

In the narrative arcs falling under the "Romantic Lover", the protagonists find one of their main motivations in romantic love. Although the type appears in 16 movies, it is often together with another type. Only in two movies (*Ghost* and *The Sixth Sense*) it appears as the only narrative arc; it is interesting that both these movies somehow spice up the romantic theme with scary and otherworldly elements such as mysteries and spirits (*The Sixth Sense* uses tropes from the horror genre). Apparently a purely romantic story is not considered sufficient by the powers to be in Hollywood to guarantee a worldwide hit. In the "Romantic Lover" plots, the protagonists may present gentle and understanding traits, often paired with qualities traditionally perceived as more masculine such as courage, endurance, or physical power. For instance, in both *Ghost* and *The Sixth Sense* the main characters, both ghosts, show great intelligence, a detective instinct, and the inner strength to defend what they believe is important. In *Titanic*, the male lead is a young immigrant that does everything that is necessary to start a new life in the New

World, in *Pretty Woman* the main character is a business tycoon, while in *Pearl Harbor* the two protagonists are soldiers fighting against a foreign invasion; however, each in a different way, all these characters are also able to get in touch with their inner feelings in the process of conquering their love interest.

The movies that feature the “Romantic Lover” narrative arc point to models of masculine identity that do not exclude emotions and non-competitive interaction with other men and with women. This interpretive type, where food-specific scenes are more frequent than in the “Involuntary Hero” type (with an average of 22 food-specific occurrences per movie), allows the main characters not only to affirm themselves as men, but also to explore intimate feelings and passions, often in regard of women. However, scenes where women serve or provide food to men are quite common: women do play an important role in those plots, but often a subaltern one, as indicated also by the frequency of scenes that feature men offering food to a woman to get close to her. Movies of this type repeatedly feature scenes where men serve food to other men, or where men relax while drinking, which point to a kind of masculinity that, despite any romantic involvement, still needs to assert itself publicly and possibly against the background of less powerful men.

The “Hardcore Warrior” and the “Danger Fighter” interpretive types are present roughly in the same number of movies as the “Romantic Lover,” (respectively 12 and 14, against the 16 movies under the latter type, on a total of 58 movies constituting the sample). They both present uncompromising masculinities, based on values like strength, fighting ability, and leadership, together with a certain recklessness. However, the “Danger Fighter” is often moved by a sense of duty and his rampages are less devastating and bloody, focusing often on more constructive goals than revenge or pure mayhem. Among the most popular characters falling under the “Hardcore Warrior” type, often played by big action-movie stars, we find police lieutenant John McClane (Bruce Willis) in *Die Hard with a Vengeance*, the last installment of a long and very fortunate series, Achilles (Brad Pitt) in *Troy*, and the android in *Terminator* played by the “Governator” Arnold Schwarzenegger, who before getting into politics tried to change his public image with movies like *Kindergarten Cop*, which pictured him as a more caring, but not less strong, character (Messner 2007).

In the “Danger Fighter” type, movies feature less high testosterone characters such as the secret agent Ethan Hawk (Tom Cruise) in the *Mission Impossible* franchise, detective Mills (Brad Pitt) in *Se7en*, and the agents K (Tommy Lee Jones) and J (Will Smith) in *Men in Black*. Since in movies falling under these two types the plot focuses on action and adventure, food is not featured prominently, with an average number of occurrences per movie of 12 for the “Danger Fighter” and 13.5 for the “Hardcore Warrior.” Eating activities are used mostly as part of the *mise-en-scene*, to describe a situation, or to underline the masculine traits of the main character.

The least frequent interpretive type is the “Irreducible Gambler,” which we find only in 5 movies out of the 58 constituting the sample. This may arguably indicate the difficulty for Hollywood to build successful movies around characters that in their single-mindedness are often unsympathetic, or that, even when likeable and admirable, are involved in activities that most people would find criminal, despicable or just too dangerous. However, when one of these characters becomes a box-office hit, he often gives origin to long-lasting franchises, like in the case of Daniel Ocean (George Cloney) in *Ocean’s Eleven* and, particularly, of James Bond (played by Peirce Brosnan and Daniel Craig in the two movies in the sample). In their appeal, these characters are somehow similar to the protagonists of the gangster genre that, according to some literature, would embody the most secret desires of the audience and the fantasy of unbridled, cruel, assertive power (Shadoian 2003; Nochimson 2007). The interpretive type of the “Irreducible Gambler” presents the highest number of food-specific occurrences per movie (23.6), mostly in scenes with narrative and descriptive functions. While food is employed as a diegetic tool, allowing the audience’s attention to focus on the main plot, the activities around it endorse or reinforce behaviors commonly perceived as masculine and gender-appropriate. The way James Bond order his favorite drink (a Martini, ‘shaken not stirred’) or offers drinks to the objects of his seemingly insatiable sexual appetite, the never-ending munching of the thief played by Brad Pitt in *Ocean’s Eleven*, or the exploitation of other people’s hunger by the filmmaker in *King King* all point to straightforward and self-assured masculinities, albeit of different kinds. Food-related actions tend to become transparent; they do not play any role in the development of the plots but can be very effective in conveying ideas, values, and judgments about

what the behavior of real men should be.

## II.2 Food-Specific Scenes

A closer look at the scenes where men interact around and with food can offer more specific insights about the way the relationship between masculinity and food is represented in the movies under examination, and about how food actually participates in the construction and the performance of masculinity.

The content analysis confirms a conspicuous presence of food-specific scenes in the movies examined, with 940 occurrences classified under 151 different situations (situational scripts). Their frequency varies greatly across the sample (see Appendix J for the complete breakdown).

With 86 food-specific occurrences, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* contains by itself over 9% of the total occurrences in sample. This anomaly is not surprising, since this is the only movie that actually features eating and consumption as its main themes, since the whole story is built around candy. Food constitutes the occasion for the main male characters (both Willy Wonka, the rich owner of a visionary chocolate factory, and Charlie, the poor boy that eventually becomes his heir) to evolve through moral conundrums and emotional trials.

Leaving *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* aside, since it constitutes an interesting case in itself, the movies with the highest number of food-specific occurrences are *Pretty Woman*, *The Bodyguard*, and *Forrest Gump*. They present narrative arcs that fall respectively under the “Irreducible Gambler”, the “Hardcore Warrior”, and “The Involuntary Hero” interpretive types. However, important aspects of their plots can also be described as perfect examples of the “Romantic Lover” interpretive type. In fact, these three movies are often labeled as “chick-flicks,” a definition that usually describes sentimental dramas where women play a relevant role, even if only as romantic interest of the male lead.

In *Pretty Woman*, food plays two main functions. On one hand it is used to underline differences in social status between the high-class male characters and the low class prostitute played by Julia Roberts. For instance, she neither knows how to use the silverware in an upscale restaurant, nor she is familiar with certain foods. These



situations turn into occasions for the male lead (Richard Gere) and other male characters to help her acquire good manners in a very protective, almost paternal, way. On the other hand, food offers various opportunities to negotiate the relationship between Edward and Vivian, both sexually and emotionally. Special foods (the famous strawberry served with champagne) are used to express physical attraction, but also intimacy between the two characters.

In *The Bodyguard*, Frank Farmer, a professional bodyguard played by Kevin Costner, works for pop star Rachel Marron (Whitney Houston, pre-addiction) and saves her from a killer. The two get involved in a very intense relationship that nevertheless ends after Frank finishes his assignment. The bodyguard, although undoubtedly masculine, does not recoil from food preparation. At the beginning of the movie, we see him alone in his kitchen, reading while he cooks and pouring himself a glass of wine while he is having dinner. He likes simple and healthy food, very appropriate for his no-nonsense professional approach (and masculinity). When he first meets the vocalist, she makes fun of him for not drinking alcohol. His attitude clashes with Rachel's, who instead loves the social and spectacular aspect of eating, such as eating out in public. As they get closer, they go for a bite after a movie, but this time we are led to think that Frank chooses the establishment, a simple diner, where they playfully enjoy food. When Frank decides to take Rachel and her family to his father's in the North to protect them, we see both men, from two different generations, very comfortable about cooking, with Frank's father showing a very nurturing ability to use food. However, it is also in kitchens that we see Frank's explosions of rage and tension, first against Rachel's former bodyguard, and later against a Hispanic cook whom he suspect of being involved with the plot against Rachel.

In *Forrest Gump*, the slow-witted but sweet main character resorts to food as a venue to communicate his desires, fears, and emotions. Forrest uses it also as a metaphor of life. At the beginning of the movie, talking with his mouth full, he reminisces: "My mama always said that life was like a box of chocolates; you never know what you gonna get." His desires and appetites often express themselves in terms of food: the box of chocolate we see him hold on his lap at the beginning of the movie ("Do you want a chocolate? I could eat about a million and a half of those"), the buffet at the White House

party where he is celebrated as a sport champion (“Now, the real good thing about meeting the president of the United States is the food. They put you in this little room with just about anything you’d want to eat and drink”), or the food in the hospital when he is wounded in battle (“The only thing good about being wounded in the buttocks is the ice cream. They got me all the ice cream I could eat”). Also his affection for his girlfriend is expressed in edible terms: “From then on, we were like peas and carrots.” Food production is at the core of the two male friendships that plays a huge role in Forrest’s life: a black man first and a burnt-out, handicapped veteran later. The connection with the black man is built on his dream of having his own shrimping business, producing the seafood that the women in his family had to cook for generations for their white employers (and arguably, in the past, masters). The black man goes on and on about the myriad ways to prepare shrimp while he and Forrest are busy with menial tasks, like polishing shoes or cleaning a floor with a toothbrush: “Shrimp is the food from the sea; you can barbecue it, boil it, broil it, bake it, and sauté it. There is shrimp kebab, shrimp creole, shrimp gumbo, pan fried...deep fried, stir fried. There’s pineapple shrimp, coconut shrimp... Shrimp stew, shrimp soup, shrimp salad, shrimp and potatoes, shrimp burger, shrimp sandwich. That’s about it.” Food provides the two characters an escape from dire reality, while allowing them to create a bond that Forrest will bring to fruition by buying a shrimping boat, on which he will work with his other male friend, a crippled former lieutenant from his time in the army.

The movies displaying the highest number of occurrences are all built around story lines where the main characters (always males) embark in a path of personal development and discovery of their identity as individuals, or they progressively open up to a relationship with a woman, exploring their more emotional side. However, a very substantial group of movies (over 44% of the total) contain between 11 and 20 occurrences each, with over 40% of total occurrences. The group with fewest occurrences per movie constitutes almost the 30% of the sample, but also in this group most movies present 5 occurrences or more. As food-related occurrences becomes less frequent in the movies, they tends to progressively lose their function of emotional arena for self-development and romantic interaction, and they are rather used as the background for the male characters actions and adventures. For instance, in *The Matrix: Revolutions*, which

features only four occurrences, food is presented to a space ship pilot to show gratitude, and it is also passed around during a collective celebration with a cathartic function in the fight against evil machines, while in *Terminator 3* the three food occurrences offer the setting for the androids to express their calculated and cold violence against the humans, often in gruesome ways.

At the opposite end of the continuum from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, we find *Star Wars III The Revenge of the Sith*, the last episode of the *Star Wars* prequel saga and the only movie in the sample without any food scenes at all. Metaphorically speaking, while *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is located at the bulimic extreme of the movie sample, *Star Wars III: The Revenge of the Sith* definitely marks its anorexic limit.

In general, aside from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Star Wars III The Revenge of the Sith*, which represent two extremes, the movies in the sample show a noticeable incidence of food-related scenes, which could be surprising due to the fact that most of them fall under genre marketed as “action movie” (see section “Testing the Results” below). However, eating and ingestion do not frequently play a primary role but they are often in the background of the main action, used as a tool to move the plot forward, to describe situations, or to suggest personal traits of the characters.

What are the most common activities around food? Do these specific situations help us outline more precisely the masculinities presented in the movie sample, and the representation of the complex relationship between men and food?

As illustrated in Chapters 4 and 5, I focused on the 940 food-specific occurrences coded in the 58 movies constituting the sample to pinpoint different situations, which I defined “situational scripts”, that may repeat themselves in the same or in several movies, each describing a recognizable circumstance in terms of relationships among the characters, interactions between characters and their environment, actions, verbal exchanges, and emotional undertones. The most frequent among the 151 situational scripts allow the identification of relevant traits in the representation of masculinity. Men are featured while sharing food to communicate and discuss news, to make plans, and to celebrate special events (and reaffirming at the same time their belonging to a specific social group). Also when they are not directly interacting with each other, but often in

each other's presence, men eat or drink to take a break during activities or just to relax. In these food-related situations, men seem to need confirmation and reassurance about their masculinity from peers and women through performance and social relations, both confrontational and convivial. Community and various fraternal networks build on affection, professional ties, or common interests reinforce their social standing, often through non-violent actions and behaviors that nevertheless can suggest the possibility of stronger interventions. After all, meals unite and divide. They connect those who share them, confirm their identities as individuals and as a collectivity, and reinforce their mutual bonds. At the same time, meals exclude those who do not participate in them, threatening and negating their very humanity. Food has always been one of the defining aspects of any given social group; its members would acknowledge each other as such by the way they eat, by what they eat, and by what they abhor to eat. In the words of political philosopher Hannah Arendt, "To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates at the same time" (Arendt 1959: 48). All that finds itself outside the boundaries that define personal and social identity can be perceived as threatening. This need for a stable, contoured integrity leads subjects and social groups to push separation they perceives as unfamiliar toward the outside, creating an external space of total difference, that can never be part of the subject and that at the same times defines the subject. "Abject and abjection are my safeguards, the primers of my culture," affirmed the French feminist theorist Julia Kristeva, who also noted that "food loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection" (Kristeva 1982: 2).

In this attempt to differentiate themselves from their surroundings, men are supposed to build their identity as individuals by affirming their hegemonic positions over other men and over women: in those cases, interactions around food, considered as a source of relaxation and energy, are also used as an arena to assert men's power and their dominant role, in terms of both social and gender relations. So we often see men being served food by women or by other men. The relational nature of masculinity is revealed in terms of race/ethnicity, social status, and age, with young and adult middle class white men represented as the most acceptable models in assertive positions. This power

distribution, which is common in Western countries and especially in the USA where all the movies in the sample are produced, clashes, however, with the social structures in many of the countries that seem to embrace the Hollywood big-budget movies. In many places, older men still enjoy respect and honor, as carrier of traditions and wisdom, while in other parts of the world, especially in areas that were in the past under Western colonial domination, status among different races and ethnicities is organized along different lines, and white men may be more or less overtly resented. The fact that in many non-Western societies we witness a resurgence (or reinvention) of traditional, very conservative, and often confrontational models of masculinity reveals all the complexity of the issue.

However, the model of hegemonic masculinity apparently prevalent in the sample is less monolithic than it would seem: food can reveal emotions and fears that contrast with the solid image of themselves that men try to project. In fact, one of the most recurrent situational scripts in the sample features men who are afraid or actually in danger of being eaten. On one hand, the frequency of this narrative element can be explained by the fact that in several movies aliens, fantasy and other otherworldly creatures, or even humans turned into monsters threaten the male characters; on the other, it is interesting that this sense of danger, clearly meant to scare and shake the audience, expresses itself in terms of ingestion. In his 1960 masterpiece *Crowds and Power*, Nobel Prize recipient Elias Canetti dedicated a whole chapter to eating and power, equating power to ingestion and the fear of being touched to the fear of being eaten (Canetti 1984: 220-1). Members of the same community need to be reassured that they will not eat each other, a concept that Margaret Visser referred to in the introduction of *The Rituals of Dinner*:

Table manners are social agreements; they are devised precisely because violence could so easily erupt at dinner. Eating is aggressive by nature, and the implements required for it could quickly become weapons; table manners are, most basically, a system of taboos designed to ensure that violence remains out of the question (Visser 1991: xii).

In the section of *Crowds and Power* aptly called “The Entrails of Power,” Canetti argues that teeth are “the very first manifestation of order,” and “the most striking natural

instrument of power” (Canetti 1981: 219). More precisely, smoothness and order, which allow teeth to fulfill their task, and their shape reminding a prison, have become attributes of power. As a matter of fact, power can be interpreted as a form of digestion, often sucking all substances from the subjects it supposedly represents. The implicit danger in digestive power is, unconsciously, cannibalism, the fear of being destroyed and consumed by stronger ones. Its antidote, as we mentioned already, is community, and the shared meal where bare teeth and hunger do not constitute a threat, where pleasure is obtained from offering food and enjoying the other’s enjoyment.

Furthermore, the scary creatures that threaten to devour the movie characters might express drives and desires that we would find otherwise unacceptable, like the unbridled hunger and the single-minded longing for ingestion that seem to define us as infants and later on – in sublimated and controlled ways – as adults. As newborns, all we want and need is to be fed, but our source of nourishment happens to be a human being. However, in the opinion of many psychologists, even at that young age, we cannot fully accept those drives, so intense that they would not stop until full satisfaction: the consequence is guilt, which has to be addressed and relieved. For this reason, every culture seems to find ways to deal with what we can define as cannibalistic desires, despite the ethical and social refusal to acknowledge their very existence and to accept them as a constitutive part of normal dynamics in the development of autonomous individuals (Parasecoli 2008: 37-60).

These observations are repeated in other fields besides social and political sciences. According to psychoanalyst Melanie Klein, whose work resonated vastly in feminist literature, the first object to which infants relate is their mothers’ breast (or any substitute for it), on which they depend for the pleasurable satisfaction of their vital needs. When babies are content and well fed, they feel one with it. But if they sense that their needs are not met, then the breast is experienced as a separate entity, becoming their first psychological object and a cause of anxiety (Frankiel 1993). At this point, infants end up perceiving the breast as split into a good part, which they identify with themselves and which provides hallucinatory pleasure, and a bad part, which becomes the object of the oral-sadistic, or cannibalistic, desires of the infant. For Melanie Klein, as a consequence of the guilt provoked by this desire, infants dread a punishment

corresponding to the offense. The object of their attack becomes a source of danger because infants fear similar retaliatory attacks from it. This early oral-sadistic phase will be overcome only when, with the beginning of the genital phase, the children's ego becomes able to take in the mother as a whole person, with her good and bad parts. Nevertheless, to be part of culture and of society, growing infants must learn to repress their destructive, ingestion-based drives, which, nevertheless, in adult life, will constitute the core for all desires for control and power, perceived as potentially dangerous for collective life. For these reasons, they must be transformed and expressed – sublimated, in psychoanalytical language – in acceptable forms. Can the monsters that threaten to devour the male characters in so many movies be an expression of this ambivalence towards food, which would find its origin in the complex relationship with the maternal breast? Could the fight and the victory over these monsters provide a special pleasure to audiences, as a fantasy reenacting infantile repressed desires? Food is clearly a source of anxiety: in 13 movies of the sample we also have 20 occurrences where men are drugged or poisoned by food, or killed by or around food. In the *Terminator* series, the obviously non-eating androids seem to enjoy to kill men when they show their nature as living organisms while drinking milk or sipping coffee; in *Henry Potter*, food can be laced with magical ingredients to make people sleep or to make them change their shapes, while in *Se7en* the serial killer uses poison to carry out his murderous plan based on the seven capital sins (including gluttony). In *Casino Royale*, a woman adds poison to James Bond's drink, almost causing his death. It is also around food that men fight and discuss; food is used to deceive and humiliate, and it is spilled and thrown around in fights and brawls. All these elements suggest that in the movie sample food is represented with a deep ambivalence; it allows men to assert themselves both in their personal traits and in their socio-economical position, but at the same time it can be used to put them down, to underline their lower social standing, and even to threaten them physically.

Food-related experiences can be fraught with tensions and contradictions also when they involve gender relations between men and women. Female characters are frequently portrayed in relevant roles that are nourishing and caring, aimed at men's emotional and physical well-being, but also clearly subaltern: one of the most frequent situational scripts describes women serving food to men, while other recurrent scripts

feature men asking food or drinks from women, using food to get close to women, to humiliate them, or to show them their cultural and social superior standing. For instance, in *Titanic* the fiancé of the main female character orders food for her in front of other guests, to show how he knows her tastes (and also the extent of his control over her). Women fight back, although much less frequently: we rarely see them spilling food over men, refusing to feed them, scolding them for running out of food, or making fun of them for what they eat or drink, but these are rare occurrences in the sample. We see few scenes where women have a more equal power position: for instance, while we frequently see men drink together to celebrate some event, only two scenes feature a man toasting with a woman (in *Spider-man 3* and *Mission Impossible 3*, both in romantic situations).

All the masculinity models that we identified in the sample, as we noticed, are deeply relational: men need others to affirm themselves, to be acknowledged and recognized in their personal and social positions, but also to be reassured. Women also play an important role, but most of the time from a position of less power, even when they are treated with care and respect, allowing the different kind of masculinities to express and to develop themselves. In general, women's presence in the movie sample as a whole and in the food-related scenes, where one would expect to find them, is relatively limited. As key informant Alice Julier pointed out (see Appendix H), it is necessary to “talk about (a) the absence of such scenes and (b) how the scenes with men stand in contrast to something that isn't visually presented or developed”. She underlines the importance of focusing on issues of oppression, where privileged groups are able to engage in acts that define others as not privileged, all while staying free of the stigma. Social interactions around food are a perfect example of this kind of dynamics.

These observations seem to support the scholarly literature, based on Judith Butler's work and on performance studies, which analyses gender identities in their performative aspects. For instance, the fact that men embodying hegemonic models of masculinity are not frequently represented while cooking or serving food can be interpreted as an attempt to avoid any trait that could be identified with any feminine or nurturing role. Women, on the other hands, perform and thus reinforce their role of caregivers since they are responsible with feeding not only their own but also others' bodies. Cooking and serving food are among the most identifiable of these performative



feminine traits. They are the result of the reiteration of highly regulated and ritualized practices, norms, and processes (the “techniques of the body” that Marcel Mauss identified) that respond to ideals and shared social templates that find their primary materialization in the very body of each individual (Butler 1993: 1–23). Performance and practices are not artificial and dispensable, but constitutive necessities for the existence of the individual self, providing the conditions of its emergence and operation, of its boundaries and stability. They mark and reinforce rules and norms, including those related to food. In many ways, movies can be then considered as a performance of a performance, aimed at confirming the cultural validity and the social relevance of food-related actions, attitudes, and values that find visual expression in the actions of the characters on screen. These food-related actions, at the same time, underline what behaviors are gender-appropriate, discretely and unobtrusively offering various models of masculinity to the viewers.

### **III. THE INVISIBILITY OF FOOD IN BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES**

The presence and frequency of food-related scenes involving men (and secondarily women) in the movie sample confirm how production, distribution, preparation, and consumption of food are found at the core of frequent and significant social interactions that mark various aspects of the subject identity, including gender.

However, the data analysis showed that, despite their frequency, food-related scenes seldom play a key role within the larger economy of the movie plots, but they are rather used as narrative or descriptive devices in the *mise-en-scene* and in the background. Also when they highlight interpersonal dynamics and various traits of the characters (including the protagonists), food-related scenes rarely offer nodal points to the development of the story line or introduce new characters; they rather blend in the narrative flow, just helping to move the action along. The movies in the sample are all Hollywood big-budget blockbusters, and their main goal is to entertain audiences worldwide with plots that, despite the increasingly frequent use of flashbacks and the occasional multiplication of the storylines, remain quite straightforward and easy to follow.

Because of the movies’ focus on the succession of events that involve the main

characters, food-specific scenes seem to offer an apparently natural and neutral space for representations of masculinity to be conveyed, to the point that viewers often do not notice them. Within this apparently ideological-free space, male characters display various traits, values, and practices through their interaction with food. As key informant Alice Julier noticed, food in movies is so ordinary that “we don't even notice the way it is used to demarcate lines.” Also when I presented my work-in-progress and the movies’ content analysis to the Feast and Famine Seminar, a group of food scholars from different disciplines that gathers regularly at New York University (see Appendix G), the participants expressed their surprise at the sheer number of food scenes in my sample.

The two focus groups I organized as pilot tests to assess movie-goers’ reactions to my research seem to suggest the validity of the content analysis data about the relative invisibility of food-scenes in well-known movies. I administered a written survey to participants to ascertain which movies from my sample they had actually seen, with which they were familiar in terms of general plot and subject (even if they had not actually seen them), and in which they remembered food-related scenes. The focus groups were composed of students in programs focusing on food and culture. The subjects’ declared interest in food-related matters constitutes a limiting factor, since they can hardly be considered a sample of regular audiences. However, precisely for their specific interests, they might have well been expected to remember more food scenes in the movies they were familiar with. This proved not to be the case. The survey sheet can be found in Appendix D, the survey data breakdown in Appendix E.

The first focus group took place on January 12, 2009 in Rome, Italy. The compilation of the survey sheet was followed by a discussion, whose transcript can be found in Appendix F. The 15 subjects, all Italians, were 4 males and 11 females, aged between 23 and 33 years of age, the average age being 27. Two of them (13%) had not finished their bachelor’s degree yet, 7 had (47%), while 6 had their master’s (40%). Each subject had actually seen a number of the sample movies (between 6 and 51: average 33). All of the participants were familiar with the general content and the plot of several among the 58 sample movies, the lowest indicating 13 movies, the highest 56, with an average of 39.

The second focus group took place on April 29, 2009, in Colorno, Italy. The 20

subjects belonged to 12 different nationalities, some from Europe, but mostly from English-speaking (USA, Australia) or Asian countries. The group was composed of 4 males and 16 females, aged between 25 and 57 years of age, the average age being 31 years. All of them already had their bachelor's degree (40%) or their master's degree (60%), and were familiar with several of the 58 movies in the sample, the lowest indicating 20 movies, the highest 58, with an average of 40. Each subject had actually seen a number of movies that ranged between 6 and 54, the average being 30.

As purely indicative as the two groups are, they suggest that the movies in the sample are very popular also outside the US, in terms both of notoriety of the storyline and of actual spectatorship. Hollywood blockbuster productions seemed to be well known to most of the subjects, whatever the country they came from. This is not surprising: as indicated by the literature, high budget movies are designed to become box-office hit internationally, thanks to wide distribution and a very efficient marketing machine (Wyatt 1994; King 2001; Sutton 2009). The broadcast of movies on TV and now their availability on VCR, DVD, and even iPod formats make them extremely available to audiences all over the globe. The subjects in my focus groups stated that they were familiar with some of the movies even if they had not actually seen them. This can be easily explained by the fact that many of the movies in the sample are based on famous novels, comic books, and TV shows, constituting a global depository of pop culture themes, images, and stories.

Breaking down the data, the movie viewed by most subjects in both groups proved to be *Titanic* (100% of subjects), which also happens to be the highest grossing movie in history, followed by movies such as *Pretty Woman*, *The Six Sense*, *Forrest Gump*, *Jurassic Park*, and *The Matrix* (with different percentages in the two groups, but over 80% in both). *Ghost* and *The Bodyguard*, also among the most viewed, ranked higher in the first group (respectively around 93% and 86% of subjects) than in the second (at any rate, a respectable 75% and 70%).

When considering the movies whose storyline and subject matter were known to the subjects, even if they had not seen them, the outcome was different. *Titanic* resulted in first position with 100% of subjects, with *Jurassic Park* scoring the same percentage; also *Ghost* was familiar to 100% of the first group, but only to 75% of the second.

When asked what movies they remembered that contained scenes involving men and food, in the first group 14 subjects (93.37%) mentioned *Titanic*, 13 subjects *Pretty Woman* (86.67%), 10 subjects *Forrest Gump* (66.67%), 8 subjects *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (53.33%). In the second, the highest scoring movies were the same but with a different ranking, with *Forrest Gump* in first position (14 subjects, 70%), followed by *Pretty Woman* (13 subjects, 65%), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (12 subjects, 60%), and *Titanic* (11 subjects, 55%). It was quite predictable that subjects remembered food scenes from the *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, because of its subject matter and the presence of by far the greatest number of food scenes in the movie sample, but also *Pretty Woman* and *Forrest Gump* appear very high in the list of the movies with the most food-related scenes (respectively 38 and 31), while *Titanic* only features 16. It is evident that it is not the relative frequency of food-specific scenes that make a movie more memorable from the food point of view. The fact that movies such as *The Bodyguard*, *Spider-Man 2* and *Spider-Man 3*, which feature a very high number of food-specific scenes, rank very low among the most noticeable movies from the food point of view for both focus groups is also interesting.

Then what is it that makes a food scene memorable? I believe it is particularly significant that at the top of all three lists from both the focus groups (films actually viewed, films whose subject matter and general plot is known, films in which the subjects remembered food scenes) we find movies falling under the interpretive types “Romantic Lover” or “Involuntary Hero” (or both). This might be explained in part by the composition of the focus groups, with a high presence of women, towards which these movies are clearly marketed. However, the discussions following the survey revealed that most of the food-specific scenes the subjects (including the male subjects) remembered featured the male characters during emotional or self-discovery moments, often in the interaction with women, where men reveal something important about themselves and in so doing assert their personality. For instance, in *Titanic* the scene that most subjects remembered featured Jack, the lead male character (Leonardo DiCaprio), a poor immigrant on his way to America, invited to the table of the rich people traveling in first class, with some of the more powerful males unabashedly trying to mortify him in front of the other guests for his lack of refinement and familiarity with upscale dishes. Jack is

## Chapter 6

confused and embarrassed by the food and the tableware but a rich American lady, Molly, helps him navigate the complex meal. “How would you like your caviar, sir?” asks a waiter. Jack answers: “No caviar for me, I never liked it”, refusing to share the uppity food and atmosphere; instead he eats bread while talking to the other guests, charming them all and saving face in front of his love interest. As for *Pretty Woman*, most subjects remember the scene where the rich finance tycoon (Richard Gere) takes his female escort (Julia Roberts) to dinner, after the maitre d’ of the hotel where they are staying, schools her in the rudiments of table etiquette. However, the meal turns out to be very intimidating for her, and only the discreet, affectionate but slightly paternalistic help from some of the male guests manage to embarrass her. The other sequence most subjects remember is when the two characters meet for the first time and the tycoon, Edward, invites the prostitute Vivian to his hotel. He asks the receptionist to send champagne and strawberries upstairs, which is brought by a male waiter. Edwards serves Vivian strawberries, explaining to her that their taste goes well with champagne. He asks her to stay for the whole night, and serves her more champagne. She offers him some champagne to drink, but he refuses. Eventually they spend the night together, and Edward asks her to be his escort for three days.

These scenes, which clearly struck a chord in many of the subjects, are all romantic, allowing the male characters to reveal soft aspects about themselves and creating occasions to get close to their love interest. At the same time, they are also about power relations, not only between women and men but also among men. Power relations lurk also behind the numerous scenes taking place in the food paradise hidden in the chocolate factory of Willy Wonka. The eccentric chocolate maker forces his guests into a sort of moral journey, while keeping all of his secrets well hidden from them, which clearly gives him the upper hand. Also his relationship with his father, revolving around the prohibition to eat chocolate, reveals intergenerational power tensions in several sad scenes that many subjects remembered clearly. In *Forrest Gump*, most subjects remembered the eponymous character sitting at a bus stop with a box of chocolate on his knees that, a situation that allows Forrest to reveal his sweet and affectionate nature.

Besides presenting narrative arcs that can be classified under the “Romantic Lover” or the “Involuntary Hero” (or both) interpretive types, another common aspect of the

movies from which most subjects remembered food-related scene is that they all feature famous male stars (Leonardo DiCaprio, Richard Gere, Johnny Depp, and Tom Hanks) that embody the new type of less threatening, but not for that reason less hegemonic, masculinity that the film studies literature has noticed becoming more and more frequent in Hollywood movies from the late 1980s on (Pfeil 2002; Chopra-Gant 2005; Baker 2006). In all the scenes the subjects remembered, the interaction with or around food allowed the male characters to express empathic traits, to reveal and face some personal weakness, and to continue on the path of self-discovery while reaffirming at the same time, and in a very discrete way, gender, race, class and age-based power relations that remain fundamentally heteronormative.

If these ideological element pass under the viewers' radar in food-related scenes that strike the audiences' imagination, we can assume that food can be used even more as a narrative and descriptive tool in scenes where food is not prominent to convey models of masculinity without distracting the viewers from the main action.

Some interesting elements emerged during the conversations that followed the survey (see Appendix F). When prompted to discuss in general the relationship between men and food as represented in cinema, the first answers underlined how food marks social stratification among men, roles, and hierarchy. Among the other functions of food, subjects pointed out that it can be a tool for power and self-affirmation for men, also inside the kitchen, where men can express their creativity and their professionalism, while women are limited to everyday chores.

On the other hand, some subjects observed that food can be used to express affection, connection, and complicity, although they admitted these elements are more visible in food movies where women are the center of the story.

When subsequently confronted with the data from the content analysis of my movie sample, just as it happened at the Feast and Famine Seminar, the participants expressed their surprise about the frequency of food-related occurrences and stated that they could not remember food scenes in many movies that actually feature several. When asked about the possible reasons for such invisibility, subjects mentioned the attention of the viewers being focused on the main action, food's normality and its being part of everyday life.

The focus group and the exchanges with some of the key informants seem to support the hypothesis that very often food scenes are not even noticed by the viewers: they tend to be unobtrusive and to fade into the “normality” of the diegetic action because eating and other food-related activities, attitudes, and values constitute such a pervasive field of social practice that they are perceived as completely natural. They can thus provide an apparently secure and ideologically irrelevant space where masculinity templates are offered to audiences for their entertainment, while reinforcing or questioning their personal and social ideas about what men are or are supposed to be.

#### **IV. RESEARCH DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

In what directions could this research on the representation of food and masculinity in the media, and in particular in movies, develop?

The content analysis I conducted focused mainly on the way male characters interact with and around food, without focusing on what foods are actually represented in the scenes. Dana Polan, one of my key informants, pointed out how content analysis intrinsically requires a high degree of abstraction in order to create categories able to code very different food-specific occurrences (scenes). This methodological approach cannot avoid a great deal of loss of details, including the food that is featured in the scenes. The visual representation of a man eating something during a work break does not communicate the same content if the man eats a hot dog dripping with ketchup or granola with yogurt. Also the participants to the Feast and Famine Seminar observed how the situational scripts ignore the actual dishes or ingredient consumed by the characters involved in the food-specific occurrences.

Following these suggestions, the same set of movies could be examined by developing a content analysis that focus on the dishes and the ingredient consumed, or on the implements and tools used to produce, prepare, consume, and dispose of food. The resulting data would surely highlight important elements about class, race, age, and gender relations in the movies. However, this analysis should take into account the very different historical and geographical settings. For instance, a thigh of lamb shared among the warriors in *Troy* to celebrate a victory could play the same socio-cultural role as a flute of champagne shared by the engineers and the travelers in *Titanic* to mark their

scientific success and technical advancements. On the contrary, the same food could be used in totally different context: bread can be a symbol of community when shared by companions in *The Lord of the Rings*, but it could arguably be used to underline class difference if hypothetically a rich person threw a piece of moldy bread to a beggar.

The movies sample could be examined through a different set of content analysis categories that consider the diachronic dimension to determine, for instance, if the masculinities identified in blockbusters have changed over time and, if they have, what are the trends and the dynamics of these changes, what are the possible historical, social, economic, political, and cultural factors causing or affecting the development in representations of masculinity, and so on. Have hegemonic and subaltern masculinities changed over time in terms of acceptable race/ethnicity, social status, and age group? Have the body image of the main characters and their relationships with food evolved or are they rather stable? At any rate, also this kind of quantitative analysis aimed at pinpointing diachronic variations should be supported by solid qualitative research on the topic at hand.

Future research should focus on how the audiences actually perceive and receive the models of masculinity represented in the movie sample. Content analysis limits itself to identify recurrent elements in communication, operating on the assumption that the elements used more frequently have more cultural relevance in the environment where the communication takes place. Since Hollywood blockbusters are engineered to be successful all over the world, it is customary for studios to work on stories and characters that have a good possibility of being well accepted by viewers. Before being released, movies are screened by focus groups in order to identify the best approach for promotion and advertising. However, following marketing research, if producers or marketers express major doubts about the movie, they might ask film-makers to change narrative elements, reorder the plot, or even completely eliminate a secondary storyline; often these changes require noticeable editing intervention (Hayes and Bing 2004; Wasko 2003; McDonald and Wasko 2008). The final products are supposed to be successful, but as we all know some end up as a flop at the box office. However, the flops are not among the movies in my sample, which are all international hits; at least some elements must have resonated in the audiences both in the US and all over the world to determine their



success.

But how does food (and other aspects) operate subliminally to reinforce ideological elements such as, in our case, masculinity and gender behaviors, attitudes, and values? And how do these elements affect female viewers, an issue that feminist film scholars have widely debated? To ascertain the actual effects of the movies on the audience it would be necessary to carry on with further research employing different methodologies like interviews, surveys, and participant observations, focused more on the receiving end of the communication process than on its origin and its media. Film provides an outlet for representations of masculinities to be made visible and become part of a shared repository of images, verbal elements, behaviors, attitudes, and values that constitute the social activity that anthropologist Arjun Appadurai defines as fantasy and imagination. Viewers negotiate their position towards this repository in different ways, determining which elements are interesting for their specific situations, which ones do not make sense, which ones can be included in their real lives.

However, it is quite unlikely that these dynamics work in the same way and with the same outcomes in different environments. As a consequence, another question that would deserve further enquiry is how the gender relations models offered subliminally operate in other cultures. The identification of the recurrent and prevalent elements that are offered by a popular and global media such as cinema constitutes only a first step towards an assessment of their actual influences over the viewers.

A different set of data could be obtained by applying the same content analysis to different sets of movies: what information about masculinity and its relationship with food would be offered by American movies produced independently from the big Hollywood studios, by movies from other countries than the USA, or by documentaries?

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this dissertation is to examine how popular movies, often called “blockbusters” when referring to their extraordinary international success at the box office, portray masculinity and men’s interactions around food and eating. As a growing body of literature suggests, the common and mundane objects, attitudes, and practices revolving around eating and ingestion play an important role in men's lives, particularly in identity development and gender relations. The analysis of film representations of food-related male practices and behaviors allowed me to outline various aspects of current culturally-sanctioned masculinities. More specifically, my research investigated how food representations in film embrace, naturalize, or at times question cultural assumptions about masculinity and gender relations.

The theoretical framework of the study is based on three core concepts that have emerged in the masculinity studies, food studies, and film studies literature, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3:

1. Masculinities are socially and historically constructed, plural, and in constant transformation. The cultural assumption of a univocal and stable masculinity is an ideological formation.
2. Food is pervasive and finds itself at the center of frequent and significant social interactions that mark various aspects of subject identity, including gender – both male and female.
3. Film provides a vehicle for various templates of masculinity to acquire visibility and become part of a shared repository constituting the social activity that can be defined as collective fantasy of imagination

Based on these theoretical propositions and on the available literature in the relevant fields, I developed two hypotheses:

1. Food-related scenes provide an apparently neutral and natural space for representations of masculinity to be conveyed. For this reasons these scenes, although frequent, tend to be overlooked by viewers.
2. The analysis of food-related scenes allows us to identify a set of recurrent traits outlining models of masculinity that are proposed to audiences around the world.

Following these hypotheses, I identified a sample of movies that I subsequently examined through content analysis, an approach often used in media and communication studies. Using this methodology to mark and quantify the presence of food-specific occurrences in the sample, I could determine in how many and in what kind of scenes men interact with and around food, in order to ascertain the most visible representations of food-related male behaviors and practices. According to content analysis principles and methodology, the frequency of a signifying element reflects its cultural relevance for all the parties involved in the process of communication. As a consequence, the most recurrent food-specific occurrences are arguably the most significant to outline the current definitions of masculinity.

## **I. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Three fields of scholarly investigation have proved critical in framing the present research: food studies, gender studies (specifically, masculinity studies), and cinema studies. However, the multidisciplinary character of my approach has posed various challenges. First of all, masculinity studies and food studies are themselves multidisciplinary and also quite recent. Neither field is considered a full discipline in the academic sense yet, nor are there many programs, established departments, and journals focusing on them. However, as indicated in Chapter 3, a consensus is building around a corpus of scholarly works that are becoming a canon of sorts for food studies, including contributions from other disciplines such as nutrition, economics, sociology, history, political science, and anthropology.

Masculinity studies has developed first within the wider framework of gender studies, under the direct influence of women's and queer studies, and only recently it has acquired autonomy. As discussed in Chapter 2, some analytical tools originated in this field of research have been particularly useful to provide the theoretical foundations of

my work: masculinity as a historical construct, determined by cultural, social, economic, and political factors, the notion that there is no such thing as a natural, stable, and univocal masculinity, and the concept of hegemonic masculinities, referring to models of masculinity that impose themselves over other models and become socially and culturally sanctioned standards. This approach has proved to be very productive when applied to representations of gender in mass media.

While extensive research has addressed the presence of women in media, with an increasing amount of work focusing on women and food in movies, and despite growing attention on representations of masculinity in film studies, very little has been focused on men and the representation of their relationship with food in media. This dissertation aims at offering preliminary theoretical observations and methodological suggestions that can be expanded to originate future investigations on media representation of gender, food, and their connections.

## **II. THE METHODOLOGY**

Content analysis has often been applied to the examination of words or phrases across a wide range of verbal texts, both written and spoken. Instead, I used it to explore images, and in particular moving ones, an option that the literature suggests to be less common, as discussed in Chapter 4, also because the process of identifying and coding the relevant material is much easier in the case of words or strings of text. Software is now able to analyze large sets of these types of data in very short time. That is not the case for visual elements. Although content-based visual information retrieval (CBVIR) and semantic-based visual information retrieval (SBVIR) are now able to recognize still objects, colors, and shapes, and in the future new software will likely be available to identify movement and action, the application of the content analysis to moving images still has to rely exclusively on human coders.

In this study I have focused not only on the movie scripts and dialogues, whose investigation can rely on previous applications of content analysis to text, but also on other communicative components that allow a film to convey meaning. Besides concentrating on visual elements such as characters and objects represented, composition, color, or shape patterns, like in other examples of content analysis of still images such as

photos and advertisements, my investigation has also taken into consideration specific aspects of moving images, including action, movement, sound, narration, and plot structure.

Furthermore, when applying content analysis to words or texts, the coding categories are usually determined in advance, based on the research questions that originate the analysis, and precise rules are developed beforehand to code the text, to distinguish among classifying categories, and to define what counts as irrelevant information. In my study, I partially followed this approach, by focusing on pre-determined categories gender, race/ethnicity, class and age of the main characters, and on the general narrative arcs of the movies as a whole. However, when the focal point of the analysis shifted from the movie in its totality to the food-specific scenes, the actual coding categories classifying the food-specific occurrences were created contextually to the screening of the movies, due to the impossibility of finding a visual equivalent to a specific words, strings of text, or even static visual elements that could be identified easily and with precision. The result was a more dynamic, although more complex, application of the methodology.

Screening the movies, identifying all the scenes involving men and food, and creating the necessary categories to code them has proved to be a long and painstaking process, in which the chances for human error and personal bias are noticeable. This approach to context analysis, when used on moving images, could achieve better results when carried out by several coders. During the movie screening, the first coder would initially determine the situational scripts that best classify the actual occurrences, as he or she encounters them in the movies; the following coders would then screen the same movies to verify that the first coder has not skipped any relevant occurrence, that all the occurrences have been classified under an existing situational scripts, and that the situational scripts are satisfactory in terms of precision and analytical efficacy. The various coders could be engaged in a process of ongoing discussion and revision until a consensus is reached on the situational scripts and on how they should be applied to the occurrences.

I also expanded on the usual content analysis procedures by coding each food-specific occurrence not only under the specific categories that I defined as “situational

scripts,” based on the verbal and physical interactions among characters and food, but also according to three different kinds of “descriptors” referring to race/ethnicity, class, and age of the characters involved, and to “diegetic functions” defining the narrative role of each food-specific occurrence within the plot of the movie as a whole, in order to increase the amount of information available through the examination of the visual material.

The content analysis of the 940 food-specific occurrences identified in the sample resulted in a taxonomy of 151 “situational scripts” describing situations, interactions, and verbal exchanges featuring men and food. Proceeding to the examination of the situational scripts - a second level analysis – I noticed the recurrence of certain experiential, emotional, and social aspects related to food. I thus identified 14 “general categories,” each including several situational scripts that showed similar elements in terms of overall theme and connection among characters and food. I then cross-referenced the general categories with the results of the content analysis of both the movies as a whole and of the food-specific occurrences, in order to identify the most common traits shared by the masculinity models presented in the movie sample.

### **III. THE FINDINGS**

I looked at the sample both considering the movies as a whole and focusing on food-specific scenes.

The analysis of the movies in their entirety allowed me to recognize five recurrent narrative arcs that outline five different models of masculinity. The formulaic nature of many Hollywood blockbuster scripts can explain the presence of characters that tend to repeat themselves across very diverse productions and storylines. The narrative arcs, which I defined as “interpretive types,” suggest that each template of manhood present specific traits regarding the development of the male characters, their relations with other men and with women, their social performances, their values and, of course, their connections with food. The most frequent narrative arc proved to be the “involuntary hero,” where the protagonist is forced to act heroically against his will, discovering himself as an individual and as a male in the process. The sensitive undertones in the protagonists in this narrative arc often express themselves through an ambivalent

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relationship with food, which assure emotional nurturing but can also be used to deceive. The other interpretive types I identified were the “romantic lover,” the “danger fighter,” the “hardcore warrior” and, the least frequent, the “irreducible gambler,” each with its narrative specificities.

The data deriving from the specific examination of food-related scenes suggest the constant presence of food in the sample movies. As discussed in chapter 6, this phenomenon can be explained by the need for scriptwriters and filmmakers to introduce elements of realism in the movie plots, which can help viewers understand the characters’ time period, place, and social background, especially in movies that propose unrealistic characters accomplishing deeds very much out of the ordinary. Food scenes can also be used to provide characters with an opportunity to explore their personal emotional landscape, interact with each other, and in general to push the action forward. It is interesting that food-centered scenes appear also in action movies, where one would least expect them.

Across the five interpretive types and the protagonists’ connection with food and eating, the analysis of the diegetic function of the scenes within the wider economy of the plots suggest that most food-specific occurrences in the movie sample play a narrative or descriptive role in the story line, with very few occurrences as key nodal scenes. This distribution supports the hypothesis that food-related interactions, due to their secondary relevance, are perceived as natural and ordinary, thus becoming virtually undetectable to the viewers, as not only the two focus groups but also the discussion with food studies experts in the Feast and Famine seminar at New York University confirmed. This invisibility allows actors, scriptwriters, and filmmakers to display various cultural elements referring to masculinity that in more relevant or spectacular parts of the movies would not be expressed so freely. Whatever the reason for the presence of food scenes, their apparent familiarity and neutrality offers an apt environment for the representation of values, attitudes and behaviors that reflect widely accepted models of what a man should be and how he should act.

The analysis of the 151 situational scripts and their frequency in the movie sample also allowed me to indentify recurrent themes that appear to be particularly relevant in the representations of current models of manhood, thus supporting the hypothesis

suggesting the possibility of identifying a limited set of traits culturally sanctioned as masculine.

As illustrated in Chapter 6, most food scenes offer images of strong, determined, and powerful men, ready to assert themselves over other men and over women. The four most frequent situational scripts in the sample are in fact “Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans,” “Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman,” “Man/boys drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work,” and “Men/boys toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community”.

The physical appearance of the main characters (usually a normal or an athletic body) reinforced their role as fighters and often as winners. Most movies in the sample featured white protagonists, while characters of other races and ethnicities are often pushed to the sides of the action, or used almost as props. White, adult, middle or working class traits are thus equated with mainstream, acceptable, and preferable masculinities.

The data also suggest that the frequent scenes describing sharing, commensality, and various kinds of celebrations, underline the social significance of food and its function as a cultural marker to identify groups and to exclude outsiders. However, the emotional and more intimate values connected to food and ingestion are not completely erased, revealing aspects of masculinity that are less associated to power and social performance but still relevant for the males’ personal lives. It is also intriguing that many scenes refer to the men’s fear of being ingested, showing deeply ingrained insecurities in otherwise apparently solid masculinities. In sum, food-specific occurrences involving men in the movie sample on one side reinforce well-established models of masculinity, while on the other hand they reveal aspects of fragility and anxiety that would not be traceable in other kinds of scenes, especially in action movies.

The absence of scenes featuring only women around food, without the presence of men, confirms both the relational nature of gender roles and identity – since men seem to frequently need women around them to affirm their masculinity, and the role of food as a tool for control and negotiation among genders. Many food-specific occurrences reveal



issues of oppression, where privileged groups are able to engage in acts that define others as not privileged, all while staying free of the stigma.

#### **IV. RESEARCH DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

The present study suggests several possibilities for future research. From the methodological point of view, it would be rewarding to delve into innovative applications of content analysis to different kinds of communication and media, besides verbal texts and still images, which seem to constitute the bulk of the existing literature. One could hypothetically explore the option of using the methodology on sounds, music, and soundtracks; on dishes and meals; on perfume and cologne fragrances; on dance and live performance; or even to hyperlinks in the Internet. This would require of course that the methodology be adapted to the different media, each time establishing new theoretical tools and applicative procedures, if necessary. The expansion to other media could also stimulate innovative forms of integration among the quantitative and the qualitative aspects of the methodology, an ongoing process that the present study indicates as paramount for a more dynamic use of content analysis.

I also hope this study has drawn attention to the need for further exploration of the complex relationship between food and masculinity in terms of identity development, social and cultural negotiations, practices, attitudes, and values. Since both masculinity and food studies have both begun developing as autonomous fields of research only recently, the topic is still largely unexplored despite its potential from the theoretical and empirical points of view.

Turning to media and communication studies, it would be the task of future research to ascertain how the models of masculinity fabricated by the Hollywood film industry and made available worldwide through capillary distribution and marketing, interact with the actual experiences of men around the globe, both as individuals and in larger social groups. The identification of the main recurring themes constitutes a starting point to subsequently investigate their utilization outside their original environment. The study of audiences worldwide and of the reception of mainstream Hollywood productions could be carried out through interviews, participant observations, surveys, and local

media analysis. It is an ambitious program, but clearly an important one not only for media and communication studies, but also for social sciences in general.

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**APPENDIX A**

**RESEARCH LOG**

June 17 2008: First dissertation proposal and outline sent to Prof. Bellows and Prof. Lindenfeld

June 25: Received observations from Prof. Bellows about dissertation

June 29: Meeting with Prof. Bellows to discuss the observations to the proposal

June 30: Meeting with Dr. Rothfuss about administrative and publication procedures

July 6: Second proposal sent to Prof. Bellows and Prof. Lindenfeld. The focus of the dissertation shifts to blockbuster movies between 1990 and 2007.

July 7: Received observations from Prof. Bellows and Dr. Rothfuss. The main problem with the second proposal is that I propose categories that I have determined before watching the movies, based on what I expect will be the results and the main themes. The methodology is circular and solipsist. I turn the project around. I decide I need to actually examine all the movies in the main sample, even if I have seen recently. To do that, I have to limit the sample to a manageable size. I decide to look at movies that have grossed more than 200 million dollars outside the US between 1990 and 2007. The result is a list of around 95 absolute global blockbusters.

I devise a new methodology: I will watch each movie, taking textual notes while watching it, and in the meanwhile I will develop a spreadsheet where for each movie I will identify certain general plot and visual characters and certain recurring narrative elements.

I decide to test the feasibility of this system. I watch 4 movies, which I choose within the sample because I have them at home and they are quite different. I watch The Last Samurai, Troy, Gangs of New York (which is not part of the sample, to check the validity of the method), and Harry Potter and the Sorcerer Stone (first installments of the series), in this order.

I add situational units each time there is a scene that cannot fall under one of the ones that I have previously defined. In the end I have the following:

Boy/man drinks self-destructively alone

Men offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation or to get close to others

Men discuss business or negotiate around food/drink

Boys/men drink self-destructively in public establishment

Boys/men serve food

Boys/men secretly observe others eat

Men/boys ask a woman for food or drink

Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman

Men/boys are refused food by a woman

Boys/men toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community

Men refuse or destroy alcohol to promote or to show reform

Boys/men eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect

Boys/men drink/eat unusual quantity or unusual substances to show power

Men/boys eat alone in front of a woman

Men produce food  
 Men transform food for consumption  
 Men discuss business or negotiate around food  
 Man/boy consumes food alone to show independence  
 Man/boy refuse to participate in food sharing to negate friendship/respect  
 Men equate food to flesh. Food used as metaphor of power/control  
 Boy/man gallant tries to help woman in preparation or carrying food  
 Man/boy is present during situation of preparation of food to get close to woman  
 Man/boy uses offering of food to get close to woman  
 Man/boy uses situation of communal consumption of food to get close to woman (not seen yet)  
 Men/boys throw food as a sign of protest  
 Boy/man forced to prepare meal  
 Boy/man threatens to be left without meal  
 Boy/man serves food  
 Boy/man desires celebratory special food  
 Boy/man receives celebratory special food  
 Boy/man prepares celebratory special food (celebratory)  
 Boy/man steals food  
 Boy/man secretly eats food  
 Boy/man punished for stealing food  
 Boy/man can't afford food he wants  
 Boy/man offers a friend food the friend wants or needs  
 Boys/men discuss foods they like  
 Boys/men brought into new community by eating unfamiliar food  
 Boys/men marvel and enjoy abundance of food  
 Already with 4 movies certain descriptors recur in more than one movie.

July 8: send email to Prof Bellows with my new ideas, a file with the textual notes about the movies I've seen and the spreadsheet. We talk over the phone and she agrees on the general organization and the new methodology. She points out that I might need key informants interviews and focus groups. She recommends I keep a log on the development of the research. I start the log also covering all the developments starting on June 17.

Sent the third version of the proposal (proposal 3.0) to Prof. Bellows.

Watched Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

New situational units

Boys/men use food as symbol of generosity to make another feel guilty

Men offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation

Boys/men use food to blackmail others

Men/boys pour or drop food on a woman

Boys/men brought into new community by eating unfamiliar food ADDED or in strange environment

Boys/man eats meal when he gets back from work or activity

Men/boys use meal to share news or information or make plans (also good for the previous Potter)



Men/boys drugged or poisoned with food  
Men/boys stuff their face out of greed  
Boy/man receives special food (celebratory) ADDED or sign of welcome  
Boy/man prepares special food (celebratory) ADDED or sign of welcome  
Boys/men gets consolation or physical healing from food  
Boy/man desire food or meal out of hunger or need (added because I remembered the hungry soldiers in Gangs of New York)  
Changed: Boy/man can't afford food he wants/need INTO wants for whim (not hunger)  
Added drink to eating when sharing news or making plans.  
Changed. Boys/men offer a friend food he wants or needs INTO offer ANOTHER food

July 9: Traveling to Strasbourg, changing planes etc. I think my movie analysis should contain more information, which eventually should offer the possibility to analyze them from different points of view.

Under each narrative unit, I will not only mark its occurrence, but I will also provide the following information:

1. Scene role in the wider economy of the wider plot.

I: introduction of a new character; D: description characters already there; K: key narrative node, something important for the development of the plot happens; N: food used as a narrative tool to move the plot along, or to describe a situation, a place, or a point in time.

2. Race Ethnicity: Wh: White; Me: Middle Eastern; Bl: Black; As: Asian; Hs: Hispanic; Na: Native American

3. Social position, I will indicate it within the movie's fictional world, so the definition is purely relational to describe the position of characters in relation to each other. L: lower class, unemployed, thieves etc; W: Working class, manual jobs (including soldiers and artisans); M: Middle class, clerical jobs, shop owners, middle management, middle chain of command in army; U: Upper crusts, nobles, owners, top managers, upper echelons of command in army

4. Age. The definition is purely relational to describe the position of characters in relation to each other. C: child; T: teenager; Y: youth; A: adult; O: old

I will review the movies already analyzed to add this information

July 12: Viewing of Independence Day on the way back from Strasbourg

New situational units:

Boy/man eat his meal to start the day or before starting an activity

Boy/man prepares normal/daily meal as expression of care

Boy/man drink or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work

July 13: Review the spreadsheet for the movies already seen.

Viewing of Forrest Gump

New situational units:

Boys/men use food as a metaphor of life or an aspect of it

Men/boys talk about food production

Viewing of Men in Black

New situational units:

Men/boys complain about food

Men/boys use food to damage/demoralize/control woman

Men/boys afraid of getting poisoned with food

Men/boys poisoned or drugged or KILLED with food OR AROUND FOOD

Men/boys unable to eat because of emotional sorrow

July 14: Viewing of Seven

New situational units:

Men/boys unable to eat because emotional sorrow. Added: OR DISGUST

Men/boys compliment woman on food she makes or serves.

July 16: Viewing of Spiderman

New Situational units

Men/boys being served food by a woman

Men/boys humiliated by being thrown food at or by being thrown on food

July 17: Viewing of I Am Legend

New Situational units:

Boys/men try to convince another to eat

Men/boys worry that a loved one gets enough food for health or wellbeing

Men/boys look for food or try to gather food

August 4: Decide to call situational units “situational scripts”

Viewing of Transformers

New situational scripts

Men/boys made fun at because of the food they like

Men/boys drop food out of surprise or fear

August 5: Viewing of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

New situational scripts:

Filmmaker uses food image as a metaphor about life or an aspect of it

Boys/men asked or ordered to stop eating

Men/boys refuse food that is offered and that they can't afford out of pride

Man/boys drink secretly to hide their alcohol consumption

August 6: Viewing of The Golden Compass

New Situation scripts:

Men/boys add poison to food or drink to get rid of an enemy

Food or drink are forcibly taken out of the hands of man/boys

August 7: Viewing of Gladiator

New situational scripts:

Men/boys are eaten “OR IN DANGER TO BE EATEN”

Man/boys discuss “OR REMINISCE” food they like

Men/boys pretend to be poisoned by food

August 8: Viewing of Die Another Day

New Situational Scripts:

Man/boy uses offering of food “OR DRINK” to get close to woman

Men/boys drink to pass time and relax in public establishment

Change

Boys/men ask for food or drink as a break or a snack

August 9: Viewing of Titanic

New Situational Scripts:

Food used as a metaphor to make fun of boys/men

Boys/men order food or ask another to go get or buy food

Men/boys embarrassed or humiliated by their lack of familiarity with food or meal

August 12: Viewing of Pirates of the Caribbean - The Curse of the Black Pearl

New situational scripts:

Men/boys upset because food/drink has been taken away from them

Change/ Men/boys drop food OR SPIT DRINK out of surprise or fear

Chance: boys/men TOAST OR eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect or community

Change: Men/boys use food to THREATEN, damage, demoralize, MAKE FUN or control woman

Change/ men/boys throw food as a sign of protest OR DISAGREEMENT

Change/ Food or drink are forcibly taken out of the hands of OR TAKEN AWAY FROM men/boys

August 15: Viewing of Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man’s Chest

New Situational Scripts

Men/boys run out or cannot get the food they want

Change: Boys/men show disgust or disparage another man's food or meal

Men/boys throw food as a sign of protest or disagreement OR IN A BRAWL

August 16: Viewing of Pirates of the Caribbean: at World’s End

New Situational Scripts:

Men/Boys sell food

Change

Boys/men desire DRINK, food or meal out of hunger or need

Men/boys stuff their face OR DRINK MUCH out of greed

August 17: Viewing of Pearl Harbor

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys prepare food as a job

Change

Boys/men use food OR DRINK to blackmail, OFFEND or damage others

Viewing of the Day after Tomorrow.

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys eat out of fear or nervousness

Change:

Boys/men get consolation or physical healing OR SATIETY from food

Boy/man offers another OR PET food the other wants or needs

August 18: Viewing of Mission Impossible

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men toast or eat/drink alone to celebrate their own achievements or victories

August 19: Viewing of Mission Impossible 2

August 20: Viewing of Mission Impossible 3

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys drink or toast with a woman to celebrate

Change:

Boy/man prepares meal OR DRINK as expression of caring

Boys/men buy food

Men/boys get food or drink spilled or poured on them by a woman

August 21: Viewing of The Mummy

August 23: Viewing of Charlie and the Chocolate factory

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys refuse to eat

Boys/men share food with others out of love or affection

Men/boys step on food showing carelessness or disregard

Boys/men eat food they do not like to show respect or not offend who gave it

Boys/men forbid another to eat

Boys/men taste food paying attention to flavors (also taking notes)

Men/boys carry food

Boys/men eat and/or savor food or drink they like

Men/boys want to eat themselves

Change

Boy/man steals food OR RECIPE

Boys/men show disgust or disparage another man's food or meal OR WAY OF EATING

Man/boy consumes food alone to show independence OR SUPERIORITY

Men/boys humiliated by being thrown food at or by being thrown OR FALLING IN/ON food

Men/boys made fun at because of the food they like OR HOW THEY EAT

August 25: Viewing of King Kong

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men are give food out of charity

Boys/men eat off the garbage out of need  
Men/boys play with food out of fun or for comedy  
Boys/men drink alone in front of others  
Change  
Men/boys DRINK OR eat out of fear or nervousness

August 26: Viewing of The Sixth Sense  
New Situational Scripts:  
Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal  
Men/boys are promised food by a woman as a consolation or comfort  
Men/boys sit in a restaurant without eating  
Men/boys reminisce about throwing up food  
Boys/men share food with others as a sign of mourning  
Change  
Men/boys are served OR GIVEN food by a woman

August 28: Viewing of Terminator 2  
Change  
Boys/men DRINK OR eat meal when he gets back from work or activity

August 29: Viewing of Terminator 3

August 30, 2008: Viewing of Saving Private Ryan  
Change  
Men/boys drop food or spit drink OR THROW UP out of surprise or fear  
Men/boys run out or cannot get the food/DRINK they want  
New Situational Scripts:  
Men/boys use meal/drinking to share memories

September 1: Viewing of The Chronicles of Narnia  
Introduction of x for a male character whose race/ethnicity is not definable, since it's a faun.  
New Situational Scripts:  
Boys/men ask for food as a reward for a service or work  
Change  
Men/boys run out OR ARE DENIED or cannot get the food/drink they want  
Boys/men are given food out of charity OR TO AVOID THEIR STARVATION  
Boy/man gives or offers another or pet food the other wants or needs  
Boys/men eat and/or savor food or drink they like OR NEED

September 2: Viewing of Armageddon  
New Situational Scripts:  
Men/boys are scolded or yelled at for being late for a meal  
Men/boys criticized for their diet from the health point of view.

September 4: Viewing of Ocean's Eleven.

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men worry that others might drink or eat too much for their own good

September 5: Viewing of Night at the Museum

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys invite woman to dinner or to a drink

September 6: Viewing of Spider-man 2

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men use food to scare others

Men/boys wants to drink to forget their sorrow or problems

Men/boys argue or disagree with a woman about the cost of food she wants to buy or offer

September 7: Viewing of Spider-man 3

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men ask for food as a break or a snack

Boys/men eat a snack or drink something just to kill time and relax

Men/boys cook together with a woman

Men/boys asked by a woman if they like the food she serves or prepares

September 9: Viewing of the Matrix

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys are jealous a woman serves or prepares food or drink for another

Men/boys accept food or drink offered by others as sign or friendship or trust

Men/boys unable to eat or drink because the stuff is too strong

Men/boys make others feel disgust for what they are eating

Change

Men offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation OR TO GET CLOSE TO OTHERS

September 10: Viewing of the Matrix Reloaded

Change

Boys/men get consolation or physical healing or satiety from food OR DRINK

Boys/men taste food OR DRINK paying attention to flavors (EVEN taking notes)

September 16: Viewing of the Matrix Revolutions

September 18: Viewing of the Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men look for food to offer or give to guests or others

Boys/men forced to wash dishes after a meal

Boys/men prepare or get or wrap food for travel

September 23: Viewing of Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys give or sell to others poisonous or toxic food or drink

Men/boys find food

September 26, 2008: Viewing of Jurassic Park

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men ask others to pay for their food

Men/boys made fun at by a woman about their fear of being eaten.

Men/boys share food or meal with a woman

September 28: Viewing of Jurassic Park: The Lost World

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys serve food to a woman

Boys/men thank for food they are offered

September 29-30

Email exchange with Allen Weiss

October 2, 2008: Viewing of the Da Vinci Code

Change

Boys/men discuss or reminisce OR ASK ABOUT foods they like

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys criticize or make fun of other men's food or the way they cook

October 3: Viewing of War of the Worlds

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boy scolded by a woman for being out of food

Men/boys are unable to identify a food

Boys/men order others to prepare or get or wrap food for travel

Change

Boy/man eat meal OR DRINK to start his day or before starting an activity

Men/boys drop food STOP EATING or spit drink or throw up out of surprise or fear

October 6: Viewing of the Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

Change

Boys/men want OR ASK FOR drink, food or meal out of hunger or need

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men discuss about the right way to cook or serve food/drink

October 7: Viewing of Lord of the Ring: The Return of the King

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys eat disgusting food out of hunger

Change

Boys/men share food OR DRINK with others as a sign of mourning

October 9: Viewing of The Bodyguard

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys made fun at by a woman about what they eat or drink

Men/boys accept invitation from a woman to eat or drink

Men/boys are offered food or drink by a woman so that she can get close to them

Men/boys are threatened to get food thrown on them by a woman

Men/boys destroy a kitchen in a brawl or fight

Change

Men/boys unable to eat because of EMBARRASSEMENT OR emotional sorrow or disgust

October 17: Viewing of Star Wars I: The Phantom Menace

Viewing of Star Wars II: Attack of the Clones

Viewing of Star Wars III: Revenge of the Sith

October 18: Viewing of Casino Royale

New Situational Scripts:

Boys/men drink something strong to calm down and stop physical pain

October 20: Viewing of Twister

Change

Boy/man serves food or drink

October 23: Viewing of Die Hard with a Vengeance

Change

Men/boys are served or given food OR DRINK by a woman

October 27: Viewing of Ghost

October 28: Viewing of Pretty Woman

New Situational Scripts:

Men/boys explain food or drink to a woman

Men/boys decline invitation from a woman to eat or drink

Men/boys help a woman get familiar with food or foodway

Boys/men set the table for the meal

Men/boys tell a woman they will order food for her

Men/boys make fun of their being unfamiliar with food to make a woman feel comfortable

Men/boys catch food that is falling

Men/boys stop others from making fun of a woman unfamiliar with food

Change

Men/boys sit in a restaurant OR AT A MEAL TABLE without eating

Men/boys invite woman to dinner to celebrate something or business

October 29 – November 10, 2008

Revision of the occurrences of food scenes and of the synopsis of all movies.



Added filmmakers, scriptwriters and date of release.

November 10: Closed introductory chapter on men and masculinities

November 16

First analysis of the scene occurrences. Individuation of the most frequent ones

November 17

Review of the units in order to collapse the ones that are similar to each other. Decide to keep separated similar units if in one a woman is involved.

Boys/men discuss about the right way to cook or serve food/drink (CD) COLLAPSED INTO boys/men discuss or reminisce or ask about foods they like (CC)

Men/boys drink to pass time and relax in public establishment (CU) COLLAPSED INTO boys/men eat or drink something just to kill time or relax (AF)

Boys/men prepare or get or wrap food for travel (W) COLLAPSED INTO boys/men prepare meal or drink T

Men/boys drink self-destructively in public establishment (AH) COLLAPSES into boy/man drink self destructively alone (AC) and BECOME men/boys drink self destructively

Boys/men ask for food or drink as a break or a snack (CV) COLLAPSED INTO

Boys/men want or ask for drink, food or meal out of hunger or need (AD) + eliminate “out of hunger or need”

Man/boy refuse to participate in food sharing to negate friendship/respect/community (DG) COLLAPSED INTO Man/boys consume food alone to affirm independence or superiority (DE)

Boys/men are offered food or drink by a woman so that she can get close to them (FB) COLLAPSED INTO Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink (EL)

Boys/men look for food to offer or give to guests or others (CJ) COLLAPSED INTO Men/boys look for food (M) + eliminate “or try to gather food”

Men/boys criticize or make fun of other men’s food or the way they cook (BC)

COLLAPSED INTO Boys/men use food to blackmail, offend, criticize (ADDED) or damage others (AV)

Men/boys give or sell others poisonous or toxic food or drink (BG) COLLAPSED INTO

Men/boys add poison to food or drink to get rid of an enemy (BF) + eliminate “to get rid of an enemy”

Boys/men eat off the garbage out of need (CP) COLLAPSED INTO men/boys eat disgusting food out of hunger (BP)

November 11 – December 8

I wrote commentaries on each movie, pointing out how masculinity is represented and dealt with in each of them.

December 17-18

Email Exchange with Alice Julier

December 21

I have added the movie general categories and the body image categories in the spreadsheet. I have decided to create a second level of coding categories based on wider description, such as food production, food preparation and service, food consumption, food sharing. I will create the categories necessary to cover all the first level coding categories that are left after the collapsing of similar categories into one.

February 6, 2009

New York University, Feast and Famine Seminary

February 12, 2009

Meeting with Key Informant Dana Pollan

March 27-April 4, 2009

Email Exchanges with Key Informant Janet Chrzan

June 3-9, 2009

Email exchanges with Key Informant Barbara Katz Rothman



**APPENDIX B**

**MOVIES' COMMENTARIES,  
SYNOPSSES  
AND  
FOOD-RELATED OCCURRENCES**

The order in which the movies are commented in this appendix mirrors the order in which they were watched and examined and which depended on what movies were available at the moment, without any specific chronological or logical order, with the exceptions of the series, which I watched one after the other in the correct order. This choice was dictated by logistical and practical reasons, but also by the consideration of the whole sample as one text, as explained in the introduction.

Before giving the complete synopsis for each movie, indicated each food-related occurrence in it, it is useful to also provide the storyline, together with some commentary focused on issues of food and masculinity. It is often a qualitative commentary about the general plot of each movie and its characters, with particular attention to the functions food plays in it. These commentaries highlight elements that were necessarily excluded from the quantitative analysis, such as character development, script, and visual elements that present connections between masculinity and food (mise-en-scene, mise-en-shot, settings, costumes, body images and body language).

## **THE LAST SAMURAI**

Director: Edward Zwick

Writers: John Logan

Release Date: 5 December 2003 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

The movie, as the title suggests, is the story of an American soldier, burned out by his participation in the Indian wars of the mid nineteenth century, who is hired to train the new modern troops of the emperor of Japan and who ends up instead sharing the life and the destiny of the samurais that did not accept the process of modernization. A theme is the tension between innovation and tradition, which overlaps with the more relevant dichotomy between honor at all costs and realism even at the price of compromise.

“I say, Japan was made by a handful of brave men, warriors willing to give their lives for what seems to have become a forgotten word: honor”. Tom Cruise remembers in the conversation with the filmmaker included in the DVD that the first time they met, Edward Zwick already pointed out honor, loyalty, integrity and compassion as the main themes. Zwick states: “We both have sons, and this movies is about those things we hope to teach to our sons.”

The main theme of the movie is clearly honor. Captain Nathan Algren (Tom Cruise) refuses to be the champion in white civilization against barbarism, even when at the beginning of the movie we see him half drunk on stage as a spokesman for guns.

Food appears mainly in two situations. The first is a dinner where Algren is invited to meet the potential Japanese employers. The Japanese are dressed formally in western clothes, and are comfortable around the western style table. Algren comes across as a man that has no patience for falsity or artificiality, unable to adapt to the elegant surrounding of an upscale restaurant and to the formal company that despite its refinement is negotiating trade and violence among armies and among men.

During the movie, we see Algren fighting against his own attitude of condescendence and infantilization of the new foreign culture he is introduced to: he refuses to play along the morbid curiosity of Graham - the imperialist anthropologist that is surprised that samurai keep to themselves and resist his attempts to understand them - to know more about the scalping and supposed cannibalistic customs of the Native Americans.

Once he is taken prisoner by the samurai, Algren tries to reaffirm his wounded masculinity through drinking, even to the point of self-destruction. His attitude changes when he realizes that the woman who has been taking care of him is the wife of a man he has killed in battle. His introduction to Japanese culture happens at first through food. In the scene of his first time when Algren eats to the family table, filmmaker Zwick notices that “the woman’s proximity while she leans in to serve the dishes makes him even more desperately uncomfortable. Having been invited generously, he feels even more alienated”. Slowly, sharing food with the family and learning Japanese words around the table become the occasions for his introduction to a culture he is increasingly more attracted to.

“They are devoted to the perfection of what they pursue”, says Algren, and we see a warrior performing a tea ceremony. “I have never seen such discipline”. The American

prisoner slowly learns to recognize the spirit of the samurai culture, embracing a discourse similar to the mythopoetic approach of the 1980s where men tried to rediscover their masculinity in spirituality and discipline, revealing a fascination for Asian religion and philosophy that is in many ways very new Age and very Californian. Algren becomes the symbol of the crisis of traditional and righteous masculinity when faced with modernity. However, his introduction to the world of heroism and honor happens to through the feminine and domestic sphere of the kitchen and of food consumption.

In the production of food, the workers seem quite gender-free: they all wear the same clothes, and the same hats that hide their faces during the work. The space of heroic masculinity is not the one of food production, but that of war. The only artisans that are always filmed with their faces visible are the sword-makers. In the way the field workers are represented, we detect traces of what theorist Revathi Krishnaswamy refers to as “effeminism”, as the ideological and systematic attempt by the colonial powers to frame their male subject as effeminate and ineffective when compared to the white men, and as a consequence similar to women in their supposed frailty, weakness, and physical softness (Krishnaswamy 1996). At the same time, the Western character needs the Orient and the sphere of domesticity to find himself. As Edward Said noticed in *Orientalism*, “the Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences. The Orient has helped as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” (Said 1979: 1)

### **Synopsis**

After a few shots of Japanese landscape, while a voice reflects about the value of honor, the camera cuts to Captain Nathan Algren (Tom Cruise), drinking and slouching on a chair (IwhMA). Although he wears a uniform, the symbol of heroic military masculinity, he is clearly washed out. We are told we are in San Francisco on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1876. On a stage, a man is describing him as a true American hero, survivor of Gettysburg, last man of the 7th cavalry that campaigned against the most savage of the Indian nations. Nathan now works for the Winchester Company, making shooting demonstrations because he is an expert of firearms. But when he gets on stage, instead of entertaining the audience, he starts describing the reality of the bloody battles.

Nathan is invited to dinner (KwhUA) by a military officer under whom he served, Colonel Bagley (Tony Goldwyn), who wants to convince him to work for Japan, in order to train its new army in the use of rifles. In exchange, the Japanese emperor would grant the US exclusive rights to supply arms. The meeting takes place in an elegant restaurant, decorated with red damask curtains, around a refined table where both the officer and the Japanese emissary, Omura (Masato Harada), are dressed up. (KIwhasMUA) Waiters serve dainty dishes of what seems salad and cheese (DwhWA). The guests sit down formally around the table, and Nathan immediately orders whiskey (KwhMA). When Nathan haggles for the price, the Japanese talk among themselves in their language saying that they are in a “land of cheap traders”. Nathan orders more whiskey (KwhMA). Nathan gets drunk and laughs at the attempt of the officer to make him look valuable, by talking about his role in the battles against the Cheyenne, whose customs he had studied. He gets up, bangs the empty glass on the table, and excuses himself to go to the toilet. Nathan clearly does not like Bagley for massacring the Native Americans he had learnt to appreciate.

Camera cuts on Nathan in a boat on his way to Japan, finding comfort in the

emptiness of the sea: “No past, no future.” He knows he is been hired to defeat another rebel tribal leader, just like it happened with the Cheyennes. When he gets to Yokohama, his first contact with Japan is the hustle and bustle of the port, with men carrying food and trying to sell it (NasWA). Nathan meets the translator, Mr. Simon Graham, a pudgy British man, a former member of a trade mission.

During the training of the Japanese conscripts, described to him as “mostly peasants who have not even seen a weapon”, Nathan gets to know that Katsumoto (Ken Watanabe), a rebel samurai, does not accept the modernization that has been imposed on the country and does not want to dishonor himself by using firearms. Graham is intrigued by Nathan’s knowledge of Blackfoot language and he asks him to translate the sentence “cut his tongue and boil it in oil”, clearly fascinated by the supposed cannibalistic nature of the savages (NwhUA).

Nathan tries to train the Japanese army, but with little success. During his first battle against the Samurais, Nathan is encircled and fights with courage, killing many, until he is wounded and faints; however, Katsumoto decides to spare him. Nathan is brought to the countryside, where the peasants show great respect for the samurai. We see a woman sowing his wound: it is Kastumoto’s sister, Taka (Koyuki), the wife of one of the warriors Nathan has killed in battle. Katsumoto has spared him to learn about his enemies.

While he is recovering, Nathan observes the family eating (NwhMA) from his room. In his fever, Nathan asks for sake (NwhMA). The woman gives it to him (NwhMA), while Katsumoto’s son looks amused. The woman uses the small sake glasses, but Nathan grabs the whole bottle and tries to drink directly from it, almost suffocating himself (KwhMA). The woman refuses to give him more to drink (KwhMA), stopping him from falling into a stupor. Nathan has to face his nightmares; Taka hears him scream in his sleep, and understands he is a tormented soul.

Finally Nathan is able to get up and he walks around in the village, always followed by an old warrior with a sword. He observes the daily life, and the warriors training with swords and arches. Then he walks among the farmers toiling in the fields. (DasWA) He makes fun of the old warriors telling them: “you are angry because they make you wear a dress”. The confrontation is about masculinity.

When he understands who Taka is, Nathan becomes more respectful of her. The first time he eats at the family table, Taka’s smaller child makes fun of him, while Taka complains he smells like a pig. Nathan, still feeling like an outsider, does not eat but only takes a sip from a bowl (DwhMA).

It is only after a few days that we see him sitting at the table eating with the family (NwhMAasMC), and asking for more rice in Japanese. The kids have fun teaching him words around the table, how to say bowl, chopsticks etc, and then he learns their names. (KwhWA)

One day, when he tries to help Taka bringing a basket heavy with rice, she tells him that Japanese men do not help with that. “I am not Japanese” he says, taking the basket. (NwhMA) While she is cooking a soup, he kneels down with her and asks forgiveness for killing her husband. (KwhMA) She accepts his apology, since they were both doing what they were supposed to do.

After an attack on his village, Katsumoto decides to go to Yokohama: he brings Nathan back and sets him free. When Nathan first meets Bagley, he refuses to accept a



drink (NwhMA); the commander cannot but observe his change.

Eventually Nathan decides to fight with Katsumoto, wearing Taka's husband's samurai armor. Katsumoto dies in battle but Nathan survives and brings Katsumoto's sword to the emperor right when Omura and the US ambassador are signing the treaty. The emperor kneels down to get the sword, understanding that Japanese can be modern, but do not need to forget who they are and where they come from, so he decides not to sign the treaty. Omura is disgraced. Nathan goes back to the village, where Taka, working in the nearby fields with other villagers (DasWA), welcomes him.

## **TROY**

Director: Wolfgang Petersen

Writers: David Benioff

Release Date: 14 May 2004 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros Pictures

### **Commentary**

The movie is based on Homer's Iliad. From the first images, which show the viewer a map - a symbol of land to be conquered and controlled - war is framed as an imperialist project. Troy is described as the Other against the national project of Greece, embracing an anachronism that makes the narrative more accessible to contemporary viewers. While we look at the map, we hear a voice: "Men are haunted by the vastness of eternity, and so we ask ourselves: will our actions echo across the centuries? Will strangers hear our names long after we are gone and wonder who we were, how bravely we fought, how fiercely we loved?" The themes of the movie are set: heroism, intensity of feelings - including love, and the role of the hero in history, interpreted as a performance of masculinity for those who will come after.

The first scene where food is conspicuously involved is the banquet where Greek and Trojan warriors celebrate their peace: the food is excessive, consumed with boisterous energy by the men. Women are there to be consumed by the warriors to reaffirm their power and, not so symbolically, their potency. Wine is poured on the floor, wasted, as a sign of dedication to the gods, but more visibly as a demonstration of richness and abundance.

During the movie, food maintains its function as an instrument for the expression of unbridled masculinity. Among the Greek warriors, Achilles represents pure strength, the hero that cannot be controlled by politics; he is also the only warrior that we see eat and drink during the siege, as an expression of his physicality and his lack of control over his passions and instincts. In the Iliad, Achilles actually wishes he could unleash his rage to the point he could eat his enemies (Buchan 2001). He is also the only warrior that we actually see naked in bed with women. Cruel and generous, he wants to share food with his female prisoner, who is taken aback and does not eat. "Why did you choose this life?" asks the prisoner. "I didn't choose anything. I was born, and that's what I am."

In many scenes we can admire the perfection of the muscular bodies of both Greeks and Trojans, generously shown through wraps, clothes, and even armors, as represented in classic tradition and similar to statues. They have built bodies, which express the warriors' discipline and their control over desires, hunger, and matter in general (Richard Dyer 1997). However, the only warrior we actually see naked is Achilles, who is also the

one that has less control over his desires, revealing a contradiction among the athletic, sculpted, controlled body and his anger.

### **Synopsis**

In Sparta, a lavish banquet is being offered in the palace of King Menelaus (Brendan Gleeson) to honor the Trojans that are leaving after an official visit. We see Spartan warriors holding goblets and sitting around a table with dishes full of meat, enjoying the abundance of food (NwhUA). We see a pig on a spit roasting. The warriors are noisy, banging their goblets on the table. The only woman sitting at the table is Helen (Diane Kruger), Menelaus's wife, who is clearly taken by Paris (Orlando Bloom), son of the Trojan King Priam (Peter O'Toole). They make a toast for future peace (DnwhUA). Menelaus and Paris's brother Hector (Eric Bana) pour some wine of the floor "for the gods", waste as a sign of abundance and power (IwhUA). Paris, possessed by his desire, sleeps with Helen and the day after he brings her to Troy. It is the beginning of the war.

Achilles (Brad Pitt) is convinced by Odysseus (Sean Bean) to join the Greeks to ensure his fame and glory for the future. The Greeks land on the beaches in front of Troy and begin their attacks.

Achilles gets interested in Briseis (Rose Byrne), cousin of Paris, priestess of Apollo, a prisoner. Achilles refuses to fight for Agamemnon (Brian Cox), who has taken Briseis from him out of spite. When his friend Patroclus (Garrett Hedlund) goes to his tent to convince him to go and fight, he tells him that he does not care about Agamemnon's battles. While he talks he keeps on eating and drinking alone, to show his independence (DwhUA).

After he takes Briseis back from the Greek soldiers, Achilles offers her a washcloth and some food. (KwhUA) She refuses, so he starts eating alone (KwhUA). Eventually she accepts his food and eats. But during the night he wakes up with her holding a knife to his throat. They end up having sex.

Achilles only decides to join the battle after a night attack from the Trojans when many men die and boats are burnt and Patroclus is killed by Hector while pretending to be Achilles, wearing his armor and weapons to encourage the Greeks. Achilles is mad with rage and kills Hector, ties his corpse to his chariot, rides around the walls and then brings him to the Greek camp. Priam goes into the Greek camp in disguise at night and asks Achilles to get his son's body back.

Eventually Odysseus manages to build a huge horse inside which he hides himself with some Greek warriors. When the Trojans bring the horse inside the city, thinking it is a token of good will from the Greeks, Odysseus and his men start the destruction of the city in the middle of the night. Achilles is killed during the battle.

### **HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE**

Director: Chris Columbus

Writers: J.K. Rowling (novel), Steve Kloves (screenplay)

Release Date: 4 November 2001 (UK)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

The movie tells the story of Harry Potter, a young boy who discovers that he is a wizard and is introduced to a secret and fantastic world where he finds opportunities to

grow up as a man and as an adult. In the first episode of the series, he meets his friends Ron and Hermione, his professors, the castle of Hogwarts, where young wizards are educated, and the first avatar of his Arch-enemy Lord Voldemort, who killed his parents.

In this movie, food plays various roles, as we see the main character, Harry, evolve and find his true self. When he is still the insecure boy in his uncle's house, food is a symbol of exploitation and isolation. Harry is forced to prepare food for the other members of the family, but he is not allowed to share it.

For that reason, food sharing acquires relevance as Harry steps out of his miserable life and discovers his identity as a wizard. When Hagrid, the messenger from Hogwarts, arrives on his 11<sup>th</sup> birthday, he brings him a cake; as ugly as it is, it is the first present that Harry has ever received in his life. He is so happy he does not care that his greedy cousin secretly devours it, only to be punished with a pig's tail.

On the train that takes Harry to Hogwarts, his first encounter with his best friend Ron happens around food. Ron does not have the money to enjoy the sweets he likes, so Harry buys many of them and shares them with him. Harry is introduced into the wizarding world through the discovery of the different foods, the meanings attached to them, the characters that are considered important in the new community. The first night Harry arrives at Hogwarts, the schoolmaster Dumbledore makes tons of food appear out of thin air to celebrate the new arrivals. Food is heaped on large trays of absurd abundance that amazes and reassures the kids, still scared about the new environment and their future. During the movie, eating together is an occasion for the students to cement their sense of community, discuss news, and plan their battles.

### **Synopsis**

Professor Dumbledore (Richard Harris), a powerful wizard, leaves the baby orphan Harry on the doorstep of his relatives, the Dursleys.

Years later, we see Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), a small boy, waking up in a closet under a staircase. His much larger cousin Dudley (Harry Melling) enters the kitchen where his mother, Harry's aunt Petunia (Fiona Shaw), hugs him: it is his birthday. At the same time the aunt tells Harry "Why don't you cook breakfast? And try not to burn anything. I want everything to be perfect for my Dudley's special day". Harry cooks (IwhMC). While aunt Petunia closes Dudley's eyes and takes him towards the presents, Harry starts serving the bacon. (IwhMC) His Uncle Vernon (Richard Griffiths) asks him to bring him coffee (IwhMA), threatening to leave him without food if anything wrong happens on Dudley's birthday (IwhMC).

Mysterious letters arrive for Harry but his uncle destroys them. Harry serves tea and biscuits on a Sunday (NwhMC), while the house is circled by dozens of owls that have brought letters. The letters literally invade the home, so the uncle decides to take them to a remote lighthouse. It is Harry's 11th birthday, and since nobody celebrates him he draws a birthday cake in the dust. (NwhMC) A bearded giant, Hagrid (Robbie Coltrane), arrives breaking the door, and gives Harry a birthday cake he has baked and written on (misspelling) (IwhWA). Hagrid tells Harry he is a wizard, and that his parents have been killed while fighting an evil sorcerer. While his past is revealed to Harry, the cousin takes the cakes (DwhMC) and eats it, thinking that nobody sees him (DwhMC). Hagrid makes a pig tails grow on Dudley (NwhMC).

As a wizard, Harry will be educated in a special school, Hogwarts. Hagrid takes him shopping in Diagon Alley, a secret wizard street in London, to get the stuff he will

need in school, including a magic wand. He takes the train to Hogwartss, when Ron Weasley (Rupert Grint) enters his compartment. A cart arrives with all sorts of yummy-looking things. The seller offers the food to the two boys, but Ron cannot afford it; he has brought some unappetizing-looking stuff from home. (KwhMC) Harry realizes that and buys lots of candy for both to share. (KwhMC) Harry is introduced into the wizarding world through the discovery of the different foods, the meanings attached to them, the characters that are considered important in the new community. (KwhMC2) Harry arrives to Hogwarts, where all the newcomers are brought to the main dining hall to be sorted among the different houses. Dumbledore makes tons of food appear out of thin air to celebrate the new arrivals. Food is heaped on large trays of absurd abundance at which the kids marvel (NwhMC). They get to know each other while eating and they learn stuff about Hogwarts, thus becoming part of the community (NwhMC).

The next big banquet (and next time we get to see the boys and the girls eating) is for Halloween (NwhMC). Once again the students witness absurd abundance, themed for the holiday. (NwhMC) The meal is disrupted by the arrival of a troll. Harry, with his friends Ron and Hermione (Emma Watson), thwarts an attempt by Lord Voldemort, the evil wizard who killed Harry's parents, to come back to power.

At the end of the movie, while Harry is recovering in the school's hospital, he wakes up and has lots of candy from his friends at the foot of his bed, making him happy (NwhMC). Dumbledore talks to him and in the meanwhile he eats some of Harry's candies, showing him friendship by partaking (NwhUAMC).

Last scene is the school year's final banquet. (NwhMC)

## **HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS**

Director: Chris Columbus

Writers: J.K. Rowling (novel), Steve Kloves (screenplay)

Release Date: 3 November 2002 (UK)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

In the second episode of the series, Harry has to fight another incarnation of his arch-nemesis Voldemort, who has set a huge killer monster, the basilisk, free in the school. Food shows a certain ambivalence, used both as an instrument of mischief and deception, and as an affirmation of familiarity and community. For instance, the house elf Dobby uses a levitating cake to blackmail Harry Potter into not going back to Hogwarts, and eventually makes it fall on a guest's head. And Harry himself laces muffins with a sleeping drug, to get rid of his enemy Draco's sidekicks. On the other hand, even Hagrid, the ogre-like friend of Harry's, makes his best to prepare tea when Harry and Ron go to visit him. Furthermore, when Harry arrives for the first time at Ron's house - clearly the first wizard home he has ever visited - sharing food with the family and Ron's mother's fussing about breakfast become signs of a heart-warming and reassuring experience that he has not come across yet.

### **Synopsis**

Cut from Harry in his room to a huge gaudy cake covered in bright colored icing, ready to be offered to the guests (DwhMA). The Dudleys are expecting uncle Vernon's boss and his wife; they are all dressed up and Uncle Vernon warns Harry to keep his owl

quiet. When Harry tried to respond, the uncle blackmails him by reminding him: “You should be more grateful, we have raised you since you were a baby, given you the food off our table, purely out of the goodness of our heart” (DwhMA).

Dobby the house elf appears in Harry’s room and starts making loud noises. Downstairs the uncle is pouring champagne (DwhMA) to the guests sitting around in the living room (NwhUA), who hear the noises. Dobby tries to convince Harry not to go back to Hogwarts, which hides dangers. Dobby enchants the cake to get the promise from Harry that he will not go back (NwhLA). The cake levitates and Dobby makes it fall on the lady’s head (NwhLA) while Harry tries to stop it.

The Dudleys think it is Harry’s fault and they lock him in his room. Ron Weasley and his brothers save him by taking him away on a flying car. They go to their place in the country. It is the first time Harry is in a wizard’s home. Ron’s mother (Julie Walters) serves them breakfast (NwhMC), which makes Harry feels at home (DwhMC). Mr. Weasley (Mark Williams) comes back and eat breakfast with them. (NwhMA) They go to Diagon Alley to buy what they need for school. Lucius Malfoy (Jason Isaacs), the father of Draco (Tom Felton), a schoolmate of Harry’s, slips a book into the cauldron of Ginny (Bonnie Wright), Ron’s sister.

Christmas arrives. Most students go home, Harry, Ron and Hermione stay. They meet in the great hall, festively decorated. They sit alone in a long table, almost empty, in front of festive foods (there is also a cake with little characters on top) but they are not there to celebrate or enjoy the food, just to discuss their plans. (NwhMC) Harry has laced muffins with a sleeping potion (NwhMC) to keep two enemies out of the way while Harry and Ron take their place to discover secrets from Draco. Harry makes the two muffins levitate in front of the two boys, who are coming out of the hall with their arms full of cookies and small cakes (NwhMC). Still they are greedy and they also grab and eat the flying muffins (NwhMC), falling asleep (NwhMC).

Harry and his friends cannot discover anything, while various students are found paralyzed, including Hermione. Harry and Ron go to talk to Hagrid about it in his cabin. Hagrid is making tea, he tries to serve it (NwhWA) but his hands tremble and he spills it (NwhWAMC).

Eventually Harry discovers that there is a basilisk, a monster snake, at Hogwarts, set free by Lord Voldemort that has taken the shape of his young self, Tom Riddle, and has used Ginny to get to Harry through the book that Draco’s father had slipped into Ginny’s cauldron in Diagon Alley. Harry saves Ginny. At the final banquet we see ridiculous amounts of food on the tables that all the students enjoy (NwhMC).

## **HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN**

Director: Alfonso Cuarón

Writers: J.K. Rowling (novel) and Steve Kloves (screenplay)

Release Date: 4 June 2004 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

In the third movie, Harry learns more about the death of his parents, and discovers that his godfather is not responsible for their murder, but that he has actually been framed. Harry looks to his godfather for the emotional support that he has never enjoyed.

Once again, at the beginning of the movie we see Harry forced to serve food to guests, and a meal from which he is excluded becomes the occasion for the explosion his rage. Harry is now becoming a teenager, trying to find his identity and to break free from the destiny that seem to be imposed onto him; food, with its connection to domesticity and family structures, becomes the symbol of everything that holds him back. It also during a breakfast that Ron's father gives Harry the news that the supposed killer of his parents has escaped from prison.

As in the other movies of the series, food is also reassuring; even the minister of Magic offers Harry a soup after his escape from his uncle's house. Sweets seem to play a very important role in the emotional world of the teenager: a professor gives Harry a piece of chocolate to help him recover from a big scare, and when he meets with his schoolmates after the summer break, the kids talk about, share and enjoy candies that when eaten give them animal voices or make smoke stream from their ears.

### **Synopsis**

Uncle Vernon's sister Marge visits. She despises Harry and loves the spoiled Dudley, who stuffs his face with candies while watching TV, totally ignoring her (DwhMT). At dinner, Harry serves food and gathers the dirty dishes. (NwhMT) Even the dog gets more food and attention than Harry. When Marge starts badmouthing Harry's parents he gets mad and makes her bloat until she floats.

Harry runs away and gets to a wizard inn riding a magic bus. Cornelius Fudge (Robert Hardy), the minister of magic, welcomes him, while a hunchback servant serves Harry some food. (NwhWA). Even the minister himself offers him pea soup (NwhUA). The day after Mr. Weasley tells Harry that the criminal Sirius Black has escaped the prison of Azkaban because, as a servant of the evil Voldemort, he wants to kill him (KwhMA). While Harry receives this scary news at breakfast, all the others are enjoying the breakfast, pleased to be together again (NwhMT). We see one of Ron's brothers receiving tea from a flying teapot that pours by itself (DwhMT).

They get on the Hogwarts Express, which is attacked by dementors, the spectral guards of Azkaban. Harry faints and when he comes to, a new professor, Lupin (David Thewlis), gives Harry chocolate; "Eat, you will feed better" (IwhMA). After eating he does feel better (NwhMT).

When they get to the school, the boys go to their rooms. They share candies that when eaten give them animal voices or make them have smoke coming out of their ears, and they talk about them, clearly enjoying them (NwhMT). They are happy to be together again and share the candies to show their sense of community (NwhMT).

When the time for a school outing comes, Harry has no parents that can sign a release form, so he can't go with the others to the nearby village of Hogsmeade. He is given by Ron's older twin brothers (Oliver and James Phelps) the marauder's map, a magical map that allows him to see where everybody is at Hogwarts. Using the map he manages to use an old tunnel and ends up in the candy shop of the village where all the kids are shopping for sweets and enjoying them (NwhMT). Harry uses an invisibility cloak to walk unseen through them while stealing a red big lollipop (NwhMT). Then he gets into Ms. Rosemerta's pub to hear the minister talk to Prof. McGonagal (Maggie Smith). While the minister pours liquor to both they talk and exchange information. (KwhUMA) He learns that Black is his godfather.

It turns out that Lupin is a werewolf, that Sirius is actually innocent, and that the

responsible for the death of Harry's parents is Peter Pettigrew (Timothy Spall), who had lived for years hiding as Ron's pet rat. The traitor escapes, Lupin has to leave the school and Sirius goes into hiding.

## **HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE**

Director: Mike Newell

Writers (WGA): Steve Kloves (screenplay) and J.K. Rowling (novel)

Release Date: 18 November 2005 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

Harry is involved in a tournament among wizard schools that almost allows his enemy Voldemort to kill him.

In this movie, Harry's friendship with Ron is tested by various events and by Ron's envy of Harry's life being constantly under the spotlight. The first tension between the two becomes visible precisely around sweets, which so far in the movies have been symbol of their mutual affection and camaraderie. When they meet on the train that takes them to Hogwarts, Ron refuses to accept candy from Harry, even if he does not have enough money to buy it himself. This act is particularly indicative because in the first movie the exchange between the two children around the candy trolley marked the beginning of their friendship. Food is not as visible as in previous movies, since all the action focuses on the wizard tournament that ends with the death of one of Harry's schoolmates.

### **Synopsis**

An old man, the guardian of a dilapidated manor, is making his evening tea (NwhWO) when he sees a light in the manor; he goes to see what it is, but he is killed by a magic curse. As he is killed we see the kettle on the stove whistling loud, a metaphor between the screaming of the man and the tea kettle. In the meanwhile Harry, Hermione and his friends the Weasleys go camping for the World's Quidditch tournament (Quidditch is the wizards' favorite sport, played on flying brooms). They enter a tiny tent that inside is as large as a wide apartment. Ron's father immediately tells Ron to get out of the kitchen, because everybody is hungry (NwhMT). During the tournament the Death Eaters, faithful of the evil Lord Voldemort, attack and destroy everything.

The kids go back to Hogwarts. On the train the usual trolley comes by, with an old witch selling candies. Ron orders a packet of candy and a licorice wand (NwhMT), but then he realizes he does not have enough money and decides to buy the candies only (NwhMT). Harry sees it and offers to buy the wand for Ron (NwhMT); but he refuses (NwhMT). At this point a girl, Cho (Katie Leung), comes by asking for pasties; she and Harry look at each other with wonder and interest. When the girl leaves, the witch asks Harry if he wants anything sweet (NwhMT), but he says he is not hungry (NwhMT).

When they get to the castle, during the first banquet Dumbledore announces that Hogwarts has been chosen to host the Triwizard Tournament among three schools, each represented by one student. During the meal, Dumbledore tells a French witch that Hagrid will take care of her horses, which only drink single-malt whiskey. Hagrid nods his assent, too mesmerized to talk, but gets the attention of the woman (IwhWA). He is so flummoxed that he sticks a fork in another guest's hand by mistake. During the dinner

another guest arrives: the students identify him as Mad-Eye Moody, a supposedly weird wizard (IwhMT). They notice he drinks from a little flask, and they assume he is secretly drinking alcohol (IwhMO). At the end of the evening, the fire in a magic goblet is lit. All students above 17 that want to take part in the tournament can put their name in the burning goblet on a piece of parchment. Many want to participate, because winning will mark their name in history and give them eternal glory. However, at the champion selection, the goblet selects two champions for Hogwarts: Cedric Diggory and Harry Potter, although Harry has not put his name in the goblet. The other students think he has cheated.

The first task is to get a golden egg from a dragon. The egg contains a clue to pass the next task. The following morning at breakfast Harry manages to make eye contact with Cho, but in the end he spits the juice he is drinking out of embarrassment (NwhMT). All the students have to get ready for a ball to celebrate the tournament, Harry asks Cho out but she has already got a date, so he goes with another girl. During the ball, Moody keeps on drinking by himself (NwhMO).

The second task is to save the champions' friends from mermen in the nearby lake. Harry manages the second task too, but afterwards one of the tournament's judges, Berty Crouch, is found dead. Harry goes to talk to Dumbledore, who offers him Licorice Snap, warning him it is a bit sharp (NwhUO). The licorice actually turns into biting creatures that, by running around, turn Harry's attention to a basin, that contains Dumbledore's memories, so Harry can see a process where Crouch, the murdered man, condemns his son to life prison for helping Voldemort.

The last task is to find the winner's cup in the middle of a maze. It turns out that the cup is a magical object able to transport anybody who touches it to another place. Both Harry and another participant, Cedric, touch it and end up in a cemetery, where Voldemort and his faithful are waiting for him. Cedric gets killed and Voldemort tries to use Harry's blood for a potion that will bring him fully back to life. Harry manages to escape and brings the body of the other champion back. Mad-Eye Moody bring him back to the castle and finally reveals himself as Crouch's son, who was using a potion to look like Moody and set the trap that through the cup would take Harry to Voldemort. The plot is discovered while the school mourns for the dead student.

## **HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX**

Director: David Yates

Writers: Michael Goldenberg (screenplay) and J.K. Rowling (novel)

Release Date: 11 July 2007 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

In the fifth and so far last installment of the series, the battle between Harry's arch-nemesis Lord Voldemort and the good wizards becomes the main theme. Both sides try to get hold of a prophecy that explains the connection between Harry and Voldemort. In the final battle, Harry's godfather Sirius Black gets killed.

Food sharing is an occasion for the wizards to regroup and plan about the future battles. Christmas dinner becomes a celebration for Mr. Weasley, one of Harry's friends that has been attacked and almost killed.



As in the previous movies, food is connected with tricks and ruses. Ron's brothers are selling younger students magic candies that can make them feel sick to avoid class. When the school's caretaker tries to find the secret room where Harry and his friends meet, he sits in front of a wall eating a sandwich waiting for a secret door to open. The students make fun of him, letting him find chocolates in the places where he sits trying to uncover their plot, and he eats them with pleasure but they turn out to be charmed, and he gets covered in pustules.

### **Synopsis**

Harry Potter is at a playground near the Durleys' place. He and his cousin Dudley are attacked by dementors, horrible creatures that suck happiness out of human beings. Harry manages to send them away using a magic charm and to carry a shocked Dudley home. When they arrive, Harry's uncle is in front of an open fridge eating ice cream directly from a small container (IwhMA), looking annoyed that something has disturbed his enjoyment. Because he has used magic outside the school, Harry receives a letter announcing his expulsion from Hogwarts, but later on during a night a group of wizards arrive to take him into custody, also telling him that his expulsion is temporarily suspended but he will have to go to court to explain what he has done. They go to a secret house, where they find Sirius Black, Lupin, the Weasleys, Hermione and Ron. After a meeting of what Harry learns of the secret Order of the Phoenix, founded by Dumbledore to fight Voldemort, Mrs. Weasley invites everybody to dinner (NwhMTYAbI MA). While she chops vegetables, everybody sits around the table and exchanges news while having a drink (NwhMTYAbI MA): Fudge, the minister of Magic is trying to deny that Voldemort is back to keep his position.

The day after, Harry is brought to the Ministry of Magic for the trial, where Dumbledore convinces the court to clear him of all charges. Harry can go back to Hogwarts with all the other students, including a girl Harry did not know, Luna Lovegood (Evanna Lynch). During the welcome dinner (NwhMT), Dumbledore announces that Hagrid is away and that there is a new teacher of Defense against the Dark Arts, Dolores Umbridge (Imelda Staunton), who has been sent by the Ministry to interfere with the teaching activities and impose the official point of view. Harry immediately clashes with her, while we see Ron's twin brothers sell candies (NwhMY) that can make students feel sick to avoid class.

Luna helps Harry understand that Voldemort wants to isolate him from his friends, so while Ron is stuffing his face with sausage (NwhMT), he goes to talk to him. In the meanwhile, Umbridge imposes her control over the school, as Dumbledore is less and less prominent. Hermione asks Harry to teach her and the other students how to defend themselves against evil attacks, and they find a secret room to practice, which opens only when needed. The caretaker tries to find it: he sits in front of a wall eating a sandwich waiting for the secret door to open (NwhWO). The students make fun of him, letting him find chocolates (NwhWO) in the places where he sits, and he eats them with pleasure (NwhWO). The candy is charmed, so he gets covered in pustules (NwhWO).

One night Harry dreams that Mr. Weasley is attacked. It turns out to be actually happening, so he understands that his mind and Voldemort's are somehow connected. The Weasleys, Harry and Hermione celebrate the return of Mr. Weasley during Christmas dinner (NwhTYA). The Weasleys all toast to Harry for saving their father's life (NwhMTYA).

Eventually Umbridge discover their secret training activities, and accuses Dumbledore to be forming an army against the Minister. Dumbledore is forced to leave Hogwarts and Umbridge is named headmaster, which allows her to exert total control.

Harry has a dream about Voldemort torturing Sirius in the Ministry to obtain a prophecy he needs to get power. Despite Umbridge's attempts to stop them, Harry and his friends go to Sirius's rescue. They find the prophecy, which reveals that Harry and Voldemort are tied by fate so that neither can live while the other survives. They get attacked by Voldemort and his faithful, but the wizards of Order of the Phoenix and Dumbledore save them, even if in the battle Sirius dies. Finally even the Minister believes that Voldemort is returned, and Dumbledore is reinstated as headmaster at Hogwarts. Harry now knows he will have to kill Voldemort.

### **INDEPENDENCE DAY**

Director: Roland Emmerich

Writers: Dean Devlin and Roland Emmerich

Release Date: 3 July 1996 (USA)

Company: Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation

#### **Commentary**

Aliens try to invade earth but in three days, thanks to American ingenuity, humans defeat them. The day of the victory, of course, is July 4<sup>th</sup>.

The movie displays different modalities of masculinity, all contributing to the success of the human endeavor. The hegemonic military masculinity is not enough to save the planet.

The most interesting character – and also the one to which audiences probably tend to root for – is Steven, a black military man. Since he is a captain, when the aliens attack he is required to report to his base. When he gets there, a friend of his reads him the letter from NASA informing him that he has been turned down by the agency. His friend tells him he needs to kiss some ass, and to stress the point he actually kneels down behind Steven, mimicking the act. Something falls from Steven's bag: it is an engagement ring for his fiancée. His friend picks it up and gives it back to him, right when another soldier arrives and sees the friend kneeling in front of Steven with a ring. The soldier then raises his arms and leaves. The day after, during a briefing, Steven's friend lays his head on his shoulder saying mockingly: "Hold me". When their superior sees it, Steven says: "Just anxious to whip some ET's ass". Masculinity prevails, but it is interesting that references to gay sexual practices involve a black man, whose masculinity in US culture has been historically the object of a deep ambivalence (Harper 1996; Reid-Pharr 2001).

Food does not play a narrative function in the movie: it does not push the action forward, but it is rather used to describe characters, or to allow them to express their individual traits. We see the President of the US in the morning, taking his breakfast alone in a formal dining room inside the White House, while discussing the day's schedule with a member of his staff. When his girlfriend's son tells him about the aliens, Steven is having breakfast in his apartment, in his domestic middle-class space. The former pilot Russell, who in the end will give his life for the success of the human plan, does not eat but drinks to a stupor in a diner patronized by red-necks, while his son cooks for his two teenagers siblings in a trailer. David, a geeky Jewish transmission wizard, has

lunch (out of a container) at his desk while talking to a coworker about the disturbances created by the arrival of the space ships.

### **Synopsis**

The movie events take place over three days. The first day, July 2, a station detects sounds from the moon. A huge flying object is approaching, causing confusion at the Pentagon. The movie introduces the four main male heroes. The first is the President, Thomas Whitmore (Bill Pullman), whom we see waking up. His young daughter is still in bed and his wife is away, so he eats breakfast alone (he finds it ready in a dining room) (IwhUA) while his press secretary talks to him about his falling approval rates (IwhUA).

In the meanwhile David (Jeff Goldblum) plays chess with his father, a Jew, in Brooklyn. Since he is an engineer, working for a TV station, he finds out that all TV stations are experiencing disturbances.

In a trailer park in Imperial Vally, California, a young man (James Duvall) is cooking for two teenagers in a trailer (IwhWY). Their father Russell (Randy Quaid) flies a plane to spray crops, but that day since he is drunk he sprays the wrong field. After a discussion with the son, he drinks again, alone (IwhWA). In the meantime the huge object breaks down in smaller pieces that enter the earth atmosphere.

David is having lunch (out of a plastic container) at his desk (NwhMA) while he talks to his coworker about the disturbance, of which he is able to make sense. His coworker, gay, kisses him on the mouth for the excitement. The President decides to stay despite the crisis, since he wants to avoid panic in the population.

Russell sits at the counter in a diner drinking coffee, alone, half drunk, without eating. (NwhWA). Other men in the diner make fun of him because he had told them that the aliens had abducted him in the past. Everything starts trembling, including food (camera focuses of a mug of beer). The police arrests Russell because he is acting up; one neighbor tells the cameras that he is being weird because sexually abused when the alien abducted him.

A small black child wakes a couple in bed, Steven (Will Smith) and Jasmine (Vivica Fox) to tell them something is happening, but they go back to sleep. When Steven wakes up, he realizes all the neighbors are packing and leaving.

A huge disk appears over Manhattan, causing car accidents and the traffic to stop. David understands that the signal coming from it shows a cycle that indicates it is going to stop in 7 hours. He realizes that the aliens are using the signal to coordinate a strike. He and his father drive to Washington DC to get his ex-wife, who is the president's press attaché. David manages to talk to the president and explains him the aliens' plan.

On the second day, July 3, the air force launches its attack against the alien ship but small pods come out and attack the planes. Steven's friend is killed and he is forced to make an emergency landing in the desert near an alien pod he has damaged. He opens the pod and punches the alien unconscious, then pulls it out to carry it with him.

All the characters end up in the same secret base in the desert where aliens are secretly kept since the 1950s. The President's wife, who has been helped by Yasmine, dies.

David thinks he can create a computer virus that can temporarily damage the alien communication system putting their protective force shield down. He and Steven decide to fly an alien pod into the mothership to place the virus. The Americans, using their ingenuity, organize a counterattack rallying the remnants of all the armies from various

countries on earth. They manage to bring the alien vessel's defenses down, but eventually Russell has to sacrifice himself to make the mothership explode. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, earth wins against the "colonizers": it is Independence Day, with guidance provided by the US.

### **FORREST GUMP**

Director: Robert Zemeckis

Writers: Winston Groom (novel) and Eric Roth (screenplay)

Release Date: 6 July 1994 (USA)

Company: Paramount Pictures

### **Commentary**

The biography of Forrest Gump, a good-hearted, lovable, but not too intelligent character, unfolds across different decades, continents, social classes, and cultural environments. Eventually he ends up enjoying the life of a millionaire, above all as the loving father of a smart child.

Forrest's masculinity is quite peculiar. He is physically fit: he becomes a ping-pong champion, jogs all over America, and is able to break down and put back together a gun in practically no time. Paradoxically, Forrest Gump embodies all the qualities a soldier is supposed to have: discipline, courage, generosity, endurance of hardship, and even technological and mechanical mastery (Barrett 1994). At the same time, he adapts well to the subordination and surveillance that is typical of the military, more than others probably could, when trying to embody the myth of the rugged masculinity that expresses itself in individualism and heroism.

However, his fitness does not translate into an aggressive male sexuality. He is not gay; he is attracted to one woman, who becomes the love of his life, and eventually has a son with her, but his innocence keeps him from expressing his sexual desires. When he finally makes love to his woman, it happens on her initiative. Forrest seems to get the emotional support he needs from male characters: a black man first and a burnt-out, handicapped veteran later. The connection with Bubba builds on the black male's dream of having his own shrimping business, producing the seafood that the women in his family had to cook for generations for their white employers (and arguably, in the past, masters). Bubba goes on and on about the myriad ways to prepare shrimp while he and Forrest are busy with menial tasks, like polishing shoes or cleaning a floor with a toothbrush: "Shrimp is the food from the sea; you can barbecue it, boil it, broil it, bake it, and sauté it. There is shrimp kebab, shrimp creole, shrimp gumbo, pan fried...deep fried, stir fried. There's pineapple shrimp, coconut shrimp... Shrimp stew, shrimp soup, shrimp salad, shrimp and potatoes, shrimp burger, shrimp sandwich. That's about it." Food allows an escape from the dire reality, while allowing the two characters to create a bond that Forrest will bring to fruition by buying a shrimping boat.

It is not surprising that the simpleton Forrest resorts to food as a venue to communicate his desires, fears, and emotions. Forrest uses it also as a metaphor of life. At the beginning of the movie, talking with his mouth full, he reminisces: "My mama always said that life was like a box of chocolates; you never know what you gonna get". His desires and appetites often express themselves in terms of food: the box of chocolate we see him hold on his lap at the beginning of the movie ("Do you want a chocolate? I could eat about a million and a half of those"), the buffet at the White House party ("Now the real good thing about meeting the president of the United States is the food. They put

you in this little room with just about anything you'd want to eat and drink"), or the food in the hospital when he is wounded in battle ("The only thing good about being wounded in the buttocks is the ice cream. They got me all the ice cream I could eat"). Also his affection for his girlfriend is expressed in edible terms: "From then on, we were like peas and carrots."

### **Synopsis**

Forrest (Tom Hanks) is sitting at a bus stop. He holds a box of candy with a ribbon that looks like a present. A black nurse sits next to him. "Do you want a chocolate? I could eat about a million and a half of those". While he talks he takes the lid off and offers the box to the lady (IwhMA). "My mama always said that life was like a box of chocolates; you never know what you gonna get." Forrest uses food as a metaphor of life (IwhMA). While he talks with his mouth full, he reminisces.

As a child, he was not as quick as the other kids, he even risked to go to a special need school. His only friend was Jenny, the only girl that let him sit next to her on the bus the first day of school. "From then on we were like peas and carrots" (DwhMA). Forrest found out he was very fast, so he got a football scholarship for college. He went to visit Jenny and brought her chocolate (NwhMy). He became part of the All American Football Team and as such he got to meet JFK. "Now the real good thing about meeting the president of the United States is the food. (NwhMY). They put you in this little room with just about anything you'd want to eat and drink" Camera pans of a great spread with hands holding forks and picking up food. (NwhMY) Forrest takes a bottle and a black waiter in a white jacket opens it for him, clearly puzzling him with this gesture (NblWA). "Number one, I wasn't hungry but thirsty, and number two I must have drunk about 15 Doctor Peppers" (NwhMY). He burps loudly.

After graduation Forrest joins the Army. Once again, nobody wants him to sit next to him except for a black man with a protruding lower lip, who also looks slightly retarded. He is Bubba, also from Alabama; first thing he says: "Have you ever been on a shrimp boat?" (IblWY) Bubba explains that all the women in his family have been in the business of cooking shrimp, meaning they were cooks in white homes. "Bubba's family knew everything there was to know about the shrimping business," Forrest reminisces.

Forrest likes it in the Army, because all he needs to do is following orders. In one scene, Bubba and Forrest are breaking down and putting back together their rifles. Bubba says: "Shrimp is the food from the sea; you can barbecue it, boil it, broil it, bake it, and sauté it. There is shrimp kebab, shrimp creole, shrimp gumbo, pan fried" Camera cuts to Bubba polishing shoes "deep fried, stir fried. There's pineapple shrimp, coconut shrimp" Cut to Forrest and Bubba in their underwear on their knees cleaning the floor with toothbrushes. "Shrimp stew, shrimp soup, shrimp salad, shrimp and potatoes, shrimp burger, shrimp sandwich. That's about it" (DbIWY).

Eventually they are sent to Vietnam. We hear Forrest say: "They told Vietnam would be very different from the USA except for the beer (camera cuts from their puzzled face to beer, then pans to soldiers barbecuing) and the barbecue" (NwhMY). Bubba immediately focuses on the fact that in Vietnam there must be good shrimp. (NblWY). They meet their lieutenant, Dan Taylor, who says: "If you boys are hungry, we've got steaks over here" and points to the barbecue: he welcomes them by offering them celebratory food (IwhMA).

We soldiers walking through rice pads near farmers that work with their heads

down (NasWA).

One night, while Forrest and Bubba are sitting back to back in the pouring rain, Bubba asks Forrest: “How would you like to get into the shrimping business with me? Man, I tell you what? I got all figured it out too”, and he goes on and on about living on the boat, splitting the money between them, and eating all the shrimp they want (KblWY). Forrest saves many companions during an attack, including the lieutenant, but cannot save Bubba. He gets a medal of honor. He has been shot in the butt. though: “The only thing good about being wounded in the buttocks is the ice cream. They got me all the ice cream I could eat.” Camera on Forrest lying on his stomach on a stretcher holding a cone in each hand, getting consolation from it like a child (NwhMY). One of the ice creams is for his lieutenant, who is lying in the bed next to him, and he offers it to him (NwhMY). The lieutenant takes it and throws it in the urine pail (NwhMA): he has lost both legs.

In the hospital Forrest becomes a pingpong fanatic, to the point of turning into a professional athlete. While in DC to receive his medal of honor, he gets involved in a huge peace demonstration where he meets Jenny again. “Jenny and me were like peas and carrots indeed” (NwhMA). He leaves her with the medal of honor.

He visits hospitals to perform his pingpong skills in front of wounded soldiers, and then he is sent to China for a tournament (Nixon’s pingpong diplomacy).

When he is back, he meets Lieutenant Dan, who drinks all the time on his wheelchair (NwhMA). Forrest tells Dan, while he is drinking in a bar to celebrate New Year 1972 (NwhMA), that he is going to keep the promise he made to Bubba to get a shrimping boat and he is going to be the captain (NwhNA). Eventually Forrest gets discharged and goes back home to his mother, who convinces him to accept money from advertisers, since he is a famous athlete. With the money he decides to keep the promise made to Bubba and goes to visit his family. He buys the shrimping boat, which he names Jenny, but he finds out that it is a tough job. The lieutenant joins him and they go out shrimping together. Hurricane Carmen hits, Forrest’s boat is the only surviving it. Now there is plenty shrimp to fish (NwhMA), so they become rich. Forrest’s mother dies, and he starts spending money on charities, also mowing the lawn of the football field in his village for free. Finally Jenny gets back with him; “We were like peas and carrots again” (NwhMA), he says. Forrest asks her to marry him, she refuses but they have sex. She leaves again the morning after. He stares at the medal she left while holding a glass of milk, unable to eat it (KwhMA). Heartbroken, he starts running, crossing the country from ocean to ocean. He involuntarily finds himself a following. After more than 3 years, he figures out he has run enough and goes back home. He receives a letter from Jenny inviting him to Savannah. That is where we see him at the beginning of the movie.

Finally Forrest gives Jenny the chocolate, even if he has already eaten some (KwhMA). She reveals that she has got a son from him. She has got an incurable disease, so they get married to ensure the child’s future. When she is sick, he brings her breakfast in bed (NwhMA). Once she is dead, he talks to her grave, telling her that he prepares all the meals for their kid (NwhMA).

## **MEN IN BLACK**

Director: Barry Sonnenfeld

Writers: Lowell Cunningham (comic) and Ed Solomon (screen story)

Release Date: 2 July 1997 (USA)

Company: Columbia Pictures

### **Commentary**

The Men in Black is a secret organization that controls all the aliens present on earth, allowed to eliminate the dangerous ones. The movie is about a young, hot-tempered, urban police agent, Edwards, who enters the organization and gets his education through battle under the guidance of the older agent K. His nemesis is a “bug”, an evil voracious insect-like creature from space that wants to control the universe and in the process devours anything he can. The bug chooses to inhabit the body of a violent, short-tempered, and abusing man that uses food to humiliate his wife, ingests as much sugar as he can get and even works in a restaurant, killing out-of-space customers and coworkers. During the final confrontation, the bug, showing his real huge size, swallows K who kills him by shooting from inside.

Food is also used in the movie to give an impression of normalcy to situations that would be otherwise outlandish. Intergalactic visitors discuss the fate of their worlds while ordering pirogis in a restaurant, and when J first arrives at the Men in Black secret base, K asks four small aliens in the coffee room to pour him a cup, demonstrating to the young apprentice that everything is under control. In the end a woman joins the organization; in the last scene J, now a mature agent, buys a hot dog and brings it to his new female partner as a sign of acceptance into the team and of business as usual.

### **Synopsis**

The Men in Black is a secret organization that controls all the aliens present on earth, eliminating the dangerous ones. Agent K (Tommy Lee Jones) works with an old partner that is too tired and wants to retire. K agrees, erasing his memory with a special flashing device, but then he needs to look for another candidate. Enters agent Edwards (Will Smith), chasing a criminal through NYC, who turns out to be an alien.

Camera cuts to a sad looking wood house in the countryside with a truck parked in front. We hear a man’s voice complaining (IwhWA): “I go out. I work my butt off to make a living. All I want is to come home to a nice clean house, with a nice fat steak on the table. But instead I get this. Looks like poison. Don’t you take it away! I’m eating that, damn it! It is poison, isn’t it? I swear to God, I would not be surprised if it was, the way you skulk around like a dog been hit too much or ain’t been hit enough! I can’t make up my mind. You’re useless, Beatrice”. Edgar (Vincent D’Onofrio) uses food to criticize and debase his woman (IwhWA) but he is also afraid to be poisoned (DwhMA). A meteorite hits the truck, so Edgar goes out to see what happened and gets devoured (KwhWA) by an alien that uses Edgar’s skin like a camouflage. The alien/Edgar goes back inside and asks the wife for sugar in water (KwhWA). She gives it to him (KwhWA) but he wants more and more (KwhWA).

Tom brings Edwards to a pawnshop, where the owner is actually an alien who sells illegal alien weapons. After that, K erases Edwards’s memories too and then he takes him to a Chinese restaurant, where he invites him to an interview the day after (NwhMABlMY).

Edgar kills a roach exterminator and uses his van to carry his spaceship around. In the meanwhile, Edwards participates in the interview and nails it, but when he is told about the nature of the agency he thinks K is crazy. K invites him for coffee (NwhMA). In the coffee room there are four small aliens drinking coffee, and they pour K a cup

(NwhMA). In apparently normal situation the new agent is introduced to the shocking reality (KblMY). Edwards decides to accept the job but does not appreciate to be treated as a rookie. He is walked through the alien port, where a very tall alien is being asked if he is bringing food or vegetables. Once again, food is used to make a crazy situation look normal (NblMY). Edwards existence is erased: he will be known from now on as agent J.

We see an old jeweler with a cat leaving his shop. He goes to have lunch in a Russian diner where he meets the tall alien we have seen at the secret port. It turns out the jeweler is a king, and he needs to leave earth while a “bug” is after him. They want to share a meal, the king is glad to see the other, who has ordered pirogi (NwhMA). Edgar, posing as a waiter, kills them both while serving them, and they both end up with their face in the pirogi. (NwhMA)

K and J go to interview Edgar’s wife, and are offered lemonade as a sign of welcome. (NwhMAblMY). They figure out a “bug” (a very dangerous and voracious alien being) is on the loose, so they start watching the morgues. They end up in the one where the king has been delivered. The woman doing the autopsy has realized she is dealing with aliens. They erase her memory, then start chasing the bug/Edgar. J figures out that the “galaxy” that the bug is looking for is hanging from the collar of the deceased king’s cat, still in the morgue near the corpse of his owner. Edgar attacks the woman and gets the “galaxy”, taking her away as a hostage. They go to the Queens world fair, where two space ships are hidden in plain view. The final confrontation ensues: the bug, who has shown his real huge size, swallows K (KwhMA), who kills him shooting from inside. In the end the woman joins them in the organization. K asks J to erase his memories, so he can go back to the woman he abandoned when he started working for the Men in Black. In the last scene J, now a mature agent, buys a hot dog (NblMA) and brings it to his new partner, the woman, as a sign of acceptance in the team and companionship (NblMY).

## **SE7EN**

Director: David Fincher

Writer: Andrew Kevin Walker

Release Date: 22 September 1995 (USA)

Company: New Line Cinema

### **Commentary**

Young detective Mills is paired with the older, almost retired, detective Somerset to unravel a series of heinous crimes that seem to follow the theological theme of the seven deadly sins. Eventually the policemen fall into the delirious trap of a murderer.

The first victim, a very obese man in his underwear, is found with his face in a plate of spaghetti. Next to him, the policemen find a cupboard full of canned spaghetti sauce, and a bucket full of vomit underneath the table. The table itself is full of food and crawling with cockroaches. “His heart has to be the size of a canned ham,” says Mills, equating flesh to food. Food, as a symbol for gluttony and unbridled appetite, becomes a weapon in the hands of the mysterious serial killer, who uses his murders to underline and enhance his separation from the rest of humanity.

On the other end of the spectrum, food is also a symbol for camaraderie among the policemen, who share coffee while working and drinks while talking. Mills’s wife invites Somerset over for dinner when she realizes that her husband is not succeeding in creating



a bond with his new coworker. Mills is aware of this aspect of food sharing, so when he is talking to Somerset in a pizza parlor, he drops a slice of cold pizza back on the plate, showing in disgust and telling Somerset: “Could you please at least sit across from me? I don’t want people thinking we’re dating.”

### **Synopsis**

Detective Somerset (Morgan Freeman) makes coffee before getting ready for work (IblMO). He lives alone. He leaves to inspect a murder scene where he meets detective Mills (Brad Pitt), who has just been reassigned to that city. We get to know that Somerset is going to retire in seven days.

The day after, Mills is waiting for Somerset under the pouring rain, holding two cups of coffee (DwhMY). There has been a new murder. The victim, a very obese man in his underwear, has his face in a plate of spaghetti (NwhMA). Somerset throws light on a cupboard full of canned spaghetti sauce. The table is full of food and crawling with cockroaches. “His heart has to be the size of a canned ham” says Mills, comparing flesh to food (NwhMY). The victim’s hands and feet are tied. Underneath the table the detectives find a bucket full of vomit. Mills feels he is being treated like a rookie, despite his experience, so the tension between the two detectives mounts. It turns out that the victim has been forced to eat till he burst with a gun pointed to his head. (NwhMA). Somerset thinks the act has a meaning, and there will be other killings; their boss tells him “Don’t even start your big brain cooking on this”. This is another body/food metaphor (NwhMA).

The day after a defense attorney is found dead. A policeman says: “Looks like we are not going to eat dinner” (NwhMA). The scene must be truly gruesome, but we do not see it yet. Mills sends the policemen already there to get some coffee (NwhMY). The word GREED is written on the floor with the victim’s blood, who bled to death. In the meanwhile Somerset is brought little pieces of plastic that were found in the first victim’s stomach and that were fed to him. (NwhMA). He goes back to the previous murder scenes and he finds that those pieces are from the floor in front of the fridge; he moves it and behind it finds the word GLUTTONY written in grease, with a message from Milton’s Paradise Lost. Somerset thinks the killer is following the seven deadly sins and there will be more murders. Somerset goes to the library to do some research, Mills stays at home mulling alone over the pictures of the dead obese while sipping from a bottle of beer (NwhMY).

On the third day they are told that temporarily they have to share Somerset’s old office, on whose door there is already Mill’s name. Mill’s wife calls and asks to speak to Somerset. She invites him over for dinner (NwhMO). At dinner, Somerset compliments Tracy on the good smell of dinner while she’s cooking (NblMO). After dinner they chat, getting to know each other better, with a glass of wine in front of them (KwhMYblMO). Mills has observed that the second victim was holding a knife, and on a nearby scale there was a pound of his flesh. It is a quote from the Merchant of Venice. The killer has probably forced the victim to choose a piece of himself to cut with a gun in his face. They continue discussing the case, while Mills gets another beer and Somerset asks for wine (NwhMYblMO). In the victim’s office, behind a painting, they find the words HELP ME written with fingerprints.

On the fourth day they identify the fingerprints as belonging to a certain Victor, with a long story of crime and mental problems. Somerset is not convinced about the

suspect's involvement, while they get ready to go and apprehend him. They find Victor half skinned, a hand missing, on his bed, completely emaciated. On the wall there is the word SLOTH. Victor has been barely kept alive.

On the fifth day, in the morning, Somerset and Tracy have breakfast together, as Tracy needs to talk to somebody because she is pregnant (NblMO). Mills is impatient, and talking of the killer says: "Probably he's dancing around in his grandma's panties, rubbing himself in peanut butter", showing he despises him (NwhMY). The two detectives go to the library; while Somerset does research and prints pages, Mills sits by himself eating peanuts (NwhMY). Afterward they go to a pizza parlor. They sit next to each other, Somerset is folding papers while Mills picks up a piece of pizza and then drops it back on the plate, in disgust (NwhNY). He tells Somerset: "Could you please at least sit across from me? I don't want people thinking we're dating". It turns out they are waiting for an informant, a FBI agent who is able to give them information about the reading habits of citizens, including the criminal. The lists from the FBI agent point towards a certain Jonathan Doe, and they find his apartment. On the sixth day they find a murdered blond woman, with on the wall the word LUST. Mills and Somerset go out for a drink and they discuss the case (NwhMYblMO).

On the seventh day another dead woman is found disfigured and bandaged, with a telephone glued in one hand and sleeping pills in the other. On the wall the word PRIDE. Somerset decides to postpone his retirement to stay on the case. While they enter the police station, the killer gives himself up. While he is kept in an interrogation room, he dunks a tea bag in a paper cup of hot water, like he is just killing time (DwhMA). He tells that there are two more hidden bodies, and that he is ready to take the two detectives to find them. They accept, in exchange of his promise that he will plead guilty. He takes them in the middle of nowhere, when a van arrives and delivers a package for Mills, containing his wife's head. Envy is his own sin, says the killer, because he envies Mill's life. He wants Mills to become wrath. Mills shoots him. The killer has won.

## **SPIDER-MAN**

Director: Sam Raimi

Writing credits: Stan Lee and Steve Ditko (Marvel comic book), David Koepp (screenplay)

Release Date: 3 May 2002 (USA)

Company: Columbia Pictures

### **Commentary**

Peter Parker, a nerdy high-school student, is bitten by a radioactive spider that passes on to him uncanny powers. Fighting for justice against bad guys, Peter learns to control his rage and his desire for vengeance, dealing with his new self while searching for his identity as a growing young adult.

The first installment of the trilogy, an adaptation of the Marvel Comics book series, uses food to mark and underline the normality of Peter Parker's life against the background of the extraordinary adventures that happen to him in his search for himself as a man through his secret identity of Spider-man. The whole film is a tale of self-discovery and coming of age, an attempt to reflect on teenager's angst and the difficulty of growing up.

Before the spider bite, Peter is a scrawny geek, not popular among his peers and not very attractive to women. However, he is very much loved by his uncle and aunt, who adopted him. The connection among them is often shown by their shared daily meals, such as dinner or breakfast.

Like in every teenager's life, food is also the occasion for dissent and contrasts. While still exploring his new powers, Peter accidentally throws a tray of food against a bully in the school canteen. A fight ensues and Peter wins, throwing the bully against a student that drops another tray of food. Later in the movie, Thanksgiving dinner also turns into an occasion for a fight among the characters, and for Spider-Man's enemy the Goblin to discover Peter's secret.

However, we never see Peter eating during his activities as Spider-Man.

### **Synopsis**

Peter Parker (Tobey Maguire) tries to catch the school bus. The kids on the bus make fun of him, including a fat one stuffing his face with a glazed donut (NwhWT). His only friend is Harry (James Franco), the son of a very rich scientist, Dr. Norman Osborne (Willem Dafoe), who is in trouble with the army because he cannot prove the performance enhancer he invented actually works. During a visit to a science lab Peter is bitten by a spider that had been used for experiments. Peter goes back home feverish while his uncle Ben (Cliff Robertson) is being served dinner by his wife aunt May (Rosemary Harris) and reads the paper looking for a new job (NwhWO). While Peter is transformed by the spider bite, Dr. Osborne decides to try on himself his invention. It works, but he also become evil and kills his assistant. Both Peter and Osborne acquire super powers. Peter leaves the morning after while his uncle is being served breakfast by his wife (NwhWO). While exploring his new power, Peter accidentally throws a tray of food against a bully (KwhWT), an involuntary sign of rebellion that however marks his change. A fight ensues and Peter wins, throwing the bully against a student that drops another tray of food on him (NwhMT). At the end of the day, after many exciting discovering about his new powers, Peter goes back home: his aunt has left him food in the oven (NwhWT). Peter decides that to get the attention of Mary Jane (Kristen Dunst), the girl he likes. He needs a car so he signs up for a wrestling contest, which he wins. In the meanwhile his uncle is killed by a petty thief, who dies while Peter chases him. Mary Jane reveals to Peter that she is dating Harry.

After Peter and Harry graduate, they share a loft that Harry's father pays for. Following his uncle's last words, "With great power comes great responsibility," Peter starts protecting common people as Spider-man. Mr. Jameson (J.K. Simmons), publisher of the Daily Bugle, who considers the super-hero a vigilante, offers money to whoever can take a picture of Spider-Man. One day Peter meets Mary Jane; he is nervous and confused but manages to invite her out (NwhWT). He also promises he will go and have coffee at the diner where she works.

To make money, Peter starts taking pictures of himself as Spider-Man to sell them to Jameson. The paper pays him a pittance, when Peter complains Jameson answers him: "Meat, I'll send you a box of Christmas meat" as if that would close the negotiation (NwhUA).

Osborne's company is being sold, and he is being fired. During a street festival organized by his former company, Osborne dressed as a Goblin attacks the crowd and kills the board members. His son Harry and Mary Jane are there too. Spider-man tries to

stop him and he is thrown on the party buffet (NwhWT). Eventually Peter saves MJ but the Goblin escapes. In the evening Harry calls MJ to see if she is all right; he is embarrassed because he did not do anything to help her when she was in danger. He tries to make everything seem normal by saying: “Tomorrow we’ll go and have breakfast, I want to buy you something” (NwhUT).

The morning after Osborne is alone, drinking whiskey in his robe (KwhUA). He hears the Goblin’s voice: he is becoming schizoid. He tries to convince Spider-Man to join him, but the young super-hero refuses.

It is Thanksgiving and dinner takes place at Harry’s loft. MJ and aunt May prepare dinner when Osborne arrives bringing a fruitcake (NwhUA). It is the first time he meets MJ. Peter is late, he brings the cranberry sauce (NwhWT). When dinner is served (KwhUAUTWT), Osborne is offered the turkey to cut the first slice (KwhUA). Right then, he understands that Peter is Spider-Man, so he gets up and leaves (KwhUA), offending everybody especially MJ, who ends up fighting with Harry over his father.

To get to Peter, Osborne attacks Aunt May as the Goblin. At the hospital, Harry sees MJ holding Peter’s hand, and he understands that MJ likes him, so he tells his father he was right about her. It is one more reason to fight Peter. Goblin/Osborne kidnaps MJ to set a trap for Peter and brings her on top of a bridge. Fight ensues, and Osborne accidentally kills himself while trying to kill Peter. Peter/Spider-Man brings him home, so that Harry thinks it was Spider-Man who killed his father.

Eventually, MJ tells Peter she loves him, but Peter renounces to her not to endanger her again and to continue with his mission.

## **SPIDER-MAN 2**

Director: Sam Raimi

Writers: Stan Lee and Steve Ditko (comic book) Alvin Sargent (screenplay)

Release Date: 30 June 2004 (USA)

Company: Columbia Pictures

### **Commentary**

Also in the second episode of the series, where Peter defeats Octavius a.k.a. Doctor Octopus, a genius scientist turned mad, food is used to show Peter Parker’s normalcy and even his shortcomings. At the beginning of the movie, we see him working as a pizza delivery boy and failing to deliver his product on time, even using his superpowers. Later on, he tries to explain his superpowers to two young children by attributing them to vegetable eating. And when he decides he does not want to use his powers any longer, we see Peter buying and eating a hot dog on the street, enjoying the flavor of normal life.

In several occasions, food sharing reinforces existing bonds (as in the case of Peter’s birthday cake) or creates new ones, like when Peter is invited to tea on his first meeting with doctor Octavius and his wife. On the other hand, food can become the occasion for humiliation and suffering, like during the party where Peter’s love interest declares she is going to marry somebody else, or when Peter tries to invite her out only to be turned down.

### **Synopsis**

Peter Parker is working as a pizza delivery boy for a shop that has a 30 minute-delivery policy. We see clients eating (DwhWA) and a man making pizza (DwhWA) next to the boss who is telling Peter he is late and has to deliver 8 pizzas in less than 10

minutes (IwhWY). Peters gets to the delivery place late and he does not get paid, so his boss fires him on the spot.

As a photographer, Peter is trying to sell pictures of everyday life of newyorkers to Jameson, but the publisher wants more sensationalist stuff, and tells Peter to get his portfolio off his desk “before going into a diabetic coma” (IwhMA). For lack of a better front page story, Jameson is ready to print a picture of a rancid chicken with the title “Food poisoning scare sweeps city” (NwhMA), so Peter eventually gives Jameson a Spider-man picture. Peter is so busy working that he risks to fail his college classes.

Aunt May, Mary Jane and Harry organize a surprise birthday party for him (NwhWY). When he leaves the aunt’s house, she gives him some cake to take home (NwhWY). After the party, Mary Jane tells Peter she has got a boyfriend. Peter promises to go see her show.

Harry introduces Peter to Otto Octavius, a scientist Peter is writing a paper about and that is working for Harry’s company on a project to initiate and sustain a stable fusion reaction. Peter goes to visit him; Otto’s wife serves them tea (NwhWMAY). While they drink they talk about projects and their lives (NwhWMAY). That evening, while he is riding his scooter to see Mary Jane’s show, a runaway car hits him. He falls back on his feet, causing admiration in two kids who ask him how he did it; he answers: “work out, plenty of rest, and eat your green vegetables” (NwhWY). One of the kids replies: “That’s what my mom is always saying (NwhWC). I never actually believed her”. Peter gets to the theater late but the usher does not let him in. At the end of the show he sees Mary Jane’s boyfriend picking her up and asking her out to dinner (NwhMY).

Peter realizes he is losing his powers. He goes to see Octavius’s demonstration. The scientist has created four huge mechanical arms that get connected directly to his brain through neural connections to do the work he could not do with his bare hands. The future reaction goes bad and Octavius’s wife gets accidentally killed. The artificial hands gets fused to Octavius nervous system and they actually take control of the scientist, making him kill the doctors that were trying to cut them off (the filmmaker uses classic horror shots for this sequence). Octavius decides to rebuild his experiment and to steal the money necessary. He robs the bank where Peter and his aunt are trying to get a loan, but Spider-man stops him.

Jameson sends Peter to take pictures at a party for his son John, an astronaut, who turns out to be Mary Jane’s boyfriend. Also Harry is at the party, getting drunk alone over his loss of money with Octavius’s failed experiment (NwhUY). Peter tries to grab some hors d’oeuvre but we see a hand stealing them from under his nose (NwhWY). He sees Mary Jane and asks her if he can get her a drink (NwhWY), but she turns him down (NwhWY). Peter is upset, he grabs a drink from a passing waiter (NwhWY), but realizes the glass is empty (NwhWY). While Peter is arguing with Harry, John Jameson announces that Mary Jane has accepted to marry him.

Peter decides he does not want to be Spider-Man again, and throws his costume away. We see Peter buying a hot dog (NwhWY), and eating it while he watches police car passing by with their sirens on, almost finding security in his normality (NwhWY). Peter goes to see Mary Jane’s show, and after the show he invites her to get some Chinese food (NwhWY) but she turns him down again.

We see Jameson talking over the phone to his wife about the son’s wedding: “Caviar? What, are we inviting the Czar? Get some cheese and crackers” (NwhMA)

when he receives a man who has found Spider-man's costume; he publishes the news.

Peter and his aunt go to the cemetery to visit his uncle's tomb. After they get back and the aunt makes him tea (NwhWY), he reveals to her that the uncle died because of his recklessness.

Harry is alone, drinking (NwhUY), angry at Spider-Man. Octavius, now known as Doctor Octopus, goes to visit him. He grabs him by the neck making him drop his drink (KwhUY), which he grabs and drinks (KwhMA). Octopus wants the precious substance that he needs to make his machine work. Harry agrees to give it to him if he brings him Spider-Man alive. Harry tells him to get the whereabouts of the superhero from Peter.

In the meanwhile, Aunt May convinces Peter about the need for heroes to give the example, so Peter starts practicing again, but at first with little success.

Mary Jane invites Peter for coffee (NwhWY) to talk about them, but Peter knows he cannot be there for her, so he tells her he does not love her. While they are talking Octopus attacks them: he kidnaps Mary Jane to force Peter to find Spider-Man and to tell him to meet him. Out of rage and determination, Peter finds his powers back and fights against Octopus, but he loses and he is brought to Harry in his penthouse, where we see him drinking (NwhUY). Harry gives Octopus the substance he wants but when he discovers that Spider-Man is Peter he cannot push himself to kill him. Spiderman goes to Octopus's secret lab to stop him and save Mary Jane. With the help of Peter, Octavius frees himself from the control the mechanical arms have over him and destroys the machine right when it is about to explode. Peter loses his mask and reveals his identity to Mary Jane, who decides not to marry John. She does not show up at the wedding and goes to Peter; Jameson tells his wife to call the caterer to tell her not to open the caviar (NwhMA). In the meanwhile Harry finds his father's secret laboratory.

### **SPIDER-MAN 3**

Director: Sam Raimi

Writers: Sam Raimi and Ivan Raimi (screenplay); Stan Lee and Steve Ditko (comic book)

Release Date: 4 May 2007 (USA)

Company: Columbia Pictures

#### **Commentary**

The third installment in the series, where Peter fights against the Sand Man and a symbiotic evil creature from outer space, presents the same uses of food as in the previous films. Food is a symbol of normalcy (Peter's friend Henry eating cotton candy) and bonding, even with sexual undertones (Henry and Peter's love interest Mary Jane cooking together and having a good time while Peter grows increasingly estranged).

Just like in the other movies, food sharing can also become the occasion for frustration and humiliation. When Peter decides to propose to Mary Jane in a fancy French restaurant, where he already feels intimidated, she turns him down. Later on, when Harry decides to hurt him, he invites him for coffee and reveals to him that he is actually dating Mary Jane. Peter finally acts up in a restaurant and jazz bar where Mary Jane is working as a waitress.

#### **Synopsis**

Mary Jane debuts in a musical, while Harry prepares his revenge against Peter, absorbing the substance that his father had invented to become much stronger. A

meteorite falls, and out of it come a black moving substance that sticks to Peter's scooter. In the meanwhile, a thief, Flint Marko (Thomas Haden Church) is chased by the police; the man breaks secretly into his home to see his sick daughter. Hungry, he is getting some bread in the kitchen (IwhWA), when his wife and daughter wake up. We learn he is accused of killing somebody; although he proclaims his innocence the wife kicks him out. While he is running from the police he ends up in a sand pit that is being used for a physics experiment; the exposure to the experiment transforms his molecular make-up, so that his body is now made of sand, capable of changing and shifting.

Peter goes to visit Aunt May, to tell her he wants to propose to Mary Jane. While she is preparing him some tea and a sandwich (NwhWY), she tells about her life with her deceased husband. "A man has to be understanding, and put his wife before himself. Can you do that, Peter?" She gives him her engagement ring for Mary Jane. While he is riding his scooter home, Peter is attacked by Harry, who is using his father's weapons. During the fights, Harry bangs his head and loses his recent memories, including the fact that he thinks that Peter is responsible for his father's death. When they get back to Harry's penthouse, Peter asks him to go to the kitchen to watch a game and get something to eat (NwhWY). They are friends again.

The morning after, critics shred Mary Jay's performance and the producers replace her. She starts being jealous of Peter/Spider-Man's popularity, especially when the city organizes a parade to celebrate him. A new photographer trying to replace Peter at the Daily Bugle, Eddie (Topher Grace), is there too: both he and Peter need to get good pictures of Spider-Man to get a staff position at the newspaper. Also Harry is at the parade; he goes to say hi to Mary Jane while eating some cotton candy (NwhUY). The sandman disrupts the parade by trying to rob an armored van.

To propose to MJ, Peter makes a reservation at a very swanky French restaurant. When he gets there, he is clearly intimidated (NwhWY). He asks the maitre d' to bring the champagne at his signal, with the engagement ring at the bottom of her glass (NwhWY). But Mary Jane gets angry with Peter for being self-absorbed and leaves him there alone, with the ring in the glass (NwhWY). Peter is hurt and angry also because he finds out that the Sandman is the one who killed his uncle. While he sleeps, the black substance from the meteorite gets control of him: his costume becomes all black, and he surrenders to his wildest instincts, chasing the Sandman to kill him. Even his landlord gets scared of him, so when he goes to talk to him he offers him an orange (NwhWA). When Peter apologizes, he says that he can make up for the rent by buying him pizza (NwhWA).

Mary Jane finds a job as a waitress/singer in a jazz club. She feels alone so Harry invites her over and asks his butler to go get some food (NwhUY). As soon as she gets to his penthouse, he asks her if she is hungry (KwhUY) and he starts cooking for her (KwhUY). She joins him and they cook together (NwhUY). To amuse her, he tries to flip the omelet, but he lets it fall on the floor (NwhUY). Eventually they kiss but they both feel bad about it. The emotion brings back Harry's memories and his will to hurt Peter, so he forces Mary Jane to break up with Peter. He and Peter meet to talk over coffee (NwhWUY); Harry tells Peter that he is the other guy Mary Jane has fallen in love with. Peter leaves very upset, while Harry keeps on eating pie alone (NwhUY). When a waitress asks him, while pouring the coffee (NwhUY): "How's the pie?" (NwhUY) he compliments it, smiling and saying: "So good"(NwhUY), also referring to the taste of

revenge (NwhUY).

Peter lets anger get hold of him. He shows up at Harry's penthouse while he is fixing himself a drink (NwhUY). Harry offers Peter a drink (NwhUY). They fight violently and Peter overtakes him.

Peter sees a false picture of Spiderman stealing, taken by Eddie, the new photographer. We see Eddie celebrating and drinking with the other people at the Daily Bugle (NwhMY), pouring some champagne to a woman talking about his success (NwhMY). Peter humiliates him showing to everybody that the picture is a fake.

The thing from outer space is taking total control of Peter. We see him talking over the phone with a professor about it, while his young female neighbor gives him cookies (NwhWY) that he compliments (NwhWY); then he asks her for more cookies and milk (NwhWY). He gets the staff job at the paper: we see him sitting at a desk with his feet on it, unwrapping and eating a candy. (NwhWY)

Peter finally manages to get rid of the thing, but it takes control of Eddie, full of hate for Peter, and turns him into a monster, Venom, who teams up with the Sandman to kill Spider-Man. Of course, Mary Jane is the bait. Peter goes to ask for help from Harry, who refuses it, but then his butler tells him that Peter is not responsible for his father's death, so he eventually joins Peter in the fight against the two villains and dies in battle, but Peter defeats Venom while Sandman just gives up.

## **I AM LEGEND**

Director: Francis Lawrence

Writers: Mark Protosevich and Akiva Goldsman (screenplay), Richard Matheson (Novel)

Release Date: 14 December 2007 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

This adaptation of the Richard Matheson's novel by the same name is a tale of desperation and hope. Robert Neville is potentially the only survivor of a virus that has turned human beings into cannibalistic monsters. He fights to survive in order to find a vaccine that can change the destiny of humanity, living in fear of being devoured. Eventually he sacrifices himself to allow the vaccine he has found to reach human hands.

Food is an anchor to life as it used to be, since it sets Neville apart from the other survivors, now feeding on human flesh. He does not suffer from lack of food, but fresh ingredients are hard to come by: we see him in a field of corn in Manhattan, and rifle hunting in a sport car. However, he has lost the sense of the value of food sharing with other human beings. We see him cooking for himself and his dog, which he tries to convince to eat vegetables. When he meets a woman and her child, she prepares breakfast, but he burst out in anger when she uses bacon. He tries to justify himself saying that he had spared it for a special occasion, but both he and the woman knows that sharing food has been perceived as an intrusion in his personal sphere.

### **Synopsis**

A mortal and very contagious virus has developed from what was thought to be a vaccine against cancer. We see New York totally empty with the exception of animals and only one red sport car, driven by a black man, Robert Neville (Will Smith) with a rifle and a German shepherd. He is hunting deer (IbIUA) but a lion jumps out of nowhere and kills his prey. It is sunset and he has to go back to his place. He shuts all doors and



windows. He wears a white apron on his T-shirt showing a muscular and fit body while he fixes dinner for himself and his dog (DbIUA). The kitchen in his Washington Square high end brownstone is well kept and well stocked. He takes the apron off, then puts his plate on a table and the dog's on the floor. He eats while watching old tapes on TV (DbIUA). When he sees his dog moving stuff around in her dish he tells her: "Eat your vegetables. Don't just push them around, eat them. I'm not playing. You will eat your vegetables or we'll sit here all night" (DbIUA). He eventually caves in. While he is giving her a bath he tells her "You're gonna eat twice as many vegetables tomorrow night, all right? Deal" (DbIUA). He closes iron curtains all around the house, looking scared. We see him trying to fall asleep in the bathtub together with his dog, while we hear screams outside.

Flashback to when the crisis started, and he is trying to bring his wife and daughter to safety away from New York. He was a military colonel, so he had to stay. Through a series of flashback at different points of the movie we find out that his wife and daughter have been killed in the helicopter that was taking them out of Manhattan.

The following morning we see him working out. He goes downstairs in a lab, where is performing experiments on rats that seem to suffer from some weird disease. Then he goes out, driving a van this time to get movies from a rental store where only mannequins are left. He visits an empty house, and he checks the kitchen cabinets for food (NbIUA). He is happy for the variety he finds (NbIUA). "See that? Salmon. Wow, actual Spam. You'll get some of that later."

Every day he broadcasts radio messages, saying that he can be found at a certain spot everyday at midday and that he can provide food, shelter, and security (NbIUA). We realize he is fighting against other humans being that have been transformed by the virus into beastly creatures that are scared of light and that eventually kill his dog.

He starts losing it, and attacks the mutants at night. He gets hurt but is saved by somebody. When he comes to, it is daylight, he is lying on his couch at home, and his wound has been taken care of. In his kitchen a woman is cooking breakfast for a boy and for him (KbIUWhMC). She has used powdered eggs and the bacon she has found. He is taken aback and suspicious, but he hesitantly sits down to share the meal (KbIUWhMC). She tells him they are on their way to Vermont, to the survivor's colony in a safe zone. He does not believe in its existence (KbIUWhMC): he gets mad at her and throws the dish and its content against the furniture (KbIUA). All he can say is "I was saving the bacon. I was saving it" (KbIUA).

He is not ready to go with them: New York is ground zero, where he thinks he can find a cure. While he is working in the lab, she brings him coffee (NbIUA). While they are talking, the house is attacked by a huge number of mutants. They penetrate the house, trying to bite and eat Robert. (KbIUA) When the creatures have almost reached them, Robert realizes that he has actually found a vaccine. He sacrifices himself to let the woman and the child escape, carrying the vaccine. The two eventually make it to the safe zone in Vermont.

## **TRANSFORMERS**

Director: Michael Bay

Writers: Roberto Orci and Alex Kurtzman

Release Date: 3 July 2007 (USA)

Company: DreamWorks

### **Commentary**

A battle between good and evil transformers, mechanical living creatures from outer space, is fought on earth. Teenager Sam, his girlfriend and other young people are involved in the combat, which ends with the victory of the good transformers. Food plays a very minor role in this movie, since the robots are the real protagonists in the narrative. However, food is used to give depth to the male characters. While a group of soldiers is flown into the Middle East, they talk among themselves about dating and what they would like to eat when they get back to the civil life; they also reminisce of their favorite foods and making fun of each other's food preferences.

In another scene, the hacker Glen wants to show his interrogators that he is not afraid and he has nothing to hide, by devouring a plate full of donuts in different flavors placed on table in an interrogation room. "They put the plate in front of you to test your guilt. If you don't touch it you're guilty. I ate the whole plate." But when the interrogators arrive, he cracks accusing his friend Meg of pulling him into the mess they are in.

### **Synopsis**

A group of soldiers are being flown to their mission in Qatar. While they fly they talk among themselves about dates and what they would like to eat when they get back to civil life. Especially a Hispanic soldier is very keen on foods that his mom made, like alligator etouffe (IhiWY). They make fun of him (IhiWY). A black soldier complains that he is tired of hearing about eating gators and crickets, and that he would never eat at the Hispanic soldier's mother's place (IblWY). "Alligators are known to have the most succulent flesh; con un poco de arroz con abichuelas..." the guy goes on, slipping to Spanish when he reminisces of the flavors (IhiWY). A white guy remembers weekends, with hot dogs and beer (IwhWY). When they get to their destination in the desert, the base camp is attacked by a helicopter that can transform into a metal giant. Only the soldiers that have just arrived escape, but out in the desert a huge mechanical scorpion attacks them.

In the meanwhile a young man, Sam (Shia La Beouf), descendant of an arctic explorer, is trying to impress Mikaela (Megan Fox), with his newly bought used car, while a young analyst, Maggy (Rachale Taylor), with the help of a friend of hers, Glen (Anthony Anderson), a black computer expert, realizes that somebody is trying to steal secrets from the computer systems on Air Force One, the presidential airplane. They get arrested for hacking into top-secret files. Cut to a plate full of donuts in different flavors placed on a table: Maggy and Glen are held alone in an interrogation room, and a plate of donuts has been placed on the table in front of them. While the woman is not hungry, the young black man greedily eat them all (NblMY) to show their interrogators that he is not afraid and he has nothing to hide. "They put the plate in front of you to test your guilt. If you don't touch it you're guilty. I ate the whole plate" (NblMY). But when the interrogators arrive, he cracks and accuses the woman of involving him.

Sam's car is stolen and the day after, while Sam is having some milk for breakfast (NwhMT), it drives back into the driveway. Sam is so surprised he drops the milk jug (NwhMT). It turns out that his old car is actually Bumblebee, an alien being, a living transforming machine, which has come to earth to prepare the arrival of a group of other transformers. They are trying to stop evil beings from their same planet, the Decepticons,

led by Megatron, who had fallen on earth in the past looking for a cube that would give him the ultimate power. An ancestor of Sam's had actually found him and the cube, and their position had got etched on his glasses by the robot's navigation system. Sam and Mikaela get arrested by a secret government organization in charge of hiding the aliens' existence.

Eventually, the soldiers who had survived the first attack, Sam, Mikaela, Maggy and Glen are all taken to the dam where Megatron and the cube have been hidden by the US government, who had found them in the ice thanks to the boy's ancestor. Also the boy's car/transformer Bumblebee has been made prisoner and taken there. At this point Megatron breaks free and the Decepticons attack. The government officials understand that they need to free Bumblebee; the other good transformers join him and the humans to defeat the Decepticons. The final battle ensues, also with the intervention of the US air forces. Eventually Sam sticks the cube inside the energy core in the chest of Megatron, destroying it. Earth is safe and the good transformers decide to stay on Earth.

### **The Golden Compass**

Director: Chris Weitz

Writers: Chris Weitz (screenplay) and Philip Pullman (novel)

Release Date: 7 December 2007 (USA)

Company: New Line Cinema

#### **Commentary**

A young girl living in a parallel universe is involved in a mortal combat to control the minds and souls of the inhabitants of her world. She also discovers that her mother and her father are not good people, and they are very much key actors in the ongoing battle.

Although the main characters of the movie are a young girl, Lyra, and her mother, many male characters, both children and adults, revolve around them. Like in other adventure movies, food is used as an instrument for cunning and deceit. At the beginning of the movie Lyra's father is almost poisoned by his adversaries; her mother uses a dinner party to create a web of alliances and to reinforce her political power. Later on, we see kidnapped children eating together before being submitted to cruel experiments. However, the usual ambivalence about food is visible: we also see Lyra sharing a plum with her male friend Roger and playing with the pits.

#### **Synopsis**

The action takes place in a parallel universe, where human beings have their souls walking by them independently, in the form of animals called daemons. Children's daemons can change forms, and then stabilize when they become adults. "Dust" connects this universe to others. There exist machines capable of seeing the truth, called alethiometers, but the political power that controls that universe, the Magisterium, has destroyed them all in fear that their power may be undermined by the discovery of dust. Only one compass remains. The main character in the movie is Lyra, a young motherless girl who enjoys to play with boys and who lives in a college where her uncle has left her. When her uncle Asriel comes to visit the college, the Magisterium tries to convince the scholars to stop Asriel from his quest for dust. Lyra hides in a closet, and sees a member of the Magisterium putting a white powder, probably poison, into a bottle of wine. (KwhUA). The wine is a special Tokaj vintage that the College Master has decided to

offer to Lord Asriel to welcome him (KwhUO). Asriel pours the wine and is about to drink it (IwhUA) when Lyra comes out of the closet and smashes the glass out of his hands to save him (IwhUA). One afternoon, while walking on the roof with Roger, a male child friend of hers, she shares plums with him (NwhWC) and they discuss the disappearance of children, apparently taken by mysterious beings called “gobblers”. That evening, during the meal she shares with the college scholars (NwhUO), a beautiful blond woman, Miss Culter, arrives. She seems to understand Lyra’s free spirit and asks the master to let Lyra go with her to the North as her assistant. When she is about to leave, the master of the college gives her the alethiometer, asking her to keep it hidden from Ms. Culter.

After a while, she realizes that Ms. Culter is just keeping her around without taking her to the North and that Ms. Culter actually controls the gobblers that capture the children to submit them to a mysterious procedure called intercision. Lyra decides to run away and in her flight she meets all sort of characters including witches and armored ice bears. She goes to the place in the North where all the kids are kept to be used in experiments on separation from the daemon. She pretends to be lost and is taken to the dining room where all the kids are eating (DwhxC) and where she meets Roger again. She almost gets her daemon separated from her, but Ms. Culter arrives and stops the process. She is in fact Lyra’s mother, and her father is Lord Asriel. Lyra manages to destroy the experimental station and to help all the kids escape.

## **GLADIATOR**

Director: Ridley Scott

Writers: David Franzoni

Release Date: 5 May 2000 (USA)

Company: DreamWorks

### **Commentary**

Maximus, a general serving under the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, refuses to obey the emperor’s son (and killer) Commodus. His family is massacred and he is sold as a slave. He becomes a famous gladiator and eventually kills the new emperor, even though it costs him his life.

The extreme violence of the movie and its high testosterone levels are balanced by the gladiator’s ideal/fantasy of a rustic life in his countryside estate. As a general, he is not involved in food production, but he often reminisces and dreams of the products of his land. Food is used as a pastime: notables and senators nibble and drink while watching the combats in the Colosseum. We also see the slave gladiators sharing meals and having fun while eating, underlying the positive values of food. However, the gladiators live in constant fear that they will become food for the beasts they fight against in the arena.

### **Synopsis**

General Maximus (Russell Crowe) is leading the Romans in the final battle to conquer Germany on behalf of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius after 12 years of war. The movie opens with a shot of Maximus’s hands touching wheat. Before the attack, he says: “Three weeks from now, I’ll be harvesting my crops. Imagine where you will be?” (IwhUA). After the victory the emperor calls the general and asks him to describe his home in Spain; the general goes on talking about grapes, olives, apples, figs, and the

herbs that grow in his orchard (KwhUA). The ailing emperor Marucs Aurelius (Richard Harris) wants him as his successor instead of his son Commodus (Joaquin Phoenix), whom he does not trust. The emperor makes his intentions clear to his son, who suffocates him and announces that his father has chosen him as the new emperor right before his death. Maximus refuses to pledge allegiance to Commodus and goes back home. Commodus's sister Lucilla (Connie Nielsen), who in the past had had an affair with Maximus, knows that her father's death did not happen as Commodus explained, and so does Maximus, who is condemned to death. The general escapes death and runs back home. We see his son and his wife playing with a horse among the men harvesting wheat (DwhWA), but by the time Maximus arrives his family has been slain and his farm destroyed by Commodus. He is kidnapped by slave traders; on the chariot that takes him to Africa a black slave, Juba (Djimon Hounsou) tells him: "Don't die or they'll feed you to the lions; they're more valuable than we are" (NwhUA). He and Juba are sold to a gladiator trainer, Proximo (Oliver Reed). Although nobody knows his true identity, Maximus proves to be a good fighter.

Meanwhile, the new emperor decides to impress the people of Rome by organizing 150 days of circus games. The senators discuss the news while eating grapes (NwhUO) and sipping wine during a break (NwhUO). Proximo decides to take his men to fight for the games in Rome. Juba is homesick: "My country is somewhere over there. My wife is preparing food, my daughter is carrying water from the river" (NblWA). During the first fight in the Colosseum, Proximo and other notables nibble and drink while watching the combats (NwhMA). Maximus manages to organize the gladiators in his team, leading them to victory against all odds. At the end of the fight he reveals his identity to everybody including the emperor and becomes a celebrity. During a meal, one of his companions pretends to be poisoned by food (NwhWA), scaring Maximus and Juba (NwhblWMA). After laughing, while they eat they discuss the situation (NblWA).

The senators realize that has Maximus become so popular that they involve him in a plot against the emperor. Commodus discovers and thwarts it: all the gladiators on the team are killed and Maximus is taken prisoner. Commodus decides to fight him in the arena, but before the combat he wounds him so he will be able to kill him more easily. In the end Maximus kills him even if he dies in the effort, dreaming of his crops, his farm and his family.

## **DIE ANOTHER DAY**

Director: Lee Tamahori

Writers: Neal Purvis

Release Date: 22 November 2002

Company: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM)

### **Commentary**

James Bond fights (and wins) against North Korean weapon traffickers that control a deadly satellite, which is able to concentrate solar heat to incinerate specific objectives.

In the whole movie, food is used to show off Bond's masculinity. We see Bond constantly asking for drinks, and using them to attract women. Also other powerful and rich men are shown drinking and partying with young attractive women around. When food or drink are shared with a woman, it is to enhance a sexual experience, like when the female agent Jinx slices and shares a pear with Bond in bed. Bond flaunts his

knowledge of refined and rare food to underline his distinguished and high-class character. In a scene we see him barge into a hospital room through a window, walking on a patient's bed. The patient has got a bowl of fruit: Bond picks a grape and chews it while exiting the room.

### **Synopsis**

Secret Agent James Bond, also known as 007 (Pierce Brosnan), intercepts a delivery of diamonds from a non-disclosed African country to a young North Korean colonel that is secretly going to barter them for weapons. 007 replaces the messenger carrying the precious stones; discovered, he manages to escape while being chased by the North Korean military in the midst of mayhem and destruction. The young colonel's father, a general, takes him prisoner and tortures him. After 14 months of imprisonment, the general trades him for a young officer who is a friend of his son's and who had thwarted a meeting between North Korea and China causing a few casualties.

Bond is determined to uncover who is trying to frame him. He arrives in Hong Kong, stopping in a luxury hotel where the manager recognizes him in the lobby. Bond asks him for his favorite tailor and some food (NwhUA). The manager replies: "The lobster's good. With quail eggs and slices seaweeds" (NasUA). It is actually food that acknowledges Bond's status and is meant to give him a special welcome (NasUA). "And if there's any left, 61 Bollinger", replies Bond, asking for a bottle that shows his knowledge of champagne and his desire to celebrate his survival (NwhUA). The camera cuts to a bottle of champagne in an ice bucket on a table near a crystal bowl of fruit and expensive tailored shirts, but we do not actually see Bond drinking or eating. The hotel's manager reveals to be a member of the Chinese intelligence, and Bond makes a pact with him: if he helps him get him back into North Korea he will get rid of Chao, who had killed Chinese agents.

Chao has fled to Havana in Cuba. Bond follows him to the island of Los Organos, where a doctor performs experiments in gene therapy to increase the life expectancy of the Cuban leaders and of rich westerners. Bond stops on the coast in front of the island, where at a bar he starts talking to a gorgeous black woman, Jinx (Halle Berry) who just came out of the water. He is sipping a mojito (NwhUA) and offers her one. In the same bar a group of white men is drinking (NwhUA) in the company of younger local women, acting obnoxiously. While Jinx and Bond are having sex, the woman pulls out a knife, but she only uses it to cut a pear that she feeds to herself and Bond (NwhUA). In the morning, the agent manages to get to the island despite all controls, and enters the hospital through a window, walking on a patient's bed. The patient has a bowl of fruit, Bond picks a grape and chews it while exiting the room (NwhUA).

Bond's quest leads him to Gustav Graves, a diamond smuggler in London. On his flight to the UK, a female flight attendant serves a Martini to Bond (NwhUA), who sips it (NwhUA) while perusing a magazine. After being invited by Graves to Iceland for a scientific demonstration, Bond is summoned by his superior in a secret base in London and given new technological weapons, including a car that can become invisible.

In Iceland Bond is welcome in an ice palace built for the occasion; also Jinx gets there. During a party Bond asks for a Martini (NwhUA) and offers a mojito to Jinx (NwhUA). We learn that Graves is actually the Korean general Moon's son who has changed appearance by undergoing the genetic therapy. The demonstration is about Icarus, an orbiting satellite able to bring light and warmth wherever and whenever on

earth by reflecting the sun's light. Jinx is taken prisoner, Bond saves her but he is almost killed while trying to get away. He also discovers that who betrayed him in Korea is a rogue secret agent that is actually working with Graves. Graves/Moon escapes to North Korea, where Bond and Jinx are sent to destroy him. Graves is trying to use Icarus to allow the invasion of South Korea but eventually Bond and Jinx thwart his attempt, killing at the same time the rogue agent.

### **CASINO ROYALE**

Director: Martin Campbell

Writers: Neal Purvis, Robert Wade and Paul Haggis (screenplay); Ian Fleming (novel)

Release Date: 17 November 2006 (USA)

Company: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM)

#### **Commentary**

Bond fights against Le Chiffre, a scarred gambler that also is the unofficial baker for international terrorism. Like in the previous movies of the series, food is mostly used to allow Bond to show off his coolness and style. We see the agent sipping drinks during card games, picking up flutes of champagne from a waitress walking by as he enters a café, and trying to enchant Vesper, his female travel companion, during a dinner on a train. However, this movie also plays on the dangers of ingestion: during a card game, Le Chiffre's girlfriend puts poison in Bond's drink and he almost dies

#### **Synopsis**

Mbale, Uganda. A little boy fetches two cokes (DbllC) and brings them to a black man in uniform who offers one to a white man in a suit (IblWA). The black man opens a bottle and drinks it while the two talk business (NwhUAbIWA). The action moves to Madagascar, where James Bond (Daniel Craig) is chasing a black man who is connected with some kind of traffic into the embassy of an African country, which he eventually blows up. He retrieves a phone that is a clue to uncover international trafficking of weapons and money that revolves around a scarred gambler known as Le Chiffre (Mads Mikkelsen).

The clues lead Bond to a luxury hotel in the Bahamas and to another gambler, Mr. Dimitrios (Simon Abkarian). While he drives to the hotel, we see men cooking (DbIWA) and selling food (DbIWA) on the side of the street. Following Dimitrios to Miami, Bond thwarts a terrorist plot organized by Le Chiffre, who is in reality a sort of banker for terrorists groups and is going to try to win money at a high-stakes poker tournament at Casino Royale in Montenegro. Bond goes there to participate and to stop Le Chiffre from winning. The UK government gives him the money necessary to participate through Vesper (Eva Green), a beautiful treasury agent. The two meet on the train, chatting while Bond sips a drink (NwhUA).

Once in Montenegro, Bonds meet with Mathis (Giancarlo Giannini), a local detective. As soon as they arrive in the cafe where they are supposed to meet, Bond takes two flutes of sparkling wine from a waitress walking by (NwhUA). They discuss their plan in front of their drinks (NwhMUA). The card game begins; during a break, both Mathis and Bong get a drink (NwhMUA), while Le Chiffre is attacked by people to whom he owes money. Bond intervenes and saves him. While washing the blood off, he drinks some whisky to calm down and numb the pain (NwhUA).

Bond loses a huge amount of money, and Vesper is not ready to give him any

more. He orders a stiff drink (NwhUA). One of the players turns out to be a representative of the CIA ready to give him the necessary funds. The game begins again. Le Chiffre's girlfriend puts poison in Bond's drink (NwhUA). A waitress brings it to him (NhUA). He drinks it and almost dies (NwhUA), but Vesper saves him. Bond goes back to the game and wins. Bond invites Vesper to dinner to celebrate (NwhUA). After dinner, Le Chiffre kidnaps both Vesper and Bond, and tortures the agent to get the password for the account where the game money has been wired, but he is killed by one of his clients.

Bond wakes up in a hospital. He is visited by an officer from the Swiss bank where the game money is kept. Bond wonders at the fact the man did not bring chocolate (NwhUA). He slowly recovers and enjoys his love story with Vesper, giving his resignations as a secret agent.

They travel to Venice. When they get there, Vesper gets all the money: she is being blackmailed by Bond's enemies, and eventually she dies while Bond tries to save her. However, her cell phone leads Bond to the man behind her death, Mr. White, who is also Le Chiffre's boss. Bond shoots him.

## **TITANIC**

Director: James Cameron

Writer: James Cameron

Release Date: 19 December 1997

Company: Twentieth Century-Fox

### **Commentary**

The movie is a reenactment of the disaster of the Titanic. On the ship, the poor immigrant Jack meets a high-class girl, Rose, who is traveling with her fiancée. During the trip, Jack helps her understand her true needs and the joys of freedom, but the shipwreck puts an end to their romance.

In this film, food is often used to illustrate power or class relationships, including gender inequalities. For example we see Cal, Rose's fiancée, trying to order for her during a meal, as if he knew perfectly what food she likes. In another scene, when he gets angry with her, Cal throws breakfast on the floor. During a dinner with Jack, Cal tries his best to use food to embarrass his rival for his lack of refinement and familiarity with upscale dishes. Jack is confused and embarrassed by the food and the tableware but a rich American lady, Molly, helps him navigate the complex meal. "How would you like your caviar, sir?" asks a waiter. Jack answers: "No caviar for me, I never liked it", refusing to share of the uppity food and atmosphere; instead he eats bread while talking to the other guests. During the whole meal his goal is not to look bad in front of Rose, even to impress her. After dinner Jack takes Rose to a dance in third class, where men and women drink beer together while having fun.

### **Synopsis**

The movie opens with the deep-sea operations to explore the relict of the Titanic at the bottom of the ocean, in search of lost treasures. The ship's safe is brought to the surface; the treasure hunters find no diamonds in it, but the drawing of a naked woman wearing a necklace, the "Ocean's Heart", which interests them. When the drawing is shown on TV, an old woman, Rose, recognizes herself in it. She flies with her grandchild Lizzy to the ship that is searching for the treasure to talk with Brock, the treasure hunter. She was traveling on the Titanic the day it sank, and she recognizes many of the objects



that have been found. She reminisces about what happened 84 years before.

Rose (Kate Winselt) is going back to America with her rich fiancée, Cal (Billy Zane). She is unhappy about her luxurious but empty life. Also Jack (Leonardo Dicaprio) is going, with his Italian friend Fabrizio, using tickets bought with the money won by playing cards. One day, Rose is having lunch with her mother, her fiancée, the engineers that designed the boat, and a rich American, Molly (Kathy Bates), at a very elegant table. Cal orders lamb for both “rare, with little mint sauce”, then he turns to Rose and says: “You like lamb, my dear, don’t you?” (NwhUY) Molly tells Rose: “You should cut his meat when you’re at it” (NwhUY). While eating, the engineers give all sorts of information about the ship (NwhMA).

One evening Rose is so desperate to be ready to throw herself overboard, but Jack stops her. Cal invites Jack to dinner to thank him for helping his fiancée. Molly dresses him up for dinner, giving him her son’s clothes. At first Jack is intimidated by the luxury of the first class, trying to imitate the behaviors of the people he observes. During the dinner, while a waiter serves them dinner (NwhWY), Rose’s mother and Cal try to belittle Jack (NwhUY), while Rose points out his talent as an artist. Jack is confused and embarrassed by the food and the tableware (NwhWY). Molly helps him navigate the complex meal. “How would you like you caviar, sir?” asks a waiter (NwhWA); Jack answers: “No caviar for me, I never liked it”, refusing to share of the uppity food and atmosphere; instead he eats bread while talking to the other guests (NwhWY). During the whole meal his goal is not to look bad in front of Rose, even to impress her (NwhWY). After dinner Jack takes Rose to a dance in third class. Men and women drink beer together while having fun (DwhWYA). Some of them are so drunk they fall. (DwhWA).

The following morning Rose and Cal are having breakfast (NwhUY), served by a young waitress (NwhUY). Cal gets mad and throws all the breakfast on the floor, humiliating and scaring Rose (NwhUY). Rose understands she cares for Jack and asks him to draw her naked, wearing only the diamond. Eventually they have sex. In the middle of the night an iceberg hits the ship, opening a hole in a side. Cal accuses Jack of stealing the diamond, and has him arrested. Jack is handcuffed to a pipe in a room, under surveillance. The engineers and the captain realize that the ship is going to sink, and they start the evacuation. Rose manages to free Jack and decides to stay with him. Too jealous to stand their love, Cal tries to shoot them, then he realizes he has left the diamond in the coat he had given Rose to protect her from the cold. When the ship sinks, eventually Jack and Rose fall in the icy water. They find a floating door but it cannot keep both, so Jack lets Rose get on while he hangs onto it. Jack dies, while Rose gets saved.

In the end of the movie, it turns out that Rose still has the diamond. She drops it into the ocean and then dies.

### **PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**

Director: Gore Verbinski

Writers: Ted Elliott & Terry Rossio

Release Date: 9 July 2003 (USA)

Company: Walt Disney Pictures

#### **Commentary**

Pirate Captain Jack Sparrow tries to take possession of the Black Pearl, the ship that captain Barbossa took from him. In his attempts, he meets William Turner, son of a

pirate, and Elizabeth Swann, daughter of the Governor of Port Royal, and together they unravel the mystery of a medallion that has condemned Barbossa and his crew to a life of semi-ghosts. Food is mainly used to underline the pirate life style, made of binge drinking and inordinate consumption, and to oppose the human characters that can actually eat food with the ghost-like pirates that cannot. Eating is also used to underline rank differences, or to interact with enemies, either to scare them or to convince them to cooperate.

### **Synopsis**

Young Elizabeth Swann is on a ship, singing about pirates. The first mate, Gibbs (Kevin McNally), tells her to stop because it could bring bad luck, then turns and drinks secretly from a flask (IwhWA). They save a young boy, Will Turner, from a burning ship. Elizabeth finds on him a medallion that indicates he is a pirate, but she hides it.

The movie moves ahead to a young Elizabeth (Keira Knightley), daughter the governor of Port Royal (Jonathan Pryce), who has become the object of the attentions of Commodore Norrington (Jack Davenport), while William Turner (Orlando Bloom), who does not know about his past, has become a blacksmith.

In the meanwhile Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) arrives and saves Elizabeth, who had fainted and fallen into the water, but he is taken prisoner. While Jack is in prison, the pirates of the Black Pearl under captain Barbossa (Jeffrey Rush) attack Port Royal and kidnap Elizabeth to bring her to Barbossa, who takes her medallion. William frees Jack so that he can lead him to the Black Pearl to free Elizabeth. They steal the Commodore's ship, the *Interceptor*, and sail away. Jack reveals to Will that his father was a pirate, Bootstrap Bill Turner. They first sail to Tortuga to get a crew. They meet the first mate Gibbs in a bar where men are drinking and fighting (DwhWA) and, while they drink (NwhWA), Jack tells him they are looking for the Black Pearl, making him almost spit his drink out (NwhWA): Jack counts on getting it back (Barbossa and the crew had mutinied and left him on an island right after they had discovered the location of an Aztec treasure) by using Will as leverage. They toast at the success of the endeavor (NwhWA).

In the meanwhile, on the Black Pearl, Barbossa sends for Elizabeth, forcing her to have dinner with him under the threat of having her have dine naked with the crew (NwhWA). The camera cuts to a pirate placing silverware and plates of refined food on a table (DwhWA); Barbossa uses food and wine to make Elizabeth get comfortable and get the information he wants (NwhWA). During dinner, he tells her the story of the medallion (KwhWA). It was part of a treasure in a chest the Aztecs gave Cortez to stop his slaughter; since the conquistador did not stop, the heathen gods put a curse on the treasure: every mortal that removes a single piece from that chest shall be punished for eternity. Barbossa and his men did not believe in the curse, so when they found the chest they spent the gold, but as time went by "drinks would not satisfy; food turned to ash in our mouths" (KwhWA). They turned into dead men living that cannot be killed and turn into skeletons under the moon. To end the curse, all the scattered pieces of the Aztec gold must be brought back to the chest and blood spilled on it to placate the heathen gods. The medallion is the final piece and the blood they want to use is hers. While telling Elizabeth the story, Barbossa turns into a skeleton drinks making the liquor falls through his bones, to scare her (NwhWA).

Gibbs, who drinks all the time also when working on the ship (DwhWA), has gathered a crew of misfits. They manage to get to the treasure's island: Will saves

Elizabeth, taking also the medallion and making the crew on the Interceptor believe that Jack is dead to make them leave.

Jack is on the Black Pearl; while eating an apple, he tries to convince Barbossa to give him back his ship (NwhWA), but the captain throws Jack's apple away (NwhWA) and orders his men to throw him to jail. The Black Pearl chases the Interceptor, and a battle begins. Barbosa wins, discovers that Will is Bootstrap Bill's son, gets the medallion back, and has Elizabeth and Jack walk the plank. The two end up on a desert island, used as a base for liquor smugglers, from which Jack had already been able to get away on rum smugglers' boats. When Elizabeth voices her despise, pointing out that the first time he had spent time on the island just drinking rum and laying on a beach (NwhWA), Jack shakes two bottles in his hands and makes fun of her saying "Welcome to the Caribbean" (NwhWA) and gives her a bottle (NwhWA). They drink together until Jack gets drunk (NwhWA), while she is only pretending. When Jack wakes up Elizabeth is burning the food and the drink (NwhWA) to make smoke signals and to get attention. Jack is upset at her for destroying the liquor, which she defines as a vile substance. The governor and the commodore saved them.

Eventually Elizabeth gets on the Black Pearl. Only two pirates are left there as sentinels, secretly eating the fancy food of the captain while on duty (NwhWA). Elizabeth frees Gibbs and the crew, Jack is condemned to be hanged but Will helps him escape on the Black Pearl. Will and Elizabeth declare their love to one another.

### **PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST**

Director: Gore Verbinski

Writers: Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio

Release Date: 7 July 2006 (USA)

Company: Walt Disney Pictures

#### **Commentary**

In the second movie of the series, William Turner meets his father Bill, now almost transformed into a sea creature and at the service of the former pirate Davy Jones. William has a new enemy, Lord Becket, the envoy of the King for the East India Company, who is actually looking for the chest where Davy Jones keeps his heart. The chest gives to those who possess it control over Davy Jones, and therefore, the Kraken, a destructive sea monster. As in the previous movie, excessive drinking and alcohol consumption illustrates the pirate lifestyle. This time, the fear of being eaten and becoming food plays an important role. The Kraken threatens to destroy and devour ships and sailors. In a very long sequence that often resorts ironically to the tropes of cannibalism in old movies, Jack Sparrow and his men are almost killed and eaten by savages on an island. We see Jack tied to a spit over fire, with spices to make him tastier, and women bringing fruit to accompany the meal.

#### **Synopsis**

On the day of their wedding, Will and Elizabeth are arrested by Lord Becket (Tom Hollander), the new envoy of the king for the East India Company, for helping Sparrow escape. On the Black Pearl, Jack is alone in his cabin; he wants to drink but the bottle he has is empty: "Why has the rum always gone?" (NwhWA) When he goes to get more, in the pantry he meets Bootstrap Bill Turner, Will's father, half transformed into a sea creature. "Is this a dream? No, if it were there'd be rum" says Jack (KwhWA). Bootstrap

gives him rum (KwhWA) and they drink together (KwhWA), while exchanging news and information (KwhWA). While they talk, Bill eats a sea snail (KwhWA), disgusting Jack. Bill tells him that he has been sent by Davey Jones, the former owner of the Black Pearl, whose servant he has become after being thrown in the sea strapped to a cannon. Davey wants revenge against Jack for taking his ship, and will send a terrible sea creature, the Kraken.

In the meanwhile Will goes to Tortuga looking for Jack; a black pirate, repairing a fishing net (NbkWA), tells him that Jack is on an island, while talking of spices for “delicious lamb boil” (NblWA). Will finds the Black Pearl on an island where Jack has landed to avoid the sea scourge. The pirate has been made chief by a tribe of natives who make Will and Jack’s crew prisoners and want to eat Jack because they believe he is a god in human form that needs to be liberated from his flesh (NwhWA). Trying to escape, Jack even seasons himself with some paprika he finds to show lack of fear (NwhWA). While running away, he steals a knife from a boy who was holding it, together with a fork, getting ready to eat him. The boy is upset of being denied his meal but also scared (NnaWC). Two adult women are holding trays of fruit to go with the meal, but they have to drop them when Jack throws a coconut at them (NwhWA), so they start throwing fruit back at him (NwhWA).

Jack, Will and his men flee the island on the Black Pearl. On the ship Jack tells will they need to find a key to save Elizabeth. They go visit Tia Dalma, a black sorceress with whom Jack had had a relationship. The sorceress reveals to them that the key opens a chest where the pirate Davey Jones has put his heart after carving it out of his chest to stop the pain caused by a cruel woman. He cannot get to land but once every 10 years, so the sorceress gives Jack a jar of dirt to protect him from Jones. She also explains to Jack that the compass he has points to whatever its owner wants most. So now they have to find Jones’s ship, the Flying Dutchman, to get the key.

Jones, which has become a haunted creature belonging to the sea, takes Will prisoner and tells Jack he has 3 days to get him 100 mortal souls in exchange for him. On the Flying Dutchman, Will meets his father. They discover that Jones carries the key and that they will have to stab his heart in the chest to free the ship. Will steals the key, jumps in the sea, and is rescued by a merchant ship; when Jones realizes it, he unleashes the Kraken, a huge octopus-like creature. The creature destroys the ship but Will escapes, hiding himself on Jones’s ship.

In the meanwhile the governor manages to help his daughter escape, but Beckett takes him prisoner. Elizabeth goes to Beckett and forces him to sign the letters freeing Jack and Will. Beckett is also looking for the chest with Jones’s heart, which allows who owns it to control all the seas through the Kraken. Elizabeth gets on board of a ship where she pretends to be a man and makes the crew believe that there is a ghost on board who wants to go to Tortuga, where also Jack is heading to get the 99 men for Jones. As usual, men are partying, brawling, and drinking. (DwhMA) Among the men, Jack meets Norrington, now a drunkard that does not hesitate to gulp down rum shamelessly (IwhUA). A brawl ensues with men throwing each other food and bottles of rum (NwhWA). Elizabeth reveals herself to Jack, who as soon as he sees her tells Gibbs to hide the rum (NwhWA). They get on the Black Pearl together, looking for Will. While drinking (NwhWA), Jack asks Elizabeth to marry him.

Jack, Elizabeth and Norrington land on the island here the chest is buried, finding it

while also Jones arrives there to retrieve it. After a long fight, Jones's crew recover the chest but eventually it turns out that Norrington has stolen the heart to bring it to Beckett. Jones unleashes the Kraken against the Black Pearl but under Will's guidance the beast is temporarily defeated, although to do it the crew has had to give up all the rum on board. (NwhWA). They have to abandon the Black Pearl to it, and Elizabeth shackles Jack to its mast because the beast was actually after him. The beast swallows him with the whole the ship (NwhWA). All his crew, Will and Eli go to Tia Dalma; after they all toast to the memory of Jack (NwhWA), the sorceress tells them they can bring him back from the dead, but they will have to sail to the end of the world. She also give them a captain, Barbossa, whom she brought back from death and who is biting an apple with appetite while all the others mourn (KwhWA).

### **PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END**

Director: Gore Verbinski

Writers: Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio

Release Date: 25 May 2007

Company: Walt Disney Pictures

#### **Commentary**

In the last part of the trilogy, after saving Jack Sparrow from the a parallel universe, Elizabeth becomes a queen of the pirates, while William Turner is struck by an incantation that condemns him to touch land only every ten years. In the most interesting and original scene of the movie, we see many manifestations of Jack fighting against each other in the nightmarish world from which he is delivered by Elizabeth and William. One of his many selves is getting ready to eat half a peanut, which he clearly craves, when he is killed by another, who then eats it by himself. Besides that, food is used in the same way as in the previous movies.

#### **Synopsis**

Beckett imposes his dictatorship in Port Royal. Barbossa, Will and Elizabeth go to Singapore to call the nine pirates lords (Sparrow is one of them) to unite against Beckett. While they are talking to the pirate lord of Singapore, Sao Feng, they are attacked by the English troops; while escaping, they destroy the stalls where men are selling food (DasWA). It turns out that Beckett, who now controls Davey Jones because he has his heart and has reinstated Norrington as admiral, is spying on them.

Barbossa's crew sails on a sanpan to the world's end, which turns out to be inside Davey Jones's chest. In this nightmarish world, we see many Jack fighting against each other. One is getting ready to eat half a peanut, which he clearly craves (NwhWA), when he is killed by another (NwhWA), who then eats it by himself (NwhWA). They save Jack and the Black Pearl but they are stuck in this weird dimension. They run out of both water and rum (NwhWA) when they realize they have to turn the boat upside down to go back to the real world.

They are taken prisoner by Sao Feng, who in Singapore has made a deal with Will that allows him to become captain of the Black Pearl to save his father. Jack is taken to Beckett. Beckett pours two drinks to toast and convince him to give information about the pirates' court (NwhUA) but Jack drinks them both (NwhWA). Jack escapes back to the Black Pearl and makes Will prisoner, while Elizabeth goes with Sao Feng, who thinks she is Calypso, goddess of the seas. When they are attacked by Norrington, Sao

Feng is hurt to death but before dying makes Elizabeth captain and gives her one of the 9 objects that bound Calypso in human form. Calypso is actually the black sorceress Tia Dalma. Elizabeth is taken prisoner and in jail she meets Will's father, who is literally becoming part of the ship. Norrington dies to free her, giving the sampan back to her. Jack throws Will out of the Black Pearl, but Beckett rescues him. They are having tea (KwhUAWY) with China cups, silver spoons and dainty crockery, very unusual on a pirate ship, to show Beckett's control (KwhUA) when he summons Jones. It turns out that Jones was in love with Calypso/Tia Dalma, but since he had felt she had betrayed him he told the pirate brethren how to bind her. Now he is afraid the high court of the pirates will release her. A teacup gets banged out of Will's hand (KwhWY) by Jones, who vents his disagreement (KwhWA). In the end they agree that Will will take them to the pirate court and give them Calypso in exchange for Elizabeth and his father.

The Pirate Court takes place but the leaders fight about what to do. Eventually they elect Elizabeth king of the pirates and vote to go to war against the East India Company, while Barbossa takes all the objects that bind Calypso. Barbossa, Jack and Elizabeth meet on a tiny strip of sand with Will, Beckett and Jones to negotiate. Jack is exchanged for Will. Jack is imprisoned, and he meets again with his double, including the one who had been stolen the half peanut and who finally gets to eat it (NwhWA). Barbossa frees Calypso from her human bonds, and Will tells her that Jones betrayed her by telling the pirate leaders how to bind her. Elizabeth leads the pirates to battle. Beckett is having tea with all its accoutrements on the deck of his ships (NwhUA) when the battle begins. Calypso creates a maelstrom. Jack escapes stealing the chest with Jones's heart, so Jones chases him, while on the Black Pearl Elizabeth, and Will get married. Jones stabs Will through the heart; trying to save him, Jack makes him stab the heart of Jones, who dies. Will's father then opens Will's chest, takes out his heart and puts in the chest, making him the captain of the Flying Dutchman.

Beckett is finally destroyed, but Will is bound to the ship, able to go on land once every ten years and leaving the chest with his heart to Elizabeth. Barbossa takes the Black Pearl from Jack again, but Jack steals the map that could lead him to the fountain of youth. Jack sails on a little boat and takes his compass out, pointing to a bottle of rum; Jack takes it, drink from it (NwhWA), and then the compass gives him his real direction.

## **PEARL HARBOR**

Director: Michael Bay

Writer: Randall Wallace

Release Date: 25 May 2001

Company: Touchstone Pictures

### **Commentary**

Food, drinking and ingestion do not play a relevant role in this movie, the story of two pilots that love the same woman, against the background of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Eventually one for the two friends dies, entrusting the woman, pregnant with his child, to the other. In the movie, we see pilots and nurses using alcohol to celebrate, relax in good company, or express a sense of camaraderie. The only character with a closer connection with food is Doris, a black soldier that makes a name as a boxer and that works in the kitchen. The connection between blackness and food is a reflection of the era in which the movie takes place. It is while Doris takes care of food that the

bombing finds him: he will drop the food he is carrying to go and take a machinegun, becoming one of the first black men to actually fight in the war.

### **Synopsis**

Two kids are playing in an old plane inside a barn in the country, while a plane flies over the fields spraying them (DwhWA). Hitler is conquering Europe, but the US still does not join the war. When they grow up, the two kids become air pilots: one of them, Rafe McCawley (Ben Affleck) has been accepted by the British Eagle Squadron to fight against the Nazis. The other, Danny (Josh Hartnett), does not understand why his friend wants to go looking for trouble in Europe. Rafe is dyslexic, he barely made it into the Airforce thanks to a nurse, Evelyn, who approved him despite his failure at reading during the vision test. He had waited for her outside the hospital and invited her to share a bottle of Champagne he had brought (IwhWY). While opening the bottle, being quite unfamiliar with the procedure, the cork hit him (IwhWY), making him howl in pain.

Rafe and his friends go out with her and the other nurses in New York. They dance and drink (DwhWY). The nurses are being sent to Pearl Harbor. Rafe tells Evelyn he is going to fight in England. On the front, his superior acknowledges his valor while they are sipping beer during a break. (NwhMAWY).

Also Danny goes to Pearl Harbor, while Roosevelt is trying to convince his cabinet that it is necessary to send more material to Europe besides the increased oil and food deliveries (NwhUA) that one of the cabinet members refer to. In Pearl Harbor, a black soldier, Doris, is fighting a boxing match against a white one. One of his black friends tries to have him win by telling him that all the black guys have bet all the money they have made washing dishes and chopping food (NblWY). After the fight Doris goes to the infirmary to get stitches and talk to Evelyn. He tells her that he had joined the navy to see the world and become a man. "They made me a cook; not even that, I clean up after the sailors eat" (NbkWY)

Rafe's plane is hit during a mission and falls into the sea. As he had promised to his friend, Danny goes and tells Kate that Rafe is dead. He and the nurses toast to his memory (NwhWY). One day Danny and Evelyn meet at the movies and after they go out for a drink (NwhWY), reminiscing about Rafe. Danny starts being interested in her; at first she does not want to move on but then they fall for each other.

After a long time Rafe comes back, alive. He has been saved by French fishermen but could not get out of occupied France. He realizes that Danny and Evelyn are in love; he becomes angry at them. He goes and drinks with the other soldiers (NwhWY), and while they drink he tells them about his war deeds (NwhWY). Danny arrives and Rafe offends him by toasting to him in an ironic way (NwhWY); a brawl ensues, but they escape together from military police. They finally manage to talk, both falling asleep in the car.

The camera cuts to Japanese pilots getting ready to hit Pearl Harbor. Before getting on their planes, they toast with sake (KasWY). While the planes arrive, the captain of the ship compliments Doris for his victories while he is serving him breakfast (NwhWY). A bomb falls in the kitchen while a black man is peeling a mound of potatoes (NwhWY). Doris puts the tray with the breakfast on the floor (NblWY) and runs. When his captain dies in his arms, he goes to a machine gun and destroys a Japanese plane. After shooting down seven Japanese planes, Danny and Rafe go to give blood. Evelyn takes it and put it into Coca Cola bottles, like food for life (NwhWY).

The US goes to war. Danny and Rafe are sent away on a mission. Evelyn tells Rafe she is pregnant of Danny, but asks him not to tell Danny. They both are trained for a secret mission whose goal turns out to be bombing Tokyo. After dropping the bombs, they are supposed to land in China. Before leaving, they celebrate by drinking and smoking cigars (NwhWY). The colonel that has trained them decides to fly with them on the mission. While they get close to Japan, the enemy spots them; they decide to fly even if they are not sure they will have enough fuel to fly to safety in China. They manage to hit Tokyo and to land in China, but after the landing they are attacked. Danny gets shot to save Rafe, and right before he dies Rafe tells him that he is going to have a son. Rafe makes it back to the US and brings Danny's body back. Also Doris gets a decoration, the first African American to do so. In the last shot, we see Rafe taking Danny's child flying on a little plane.

### **THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW**

Director: Roland Emmerich

Writer: Roland Emmerich

Release Date: 28 May 2004 (USA)

Company: Twentieth Century-Fox

#### **Commentary**

The dire consequences of global warming are the main theme of this movie: Jack Hall, a climatologist, tries to warn the authorities that a cold wave is arriving. Nobody believes him until it is too late. Despite the prohibitive conditions, Jack saves his son and his schoolmates, stranded in the New York Public Library. At the beginning of this catastrophic movie, food is used as a tool to create connections between people: we see the kids drinking at a party, and later on the members of a weather station sharing tea and whisky, knowing that the cold wave will eventually kill them. When the ice covers everything, food becomes a source of life and survival, while its sharing acquires a new and deeper meaning.

#### **Synopsis**

Jack Hall (Dennis Quaid) is a climatologist. He thinks a new ice age might be coming soon as a consequence of global warming. In Tokyo hail as big as footballs creates havoc. When Jack gets back from a conference, his wife Lucy (Sela Ward) tells him that his son Sam (Jake Gyllenhal) is getting bad grades in school, while Sam eats breakfast in silence (IwhMY).

Sam is leaving for a school contest to NYC and Jack takes him to the airport. Sam is afraid of flying, so eats peanuts nervously (NwhMY) while holding the hand of Laura (Emmy Rossum), a girl who joined the contest together with her schoolmate Brian (Arjay Smith). After the contest all the participants participate in a party and have non-aloholic drinks (NwhblMY).

In the meantime weather stations register a drop in water temperature, seemingly proving Jack's theory. Hails and tornadoes destroy downtown Los Angeles. All the planes are grounded all over the US, so Sam and his friends are stranded in NYC. Jack and his team, together with Janet from NASA, work to prove Jack's theory. One of them, Jason (Dash Mihok), brings tea to everybody to make a female expert notice him (NwhMY) Jack tries to convince the Vice President of the USA to start evacuation, but he does not listen to him.



It starts pouring over NYC, also the train stations are flooded. Sam and his friends decide to walk out of Manhattan. A homeless black man takes advantage of the confusion to steal a hot dog (NblLA) and tries to get into the Public Library. Also Sam and his friends take refuge there while a huge wave covers NYC. The black homeless man also gets into the library while eating the hot dog (DbllA), then shares a piece of it with his dog (DbllA). Sam manages to talk to his father, who tells him a cold front is arriving and that they have to stay in the library and burn all they can to keep warm. Jack promises to go and get him.

In his station in the Northern Atlantic, a climatologist, Rapson, jokes saying that if they are snowed in, they “have enough tea and biscuits to sink a ship” (NwhMO). A black member of Rapson’s team bring him tea (NblMA), right before he talks to Jack and realizes that they are doomed. They decide to toast with a bottle of 12 year old scotch (NwhUMAbIMA).

Jack briefs the President and proposes to evacuate all the north of the country; the President accepts the proposal. Crowds try to flee to Mexico but the frontiers are blocked until the President cuts a deal with which he cancels the debt of all of South American countries. Jack goes to look for his son with his colleagues Frank and Jason. Their car breaks down so they decide to walk. Frank falls and dies.

Meanwhile Sam and his friends decide to stay in the library, while most people leave to try to go home. They get organized, burning books and destroying the vending machines to get food (NwhMUY). When they realize it is not much, the black homeless proposes to look in the garbage cans (NblLA), because there is always food, creating disgust in the others (NwhMUY). The freezing cold front hits. when Jack and Jason get to Manhattan, the Library is almost completely covered in snow, but Sam and his friends have survived. At the same time, a rescue missions start to gather all the survivors in the North.

## **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**

Director: Brian De Palma

Writers: Bruce Geller (television series), David Koepp and Steven Zaillian (story), David Koepp and Robert Towne (screenplay)

Release Date: 22 May 1996 (USA)

Company: Paramount Pictures

### **Commentary**

In the first movie inspired by the famous TV series, secret agent Ethan Hunt defeats a clique of rogue agents that are trying to sell the real identities of other CIA operatives to criminals.

Food and drink are occasions for socialization and relaxed bantering, like when the agents discuss about the quality of the coffee they are drinking during a meeting. At the same time, during the movie poison is poured into drinks to make somebody pass out or vomit, underlying the dangerous aspects of ingestion.

### **Synopsis**

A man is looking at an interrogation on a monitor; when the interrogated person gives the name he was waiting for, he toasts (IwhMA); at the same time some poisoned liquor is given to the interrogated man, who sips it and passes out (NwhWA). Immediately after we realize that the whole scene is false, built to have the interrogated

man talk. The interrogator is agent Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise), wearing a mask.

On a plane we see another agent, Jim Phelps (John Voight), receiving instructions to follow a spy, Golitsin, who wants to steal a list of CIA secret agents from the Prague US Embassy during a party to sell it, potentially destroying all operations in Eastern Europe. His wife Claire (Emmanuelle Beart) and Ethan will be among the agents working with him on the case. Their task is to let Golitsin steal the list to identify the buyer and get them both; but if the list is actually sold, all the agents on it will be killed.

During a meeting Ethan complains, holding his cup of coffee (IwhMA): “Do you have an Italian coffee maker? I don’t know how you call this, but I call it cruelty” (IwhMA). Claire had made that coffee. “That’s what I said,” continues Ethan “How could it be worse than what you made in Kiev?” (IwhMA) Jim tells him to stop offending his wife’s coffee (IwhMA).

The operation fails and Golitsin manages to escape with the list, which will turn out to be false; Ethan decides to follow him despite Jim’s orders. It all turns out to be a trap: Jim gets killed with all the other team members, except Ethan. Also Golitsin gets killed and the list is stolen. Ethan calls Jim’s boss, Kittridge, who gives him an appointment after one hour in a restaurant. The CIA thinks Ethan is the mole selling information to Max, a Czech weapon merchant. The meeting is a trap, but Ethan escapes it and goes back to his apartment, where Claire reaches him.

Ethan manages to meet Max, who turns out to be a woman (Vanessa Redgrave). He tells her that the list the mole is going to give her is false. He wants her to give him a contact with the mole. They agree that Ethan is going to give her the whole list of all CIA agents for 10 million dollars and the guarantee that the mole (known as Job) will be present at the delivery. He starts looking for new teammates among disavowed ones from the CIA center in Langley, Virginia and he finds two: Luther, a computer expert (Ving Rhames), and Krieger (Jean Reno). They discuss the plan while eating a snack in a train (IwhblMA).

They manage to enter the Langley base. Claire sits next to an officer who has codes to enter the safe room where the list is kept, while he is having a break and having coffee (NwhMA). She puts something in his coffee (NwhMA) to make him sick, so that Ethan has time to get into the safe room. They manage to download the list and go to London.

To stop Ethan, Kittridge arrests his mother and uncle accusing them of drug trafficking. Jim reappears and tells him that the man who shot him was Kittridge, who is also the mole. But Ethan understands that Jim, Claire, and Krieger are the real people responsible, but he does not let Jim realize he knows. While they talk Ethan drinks coffee (NwhMA).

Ethan organizes a trap: he gives an appointment to Max and Kittridge on the train to London; Jim is there too. Eventually he entraps both Max and Jim, who by mistakes kills Claire. In the end Ethan and Luther go to a pub and toast with beer (NwhblMA).

## **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE II**

Director: John Woo

Writers: Bruce Geller (television series) Ronald D. Moore and Brannon Braga (story), Robert Towne (screenplay)

Release Date: 24 May 2000 (USA)

Company: Paramount Pictures

## **Commentary**

In the sequel, Ethan gets the order to recover a virus, called Chimera, and its antidote, Bellerophon, with the help of a beautiful female thief, Nyah.

Besides seeing the characters sipping coffee or drinks to relax or kill time, food has no relevance in this movie.

## **Synopsis**

Ethan Hunt gets the order to recover an item called Chimera; for the mission, he can choose two team members and the third must be Nyah (Thandie Newton), a professional dancer. He goes to a party in Seville to meet her. He is having drinks while waiting (NwhMA). She follows her while she tries to steal a jewel and tries to convince her, but at first she does not want to join him in the mission. He meets his boss (Anthony Hopkins) who asks him if he wants cappuccino or coffee (IwhMA). The boss tells him that Nyah had a relationship with Sean Ambrose, who has Chimera, and that she has to go back to him to spy on him and report to Ethan. Eventually she accepts.

They plant a transmitter in her foot to locate her, then pretend she has been arrested, so she can ask Ambrose to help her and then get back with him. Ethan gets Luther again and another guy, Billy, to work with him on the mission in Sidney, Australia. Luther is sipping coffee (NblMA) when they talk and understand that Chimera is a deadly virus that had been created by mistake in the attempt to make a vaccine, and that there is an antidote, Bellerophon.

Ambrose goes to the races to meet McCloy, the boss of the scientist who invented Chimera and who was killed in a plane crash. Nyah gets the memory card with the pictures that Ambrose has shown McCloy, demonstrating the effects of Chimera on a human. Sean realizes that Nyah has betrayed him, and pretends to be Ethan asking her to stay close to him. In the meanwhile Ethan kidnaps McCloy, pretending he injected him with the virus to force him to talk about what had happened. Ethan understands that Ambrose has Bellerophon while McCloy keeps Chimera in the headquarters of his pharmaceutical company, Biocyte.

Ethan penetrates Biocyte to destroy Chimera when Sean attacks him, bringing also Nyah with him. She injects herself with the last dose of the virus to stop Sean from selling it. Ethan manages to escape, leaving Nyah with Sean while he tries to get Bellerophon. McCloy and Sean meet to do their exchange, but now that Sean has got the virus too, he wants McCloy to give him Biocyte's stocks. By letting Nyah infect all of Australia, Biocyte's stocks will go through the roof, since the company has the antidote. Ethan penetrates the place where they are meeting and thwarts their plan, killing Sean, getting the antidote, and saving Nyah.

## **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3**

Director: J.J. Abrams

Writers (WGA): Bruce Geller (television series), Alex Kurtzman, Roberto Orci, and J.J. Abrams

Release Date: 5 May 2006 (USA)

Company: Paramount Pictures

## **Commentary**

In the third episodes of the series, Ethan has to save his wife Julia from an evil trafficker, revealing his double identity as secret agent to her.

Since Ethan is now becoming a family man, we see him around food at his engagement party, making cocktails and drinking with his friends. However, when his duty calls, he meets with another agent in a convenience shop, while browsing junk food. In the mission, food becomes a tool of deceit: the trafficker is lured into a bathroom when an agent pours on him a glass of wine during a party. Later on, Ethan passes out after drinking something offered by the trafficker's minions.

### **Synopsis**

It is Ethan and Julia's (Michelle Monaghan) engagement party. They kiss each other in front of the fridge, while Ethan opens it and takes a cold beer (IwhMA). Julia's sister gives a talk and they all toast together to the couple (NwhMA). Ethan plays the host, asking his guests what they would like to drink (NwhWA); then he makes the cocktails (NwhMA) looking at Julia chatting with her friends. During the party he receives a phone call and goes to an appointment with another agent in a convenience store. They talk in front of the food aisle, pretending to be browsing it (NwhMA). An agent, Lindsay Farris, has been captured while she was following the trafficker Owen Davian and the agent wants Ethan to join the team looking for her. Ethan does not want to and is ready to go after buying some food and a drink (NwhMA). Before leaving, he is given a fake camera through which he receives a report. They have already made a team for him: Luther, Zhen Lei (Maggie Q), and Declan Gormley (Jonathan Rhys Meyers). Eventually he decides to take the mission.

He and his team manage to save Lindsay but the kidnappers have planted a small explosive charge in her head, so she dies in the helicopter while they are getting away.

The CIA recovers a document revealing that Davian is going to go to the Vatican to close a deal for something very valuable, called the Rabbit Paw. Before leaving, Ethan marries Julia. Ethan and his team are going to try to get the trafficker.

At a party inside the Vatican, Davian nervously takes a drink (NwhMA) then he gets a little briefcase. At this point Zhen Li, who is at the party, spills a glass of wine on him (NwhMA). He goes to the bathroom where Ethan, wearing a mask, replaces him, while his teammate take the real Davian out of the Vatican. They make Davian's car explode to make everybody believe he is dead, and they take him to the US.

When they get there, Ethan manages to scramble a message sent by Lindsay before dying, finding out that Davian has got a connection with Brassel (Lawrence Fishburne), their boss. They are attacked and Davian is freed.

Meanwhile Julia is kidnapped. Ethan has 48 hours to get the briefcase containing the plans to find the Rabbit Paw to Davian or his wife is going to die. He gets arrested by Brassel but another agent helps him escape. He goes to Shanghai to recover the object together with his team. He succeeds. He calls Davian who has a car pick him up. As soon as he gets inside he has to drink something that makes him pass out (NwhMA). When he comes to, they place a small explosive charge in his head. It turns out that the agent that helped him escape is Davian's accomplice. Ethan manages to escape again. He runs to Shanghai to the place where they keep his wife. We see men fishing from a bridge (DasWA), and other carrying and selling food (DasWA). He reaches her but Davian activates the charge in his head. He has to electrocute himself to stop the charge, but his wife (who's a nurse) saves him.

### **THE MUMMY**

Director: Stephen Sommers

Writers: Stephen Sommers, Kevin Jarre, and Lloyd Fonvielle (story) , Stephen Sommers (Screenplay)

Release Date: 7 May 1999 (USA)

Company: Universal Pictures

### **Commentary**

An American adventurer and a British female archaeologist embark in the discovery of the Egyptian Book of the Dead, which brings a dangerous mummy back to life. With the help of the mysterious order of the Magi knights, they manage to destroy the menace while falling in love with each other.

The movie widely employs the horror theme of the cannibalistic threat: the mummy systematically consumes the archaeologists that disturbed his slumber so that he can acquire a body, while flesh eating beetles devour various characters.

Many scenes involve drinking, to enhance the adventurous and reckless traits of the male characters, but there is no eating scene. Drinking is also used to create comedic situations for the main characters' sidekicks, and as an expression of male camaraderie.

### **Synopsis**

Imhotep (Arnold Volsoo), high priest and guardian of the dead, is in love with Anak Su Namoun (Patricia Velasquez), the Pharaoh's woman. They kill the Pharaoh, and when they are discovered she commits suicide. Her body is mummified and her organs placed in five jars. Imhotep tries to resurrect her in Hamunaptra, City of the Dead, using the Book of the Dead, but he is stopped by the Pharaoh's soldiers and condemned to be mummified alive, with his sarcophagus full of flesh eating beetles (ImeUA). Since then the Magi, the descendent of the Pharaoh's guard, have kept watched on the City of the Dead so that the priest could not be brought back to life.

At the turn of the nineteenth century French soldiers are fighting against what they think is a band of Arabs; in reality it is the Magi, a secret order trying to keep them away from Hamunaptra. Among the soldiers Rick O'Connell (Brendan Fraser), an American, and Beni (Kevin J. O'Connor), a Turk, both mercenaries, are the only survivors.

In Cairo, Evelyn (Rachel Weisz), the daughter of a famous Egyptologist, is trying to make a name for herself in the library of the Egyptian Museum, but she lacks experience in the field. Her brother Jonathan (John Hannah) brings her an octagonal box that opens up, revealing a map for Hamunaptra, which is also fabled to contain a fabulous treasure. By accident the director of the Museum burns parts the map, so they decide to contact Rick from whom Jonathan has stolen the box and who is now in prison in Cairo. He promises to reveal the city's location if they help him to get out of prison. Evelyn convinces the jailer to let him go in exchange of the promise of 25% of the treasure.

They all get on a steamboat going down the Nile River, on which they meet another group of American treasure hunters guided by Ben, also looking for the City. The boat is attacked by the Magi looking for the map and the box, which turns out to be a key. O'Connell and his companions buy camels and enter the desert, always watched from the distance by the Magi. They find the city at the same time as the Americans and while the jailer gets eaten inside by the flesh eating beetles (NmeMA), they discover the sarcophagus of Imhotep. In the evening, while they talk around a fire, Jonathan finds in the jailer's backpack a bottle of 12 year old Glennlivet whiskey, which he opens and sips from (IwhMA). They are attacked again by the Magi, and during the ensuing battle

Jonathan and Beni keep on drinking from the bottle when they are not shooting (NwhMameWA). When one of the attackers suddenly charges them, Beni is startled and spits out the liquor (NmeWA). The Magi give them a day to leave, or they will die. Jonathan falls asleep peacefully hugging a bottle (NwhMA), while also Evelyn drinks and get drunk.

The following day the Americans find a chest inside which they find the Book of the Dead and the jars that contain Anuk Su Namoun's organs, while Rick and Evelyn open the priest's sarcophagus. Evelyn opens the book and reads a text that resurrects Imhotep, who starts recomposing himself using the flesh of the Americans who had opened the chest with the jars. Another worker is eaten by the beetles (NmeWA) while Beni makes a pact with the mummy, promising to help him in exchange of gold.

The all run away from the city. Back in Cairo, Jonathan and Rick drink together talking about how difficult Evelyn can be, joined by the Americans (NwhMA), but all their drinks turn into blood. In the meanwhile Imhotep visits one of the Americans, from which he has already stolen eyes and tongue. The American, blind, overturns his cup of tea (NwhMA), right before the mummy consumes him to recompose himself (NwhMA). Jonathan drinks nervously from a little flask (NwhMA). Two more men are consumed (NwhMA, NmeUA). The mummy is almost regenerated; a beetle comes out of his body but he chews on it (NmeUA). Imhotep is trying to kidnap Evelyn to sacrifice her for a ceremony to bring his lover back to life. Evelyn understands that to kill him they have to go back to Hamunaptra to get the Golden Book of Amun Ra and read from it.

After consuming a fourth man (NwhMA) the mummy, totally recomposed, takes Evelyn to Hamunaptra to perform the ceremony, followed by O'Connell, Jonathan and the chief of the Magi. They discover the hidden treasure and also the Golden Book, with which they defeat Imhotep. Beni gets eventually eaten by the beetles (NmeWA).

## **CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY**

Director: Tim Burton

Writers: Roald Dahl (book) and John August (screenplay)

Release Date: 15 July 2005 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

Within the whole sample, this is the movie with the highest number of food related scenes. It could not be otherwise, due to its content: it is the story of Willy Wonka, an unusual chocolate maker turned millionaire, who after years of paranoia decides to put an end to his self-imposed seclusion and slips 5 golden tickets in the chocolate bars he produced. The five children that find them and the adults that accompany them are admitted to his fabulous and surreal factory, where they are tested for their moral quality. Eventually the poorest one, Charlie, is chosen by the industrialist to become his heir.

The movie is a long reflection about themes such as greed, sharing, and personal growth. Willy Wonka, despite being an adult, is emotionally still a growing boy that suffers from the lack of affection from his father, a dentist, which takes the form of a prohibition to consume chocolate. The whole factory becomes a compensation for this lack of affection, and even when he finds his heir, Willy is not able to understand the child's attachment to his parents and family, despite his poverty.

In the factory, children are punished according to their sins, just like in Dante's *Inferno*, with commentary offered by the Oopma-Loompas, small human beings that decided to leave their far-away land and to work for Wonka out of their passion for chocolate. Among the children, we have Augustus, which cannot stop stuffing his face with whatever he finds and ends up being sucked up (and metaphorically ingested) by the pipes of the factory.

On the other hand, we have Charlie and his family, where everybody shares the little food that is available, whether it is cabbage soup or a chocolate bar. Eventually, this loving family welcomes Willy as a member, giving him the courage to go and face his father, who has actually missed him for many years.

### **Synopsis**

An ominous music accompanies the viewer down a factory smoke stack into the complex production of chocolate bars, which eventually are parachuted on the wrapping; we see one purple gloved hand lay golden tickets on 5 bars before they get wrapped. The production happens in darkness, extremely mechanical, in many ways reminiscent of science fiction hypertechnological nightmares. The bars are boxed and loaded onto red trucks carrying the writing "Wonka", which pass by Charlie (Freddie Highmore), a little boy from a poor family.

We see him doing the homework while his mother (Helena Bonham Carter) is cooking a soup, his four bed-ridden grandparents share one bed, and his father (Noah Taylor) comes back home, unable to bring anything to add to the soup of "cabbage and cabbage" (IwhWA). His grandfather Joe tells Charlie that he used to work as a clerk for Willy Wonka when he first started in his first shop which was immediately very successful. We see him sell candy (IwhWA) then go inside in the factory where men and women wear red uniforms (DwhWA) and Willie Wonka is licking a huge semi-transparent lollypop (IwhUY). The grandfathers talk longingly (IwhWO) about all the fabulous products that Wonka produced (IwhWO) and how about Wonka built the biggest chocolate factory ever (IwhWO). While Charlie's mother serve them soup (IwhWO), Grandpa Joe tells the story of an Indian Prince who had Wonka build him a whole palace of chocolate. When he finished, Wonka warned the prince he should start eating the palace soon but the prince refused (WasUA). One day, when his woman was feeding him wrapped candy (NasUA) his palace melts falling all over him (NasUA), so that they had to run away fast. Wonka's competitors sent spies to steal his recipes (NwhWA) so we see them selling the same products as Wonka (NwhWA), while children clamor to get candy (DwhMC). Wonka fired all this workers and closed his chocolate factory, but the production somehow continued. They eat while Grandpa Joe tells his stories (NwhWCAO) and the other grandfather complains about the soup (NwhWO).

During the night, flyers are posted all over announcing the presence of five golden tickets in five chocolate bars; the children who find them will be able to visit the factory, and one of them will get a special surprise. The day after people take candy shops by storm all over the world. We see children in East Asia (NasMC), adults and children in Marrakesh, (NmeWAC), women in NYC. Grandpa Joe and Charlie fantasize about getting the winning bar (NwhWCO), but Charlie only gets one a year for his birthday, so he cannot get it (NwhWC).

The first kid who wins the ticket is a fat German child, Augusts Gloop (Philip Wiegratz). We see him with his mouth smeared with chocolate (NwhMC) and his father

making sausage in the background (NwhMA). He says that he celebrated by eating more chocolate, while stuffing his face with another bar (NwhMC). Charlie's grandparents are disgusted when they see him on TV (NwhWO).

The second winner is Veruca Salt (Julia Winter), a very rich girl in England. Her father tells reporters he bought huge amounts of chocolate (NwhUA) until one of his female workers found the ticket. Charlie's parents get him a bar as a birthday present (NwhWA), he opens it (NwhWC), does not find a ticket but decides to share it (NwhWC). They all eat it together to celebrate the birthday (NwhWCAO) and enjoy it, savoring it (NwhWCAO).

The third ticket is found by Violet Beauregarde (AnnaSophia Robb), a girl into sports and overachiever who always chews gum, the fourth by Mike Teavee (Jordan Fry), a boy always playing videogames and into technology and who hates chocolate (NwhMC), so he did not even want to eat the bar (NwhMC).

Grandpa Joe gives Charlie his savings to buy one last bar (NwhWC), but they do not find it. When he has given up hope, Charlie finds a ten-dollar banknote and buys just one bar (NwhWC), where he finds the last golden ticket. With the golden tickets comes a supply of as much chocolate as one can eat. At first Charlie wants to sell the ticket to get some money for the family, but his grandfather convinces him to go. Grandpa Joe will go with him.

While they wait to enter the factory, Augustus keeps on crunching chocolate (NwhMC). Once inside, he offers some to Charlie only to actually refusing it to him (NwhMC).

Wonka (Johnny Depp) leads his guests to a room where everything is edible, at which they all marvel (NwhWMUCAO). "I am also edible but that is called cannibalism and it is in fact frowned upon on most societies," says Wonka (NwhUA). Augustus is so excited he drops his bar (NwhMC) and steps on it (NwhMC). In the room there is a chocolate fall that churns the chocolate, which is then sucked up by pipes and carried to the rest of the factory. Wonka explains how it works and that it is the only in the country (NwhUA). Wonka invites them to enjoy (NwhUA). Mike jumps on a pumpkin full of syrup to destroy it, telling his dad that it is his way to enjoy (NwhMC). Charlie is about to get a sugar apple when Violet steals it from him to show him he is a loser (NwhMC). Augustus stuffs his face, also eating the grass on all fours (NwhMC).

They notice the Oompa-loompas, tiny brown men working on production (NasWA), so Wonka tells the story about how he found them in Loompaland. We see him cross a jungle when a huge insect attacks him. He kills it with a machete then he licks it, since he was there to look for new flavors (NwhUA). Wonka says that "the Oompa-Loompa only ate caterpillars, which tasted revolting" (NwhUA). We see the Oompa-Loompa grinding the huge insects in a mortar (NasWA). He is invited by the Oompa-Loompa to share their meal (NasWA). He refuses at first (NwhUA), but then he accepts it not to offend his hosts (NwhUA) The Oompa Loompa craved cocoa beans, which were very hard to find (NasWA). Wonka invites them to work for him in his factory; in exchange they could have all the cocoa beans they want.

Augustus stuffs his face drinking directly from the chocolate river (NwhMC) but when he is ordered by Wonka to stop (NwhMC) he falls into the chocolate. He is sucked up by the pipe, metaphorically eaten and digested by the factory (NwhMC). The Oompa-Loompas sing a song (NasWA) making fun of his greediness and fatness (NwhMC).



Wonka also shows disgust for Violet's continuing chewing (NwhUA) and explains that chocolate releases endorphins, which give a feeling of love (NwhUA).

They all get on a boat on the chocolate river. Wonka gets some chocolate from the river with a ladle and gives it to Charlie (NwhUA), telling him he looks starved to death (NwhUA). Both Charlie and Grandpa Joe drink it with pleasure, since they were actually hungry (NwhWCO). He repeats the information about the chocolate production (NwhUA). Being close to children, Wonka starts thinking about his own childhood. We see Wonka as a child, wearing a huge metal contraption on his teeth, like excessive braces, going treat or tricking, clearly desiring the candy (NwhUC). His father, a famous dentist, takes the candy from him (NwhUC), showing disgust for it (NwhUA) and destroying it in the fire (NwhUA). Little Wonka is clearly upset (NwhUC).

The factory guests get to the invention room, with lots of Oompa-Loompas busy producing food (DasWA). Wonka explains to them about his new candies (NwhUA), including a chewing gum that is a three-course dinner. He reads from a card (NwhUA): "It will be the end of all kitchen and of all cooking. Just a little strip of Willy Wonka chewing gum and that's all you'll ever need at breakfast, lunch and dinner. This piece of gum happens to be tomato soup, roast beef and blueberry pie". Grandpa Joe is the only one who voices his admiration and desire, since he is still hungry (NwhWo), while the others are puzzled. Despite Wonka telling her not to (NwhUA), Violet eagerly eats the chewing gum and turns blue, swelling up. The Oompa Loompa sing a song making fun of her continuous chewing.

Wonka goes back to his childhood memories. After his father had thrown the candy in the fire, he finds a chocolate in the ashes and eats it secretly (NwhUC). We see him eating and tasting chocolate, while taking notes. (NwhUC).

The guests and Wonka proceed to the nut sorting room. Wonka and Veruca's father talk about nut sorting techniques (NwhUA). Another flashback: Wonka's father voices his disgust and says no son of his is going to be a chocolatier (NwhUA).

They go to the television room, where they are experimenting in sending real bars through the TV. The Oompa-Lumpas bring a huge bar of chocolate for the experiment (NasWA), which succeeds. Wonka invites the kids to grab it and eat it (NwhUA), and Charlie does and enjoys savoring it (NwhWC). Mike despises Wonka for inventing a teleporter and just thinking of chocolate (NwhMC). We see an Oompa-Loompa dressed as a chef preparing food (NasWA). Mike ends up in the TV.

Charlie is the winner. He, Grandpa Joe and Wonka fly away in a glass elevator. We see the other kids leave the factory. Augustus, covered in chocolate, is trying to suck all the chocolate from his body. His mom tells him not to eat his own fingers (NwhMC), but he answers he tastes good (NwhMC).

The glass elevator lands on Charlie's home destroying the roof. Wonka tells Charlie and his family he is going to get his whole factory, but his family must stay behind. Despite Wonka tempting him with candy and chocolate (NwhUA), Charlie is ready to renounce it all that to stay with his family. Things turn for the better for Charlie's family; we see he and his father serving food (NwhWCA) on a table full of dishes. Wonka is in crisis, he cannot make candy any longer (NwhUA). He goes to visit his father with Charlie, and they make peace. Wonka makes Charlie the offer again, but now he can take his family. We see them served food by Charlie's mom (NwhWUCAO), and they all partake (NwhWUCAO).

## **KING KONG**

Director: Peter Jackson

Writers: Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Peter Jackson (screenplay); Merian C. Cooper and Edgar Wallace (story)

Release Date: 14 December 2005 (USA)

Company: Universal Pictures

### **Commentary**

The movie is a spectacular and sometimes gruesome remake of the black and white classic. The enormous ape King Kong is brought from his lost island to New York City, lured by its infatuation for a beautiful woman. Eventually the ape breaks free, creating havoc in the city, and is killed on top of a skyscraper.

The new version adds many themes to the main narratives: at the beginning, we see scenes of New York City during the depression: people living in huts in Central Park and lining up at the soup kitchen and having a dish of soup, a man biting on something he just pulled out of the garbage, and a juggler biting at the apples he is juggling. Hunger is the reason that pushes the young actress Ann to join the expedition to film the exotic movie planned by Carl, a self-absorbed filmmaker, who uses a dinner to lure Ann into his scheme, and a bottle of Johnny Walker to convince Jack, a scriptwriter, to stay on the boat that is taking them to a mysterious island. Food is used to deceive and trick people.

When they get there, the crew finds a hungry population that has to sacrifice some of its members to appease the hungry ape King Kong. The crew itself is in constant danger of being devoured by the monstrous creature that live on the island, such as dinosaurs and huge insects.

Once he brings the ape to New York City, Carl organizes an entire show surrounding it, reenacting the myth of the white man subjugating the wild forces of nature and the natives. This desire of control is temporarily defeated by King Kong and eventually ends up in mayhem and destruction.

### **Synopsis**

We see scenes of New York City during the depression: new buildings and bridges, but also people living in huts in Central Park and lining up at the soup kitchen, getting a dish of soup (DwhLA), and a man biting on something he just got out of the garbage (DwhLA). We also see a juggler biting at the apples he is juggling (DwhMA), men eating only soup and bread (DwhLA), and men breaking bottles during prohibition (DwhMA).

An old man, Manny, is working in a vaudeville theater with a younger woman, Ann (Naomi Watts), but he cannot eat because he does not have money (NwhWO). He decides to leave NYC and go back to Chicago.

Carl (Jack Black), a filmmaker, has found a map leading to an unexplored island where he wants to go and shoot his new movie. When his investors decide not to fund the expedition, he steals the film he has already shot. He is looking for an actress when he sees Ann stealing an apple. He pays for it (NwhMC) and takes her to dinner (NwhMC) to talk to her. He convinces her to join the film crew by telling her that a writer she likes, Jack Driscoll (Adrien Brody), is working on the script. In the boat that is supposed them to bring them on location, we see Carl opening a case of Johnny Walker and taking out a bottle to convince Jack to stay (NwhMA). Eventually they all sail.

While Jack is writing, a young sailor, Jimmy (Jamie Bell), serves him food (NwhWY) but he almost throws up when he sees it because of sea sickness (NwhMA). Jimmy has been found on the ship by the black first mate, Mr. Hayes (Evan Parke), who has basically adopted him. Jack and Ann fall for each other.

The ship crashes onto the island, which is surrounded by a huge wall. While Carl and the film crew get to the island, the captain and the ship crew try to repair the vessel. The island seems empty at first, but then they see a child. Carl tries to get close to him offering him chocolate (NwhWA). The natives come out of hiding and capture them. They are about to kill them when the captain and his crew come to the rescue. While the captain tries to get the ship going, Carl keeps on drinking. (NwhMA) The natives get on the boat and kidnap Ann, so all the men get back to the island to save her. The natives give her as a sacrifice to a huge ape, which however does not eat her but takes her away with him. The ship crew prepares an expedition inland. They find themselves reenacting Heart of Darkness, which the young Jimmy is reading on board. Also, Mr. Hayes, who had already had an impending sense on doom about the trip, has to face the danger with the other white men. On the island they find dinosaurs; Carl is still filming, trying to make his movie. They get caught in a dinosaur stampede: some of the animals try to eat them (NwhasblWMYA). Some of the men die. Carl drinks out of fear (NwhMA), while some of the men decide to go back to the ship.

Ann wakes up in the ape's lair, and to appease him she starts entertaining him with his vaudeville antics, which he seems to enjoy. Ann manages to escape, while the ape attacks the men, killing Mr. Hayes. All of Carl's film is destroyed. The men are attacked by huge slugs and insects. They are all afraid to be eaten (NwhWMA) and some of the men actually are (NwhWA). Carl, Jimmy and Jack survive, rescued by the captain. Jack decides to keep on looking for Ann.

In the meanwhile, some dinosaurs attack Ann, but the ape fights against them and saves her. Eventually the two seems to get along. Jack finds her, and when the ape tries to get her back Carl and the captain capture it, despite Ann's attempts at stopping them, and bring it to New York. They organize a whole show about it, reenacting the myth of the white man subjugating the wild forces of nature and the natives. Ann refuses to participate in it and goes back to variety shows. During the show, the ape frees himself looking for Ann and creating havoc in the city. She manages to appease him, but the military attacks them. The ape climbs on top of a skyscraper, is attacked by planes and killed. Jack climb on top for the skyscraper to get Ann. Carl sees the corpse and says: "It was beauty killed the beast"

## **THE SIXTH SENSE**

Director: M. Night Shyamalan

Writer: M. Night Shyamalan

Release Date: 6 August 1999 (USA)

Company: Hollywood Pictures

### **Commentary**

Malcolm is a child psychologist that tried to help the young Cole to get rid of his nightmarish idea that he can see dead people, only to discover that Cole is telling the truth and he is just a ghost. Since the main character is a ghost, we never see him eat, but he is often next to people who eat, without sharing the meal. On the side on the living

human beings, meals and food are a focus for the fights and the reconciliations between Cole and his mother: they quarrel over breakfast, and she makes him pancakes when he gets back from school depressed.

### **Synopsis**

Anna (Olivia Williams) comes up from a cellar with a bottle of wine. She joins a man, Malcolm (Bruce Willis), who is drinking wine while she is not (IwhMA). They are celebrating the man's success as a child's psychologist. They realize somebody has broken into their home: it is a former patient, who shoots him.

Movie cuts to the following fall. We see Malcolm sitting outside a house reading notes about the child who is coming out of it, Cole (Haley Joel Osmont). On Malcolm's notes we read that Cole has divorced parents, is socially isolated and suffers from anxiety. The two talk.

We see Cole's mother (Toni Collette) calling him to breakfast (NwhMC), telling him to hurry because his cocoa puffs are getting soggy. Before he goes she gives him a packaged snack (NwhMC). When Cole get back home Malcolm is sitting in front of his mom. Cole tells her the boys have picked on him again, so she tells him she is going to make him pancakes (NwhMC). Cole and Malcolm start to talk, getting to know each other, but Cole thinks Malcolm cannot help him.

Malcolm joins his wife at a restaurant. He is late. While he talks, his wife keeps on sipping her coffee, without talking to him (NwhMA); she gets the check, pays, and saying "Happy Anniversary" goes away. They seem to be having problems.

Cole acts more and more strangely. In class, he uncovers one of his professor's past, embarrassing him. At a schoolmate's party other kids shut him in a closet from where he is hearing voices; he passes out and he is hospitalized. When Malcolm visits him, Cole tells him he sees dead people walking around that do not know they are dead.

One morning Cole and his mom are having dinner (NwhMC) and fight over a pendant that has been moved and that Cole denies he moved. She sends him to his room without letting him finish dinner (NwhMC).

Malcolm decides to discontinue Cole's therapy because he feels he has to think about his family. He does not know if he should believe Cole. He goes back to a tape of the therapy with the patient that had shot him, when he had told him he once was scared about a blood test and threw up chili cheese fries all over the nurse (NwhMA). He hears voices on the tape that did not belong to his patient. So he goes back to Cole, making him understand that the ghosts only want help and that is the only way to make them go.

One night, when a young girl appears, Cole asks her what she can do to help. He and Malcolm go to the girl's vigil at her house. We see women and men eating (NwhMAO). The dead girl shows him a box that he gives to her father; it contains a tape that accuses the woman that poisoned her. Once Cole has learnt how to deal with the ghosts, he starts doing better, also being more social.

Cole and Malcolm do not need to see each other any longer. Cole tells Malcolm that if he wants to talk to his wife he can do it while she sleeps, so she will listen. He goes home and does it. While sleeping, she tells him that she misses him, and asks him why he left. He flashes back to the moment he was shot by his patient. Malcolm finally understand he is dead himself, and that is why Cole could see him. He just needed to do two things: help somebody, and tell his wife he loves her. Now that he has done both, he can go in peace.

## **TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY**

Director: James Cameron

Writers: James Cameron and William Wisher Jr.

Release Date: 3 July 1991 (USA)

Company: Amblin Entertainment

### **Commentary**

An android, called terminator, a new generation shape-shifting machine, is supposed to kill John Connor – the leader of the future rebellion against the machines - while he is still a child, but the resistance has sent a lonely warrior to protect him: it is an old terminator (Arnold Schwarzenegger), now reprogrammed. Eventually the old terminator eliminates the new, ensuring the survival of humanity and the future leadership of Connor.

Food is of course out of question for the terminators; that might be the reason why the evil one seems to enjoy killing his victims while they are consuming food, thrusting a metal spike through their heads: first Connor's adoptive father, while he is drinking some milk, then a policeman while he is having coffee. The good terminator forces himself to refuse offers of food, like when a friend of the Connors invites him to drink. However, once the action is in full gear, food consumption of any kind disappears completely from the movie.

### **Synopsis**

Los Angeles 2029: Very few survived the nuclear war in 2017, only to live through another nightmare: the war against the machines. The movie begins by showing a battle, taking place in a destructed Los Angeles in 2029. The computer leading the machines, Skynet, has sent two androids, called terminators, to the past to kill John Connor, the head of the human resistance. The first was sent back to 1984 to kill his mother Sarah (Linda Hamilton), the second (Robert Patrick), a new generation shape-shifting machine, is supposed to kill Connor while he is still a child, but the resistance has sent a lonely warrior to protect him: it is the old terminator (Arnold Schwarzenegger), now reprogrammed to protect Connor.

He arrives naked, so he enters a bikers' bar, where women and men are playing pool and drinking (IwhWA) to get clothes and a motorbike. The bad terminator kills a policeman, wears his uniform and takes his patrol car.

John's mother Sarah is in a psychiatric hospital, while John (Edward Furlong) lives with legal tutors. Both Terminators are looking for him; the bad one finds him first but the good one saves him. John makes the good terminator promise he will never kill humans. The bad one kills John's adoptive mother first, then takes her shape and kills her husband (NwhWA) while he is drinking some milk before dinner (NwhWA) with a metal spike through the milk carton and his head.

John and the good terminator go to look for his mother. The bad one is already at the mental hospital. He kills a guard (NwhWA) while he is getting some coffee (NwhWA). The guard drops the coffee while dying (NwhWA). Sarah manages to escape right when also John and the good terminator arrive, and they all get away from the bad one. They pass by Sarah's friend Enrique to look for weapons. Enrique (Castulo Guerra) offers them to drink (NhiWA); the terminator refuses (NwhWA), Sarah drinks and so does he (NhiWA).

Sarah decides to stop Miles Dyson (Joe Morton) from inventing the future Skynet by using technology learned from pieces of the first terminator destroyed a few years before. But she cannot push herself to kill him. The good terminator explains the future to Dyson. Dyson decides to help them destroy the whole experiment in his laboratory within a cybernetic industry. The bad terminator catches up with them, at the same time as the police, but they manage to destroy everything, with Dyson dying in the operation. The bad terminator does not relent though and keeps on chasing them. They eventually kill the bad terminator by throwing him into molten metal, but also the good terminator jumps in the metal to destroy himself and avoid that anybody can use the technology present in him.

### **TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES**

Director: Jonathan Mostow

Writers: James Cameron and Gale Anne Hurd (characters), John Brancato and Michale Farris (Screenplay)

Release Date: 2 July 2003 (USA)

Company: C-2 Pictures

#### **Commentary**

In the third installment of the series, John Connor is an adult, living a nomadic life to escape dangers coming from the future. He reconnects with his former high school friend Kate, and together they try to thwart the attempt of the machines to control the world. A new hyper-technological female terminator, TX, is sent to destroy Connors, but with the help of the old terminator he manages to survive.

As in the previous movie, the evil terminator chooses food-related situation to kill her victims, like a male Hispanic worker in a fast food, whom she kills at the drive-through window. The good older terminator only scares a young man at a gas station in order to get some food without paying, since he and Connor have no money. Also in this movie, once the action gets going, we do not see food any longer.

#### **Synopsis**

John Connor, now an adult (Nick Stahl), lives a normal life: apparently in the previous movie he and his mother have managed to stop the final destruction. Yet, he still has nightmares about a world dominated by machines, and keeps wandering around.

General Brewster is investigating a new virus attacking computer network. His young daughter Kate (Claire Danes) is getting cold feet about her fiancée Scott (Mark Famiglietti).

Another terminator arrives from the future, this time a woman, TX (Kristanna Loken), followed by another, a male, T1 (Arnold Schwarzenegger), looking like the one who saved Connor in the previous movie. He takes clothes from a male stripper performing at a bar (including star shaped eyeglasses that he discards). TX is looking for high school kids. She finds the first of them, a male Hispanic, working in a fast food (NhiWT) and kills him at the drive-through (NhiWT) window. Then she kills two siblings in their home.

Kate is a veterinarian. She is woken up by an alert: John has had an accident, and has broken into her clinic to get medication. Kate, who thinks he is a drug addict, manages to shut him in a cage for animals and then recognizes him: they had been in junior high together. The TX arrives, killing one of Kate's clients while looking for John

Connor. The T1 arrives, stops her momentarily, saves Kates, and frees Connor, who drives away in a van not knowing that Kate is locked in the back. They are pursued by vehicles that are controlled remotely by the TX, but they are saved again by the T1, who reveals that the machines will actually take power in the future and that Kate is going to be one of John's lieutenants and his wife. They stop at a gas station where T1 gets some food without paying (NwhWA), scaring the young man selling the food (NwhWY). T1 takes them to the cemetery where John's mother's tomb is located. Her body had been cremated, but the coffin is full of weapons that John's mother had left in case of trouble.

In the meanwhile TX kills Kate's fiancée Scott and takes his shape to join the police looking for Kate. She finds her, but T1 and John save her. T1 reveals to them that Kate's father is the one working on Skynet, the system that will lead the machines and start the nuclear war, so they decide to go and have him shut Skynet down.

It is too late: all the networks are showing problems so the army decides to put everything under the control of Skynet defense system, which in the meanwhile has been infiltrated by TX. Skynet becomes self aware, while TX kills Kate's father who, before dying, gives John and Kate a code to enter a secret location nearby where the core of Skynet is located. TX corrupts T1's system so that now he is programmed to kill John, but he shuts himself down rather than doing it. John and Kate reach Skynet while T1 kills TX. It turns down that the place they reached is not the core of Skynet, since Skynet is a diffused network with no core, but a bunker that can protect them from the nuclear fallout and from where they can coordinate the human resistance. The machines' attempt to destroy of the human race has started.

### **SAVING PRIVATE RYAN**

Director: Steven Spielberg

Writer: Robert Rodat

Release Date: 24 July 1998 (USA)

Company: DreamWorks

### **Commentary**

Right after D-Day, Captain Miller and his men are sent beyond enemy lines to look for Private Ryan, a soldier whose three brothers have all been killed in combat. They succeed in bringing him home, but they lose their lives in completing their mission.

Food is virtually absent from the movie. We only see soldiers stuffing food in their mouth and throwing up during the landing on D-Day, and Captain Miller talking to one of his men while they are eating a frugal meal.

### **Synopsis**

The movie opens with a flag billowing in the wind. An old man is walking, followed a few steps behind by what seems to be his family. The camera reveals that he is in a military cemetery with hundreds of identical white crosses. He falls on his knees, crying in front of one of those, and starts reminiscing.

June 6, 1944, D-Day. Young soldiers are on amphibious vehicles ready for landing. They are all scared and many are seasick: Captain Miller (Tom Hanks) sips some water (IwhMA), Sergeant Mike Horvath (Tom Sizemore) stuffs some food in his mouth (IwhWA), others are throwing up (IwhWY). Many are immediately massacred by the German gun machines and grenades, while the survivors are stuck on the beach, including captain Miller and Horvath. Many die, Miller and some soldiers make it

through.

The Ryan family has lost three young men in the war. The fourth, James (Matt Damon), has been parachuted in Normandy behind German lines; nobody knows if he is alive. The Pentagon decides to send a rescue mission to find him, and they choose Miller and group of handpicked men for the mission. The men are disgruntled about the mission, which they consider a dangerous waste of time and energy. Horvath makes fun of a soldier telling that he is going to get a chunk of cheese in his ass with an American flag (NwhWAA).

They find a James Ryan, but it is the wrong one. They spend the night in an abandoned church; Horvath and Miller exchange memories while eating their dinner (NwhWA). Two men of the rescue mission get killed, but they finally find Ryan. Ryan does not want to leave his post; he cannot understand why he would be allowed to leave while the others (“the only brothers I have left”) cannot. Miller decides to stay and help Ryan’s company to defend the bridge they have been assigned to; they will take Ryan home after.

Miller tries to get some coffee out of a coffee machine in an abandoned café, but there is none left (NwhMA). When the Germans arrive, the Americans maintain their position until the arrival of the rescue planes and troops, but Miller and others in his team die.

Cut to present. We understand that the old man we have seen at the beginning of the movie is James Ryan, praying at Miller’s tomb and asking his wife to reassure him he had a good life and he is a good man, worth of Miller’s sacrifice. Ryan salutes the tomb; close up onto the cross, fade to the billowing American flag.

## **THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE**

Director: Andrew Adamson

Writers: Ann Peacock, Andrew Adamson, Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely (screenplay); C.S. Lewis (book)

Release Date: 9 December 2005 (USA)

Company: Walt Disney Pictures

### **Commentary**

During World War II England is under the attack of German air raids. Four siblings, the Pevensies, are evacuated to the countryside. While playing in the mansion where they are living, they end up in a wardrobe that gives them access to the world of Narnia, where after many adventures they become kings and queens.

This fantasy epic shows ambivalence about eating: food sharing is often a conduit for building trust and companionship, but it can also be a tool for treachery and deceit. When the youngest of the Pevensies, Lucy, first arrives in Narnia, the faun Tamnus invites her for tea, creating a bond with her, although his first intention is to capture her, following the orders of the evil queen. When Edward, another sibling, meets the Queen, she offers him a hot drink and lures him into helping her to capture his sibling with the promise of sweets and anything he might want. Edward ends up in the Queen’s prison, giving a piece of almost inedible bread to Tamnus, who has been also imprisoned.

On the other end, food is also symbol of protection and wellbeing; the siblings meet a couple of beavers that offer them tea with fish and chips in their warren and introduce them to the reality of Narnia.



At any rate, when the action gets going, food-related scenes disappear.

### **Synopsis**

During World War II England is attacked by German air raids. Four siblings, the Pevensies, whose father is away fighting, get evacuated to the countryside: teenage Peter, the eldest (William Moseley), Edmund (Skandar Keynes), Susan (Anna Popplewell), and Lucy, the youngest (Georgie Henley). They are hosted by Professor Kirke (Jim Broadbent) and his protective housekeeper, who immediately gives them very strict behavior rules to avoid disturbing the professor.

They soon get bored and start playing hide and seek. Lucy hides inside a wardrobe which turns out to be the access to a different world, Narnia, covered in snow and ice. The first character she meets in Narnia is a faun, Tumnus (James McAvoy), carrying some parcels and two bottles of something (IxxY), who invites her for tea, during which he serves her toast, cakes and sardines (IxxY). While they are having tea, Tumnus tells her about the long winter in Narnia (IxxY). Tumnus tries to kidnap her, following the orders of the Witch that has commanded all Narnians to capture any humans that might venture in her kingdom, but then he decides to defy the orders and helps her get back to her world. Her siblings do not believe her story, until one night Edmund follows her through the wardrobe to Narnia.

He meets the White Witch, Queen of Narnia (Tilda Swinton), who offers him a hot drink (KwhMC) and asks him what he would like to eat, telling him she can get him anything he wants (KwhMC). He wants Turkish delight (KwhMC), which she immediately conjures for him out of thin air (KwhMC). He eats the sweets with pleasure (KwhMC), while she convinces him to introduce his siblings to her; in exchange he will become her successor, with his siblings as servants. Edmund also tells her that Mr. Tumnus has helped Lucy. She promises he will have rooms full of Turkish delight (KwhMC), but when he asks for some at that moment (KwhMC), she briskly refuses (KwhMC) upsetting him (KwhMC). When they get back to their world, Edmund denies he has been to Narnia and tells the other Lucy is lying. She runs away crying and runs into the Professor, who offers her hot chocolate (NwhUO). The professor encourages Peter and Susan to believe Lucy.

One day, running away from the housekeeper, Edmund lures the four of them to hide inside the wardrobe and into Narnia. Lucy takes them to Mr. Tumnus's place, but they find it ransacked and realize Tumnus has been arrested for helping Lucy. They meet a couple of beavers that offer them tea with fish and chips in their warren (NwhMC). While they eat (NwhMC), they are informed about Aslan, who is the real king of Narnia and who has just come back to fulfill a prophecy that concerns four humans that will defeat the Witch. Edmund leaves and goes to see the Witch in her castle, telling her where his siblings are and asking for some more Turkish delight as a reward. (NwhMC). She refuses (NwhNC) making fun of him and has him thrown in prison. She unleashes the wolves against the beavers and the kids, but they manage to escape with the help of a fox, who is gathering more troops for the final battle against the witch.

Edmund is given some old bread in the cell (NwhMC) and tries to eat it (NchMC), but he cannot force himself to (NwhMC). From the cell next to his, Tumnus, who has also been imprisoned, asks for it (NxxY), and Edmund gives it to him (WhMC). Tumnus eats it ravenously (NxxY). The Witch reveals to him that Edmund betrayed her for sweets, making the child feel guilty (NwhMC). The witch takes Ed with her on her

sleight.

The beaver and the other kids meet Santa Klaus, who gives Lucy a juice that heals any injury; a horn, a bow and arrows to Susan; and a sword and shield to Peter. Narnia has hope and the ice starts to melt. The three kids get to the camp of Aslan, who turns out to be a lion, and tell him about Edmund's betrayal. Aslan sends a rescue team for Edmund, who eats with his sisters (NwhMA) when he reaches the camp.

The witch, following Narnia's law, asks for the traitor's blood, but after talking to Aslan she renounces to him: Aslan has offered his life instead of Edmund's, and lets the witch bind him, shave his mane, and kill him on an altar. Susan and Lucy see it all, but the morning after during an earthquake Aslan's body disappears to reappear alive: the willing sacrifice to save a traitor has been stronger than death.

Meanwhile Peter has replaced him in guiding the army against the witch's much larger troops. While the battle rages, Aslan, Susan and Lucy go to the witch's castle, where Aslan frees all the prisoners that the witch had turned into stone, including Tamnus. During the battle, the witch wounds Edmund. Right when the witch is about to win, Aslan and all the freed prisoners join the battle. The witch and her army are defeated, but Edmund is dying. Lucy uses her magic potion to save him and all the other fallen warriors. The kids are crowned kings and queens of Narnia.

They begin a new life in Narnia. One day, as adults, they find their way back into the wardrobe and go back to their reality, as children.

## **ARMAGEDDON**

Director: Michael Bay

Writers: Robert Roy Pool and Jonathan Hensleigh (story); Tony Gilroy and Shane Salerno (adaptation); Jonathan Hensleigh and J.J. Abrams (screenplay)

Release Date: 1 July 1998 (USA)

Company: Touchstone Pictures

### **Commentary**

A huge asteroid is heading towards earth. Pieces of it fall on New York City, bringing destruction. Dan Truman of NASA contacts Harry, an expert on oil drilling, to place an atomic bomb on it to destroy it. Harry convinces him that his team is better for the job than the NASA trained astronauts, so they go to the asteroid in two spaceships. With Harry's sacrifice, the asteroid is destroyed and earth is saved.

There is not much food featured around the movie's main characters, with the exceptions of a drinking party before leaving for the mission. However, when the US president announces to the world that a team is working in space to place the bomb, the trepidation about the mission is showed on various parts of the planet, where people are caught while sharing food, maybe a metaphor for their normal life coming to an end: shepherds in France near Mont Saint Michel; a group of young men and women sitting around a table in what could be a French or an Italian street; some men and women at a food stall somewhere in a night market in Asia. Meal sharing and food production are represented as some of the treasures that could disappear with the impact.

### **Synopsis**

A huge asteroid is heading towards the earth. Pieces of it fall on NYC, causing destruction. The first person to identify it is an old man looking through a telescope bickering with his wife, who is yelling at him for being late for dinner (NwhMO). The

only way to stop the asteroid is to drill on it, plant an atomic bomb inside it, and make it explode. Dan Truman of Nasa (Billy Bob Thornton) contacts Harry (Bruce Willy), an expert in oil drilling, to train the astronauts that are going on the asteroids. Harry convinces Truman that he and his team are better for the job than astronauts, so the NASA accepts them.

While they are getting their physical tests, a doctor says to Bear (Michael Clarke Duncan), a member of Harry's team, a huge black man: "Your triglycerides are extremely high, and your cholesterol is shockingly bad" (NblWA) Bears gets half naked and start dancing on top of a table.

They all fail the tests, but they get approved just the same and start a brutal training for working in space. AJ (Ben Afflek), on Harry's team and in love with his daughter Grace (Liv Tyler), asks her to marry him, but Harry does not agree. Before they leave for their mission, they are free for one day so they can see their families or have fun for the last time before being sent to outer space. Many of them get into a brawl in a bar and get arrested, while other pieces of the asteroid ravage Hong Kong.

The President gives a speech televised all over the world to announce the mission. We see people hearing it: shepherds in France near Mont Saint Michel (DwhWAO), a group of young men and women sitting for a meal around a table in what could be a French or an Italian street (DwhMY); men and women at a food stall somewhere in a night market in Asia (DasWAO).

Harry's men are sent to the asteroids on two shuttles, together with professional astronauts. They stop at a Russian space station with a single astronaut, Lev, to get fuel, then they leave bringing him with them. While they are approaching the asteroid, debris hit one of the shuttles. Truman at NASA drops his cup of coffee (NwhMA). Only Lev, Bear and AJ survive; they free a vehicle from the wreck and try to join the others. The other shuttle has managed to land: they only have 8 hours to place the bomb, but it seems the soil they have landed on is particularly hard to drill.

In the meanwhile on earth NASA realizes the asteroid is changing course; the US president orders to detonate the nuclear bomb remotely, with the help of the NASA astronauts on the asteroid, but Harry and his team neutralize the plan.

They eventually place the bomb but they realize that somebody has to detonate it in person, while the others fly to safety. They draw lots and AJ loses, but right when he is getting ready to get to the bomb, Harry tricks him and takes his place, telling him to get married to his daughter and to take care of her. While the rest of the team flies back to earth, Harry detonates the bomb. The others are welcomed like heroes.

While the closing titles roll, we see scenes from AJ and Grace's wedding.

## **OCEAN'S ELEVEN**

Director: Steven Soderbergh

Writers: George Clayton Johnson and Jack Golden Russell (1960 story); Harry Brown and Charles Lederer (1960 screenplay); Ted Griffin (screenplay)

Release Date: 7 December 2001 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

Daniel Ocean is released from prison and goes to Las Vegas. He puts together a team of cons to rob three casinos that belong to Terry Benedict, who has taken his

woman away from him. The team manages to accomplish the deed and Daniel gets his woman back.

The characters often socialize around food: we see all of them meeting for the first time around a buffet in a villa, or drinking together when they discuss plans and personal matters. Many team members are somehow characterized by some food: an older man peels and eat oranges to get Vitamin C; a security specialist who lives the good life in his villa has a salad for lunch; Rusty, Ocean's main accomplice, eats junk food without interruption (wee see him slurp a bright colored snow ice, eating out of a dish, sucking on a lollypop, or gobbling a sandwich). Rusty's uninterrupted ingestion somehow seems to represent his straightforward and uncomplicated nature, while Ocean, the mastermind, is more controlled and self-contained, with his passion for his ex-wife being the main motivation for his plan.

### **Synopsis**

Daniel Ocean (George Clooney) is released from prison and goes to Las Vegas. He meets a friend, Frank (Bernie Mac), who is a barman in a casino.

In Hollywood, Rusty (Brad Pitt) is eating something that looks like hot dogs (IwhMA), while he waits to go play cards. In a break, he goes for a drink (IwhMA); when he gets back, Ocean is there, playing. They go together for a coffee (NwhMA), and Ocean tells Rusty he needs his help to rob three casinos in Vegas, who all belong to the same person, Terry Benedict (Andy Garcia). They go to see Reuben (Elliott Gould), a security specialist in Vegas, who discusses the plan with them while eating a salad (IwhMA) near his swimming pool; he agrees to join them because Benedict had muscled him out of the casino business.

They start forming a crew: Frank, now a card dealer in one of the casinos that they want to rob; the "Mormon twins", car experts; Livingston, a computer expert; Bash (Don Cheadle), for explosives; the "amazing Yan", an acrobat, as a "greaseman"; Sal, an older man that we see peeling an orange (IwhMO) during a break at the dog races and that Russ criticizes for his way of getting vitamins (IwhMO). While they talk, Rusty eats a bright colored snow ice (NwhMA). Then we see Russ and Ocean at a bar, drinking while Ocean discusses the need to get more people (NwhMA). Ocean also goes to Chicago to meet the young Linus, a pickpocket (Matt Damon).

They all meet at Ruben's where they get to know each other and chat while eating hors d'oeuvres (NwhasblWMYAO). Ocean comes out, asks them if they ate enough (NwhMA) and if they are still sober (NwhMA), and tells them that if they find the job he proposes is "not their kind of vodka" (NwhMA), they can eat as much as they want (NwhMA) and they can leave.

The thieves are shown in different moments of the preparatory phase; we see Rusty eating out of a dish (NwhMA) while talking to Livingston, Rusty sucking on a lollypop (NwhMA) while talking to a woman that gives him information, Ocean drinking whisky while talking to Rusty (NwhMA), Rusty eating a snack while talking to Linus (NwhMA), Sal drinking while playing in the casino (NwhMO).

Rusty finds out that Ocean's ex wife Tess (Julia Roberts) is now Benedict's woman, and that Ocean wants his revenge. Ocean sits at a restaurant table with Tess while she is waiting for Benedict. He does not eat (NwhMA) but orders a drink (NwhMA) to talk to her. Tess is clearly nervous and angry at Ocean. Terry arrives while Ocean is still there.

The robbery works as planned. Ocean manages to push Terry to say that he would rather keep his money than have Tess. Tess hears that and decides to go back with Ocean, who in the meantime is sent to prison again for breaking his parole (Terry could not demonstrate he was implicated in the robbery).

We read that three to six months have passed. We see Rusty eating a sandwich (NwhMA) while waiting for Ocean to get out of prison. Tess is also waiting for him in the car.

### **NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM**

Director: Shawn Levy

Writers: Robert Ben Garant and Thomas Lennon (screenplay): Milan Trenc (book)

Release Date: 22 December 2006 (USA)

Company: Twentieth Century-Fox

#### **Commentary**

Larry Daily, an unemployed inventor, gets a job as a night watchman at the Museum of Natural Sciences to show his wife and his son that he is a responsible person. Larry soon realizes the whole museum comes alive at night. With the help of Rebecca, one of the curators, and of the creatures of the Museum, he manages to thwart the plan of the three previous watchmen to steal a golden object. After the first night of mayhem, before becoming inanimate again, the statue of Roosevelt tells Larry, who is not sure if he is coming back the following night, "Some men are born great, some have greatness thrust upon them." This is the central theme of the movie: it is all about Larry accepting his responsibilities and dealing with reality.

Food plays a very secondary role in the movie; we see Larry's wife's new companion sipping high-end coffee while talking business, as a demonstration of his yuppie status, while Larry and Rebecca use coffee to talk and get to know each other.

#### **Synopsis**

Larry Daily (Ben Stiller), an unemployed inventor, goes see his son Nick (Jake Cherry) at his ex wife's place, where her fiancée Don, a bond trader, is sipping coffee in between business calls (IwhUA). Nick admires Don and his success, but he still loves his father, despite his inability to find a stable job to settle down.

Larry decides to get a job and an employment agency sends him to the Museum of Natural History, where he meets Cecil (Dick Van Dyke), Gus (Mickey Rooney), and Reginald (Bill Cobbs), the old night guards that are being fired, to be replaced by only one young guard. Larry decides to try; the old men give him the written instructions of all he has to do and leave. Larry soon realizes the whole museum comes alive at night, including the stuffed lions that he fears will eat him (NwhWA). The instructions get destroyed in the mayhem. He survives and controls the situation thanks to the statue of president Theodore Roosevelt, who explains to Larry that all the commotion and the coming to life of everything is caused by the golden tablet of Pharaoh Akhmenrah, kept in the museum since 1952. If any creature from the museum is caught in the daylight outside, it turns to dust.

Larry is ready to quit but leaving the museum he runs into Nick, who is very proud that his dad is working in the museum. So he decides to stay, and asks Rebecca (Carla Gugino), one of the curators, out for a coffee (NwhWA) to learn more about the exhibits.

They walk around sipping the coffee and talking about the museum and themselves (NwhWA).

Larry starts studying to get information to control the various creatures when they come alive at night, so that he can keep his job. At first, the second night seems to be a little better, he can control some of what happens. For instance, he feeds a huge amount of chewing gum to an Easter Island statue (NwhWA), who had asked for some the previous night. But a little monkey steals his keys and opens a window. Larry is ready to give up when he realizes that a primitive man has escaped through the window. He finds him too late, and the creature becomes dust.

He understands he has to stay but gets fired by the director, right when Larry's son is entering the museum and hears it all. The director gives Larry one more chance, so he decides to take Nick to his job the following night. The three old night guards come back to steal the golden tablet; they leave the doors open so many creatures escape. Larry frees the Pharaoh whose tablet the three old men stole, and with his help they manage to get the tablet back and to bring back all the creatures. Larry is about to be fired but the events of the night have been partly reported by the media, attracting lots of visitors, so the director decides to keep him.

### **The Matrix**

Directors: Andy and Larry Wachowski

Writers: Andy and Larry Wachowski

Release Date: 31 March 1999 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

In the year 2019 or so, machines dominate the world. To do so they exploit human beings as a source of heat and electricity (which is to say, food): the living creatures are fed with the liquefied remains of the dead. To keep humans under control, the machines have created a digital virtual reality, directly transmitted to their victims' brains, which is a perfectly functioning image of the world like it used to be before the machines took power. In reality, humans are kept in a state of suspended animation within cocoons, deprived through wires and pipes of their life force, while dreaming of a normal life.

A group of men, aware of the situation, decide to live outside the illusion and to jeopardize the whole system in order to free humanity. One of the leaders, Morpheus, believes that Neo, a hacker, is the Chosen One that a prophecy has announced as the destroyer of the Matrix. With the help of the beautiful, leather-clad Trinity, Morpheus brings Neo into the resistance and trains him to fight in and out of the Matrix.

Inside the construct of the Matrix, food is projected in the way we perceive it, as humans. After Neo realizes the truth, when he is put back inside the Matrix, he sees a restaurant that he used to patronize before the illusion he lived in was broken. He says that there were "really good noodles." Later in the movie, the rebels go see the Oracle, a woman who, after their meeting, gives Neo a cookie. She says that after he finishes eating the cookie, he will feel "right as rain." After noticing the noodle shop, Neo says he has memories that, in reality, never happened. Although what constitutes a memory is a completely different and complex question, Neo brings up a good point when he says he is lived an entire life that was not even real.

Various key scenes focus on food. The first one takes place in a restaurant located in the virtual reality projected onto the human mind, where two characters talk over a steak. One of the rebels is cutting a deal with an envoy of the machines to betray the rebel leader. All he wants in exchange is to be sucked into the matrix and to abandon the sad reality of the dehumanized world, though he is fully aware the whole move is a delusion.

Another scene happens in the rebel warship, in the grim reality outside the matrix. Since the crew members have to nourish themselves, they have recourse to an artificially processed aliment that “looks like snot.” The dialogue among them points out that machines cannot possibly know what real food tastes like, and above all that they cannot convey the actual sensations that flavor memories elicit. The Matrix algorithms are not able to give the same depth and emotional value as real food recollections to neural perceptions of taste and smell. (Parasecoli 2008: 20-22)

### **Synopsis**

Trinity (Carrien-Anne Moss), a beautiful woman clad in black latex, is trying to escape from the police. She shows to have superhuman powers, but there is an agent that appears to have the same capacities. She manages to escape by disappearing in a phone boot. The agents are also looking for a certain Neo, described as the next target. Neo (Keanu Reeves) is a hacker, but with a serious day job as a program writer in a software company. In a club he meets Trinity, who tells him that he is in danger and that somebody is watching; they start talking about the Matrix.

One day when he is at work he receives a phone call by Morpheus (Lawrence Fishburne), who gives him the possibility to discover the Matrix. He realizes he has been living an imaginary life, attached to a machine in a cocoon full of liquid, with wires plugged onto his body. Neo is freed and brought into a place where Trinity and Morpheus are waiting for him. They take him into a spaceship, where they heal him and show him that what he thought was reality was the Matrix, a computer-generated dream world built to keep the humans to use the energy they produce as heat and electric stimuli. The dead humans are liquefied and then fed to the living ones to keep them in suspended animation.

Morpheus believes Neo is the one whose coming to free the human race had been announced by an Oracle. Lots of programs are uploaded into Neo to get him used to fight in the Matrix. After the first training, Trinity brings him food while he sleeps (NwhMA). One of the crew, Chypher (Joe Pantoliano), tells her: “I don’t think you ever brought me dinner” (NwhxA).

One day while they are talking, Chypher offers Neo a drink (NwhxA), which he accepts (NwhMY). It makes Neo cough because it is too strong (NwhMY); Chypher tells him a crew member makes it and that it is good to degreasing engines and killing brain cells (NwhxA). Neo keeps on drinking to show he can take it (NwhMY).

Cut to Chypher in the Matrix, cutting a piece of rare meat off a steak and acknowledging that it is actually an effect of the mind while he savors it (KwhxA). He is talking to an agent from the Matrix, making a deal over dinner (KwhxA). Chypher is going to give Morpheus to the agents.

Camera cuts to rebels eating together (KwhblxYA). Crew members make Neo notice what he is eating, which feels like runny eggs or a blow of snot (KwhxYA); Neo stops eating and makes the food fall from the spoon to the dish (KwhMY). A young guy

reminisces of a food called Tasty Wheat (KwhxY), trying to understand what it really was what he was eating (KwhxY) when he ate it. Another explains to Neo what the food actually is (KblxA). Morpheus interrupts the meal because he wants to bring Neo to the Oracle (NwhblxYA). They get into the Matrix. While they are driving Neo recognizes a restaurant and says he used to eat there and they had really good noodles (NwhMY)

The Oracle is a woman (Gloria Foster), busy baking cookies; she tells him he is not the One. Before he leaves, she gives him a cookie (KwhMY). Chypher has betrayed them, so the agents ambush them, making Morpheus prisoner to get the access codes to all the computer of the resistance. Chypher goes back to reality and kill some of crew, but he gets killed. Neo and Trinity escape the Matrix, then go back and rescue Morpheus. Neo's abilities and actions convince everybody including himself that he is the One.

### **THE MATRIX RELOADED**

Directors: Andy and Larry Wachowski

Writers: Andy and Larry Wachowski

Release Date: 15 May 2003 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

#### **Commentary**

In the second installment of the series, Neo succeeds in penetrating the core of the Matrix to meet its Architect. Morpheus's ship is destroyed by machines, which Neo mysteriously stops even if that means he will enter a coma.

In this movie, food points to less challenging and unusual aspects of human life. We see women and men sharing food during a celebration, some of which is left in front of Neo's door, as a form of gift. Another character, Seraph, sips tea while waiting; Neo himself is offered candy when he goes to visit the Oracle.

In the most interesting food scene Neo, accompanied by Morpheus and Trinity, go to see the Merovingian, a rogue program from the Matrix, who is dining with his wife, Persephone, in a restaurant. As soon as they arrive, he invites them to eat, pointing out that food is not real and it is only for the sake of appearances, but Neo turns the offer down. The Merovingian sips some wine describing it with expertise, while the rebels sit around the table without eating. To show them his power, the Merovingian sends to a female customer a dessert that provokes her orgasm, while pronouncing a long prolusion about causality and the futility of free will. In doing so, however, he displays a thirst for control over the woman and a proud and unabashed masculinity in front of his annoyed wife, who retaliates by helping the rebels.

#### **Synopsis**

Neo, who we see in bed with Trinity, has problems sleeping because of bad dreams where his woman dies. They talk while Neo drinks something warm (NwhMA). They go to a meeting of the Resistance, where they meet Niobe (Jada Pinkett Smith), another captain, who used to be Morpheus's life partner and now is with Lock (Harry Lennix), the military commander of the resistance. Morpheus discusses with her because he does not agree with the order given by Lock, who does not believe in Neo (who now wears a priest-like cloak and looks more adult) and the Oracle.

Morpheus's ship goes back to Zion, the basis of the resistance deep near the warm core of the earth, to recharge. Neo is welcomed by part of the population as a savior. Morpheus addresses the people of Zion in a sort of religious ceremony, revealing that the



machines are preparing an attack, but also giving hope to everybody. Women pass food around; we see men taking some (NwhblhixYAO), then the ceremony turns into something like a rave party, with everybody dancing, while Neo and Trinity retire and make love. When Neo leaves their place, he finds lots of food outside the door, probably left by the people as a gift (NwhMA).

Morpheus and his ship leave Zion to meet the Oracle. Neo goes to visit the Oracle, but he is met by Seraph (Collin Chou), who is first drinking tea (NasxA) and then attacks him to check if he is really Neo. He takes Neo to the Oracle, who reveals she is a computer program who believes that humans and machines have a future together, and who is against rogue programs refusing to do what they were created to do. She also tells Neo that the solution is in the machines' mainframe, but to get access to it he has to find the Keymaker, who is held prisoner by a bad old program, the Merovingian (Lambert Wilson). While they talk, the Oracle offers him a candy (NwhMA). When she leaves a Matrix agent arrives, Smith (Hugo Weaving), who after being defeated by Neo (in the previous movie) has become independent, deciding to disobey the system and refusing to be discarded. He multiplies and attacks Neo, who eventually escapes.

The council of Zion gets ready for the attack, but requests that two more ships leave Zion to look for Morpheus's ship that carries Neo, the One. In the meanwhile Neo, accompanied by Morpheus and Trinity, go to see the Merovingian and his wife, Persephone (Monica Bellucci), in the restaurant. As soon as they arrive, the rogue program invites them to eat (NwhUA), pointing out that the food is not real and it is only for the sake of appearances (NwhUA). Neo turns the offer down (NwhMA). The Merovingian sips some wine describing it with expertise (NwhUA). They all sit around the table without eating (NwhblxA). To show them his power, the Merovingian sends to a female customer a dessert that provokes her an orgasm (NwhUA). He refuses to give the Keymaker up, and leaves saying he has to take a piss because he drank too much wine, using it as a metaphor to make fun of them (NwyUA). But the Merovingian's wife takes them to the Keymaker to get back at her husband. In exchange she wants a kiss from Neo. She takes them through the kitchens, where we see many cooks working (NxxA).

They get the Keymaker, but the Merovingian sends his lackeys to stop them. With the help of Niobe and her crew, they succeed in freeing him. The Keymaker reveals to them how to get to the source of the Matrix, hidden on a secret floor inside a huge building. Here Neo meets the Architect, the creator of the Matrix, who tells Neo that the present Matrix is the sixth of a series, and every time Zion is destroyed and rebuilt as a form of systemic cyclical defect necessary to the survival of the Matrix. He is given the choice between destroying the source, thus ensuring the survival of Zion, and saving Trinity who is fighting against agents to allow Neo to get to the source. Neo decides to save Trinity, because he understands that the prophecy is created by the Matrix itself to continue existing and controlling the human anomaly.

Morpheus's ship is destroyed by machines, which Neo mysteriously stops even if that means that he must enter a coma.

## **THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS**

Directors: Andy and Wachowski

Writers: Andy and Larry Wachowski

Release Date: 5 November 2003 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

In the last part of the trilogy, while the machines are digging deeper and deeper to enter the core of Zion, Neo wakes up in a sort of virtual limbo between reality and the Matrix, a place that assumes the form of a train station. He eventually manages to escape and goes back to reality, where he is hurt and blinded. However, he manages to make peace between humans and machines, who both need to get rid of the rogues programs that have infested the Matrix.

Food is almost absent, with a few minor exceptions: the Merovingian, sipping a Martini and eating the olives while he talks in a dance club; Neo being offered candy by the Oracle and refusing it; and Agent Smith, the evil aspect of the Matrix, throwing a plate of cookies baked by the Oracle against the wall. In all cases, food is used as a manifestation of masculinities, albeit different ones.

### **Synopsis**

While the machines are digging deeper and deeper to enter the core of Zion, Neo wakes up in a sort of virtual limbo between reality and the Matrix, a place which assumes the form of a train station where Neo meets a young girl, Sati, who is actually a program headed into the Matrix. The place is controlled by a program called the Trainman, who smuggles programs in and out of the Matrix under the orders of the Merovingian. Sati is at the station with her father Rama-Kandra and her mother Kamala.

In the meanwhile Morpheus is summoned by the Oracle, who tells him that he needs to help Neo get out. Together with Trinity and Seraph, the Oracle's protector, he goes to the Merovingian to get him to free Neo. The Frenchman is in a dance club, sipping a Martini and eating the olives while he talks (NwhUA). They force him to let go of Neo, who goes to visit the Oracle. While they talk, she offers candy to Neo (NwhMA), who refuses (NwhMA). She tells him he needs to destroy agent Smith, or everything will end. Smith goes to the Oracle, who is waiting for him. He throws the plate of cookies she had baked against the wall (NwhMA), then transforms the Oracle into another replica of himself.

Neo decides to take one of the ships to the machine city with Trinity, asking all the others to go back to Zion on another ship driven by Niobe. Smith takes control of one of the rebels, who penetrates Neo's ship and manages to blind him. Neo however is somehow able to see.

Niobe succeeds in bringing back the ship to Zion in time for the final battle. Everything seems lost, with the machines penetrating deeper and deeper into Zion and the rebels preparing their last stand.

In the meantime, Neo and Trinity get to the city of the machines, but she dies in the attempt. Neo, alone and blind, makes a deal with the machines, promising to destroy Smith, who is dangerous also for the machines, if they stop their attack to Zion. Neo defeats Smith, using the energy from machines, but he dies. The war ends, all the machines leave Zion.

## **THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING**

Director: Peter Jackson

Writers: J.R.R. Tolkien (novel); Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Peter Jackson (screenplay)

Release Date: 19 December 2001 (USA)

Company: New Line Cinema

### **Commentary**

The destiny of Middle Earth lies in the hands of four Hobbits, small gentle creatures, led by Frodo Baggins, who has to bring an all-powerful ring to its destruction, lest it falls in the hands of evil beings that would then control the universe. They get help in their mission from representatives of many races: Elves, Dwarfs, and Men, all guided by Galdalf the Wizard.

The Hobbits are characterized by a healthy, hedonistic relationship with food: they like to eat and to have a good time, and actually they think about food more than the other races of Middle Earth. At the beginning of the movie, we see them eating and drinking to celebrate the old Bilbo Baggins, and when Gandalf arrives, the first thought is about what to serve to him. And when Frodo leaves for his mission, scared, he wraps some bread for the trip. On the road, the Hobbits are always hungry; at night, they light up a fire to cook something and eat, even if it is dangerous. Among the Hobbits, it is Frodo's gardener Sam who worries all the time that his friend gets enough food.

During their trip, the Hobbits meet the Elves, whose food is a source of life and purity.

### **Synopsis**

Lord Sauron of Mordor, after forging a ring that can control all races of Middle Earth, Elves, Dwarfs, and Men, gets defeated by an alliance of Elves and Men. The ring passes from men to men, causing hate and destruction, and eventually gets lost, until the filthy creature Gollum (Andy Serkis), finds it and loses it again. The last to find it is the Hobbit Bilbo Baggins (Ian Holm).

60 years later, the wizard Gandalf (Ian McKellen) visits the Shire of the Hobbits for Bilbo's birthday. We see women and men cultivating the land (IwhWA) and selling food (IwhWA). Bilbo offers Gandalf tea and liquor (IwhMO), and then starts looking for food to offer his guest (IwhMO). Gandalf accepts only tea (IwhUO), while Bilbo stuffs his face with some sponge cake (IwhMO). While Bilbo prepares tea they talk about Bilbo's plans (IwhMUO).

The celebrations start; men drink and eat festively (DwhWYAO). The fireworks get out of control: people run all over the place and a man overturns a table full of food (DwhWA). The two young Hobbits responsible for the incident are forced to wash dishes while the party goes on (IwhWY). Bilbo announces he will go away and suddenly disappears by wearing the ring, which exerts a strong influence on him. Gandalf convinces him to leave the ring to his nephew Frodo (Elijah Wood) before leaving for good.

Gandalf goes back to his place, and while he reads some old documents to understand more about the ring, he drinks (NwhUO). He goes back to the Shire to tell Frodo that Sauron is back and he is looking for the ring. Frodo drinks while listening to the news (NwhWY). Gandalf tells him that he needs to take it away from the Shire, because Gollum has told Sauron who had the ring, and that he has never to wear it, otherwise his enemies will know where he is. Frodo, scared, wraps some bread for the trip (NwhWY). His gardener and friend Sam (Sean Astin) travels with him. On their way

they run into their friends Merry (Dominic Monaghan) and Pippin (Billy Boyd), who have been stealing carrots and cabbages from a field (IwhWY). They see mushrooms and while they are picking them (IwhWY) a dark scary knight sent by Sauron almost finds them. The four hobbits escape together.

In the meanwhile Gandalf goes to talk to Saruman (Christopher Lee), the head of his wizard order, who reveals himself as an ally of Sauron and imprisons him.

The hobbits end up in a dingy tavern, where many men are drinking (DwhWYA) and where they are supposed to meet Gandalf. While they wait they have a meal (NwhWY). They ask the tavern owner, who is serving food (NwhWA), about a guy who sits by himself. This man, known as the Strider, sees Frodo disappear while wearing the ring, an action that reveals him to the dark knights looking for the ring. The Strider (Viggo Mortensen) decides to take them to see the Elves.

On the road, the Hobbits are always hungry (NwhWY); breakfast is not enough for them, so the Strider gives them some apples (NwhMA). Even at night, they light up a fire to cook something and eat (NwhWY) and they offer some to Frodo (NwhWY) who tells them to stop (NwhWY), destroying their fire so that they cannot be spotted. One of them complains that ashes fell on his tomatoes (NwhWY). They barely escape the dark knights with the help of the Strider, but Frodo is hurt. An elf, Arwen, comes to take him to the house of the elf king Elrond, where they heal his wound. Here Frodo meets Gandalf, who has managed to escape from Saruman, and Bilbo. The Strider turns out to be Aragorn, the heir to the throne of Gondor, the kingdom of the men.

Representatives of men, elves and dwarves meet to decide about the future. The only way to defeat Sauron is to destroy the ring in the furnace where it was created, and Frodo volunteers to do it. The other hobbits, Aragorn, Gandalf, an elf, Legolas (Orlando Bloom), a dwarf, Gimli (John Rhys-Davies), and a man, Boromir (Sean Bean), join him to become the fellowship of the ring.

During the trip, we see Sam preparing food for the hobbits (NwhWY) while Aragorn trains them to sword fight. Saruman attacks them, so they decide to go through the mines of Moria, where Gandalf disappears while fighting a fire giant. They arrive to the elf kingdom of Galadriel, the Lady of the Woods (Cate Blanchett), who shows Frodo his future and gives him the water of Earendil, which will provide light in dark places. When they leave the elves, they are attacked by Orcs, violent and cruel creatures at Saruman's command, who kill Boromir and take Merry and Pippin prisoners. Frodo and Sam go away alone, while Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli decide to save Merry and Pippin.

## **THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS**

Director: Peter Jackson

Writers: J.R.R. Tolkien (novel); Fran Walsh (screenplay), Philippa Boyens, Stephen Sinclair and Peter Jackson (screenplay)

Release Date: 18 December 2002 (USA)

Company: New Line Cinema

### **Commentary**

The Hobbits continue their mission, but they get divided. Sam takes care of Frodo, feeding him the Elves' bread, nourishing and comforting: it is his way to fight fear and keep reality within the limits of what he knows.

They travel with Gollum, a slimy creature that used to be a Hobbit and that has been corrupted by the ring. Gollum's beastly state is marked by food: he captures two hares and bites into them raw; Sam, disgusted, throws them into a stew, provoking in turn Gollum's disgust. And the dichotomy between raw and cooked foods also defines the Orcs, who seem to appreciate raw human flesh.

At the end of the movie, the Hobbits and the other allies win a couple of important battles against the forces of evil.

### **Synopsis**

Frodo and Sam get lost on their way to Mordor. They are very tired. Frodo drinks some water to get some respite (NwhMY) and then ask Sam what food they have got left (NwhMY). Sam offers him lambas bread (NwhWY), given to them by the elves. While savoring it, Sam observes he usually does not like foreign food but the elves food is not bad, (NwhWY). While they sleep, Gollum, the former holder of the Ring, tries to get the Ring back and during the fight he bites Sam (NwhWY). Eventually they capture him and force him to guide them to Mordor. Gollum, who used to be a Hobbit named Smeagol, takes them through the Dead Marshes, where the black riders looking for the Ring chase them.

Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli are following the Orcs that are taking Merry and Pippino to Saruman, who in the meanwhile has attacked the human kingdom of Rohan. The Orcs are hungry, complaining about eating maggots for three days (NxxA). Some of the Orcs want to eat Merry and Pippin (Nxxa), terrified by the perspective (NwhWY), but their leader forbids them to do it (NxxA). A fight ensues and the hobbits are almost devoured when the Orcs are attacked by knights that have been banned by Rohan, now controlled by an ally of Saruman's. Merry and Pippin manage to escape into Fangorn forest where they captured the Ent Treebeard, a tree herder, a huge tree-like creature that hates the Orcs for burning the trees. He brings them to Gandalf, who after fighting with a demon is back as a more powerful wizard. While following the hobbits, Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli also meet Gandalf and together go to the human city of Edoras, where they free the king Theoden (Bernard Hill) from Saruman's control. During dinner, to which also children refugee participate (NwhxAC), they discuss the future; the king decides not to fight against Saruman but to take all his people to a refuge on the mountains, Helm's Deep. Gandalf leaves to look for help. The people of Edoras make their way to their last stand, carrying food (NwhWAO), when they are attacked by the orcs. During the ensuing battle Aragorn falls off a cliff, but the rest of the expedition reaches Helm's Deep.

In the meanwhile, Frodo and Sam arrive to Mordor. Sam worries that Frodo, under the influence of the Ring, is not eating (NwhWY). Gollum brings Frodo two hares (NxxA) to express his affection. Gollum starts to eat them raw but Sam, disgusted, (NwhWY) cook them in a stew (NwhWY) provoking in turn Gollum's disgust (NxxA). Sam says it would be good to add "taters" (NwhWY), and when Gollum ask what they are (NxxA), Sam explains they are potatoes (NwhWY) and starts reminiscing about foods he likes (NwhWY): "Lovely, big, golden chips with a nice piece of fried fish." They keep on discussing if fish is better raw or cooked (NwhxxWY). Some men, led by Boromir's brother Faramir of Gondor (David Wenham), capture them. Gollum escapes but is also captured by the men while he is catching fish (NxxA): he reveals to Faramir that Frodo is carrying the ring. Faramir decides to bring Frodo to Gondor so that men can control the power of the ring, but the Dark Riders attack the city. Frodo almost surrenders to them

but Sam saves him once again, convincing him to go on. Faramir lets them go.

Aragorn also gets to Helm's Deep, carrying the news that Saruman is attacking with a huge army. Also the Elves from Rivendell send archers to help the men. While the battle rages, the Ents march against Saruman in Isengard to avenge all the trees that the wizard has destroyed to make weapons. Helm's Deep has almost fallen when Gandalf arrives with an army of men, defeating the Orcs, while the Ents defeat Saruman.

### **THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**

Director: Peter Jackson

Writers: J.R.R. Tolkien (novel) Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Peter Jackson (screenplay)

Release Date: 17 December 2003 (USA)

Company: New Line Cinema

#### **Commentary**

In the last episode of the trilogy, Frodo manages to destroy the ring, the forces of evil are defeated, and the warrior Aragorn takes his place as legitimate heir of the throne of the Humans. In the whole trilogy, the good characters live in the continuous fear of being killed and eaten by the Orcs.

The more Frodo and Sam penetrates into Mordor, the reign of evil, the less food they have, and the more they miss food and the comfort that comes from it. Gollum wastes the last Elves' bread to accuse Sam of eating it alone and to separate him from Frodo. One night Sam overhears Gollum discussing his plans to kill them and the differences between Hobbit and Orc flesh.

In this movie we also see the human warriors use food to underline their sense of community, to mourn for dead heroes, and to celebrate, a trope common to many epic films where the heroes express their masculinity by eating and drinking festively and in large amounts. The mad kings of the humans, on the other hands, use his food to show its detachment from the events that invest his men: his son is almost killed, but he continues his solitary banquet, forcing one of the hobbits to keep him company.

#### **Synopsis**

The movie starts with a flashback: Smeagol and another hobbit are fishing (NwhMA) when they find the ring, over which they fight till Smeagol kills the other. We see him transforming into Gollum, eating raw fish even if he is not used to it (NwhMA). We hear him reminisce: "We forgot the taste of bread" (NwhMA).

We go back to the present to see Sam telling Gollum they cannot go on before Frodo has eaten (NwhWY). Sam gives Frodo the little lembas bread left (NwhWY). He pretends not to be hungry to let Frodo eat more (NwhWY), but Frodo understand that he is lying so Sam agrees to share (NwhWY) while Frodo eats his breakfast (NwhMY). One night Sam overhears Gollum discussing his plans to kill them and the differences between hobbit and orc flesh (NxxA).

However, Frodo does not believe Sam. One night, Gollum throws away all the bread left (Nxxa). When they wake up, Sam is upset at seeing that all the bread has gone (NwhWY), and when Smeagol accuses him to be the thief, he attacks him. Frodo believes Smeagol, who convinces him that Sam wants to take the ring away from him, so they part ways.

Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli go to Isengard where they see Pippin and

Merry eating and toasting to them (NwhWY). Pippin even points out that the salted pork is particularly good (NwhWY), making Gimli salivate (NwhUA). Gandalf scoffs at them because of their gluttonous ways (NwhUO). They all go back to the city of Edoras, where the king and the warriors toast to the dead heroes (NwhUA). Then everybody participates to a celebratory banquet (NwhWUUCTYA), during which Aragorn is offered a cup by the king's niece (NwhUA). Merry and Pippin dance and drink, entertaining everybody (NwhWY). Pushed by curiosity, Pippin looks into a crystal sphere that connect him to Sauron, so he discovers that the city of Minas Tirith is going to be attacked. Gandalf takes him there to meet Boromir's father, Denethor (John Noble), steward of the men's kingdom, who does not want to give up his power to Aragorn, the legitimate heir of the kingdom. Denethor does not want to fight against Sauron, but the events force him to call for help from all men. However, while dining in his throne hall (NwhUO), he sends Faramir, whom he deems unworthy of his dead brother Boromir, to reconquer a station taken by the Orcs. While Faramir rides toward his fate, his father keeps on eating (NwhUO), asking Pippin to sing for him. Faramir is brought back by his horse, almost dead. The king decides to burn himself with the apparently dead son, but Pippin saves Faramir. Gandalf takes command of the defense. While the men get ready to fight, Aragorn, as the legitimate heir to the throne of the Men, conquers the allegiance of the Dead Warriors and saves Minas Tirith.

In the meanwhile, Frodo is brought by Gollum into the lair of a giant spider. Sam, who is following him, finds the bread (NwhWY) that Gollum has thrown away but he gets too late to help Frodo, who is attacked first by Gollum and then hurt by the spider. Sam fights the spider and saves Frodo, who in a state of semi coma is taken by the Orcs inside Mordor. Sam follows them and frees Frodo.

Aragorn decides to attack Sauron to distract him, so that Frodo can destroy the ring. Sam gives Frodo the last drops of water they have (NwhWY). They manage to get near the volcano where they are supposed to destroy the ring when they are attacked again by Gollum, who gets the ring but falls into the volcano with it, destroying it.

The war is over and Sauron is defeated. Aragorn is celebrated as king. When the four hobbits get back to the Shire, they go to a tavern, where everybody is drinking merrily (NwhWMYA); they toast to each other (NwhWMY). Eventually Frodo leaves with Gandalf and the elves.

## **JURASSIC PARK**

Director: Steven Spielberg

Writers: Michael Crichton (novel): Michael Crichton and David Koepp (screenplay)

Release Date: 11 June 1993 (USA)

Company: Universal Pictures

### **Commentary**

Millionaire John Hammond lures archaeologist Alan Grant and paleobotanist Ellie Sattler to consult for him about the amusement park where he has been able to bring dinosaurs back to life. The experiment ends up in mayhem, jeopardizing the millionaire's grandchildren's lives, but eventually all the humans manage to escape the island.

The movie is dominated by the fear of being eaten by the dinosaurs, the representatives of the power of nature.

An interesting theme in the movie is the dichotomy between the reproductive power of nature, considered feminine, and the masculine scientific need to measure and control nature. When one of the guests on the island, the chaos theory expert Malcolm, points out that dinosaurs eat men, Dr. Sattler answers: “Dinosaurs eat man, woman inherits the earth”.

When Hammond calls him a luddite while they sit at the table around a specially prepared meal, Malcolm defines scientific discovery as a “violent, penetrative act that scars what it explores. What you call discovery, I call the rape of the natural world.” Scientific ethos is characterized as masculine and violent, as opposed to the femininity of nature. Nobody eats the beautiful dishes in front of them. The rest of the movie is the actualization of the fears expressed by the scientist during the unaccomplished meal.

Of course we see the children eat with vigor, and in the same oblivious way also the millionaire reminisces and discusses future projects while eating cake. He is like a child, absorbed in his plans while satisfying his craving. Food is also symbolic of greed and self-absorption also in the character of the bad guy who steals the embryos from Jurassic Park: besides being overweight, he keeps on eating while he discuss his betrayal, and even refuses to pay the bill.

### **Synopsis**

In Montana, Professor Alan Grant (Sam Neil) and his partner Ellie Sattler (Laura Dern) are digging skeletons of velociraptors, dinosaurs that hunted in packs, when millionaire John Hammond (Richard Attenborough) visits them to convince them to consult for him about an amusement park. He invites them to the park, promising to fund their dig if they accept.

The action moves to San Jose in Costa Rica. We see an overweight man in a colorful “tropical shirt”, Dennis, a disgruntled employee of Hammond’s, eating a meal on a beach (IwhMA) (never mind there is no beach in San Jose); in the background we see a barman mixing drinks (DisWA). A man brings him money for the dinosaur embryos he is supposed to steal, and they talk about their plans while Dennis keeps on eating (IwhMA). Dennis receives what seems a shaving cream can to transport the embryos in perfect conditions. When the check arrives, Dennis looks at the other man and waits for him to get the bill, saying: “don’t get cheap on me” (IwhMA).

Meanwhile, on the helicopter that takes them to the park, the two paleontologists meet Doctor Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum), a mathematician specialist in chaos theory. The park turns out to be a tropical island full of electrified fences, moats and other security features, because it is full of live dinosaurs. It is Jurassic Park, an amusement park with live biological attractions cloned from DNA strands obtained from the blood sucked by mosquitoes preserved in amber. All the animals are engineered as females, so that they cannot breed uncontrolled.

While they see a whole cow being fed to a dinosaur, Hammond invited them to go to the special lunch prepared by his chef Alejandro (NwhUO). While they eat lunch they discuss the possibility of development and the dangers of the park (KwhMAUO). The scientists are not convinced, and eventually even if they are sitting at the park restaurant nobody eats anything (KwhMAUO).

While a tropical storm approaches, the two grandchildren of Hammond join the scientist in their visit of the park. During the trip, Malcolm points out that dinosaurs eat men (NwhMA); Dr. Sattler answers: “Dinosaurs eat man, woman inherits the earth”.



When Hammond's granddaughter express disgust at the idea a T-Rex is going to eat a live goat, Hammond's lawyer, who is with them in the park tour, ask her mockingly: "Never had lamb chops?" (NwhMA)

Since they cannot see any dinosaurs, they all decide to leave the cars but suddenly a storm hits. In the meanwhile Dennis neutralizes the security systems so he can steal the embryos, but while he is bringing them to a boat he gets lost. He is attacked and devoured by a small dinosaur (NwhMA). The cars that are taking the scientists and the kids around lose power, so they cannot get back to the main building of the park. They get attacked by a T-rex and the lawyer is devoured (NwhUA). They get divided: Grant is with the children, while Sattler, together with an animal hunter, manages to get back to the main building. Sattler talks to Hammond, who while eating cake reminisces (NwhUO) and then discusses the future projects (NwhUO). He is like a child, absorbed in his plans while satisfying his craving, while Sattler tries to bring him back to reality and the fact that the people they love are outside in danger. While they are on a tree, Grant gives some branches to a brachiosaur to eat (NwhMA), as if it were a big cow. While making their way back to the main building, Grant and the kids find hatched dinosaur eggs: life has found its way to multiply. While they get back to the main building, the hunter that was with Sattler gets attacked and devoured (NwhMA).

Once in the building, the kids are finally savoring a large, satisfying meal (NwhUC), sharing it (NwhUC), when they realize that velociraptors have got inside. They escape into the kitchen, where they are followed by the velociraptors: they risk being "prepared and ingested" in the place where food is usually made. The girl, who is a computer expert, manages to bring back the security systems up, but the velociraptors are unrelenting. They are all scared to be eaten (NwhUCMA). It is the T-rex who saves them, attacking the velociraptors. They eventually manage to escape. In the helicopter that takes them away, we see the children falling asleep leaning on Grant, who before did not care much about them: at the end of this adventure, he has found the nurturing father within him.

## **JURASSIC PARK: THE LOST WORLD**

Director: Steven Spielberg

Writers: Michael Crichton (novel) and David Koepp (screenplay)

Release Date: 23 May 1997 (USA)

Company: Universal Pictures

### **Commentary**

The second movie of the series continues with the same themes as the first one, mainly with the fear of being eaten by the dinosaurs, which constitutes the horror element in the otherwise sci-fi adventure.

### **Synopsis**

The movie opens on a tropical island. We see two men in uniform that walk up a beach. One carries a bottle of champagne, fills flute glasses (DhiWA), and gives one to a man sitting on a chair, who takes it (NwhUA) and thanks him. The other gives food to a young girl (DhiWA). Two more men are setting a table and serving food (DxWx). The little girl wanders off and is attacked by tiny dinosaurs.

The action moves to New York, where we see Ian Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum) in the subway, recognized by people who heard him talk on TV about dinosaurs. He is on his

way to Hammond's, where he is welcome by his two grandchildren and quarrels with a nephew of Hammond's who is now in charge of Hammond's genetic company InGen and who warns Malcolm not to tell anything about what happened in Jurassic Park. Hammond reveals that there is another island where dinosaurs were bred and now are flourishing, and that a team of scientists will be sent there to observe the island: a technician expert in explorations; Nick, a photographer (Vince Vaughn); Sarah Harding, a paleontologist and Malcolm's girlfriend (Julianne Moore). Malcolm decides to go and get her out; his daughter Kelly (Vaness Lee Chester) is angry with him for leaving again, and hides in a motorhome headed to the island.

The expedition finds Sarah and discovers the presence of Kelly, who has lit a fire trying to prepare dinner for the others (NwhMA). In the meantime, InGen sends another team to capture the animals, led by the hunter Roland and his aide Dieter, who are there just to kill a T-rex, and Hammond's nephew who wants to build a dinosaur zoo in San Diego. It turns out that Nick the photographer is actually an environmentalist sent by Hammond to stop them; he frees the captured animals right when Hammond's nephew is talking to the investors about the project. Nick and Sarah save a baby T-rex who has got hurt and bring it to their base, thus attracting the parents, who devours one of them (NwhMA). They are discovered by the hunters' team, who decides to go into the interior to find a telephone to call for a boat to pick them up, despite the presence of velociraptors in that area. On the way there, Dieter, one of the hunters, is devoured by tiny dinosaurs (NwhWA) while the expedition is attacked again by T-rexes, which devour some other members (NwhMA). While they are escaping, they are attacked by velociraptors, which eat some others (NwhhiWA). Malcolm, Sarah, Kelly and Nick are saved by a helicopter. The hunters' team has an adult T-rex and an infant one, and they try to bring them to the US. The boat carrying it crashes on the dock: the T-rex has freed itself and killed the whole crew. The adult T-rex is free, ravaging the city. It devours a man trying to find refuge inside a telephone booth (NwhMA). Malcolm and Sarah manage to attract it back to the ship using the baby T-rex but Hammond's nephew is devoured by the baby (NwhUA). The ship is then sent back to the island. Even Hammond concedes to the fact that the animals need to be left alone on the island.

### **THE DA VINCI CODE**

Director: Ron Howard

Writers: Akiva Goldsman (screenplay) and Dan Brown (novel)

Release Date: 19 May 2006 (USA)

Company: Columbia Pictures

#### **Commentary**

Professor Robert Langdon is drawn by Sophie Neveau, granddaughter of the murdered curator of the Louvre, into the chase for the Holy Grail, which in the end turns out to be Sophie herself, the only living descendant of Christ and his companion Mary Magdalene.

Food plays a very secondary role in the movie. The only relevant exceptions are Langdon's conversation with professor Leigh, who submits his friend to a quiz about the proper way of having tea before admitting him to his villa, and the attack of French police officer Fache on a flight controller who is eating a sandwich on his break and

refuses to pay him attention. The two scenes reference opposite approaches to masculinity: one refined, the other brutal.

### **Synopsis**

Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks), professor of religious iconography, is giving a talk about symbols in Paris, when the body of the Louvres' curator Sauniere is found in the museum. The killer is an albino monk, Silas (Paul Bettany), who was looking for information from Sauniere about the location of something. Police Captain Fache (Jean Reno) requires Langdon's presence at the murder scene, since his name was on the curator's agenda. Before dying Sauniere has left a message written with his own blood, and the police suspects Langdon. Officer Neveu (Audrey Tautou), a police cryptologist and Sauniere's granddaughter, helps him to get away from the police while finding an object left by Sauniere, a cross that is connected with a secret order, the Priory of Sion, supposedly protecting the Holy Grail.

The cross is actually a key for a security deposit box in a bank. In the box they find a wood container with a white rose, the symbol of the Holy Grail. Inside there is a cryptex, an old machine meant to protect secrets. Langdon and Neveu escape the police again and go to Leigh (Ian McKellen), an old friend of Langdon's, a professor who lives in a castle not far from Paris. Before entering the castle, Leigh quizzes them: he asks if they want tea or coffee. The right answer is tea. And when asked if they want it with milk or lemon, Langdon answers that it depends on the tea (IwhMUA). Once inside, Leigh actually greets them by serving tea (IwhUA). They drink tea while discussing the Priory (KwhMUA). Leigh thinks the Holy Grail is actually a woman, Mary Magdalene, Jesus's wife, who was pregnant when Jesus was crucified and run away to France where she gave birth to a girl. While they talk, Leigh's butler calls; Leigh makes fun of him saying that his sauces are not that good (NwhUA).

In the meanwhile we learn that Silas works for a Bishop, Aringarosa (Alfred Molina), who has been contacted by somebody called "the Teacher" who wants the Holy Grail to be destroyed. Aringarosa is also in touch with captain Fache, who has accused Langdon of the death of Sauniere to cover the attempts of a conservative group within the Catholic Church at eliminating the Priory, of which Sauniere was the Grand Master.

Silas enters Leigh's castle and attack Langdon to get the cryptex that could lead to find the Holy Grail, but Leigh and Neveu stop him. Also the police arrive, so Langdon, Neveu and Leigh escape by plane, bringing Silas with them.

Fache wants the plane's destination from a flight controller who is on his break eating a sandwich (NwhMA). When he refuses, Fache attacks him and gets to know the plane is heading to London. Here, Leigh reveals himself to be the Teacher that is trying to get money from Bishop Aringarosa to destroy Christ's descendant. Eventually Aringarosa and Silas get killed, while Fache, realizing that Aringarosa used him, arrests Leigh letting Langdon and Neveu go. The two manage to get a map out of the Cryptex that takes them to a small church in France where they figure out that Neveu is actually the last descendant of Christ and Mary Magdalene.

### **WAR OF THE WORLDS**

Director: Steven Spielberg

Writers: Josh Friedman (screenplay) and David Koepp (screenplay): H.G. Wells (novel)

Release Date: 29 June 2005 (USA)

Company: Paramount Pictures

### **Commentary**

Ray Ferrier and his children survive the invasion of alien creatures bent on using humans as fodder for the spores through which they multiply. On their way to safety, they face various aspects of humanity at its worst.

Food tracks the transformation of Ray from a loser, incapable of taking care of himself and his children, to a more responsible father and adult. At the beginning of the movie, we see his former wife taking the children to him for the weekend, opening his fridge and scolding him for being out of milk.

When his daughter asks him what they are going to eat, he tells her to order in; when he wakes up, he finds out the girl has ordered hummus (exotic and healthy), which he does not know, revealing the different exposure to unusual foods between father and daughter.

When they have to run from Ray's place, he asks his son to pack everything they have in the fridge. Once at destination, Ray decides to prepare dinner, but he realizes that all they have is sauces, the only foods that were in his fridge. He tries to make peanut butter sandwiches but the kids are upset and not hungry. Frustrated, he throws the food against the window.

From then on, Ray's job is to protect his children from the bloodsucking aliens, while society crumbles around him (Gunn 2008). Eventually he manages to bring the kids to safety.

### **Synopsis**

Ray Ferrier (Tom Cruise) works at the docks in NYC. A divorced man, he struggles to make a living and to take care of his two children, Rachel (Dakota Fanning) and a teenager Robbie (Justin Chatwin). His wife leaves them with him for the weekend. Before going she opens his fridge, scolding him for being out of milk (IwhWA). Ray gets into an argument with his son, and decides to go to bed. His daughter asks him what they are going to eat (NwhWA), he answers to order in (NwhWA). When he wakes up, while he is drinking his coffee (NwhWA) he realizes that his daughter has ordered in. He cannot recognize the food (NwhWA) so he asks her what it is, showing his dislike for it (NwhWA). It his hummus (exotic and healthy), which reveals also the different exposure to different foods between father and daughter.

A strange storm arrives, with lightning hitting always the same spot and opening a hole on the pavement. A huge machine crawls out of the hole, walking on three very long legs and shooting destructive beams. Ray goes back home and decides to leave the house. He orders his son to pack some food (NwhWA) and they leave, with his son carrying a box of food (NwhMT). They get in a car and leave the city, trying to reach Ray's ex wife, but when they get there she is gone. Ray, while carrying the food inside (NwhWA), realizes she has left to go to her mother's in Boston. To reassure his kids, Ray decides to prepare dinner (NwhWA), but he realizes that all they have is sauces, the only things that were in his fridge (NwhWA), so he starts to make peanut butter sandwiches. The kids are not hungry. Frustrated, he throws the food against the window (NwhWA).

They decide to go to sleep in the basement, but during the night the house gets destroyed. When they get out, they meet a TV crew, two members of which are trying to get food from a fallen plane (NblMA). There are more and more people trying to get away; a crowd attacks them because they have a functioning car, which gets stolen. They

get into a diner, where they sit in the dark without eating (NwhWAMT). While they try get on a ferry to cross the Hudson, they get attacked by Tripods that overturn the boat. They reach land, but Robbie decides to join the military fighting against the aliens. Ray and Rachel take refuge in a farm. While Rachel sleeps, Ray is invited by the farmer to share some peach schnapps (NwhWA). While they drink, they discuss the situation (NwhWA). During the night, the aliens penetrate the farm. Ray and the farmer see the alien tripods taking a man and sucking his blood out of him (NwhxA), to use it as a fertilizer for spores. The farmer goes mad because of the fear of having his blood sucked out of him (NwhWA). Rachel is taken by the aliens, so Ray gets himself taken too and saves her. They finally make it to Boston, while the aliens are destroyed by the viruses and bacteria present in the air.

### **THE BODYGUARD**

Director: Mick Jackson

Writer: Lawrence Kasdan

Release Date: 25 November 1992 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

Frank Farmer, a professional bodyguard, works for pop star Rachel Marron and saves her from a killer, while building with her an unusual and passionate relationship.

Frank, although very classically masculine, does not recoil from food preparation. At the beginning of the movie, we see him alone in his kitchen, reading while he cooks and pouring himself a drink while he is having dinner.

He likes simple and healthy food, in tune with his no-nonsense professional approach (and masculinity). When he first meets Rachel, she makes fun of him for not drinking alcohol. His attitude clashes with Rachel's, who instead loves the social and spectacular aspect of eating, such as eating out in public. As they get closer, they go for a bite after a movie, but this time we suppose that Frank chooses the establishment, a simple diner, where they play around food. When Frank decides to take Rachel and her family to his father's in the North, we see both men, from two different generations, very comfortable about cooking, with Frank's father showing a very nurturing ability to use food.

However, it is in kitchens that we see Frank's explosions of rage and tension, first against Rachel's former bodyguard, and later against a Hispanic cook whom he suspect of being involved with a plot against Rachel.

### **Synopsis**

Frank Farmer (Kevin Costner) works as a professional bodyguard. We first see him talking to his employer, who is trying to convince to stay and work with him while sipping a drink (NwhUA). Frank goes back to his home. We see him read while he cooks (IwhMA) and pours himself a drink (IwhMA), then while he is having dinner (IwhMA).

Rachel Marron (Whitney Houston) is a famous singer with an 8-year old son, Fletcher (DeVaughn Nixon); her manager wants to hire Frank because she is afraid somebody wants to kill her.

When he first meets her, we see her old bodyguard, Tony (Mike Starr), chewing on something while working (NwhWA). Rachel offers Frank something to drink (NwhMA)

and he asks for orange juice (NwhMA). Rachel asks back: “Straight?” in an ironic tone (NwhMA). At first Frank does not want to take the job, but eventually he accepts.

Rachel goes out to a restaurant. We see a waiter serving food (DwhWA). On the way back a car follows them, but Frank does not succeed in seeing who is inside. Rachel receives more death threats. After a scare at a club, Frank is alone in the kitchen eating an apple (NwhMA) when he is attacked by Tony the old bodyguard, who is angry because he was replaced. They destroy half of the kitchen in the fight (NwhWMA).

Rachel asks Frank to take her out. After a movie, they go for a drink. We see a young man cooking hotdogs (DwhWY), Frank finishing a beer (NwhMA) and a waitress asking him if he wants another beer (NwhMA). Rachel and Frank talk while they drink and eat (NwhMA). For fun, Rachel threatens to throw chips on him (NwhMA). At the end of the evening they have sex, but the morning after he decides it is not a good idea to have an affair with his client, making Rachel angry.

Rachel is nominated for an award, so she is giving two charity concerts in Florida. At a party we see women and men drinking (NwhUA). Frank is offered an orange juice (DwhWA), which he sips (NwhMA). The morning after he is having breakfast (NwhMA) when Rachel confronts him. He goes into the hotel kitchen. We see men preparing food (DhiwhWA). Frank is nervous, he throws some food on the floor (NwhMA). He and a Hispanic man fight in the kitchen (NhiWAwhMA).

Rachel is really frightened, so she asks Frank to stay. They go on a vacation in the north to visit with Frank’s father. We see Rachel and the old man talk while he is preparing dinner (NwhMO). During dinner (NwhMAObIUC) he talks about Frank’s childhood (NwhMO); Frank is embarrassed and takes his food away from the table (NwhMA). While Fletcher stuffs his face (NbiUC), Frank’s father worries he has enough to eat (NwhUO). After dinner they drink and snack while playing chess (NwhMAObIUC).

After the family boat explodes, the cars are messed with and the phone lines cut, Frank is sipping coffee while keeping guard (NwhMA); he finds out that Rachel’s sister has hired a killer to get rid of her sister, whom she hates and is jealous of, but she does not know who the killer is. She actually becomes the first victim of the killer.

During the night of the Oscar ceremony, Tony is nervously eating carrots (NwhWA) while Rachel gets ready to perform. The killer tries to shoot her while she receives the award but Frank takes the bullet, shooting the killer at the same time. Frank goes back to being a bodyguard for politicians, Rachel continues her career.

## **STAR WARS: EPISODE I - THE PHANTOM MENACE**

Director: George Lucas

Writer: George Lucas

Release Date: 19 May 1999 (USA)

Company: Lucasfilm

### **Commentary**

The Jedi Obi-wan Kenobi and his master Qui-Gon Jinn are involved in a plot, organized by the mysterious sect of the Sith, to take control of the galactic Republic. With the help of queen Amidala from Naboo and the young Anakin Skywalker, the son of a slave, the two Jedis manage to temporarily stop the evil plan, even if that entails Qui-Gon deaths. Obi-wan decides to train Anakin as a Jedi.

Food plays a very secondary role in the first installment of the prequel of this space epic. We see it used to show the silly nature of one of the secondary character Jar Jar Binks, who gets into trouble for stealing food out of greed. Also, as in other action and adventure movies, food sharing is an occasion to exchange news and information.

### **Synopsis**

Pretending to be ambassadors of the Galaxy Senate, the Jedi Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor) and his master Qui-Gon Jinn (Liam Neeson) are sent to negotiate the end of an embargo against the small planet Naboo with the powerful Trade Federation, controlled by the master of the mysterious Sith organization. They are offered a drink while they wait (IwhUYA). They are discovered and attacked, but they find out that the Federation is preparing the invasion of Naboo.

The Jedis save Jar Jar Binks, a local, who takes them to the underwater city of the Gungans, creatures that do not like the surface people and that do not want to get involved in the war. The Jedis and Jar Jar are given a ship to reach the Naboo going through the core of the planet, where Jar Jar is afraid to be eaten by monsters (Nxxx). They free the queen Amidala so that she can get in touch with the senate, but they have to make an emergency landing on the tiny planet of Tatooine, controlled by gangsters, the Hutts, but lying outside the area controlled by the Federation. Padme, the queen's maid (Natalie Portman), goes out with Qui-Gon and Jar Jar to a space station to find spare parts for their ship engine. Jar Jar steals some food (Nxxx) and tries to eat it in secret (Nxxx), but when he is discovered and ordered to stop eating (Nxxx) by mistake he drops it into another creature's meal (Nxxx), who ends up eating Jar Jar's stolen food alone, as a sign of despise. A fight ensues but Jar Jar is saved by the little Anakin, a human slave (Jake Lloyd), who offers some fruits to Qui-Gon (IwhLC) – who accepts (NwhUA) – and then takes the visitors to his place to shelter them during a sand storm. Anakin's mother serves them food (NwhUALCxx). While they eat they discuss the situation of the slaves (NwhUALC).

Anakin decides to race with a machine he has built to raise the money to buy the necessary spare parts for the queen's ship; Qui-Gon realizes the boy is special. Anakin wins and Qui-Gon frees him from slavery to train him as a Jedi. The apprentice of the Sith master, Darth Maul, is sent to stop the Jedis but they manage to escape and get to Coruscant, where they meet Senator Palpatine (Ian McDiarmid). Anakin is brought in front of the Jedi council, because Qui-Gon thinks he is the one who, according to a prophecy, will bring balance to the Force. While Senator Palpatine is elected Supreme Chancellor of the Republic, the Jedis are sent is sent back to Naboo with Queen Amidala to uncover the mystery of the Sith.

Once on the planet, Padme reveals she is the real queen Amidala, (the other was only a decoy) and she makes an alliance with the Gungans against the Federation. Together they decide to capture the Federation's Viceroy. In the meanwhile, Anakin destroys the starship controlling the Federation's robots, stopping the invasion. Darth Maul kills Qui-Gon, but he is killed by Obi-wan, who from now on will train Anakin.

### **STAR WARS: EPISODE II - ATTACK OF THE CLONES**

Director: George Lucas

Writer: George Lucas (story and screenplay) and Jonathan Hales (screenplay)

Release Date: 16 May 2002 (USA)

Company: Lucasfilm

### **Commentary**

In the second episode of the trilogy, Senator Palpatine reveals himself as the leader of the Sith. While Obi-wan discovers a plot to create an army of clones with the goal of destroy the republic, Anakin, who in the meantime has become a young man, has the task of protecting Amidala. The two fall in love, despite Anakin's vow of celibacy, and get married in the end.

As in the previous movie, food is the occasion for characters to talk and make plans or exchange news. In the case of Anakin and Amidala, a shared meal allows them to express their forbidden love.

### **Synopsis**

Several systems under the leadership of the mysterious Count Dooku (Christopher Lee) want to secede from the Republic. Amidala, now a senator, is going to vote for the creation of an army for the Republic when her ship is attacked. Senator Palpatine, who is against the idea of the army to avoid a civil war, places Amidala under the protection of Obi-wan and his disciple Anakin (Hayden Christensen), now a young adult. The two Jedi follow a bounty killer who has tried to kill Amidala in a bar. We see people drinking and Obi-wan gets a drink too (NwhUA). Obi-wan tries to discover who is behind the plot to kill Amidala while Anakin brings her back to Naboo.

Obi Wan goes to visit his friend Dex, a creature that cooks in a diner (Nxxx), and a female robot-waiter offers him a drink (NwhUA), which he accepts (NwhUA). While they drinks, they talk (NwhUAxxx) about the weapons used by the bounty hunter. The weapons come from Kamino, a system beyond the outer rim of the Galaxy inhabited by cloners. Obi-wan goes to Kamino, which cannot be found on maps, and he is welcome because they think he is a client who has come to check on an order of clones. It turns out that the locals believe they have received an order to produce a clone army for the Republic from a Jedi master. The clones that we see eating (NxxY) are based on a bounty hunter called Jango Fett (Temuera Morrison), who kept a clone for himself as a son, Boba. Obi-wan follows them to another planet, Geonosis, where he discovers that Count Dooku is behind the attempt to create an army to defeat the Republic and the Jedi. Obi-wan is made prisoner by Dooku, who reveals to him the Senate is under the influence of the Sith Master Darth Sidious.

On their way to Naboo, Amidala and Anakin stop to eat. While they share the meal (NwhUY) they talk about love. Once on the planet, they spend lots of time together, discuss politics, and feel increasingly more attracted to each other. During a meal, Anakin makes a pear levitate to cut it in two for Amidala (NwhUY). Anakin decides to go back to Tatooine to see his mother, who in the meantime has become free and married a farmer. While he talks to the farmer, a young girl serves them drink (NwhWYAU); the farmer tells him she has been made prisoner by bandits, so he goes to free her but she dies in his arms. To avenge her, he destroys all the bandits, including women and children. When he is back, Amidala offers him something to eat (NwhUY), but to no avail.

Amidala and Anakin decide to go to Geonosis to help Obi-wan, after revealing the plot to the Jedi council. In the meanwhile the senate gives special power to chancellor Palpatine to create an army, and the Jedis go to Geonosis to help Obi-Wan.



Amidala and Anakin are taken prisoners and brought to an arena together with Obi-wan to fight monsters, but they are rescued by the Jedis. Anakin loses a hand in the fight against Dooku, who is defeated by Yoda, the leader of the Jedi, and tries to find refuge under the protection of the master of the Sith. Anakin and Amidala get married.

### **STAR WARS: EPISODE III – REVENGE OF THE SITH**

Director: George Lucas

Writer: George Lucas

Release Date: 19 May 2005 (USA)

Company: Lucasfilm

#### **Commentary**

In the last part of the prequel series, Anakin passes to the dark side of the force, helping Palpatine to destroy the Jedi order and to build his empire. Amidala, who cannot accept her lover's transformation, dies while giving birth to twins, Luke and Leia (the future protagonists of Star Wars).

This is the only movie of the whole sample (58 films) where there is not even a scene where any kind of food is shown.

#### **Synopsis**

War rages between the Republic and the separatist droid army led by Count Dooku and General Grievous, who manages to kidnap Chancellor Palpatine. Obi-wan and Anakin rescue him; Anakin defeats Dooku and, under pressure from Palpatine, kills him, but Grievous escapes. When Anakin returns from the mission, Amidala tells him she is pregnant, but he has bad dreams and premonitions about it.

Palpatine wants Anakin as his representative in the Jedi Council, even if he is not an elected member. The Jedis accept his presence but refuse to give him the status of "master", making him angry; at the same time they want him to spy on Palpatine, who is becoming more and more powerful.

While Obi-wan is sent after Grievous to destroy him, Palpatine reveals himself to Anakin as the Sith Lord, trying to bring him to the dark side by convincing him that he could teach him to bring people back from death, including his wife if anything were to happen to her. Anakin tells the Jedis that the Chancellor is the master of the Sith, but when a few Jedi masters try to arrest him, Palpatine kills them with the help of Anakin, who decides to become a Sith apprentice under the name of Darth Vader. Palpatine decides to eliminate all the Jedis and to destroy the separatists in order to rule the whole Galaxy as the sole Emperor. All the Jedis are massacred, with Anakin killing the young ones in the school; only Yoda and Obi-wan manage to escape.

Yoda tries to defeat Palpatine, but he fails and goes into exile. Anakin goes to the far system of Mustafar to take care of what is left of the separatist rebellion. Amidala and Obi-wan follow him to try to convince him, but he has turned to the dark side. Anakin believes that Amidala has turned against him because of Obi-wan, so the two Jedis fight. Anakin is defeated and get badly burnt, but he gets saved by Palpatine who builds a black armor to keep him alive. In the meanwhile Amidala has started her labor; Obi-wan helps her deliver twins, Luke and Leia, but she dies. The Jedis decide to split up the twins; the girl is be adopted by a senator, the boy is brought back to Tatooine, where Obi-Wan will keep an eye on him from afar.

## **TWISTER**

Director: Jan de Bont

Writers: Michael Crichton and Anne-Marie Martin

Release Date: 10 May 1996 (USA)

Company: Warner Bros. Pictures

### **Commentary**

In this disaster movie, food is not featured in a relevant way. It is used by a woman, Melanie, to try to be nice to her fiancée, and it is also the center of a huge meal where work companions reminisce about their past adventures and reinforce their mutual bonds. Also during this meal, the women take care of most of the preparation and of the service for the guests, who are mostly men.

### **Synopsis**

1969, Oklahoma. A man is sipping his evening coffee (IwhWA) when the TV gives the news of a major hurricane. His whole family runs to the storm shelter, but he is blown away by the tornado.

The movie switches to present day. The little girl from the 1969 storm has become Jo (Helen Hunt), a meteorology professor and a “storm chaser”. She is working with her students when her ex-husband, Bill (Bill Paxton), who was also a “storm chaser” and has become a TV weatherman, arrives with his new fiancée Melissa (Jami Gertz) to get divorce papers. While the two talk, Melissa chats with another assistant, who sips something while sitting under an umbrella (NwhMY). Jo shows him Dorothy, a machine first designed by Bill to understand how a tornado works. Bill decides to stick around and asks Melissa to go get something to drink for both of them (NwhMA). While she is bringing back the drinks (NwhMA), they get the news that a tornado is approaching, so they all jump into their cars and leave. The twister destroys the truck that was carrying Dorothy, so they put it on Melissa’s truck and start following another twister, almost dying in the attempt.

The men in Jo’s crew start clamoring for food (NwhMY), so they all go to Meg, Jo’s aunt (Lois Smith). Jo and Meg cook and serve the men and Melissa (NwhMYA). They all compliment them (NwhMYA), savoring and enjoying the food (NwhMYA) and making observations about the abundance of meat (NwhMYA). One of the students serves Melissa (NwhMY), commenting on the food and its taste (NwhMY). They all reminisce about Bill’s past while eating (NwhMYA). Some of the men serve coffee (NwhMA); while they drink it they discuss tornadoes (NwhMYA).

They leave to follow another tornado, but they miss the opportunity to launch Dorothy again. Jo blames Bill for it and she decides to sign the divorce papers, but another tornado is going towards Jo’s aunt’s place. They decide to go and get her; Melissa realizes that the relationship between Bill and Jo is too strong and decides to give up. Although in the attempt they are almost killed, Jo and Bill manage to have Dorothy fly, enabling their coworkers to get readings about the way the tornado works.

## **DIE HARD: WITH A VENGEANCE**

Director: John McTiernan

Writers: Jonathan Hensleigh

Release Date: 19 May 1995 (USA)

Company: Twentieth Century-Fox

## **Commentary**

Very few scenes feature food in this fast action movie, the third of a series starring Bruce Willis, besides the usual policeman sipping coffee and terrorists toasting to champagne to the success of a heist. A white policeman and a black shopkeeper find themselves forced to work together to defeat a terrorist plot aimed at stealing the gold from the New York National Bank.

## **Synopsis**

The movie opens with introductory shots in New York City; we see street vendors selling food (DasWA). A department store blows up. The police commissioner receives a phone call from a man who calls himself Simon and who claims responsibility for the explosion. Simon wants Lieutenant John McClane (Bruce Willis), who is on suspension, to do what he asks for or he will cause other explosions. McClane has to stand in Harlem with a sign saying "I hate niggers". McClane is hungover; he receives coffee from a female officer (IwhMA). He nearly gets killed by the locals when Zeus, a black shopkeeper (Samuel L. Jackson), saves him.

Simon now wants them both to follow his orders. Zeus does not like white people or McClane, but he decides to cooperate. Another bomb goes off in a train station in Wall Street before they figure out that Simon (Jeremy Irons) is the brother of somebody that McClane had killed in a previous operation and that he is working with an explosive expert. Simon has placed a bomb in a school, McClane and Zeus have to find out in which school it is. While the whole city is in panic mode because of the threat, Simon tries to rob a government bank next to the train station where the last explosion has taken place. McClane realizes that the bomb threat is a diversion and goes back to Wall Street, but Simon succeeds in taking the money. His men celebrate, opening champagne bottles when he arrives with the stolen money (NwhWA); one makes a toast to the dead soldiers (NwhWA). In the end McClane defeats Simon, with Zeus's help.

## **GHOST**

Director: Jerry Zucker

Writer: Bruce Joel Rubin

Release Date: 13 July 1990 (USA)

Company: Paramount Pictures

## **Commentary**

Sam is killed by his friend Carl as a cover-up of an illegal transfer of funds in the bank where they both work. As a ghost, he resorts to a psychic to get in touch with his loving wife Molly. Together they thwart Carl's plan. Only Carl and his accomplice Willie, the bad male characters, are shown interacting with food, probably because the good male character is a ghost and incorporeal. Carl tries to use food to lure Molly into sex by throwing coffee onto himself as an excuse to get rid of his shirt.

## **Synopsis**

Sam (Patrick Swayze), who works in finance on Wall Street, and Molly (Demi Moore), an artist, move in to a new loft in Manhattan. Sam discovers that there is something strange with his company accounting books and shares his worries with his coworker and friend Carl (Tony Goldwyn). That night, coming back from the theater, Sam and Molly are mugged on the street and Sam gets shot and killed. He becomes a ghost, but he does not know how to make his presence known to Molly and how to warn

her that the guy who killed him, Willie Lopez (Rick Aviles), is looking for something in their loft.

He finds a psychic reader, Oda Mae (Whoopi Goldberg), who can actually hear him, and forces her to be the intermediary with Molly, who eventually believes her. Sam finds out that Carl knows Willie and that he paid him to kill Sam to get the codes to get into the company accounts. Carl goes to see Willie, while Willie is having dinner (NhiWA), and tells him to kill Oda Mae, who knows too much; he also finds the code to access Sam's computer and the accounts with the money he owes to a drug dealer.

Carl goes to visit Molly and brings her Japanese apple pears (NwhUA), trying to get close to her. Molly offers him coffee (NwhUA), and when she is not looking he pours it on himself to have an excuse to take his shirt off (NwhUA). They talk while sipping coffee (NwhUA). When Carl tries to kiss Molly and invites her to dinner (NwhUA), Sam decides he has to find a way to communicate with her.

When Willie tries to kill Oda Mae, Sam convinces her to help him uncover Carl by recovering the stolen money from a secret account. Carl discovers it and tries to kill her with Willie's help but Sam saves her and stops Carl from avenging himself on Molly. Finally Sam can finally leave the mortal world.

#### **PRETTY WOMAN**

Director: Garry Marshall

Writer: J.F. Lawton

Release Date: 23 March 1990

Company: Touchstone Pictures

#### **Commentary**

Edward, a young millionaire who made a fortune by buying and breaking down faltering companies, hires the young prostitute Vivian to keep him company during a business stay in Los Angeles. The two fall in love but at first Edward cannot accept his feelings. Only when Vivian refuses to become his kept woman and leaves, he realizes she is the love of his life. The movie is about the discovery for Edward of another side of his masculinity, more vulnerable and sensitive, but also more fulfilling.

Food plays two main functions in this romantic comedy. On one hand it is used to underline class differences between the high-class male characters and low class Vivian. For instance, she neither knows how to use the silverware in an upscale restaurant, nor she is familiar with certain foods. On the other it becomes a tool to negotiate the relationship between Edward and Vivian, both sexually and emotionally. Special foods are used to express physical attraction, but also intimacy between the two characters.

#### **Synopsis**

The movie opens with a party at Phillip's (Jason Alexander), the lawyer of Edward Lewis (Richard Gere), a very important finance tycoon, on a terrace overlooking Los Angeles, with tables full of food. We see waiters serving drinks and food (DwhWA), and men and women mulling around sipping their drinks and snacking on the food (DwhUA). While they drink they talk about Edward and his business (IwhUA). Edward is very upset about his inability to create relationships with women, so he leaves the party and goes downtown. Here a young prostitute, Vivian (Julia Roberts), is looking for her roommate in a sleazy bar where a barman is serving drinks (DwhWA), while women and men are drinking and dancing (DwhWA). Edward and Vivian meet on the street when Edward

asks directions for Beverly Hills and invites her to his hotel. He asks the receptionist to send champagne and strawberries upstairs (NwhUA). A waiter brings the food (NwhWA). He serves her strawberries (NwhUA), explaining to her that their taste go well with champagne. He asks her to stay for the whole night, and serves her more champagne (NwhUA). She offers him some champagne to drink but he refuses (NwhUA). They spend the night together and Edward asks her to be his escort for three days.

In the morning he is talking to the phone to Philip while a waiter is serving him breakfast (NwhWO). Also Philip is having breakfast (NwhUA); we see his female maid offering coffee (NwhUA) but he refuses (NwhUA). Edward serves Vivian breakfast (NwhUA) but although sitting at the table, he does not eat (NwhUA). Edwards asks her to keep him company for a few days, to accompany him in business meetings, so he gives her money to get new clothes to go to dinner (MwhUA). No shop on Rodeo drives welcomes her, but the hotel manager, Barney (Hector Elizondo), helps her get a cocktail dress and teaches her the basics to behave at an elegant restaurant (NwhMA). In the background we see young waiters preparing tables for dinner (NwhWY).

When they arrive to the restaurant, the maitre d' takes them to their table, while waiters are busy setting tables (NwhWY). Dinner is with Mr. Morse (Ralph Bellamy) and his nephew, owners of a company that Edward is planning to buy. While Vivian goes to the ladies room, Edwards tells her he will order for her (NwhUA). When the appetizer arrives, Vivian asks where is the salad, and Edward explains to her that it arrives at the end of the meal (NwhUA). Mr Morse realizes Vivian is not comfortable with the table settings and he agrees that he cannot make sense of the forks order himself (NwhUO); so he makes a show of using his hands to eat (NwhUO). A waiter serves her escargots (NwhWA), and Edwards explains what they are to her (NwhUA). Vivian tries to eat one and the escargot flies from the table, but a waiter catches it (NwhWA). We never see Edward eating (NwhUA). Waiters keep on serving food (NwhWA), and when they seem to make fun of Vivian smearing a filet mignon with ketchup (NwhWA), Edward discretely intervenes to make them stop (NwhUA).

The morning after Edward takes her shopping: this time all the shop owners are nice to her. In the evening, when Edward gets back to the hotel, she waits for him at the table, set for dinner and with food on it (NwhUA). The day after, they go to a very upscale polo event, where Edward tells Phil, his lawyer, that she is a prostitute and he disrespects her. Hurt and offended, Vivian is almost ready to leave but Edward convinces her to stay. He is so taken by Vivian that he does not want to destroy Mr. Morse's industry, causing Philip to get angry with him. The following night Edward takes Vivian to the opera in San Francisco to see *La Traviata*, which in many ways parallels their relationship.

The morning after we see Edward eating his breakfast with appetite (it is the first time we actually see him ingest any food) (NwhUA). He offers to get Vivian an apartment, and to have her as his kept girl, but Vivian refuses. Edward is changed though, and he decides not to buy Morse's company but to invest in it to help him. Edward offers him coffee and Morse accepts (NwhUA), taking it black (NwhUO). Phillip is angry, goes to the hotel, serves himself a drink (NwhUA) and then tries to rape Vivian. Edward intervenes and fires Phillip, but Vivian still decides it is time to go. Eventually Edward understands she is the woman for him and goes after her.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **CONTENT ANALYSIS**

### **SPREADSHEETS**

	Men produce food (farmers, fishermen hunters etc)	Men/boys look for food or try to gather food	Men/boys find food	Men/boys talk about food production	Men transform food for consumption or sale
Last Samurai	DasWA; DasWA2				
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix			NwhWO		
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump	NasWA, NwhMA			IblWY, KblWY, NwhMA	
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend	IblUA	NblUA			
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator	DwhWA			IwhUA, KwhUA	
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest	NblWA				
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor	DwhWA			NblWY2	
The Day After Tomorrow		NwhMUY, NblLA			
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3	DasWA				
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	NasWA			IwhWO, NwhUA5	DwhWA, NwhMA, I
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon	DwhWAO				
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	IwhWA	IwhWY			
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers	NxxA				
Lord of the Rings: Return of King	NwhMA		NwhWY		
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds		NblMA			
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Man/boys prepare food as a job	Boy/man forced to prepare meal	Boys/men forced to wash dish after a meal	Boy/man prepares meal or drink	Boys/men set the table for the meal
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone		IwhMC			
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day				IwhWY	
Forrest Gump				NwhMA2	
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2	DwhWA				
Spider-man 3				KwhUY	
I Am Legend				DbIUA	
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor	NbIWY				
The Day After Tomorrow				NbIMA	
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3				NwhMA	
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	NasWA				
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded	NxxA				
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship			IwhWY	NwhWY2	
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers				NwhWY	
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park				DhiWA	
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds				NwhWA	
The Bodyguard	DwhWY, DhihWA			IwhMA	
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	Nxxx				
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale	DbIWA				
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					NwhWY2



	Boy/man serves food or drink	Boys/men order others to prepare or get or wrap food for travel	Boys/men prepare or get or wrap food for travel	Men/boys carry food	Men/Boys sell food
Last Samurai	DwhWA				
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone	IwhMC; NwhMC				
Potter Chamber Secrets	NwhWA			NwhMC	
Potter Azkaban	NwhMT, NwhWA				
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump	NbiWA				
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2				IwhWY	
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic	NwhWY, NwhWA				
Pirates Black Pearl	DwhWA				
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					DasWA
Pearl Harbor	NbiWY				
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					DasWA
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	NwhWCA			NasWA	IwhWA, NwhW
King Kong	NwhWY				
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					NhiWT
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia				IxxY	
Armageddon					DasWAO
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	NwhWA		NwhWY		IwhWA
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers				NwhWAO	
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World	DhiWA, DxWx				
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds		NwhWA		NwhMT, NwhWA	
The Bodyguard	DwhWA2				
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale				DbILC	DbIWA
Twister	NwhMA				
Die Hard with a Vengeance					DasWA
Ghost					
Pretty woman	DwhWA2, NwhWA2, NwhWO				

	Boys/men buy food	Boys/men consume a meal in a public establishment	Boy/man drinks Self-destructively alone	Men/boys wants to drink to forget their sorrow or problems	Man/boys drink secretly to hide their alcohol consumption
Last Samurai			IwhMA; KwhMA		
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					IwhMO, NwhMO
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day			IwhWA		
Forrest Gump			NwhMA		
Men in Black	NblMA				
Seven					
Spider-man			KwhUA		
Spider-man 2	NwhWY		NwhUY3	NwhWY	
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl			NwhWA		IwhWA
Pirates Chest					NwhWA
Pirates World's End			NwhWA		
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3	NwhMA				
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	DwhMC, NasMC, NmeWAC, NwhUA, NwhWC2				
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship		NwhWY			
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Men/boys drink to pass time and relax in public establishment	Boys/men drink something strong to calm down and stop physical pain	Boys/men drink Self-destructively in public establishment	Boys/men drink alone in front of others	Men refuse or destroy alcohol to promote or to show reform
Last Samurai				KwhMA2	KWhMA
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump			NwhMA		
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day	NwhUA				
Titanic			DwhWA		
Pirates Black Pearl			DwhWA		
Pirates Chest			DwhWA, IwhUA		
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor	NwhWY				
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					DwhMA
King Kong				NwhMA	
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2	IwhWA				
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	DwhWYA				
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King	NwhWMYA				
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	NwhUA				
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale		NwhUA			
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman		NwhUA			

	boys/men drink/eat unusual quantities or unusual substances to show power or lack of fear	Men equate food to flesh. Food used as metaphor of power/control	Food used as a metaphor to make fun of boys/men	Boy/man uses food as a metaphor about life or an aspect of it	Filmmaker uses food image as a metaphor about life or an aspect of it
Last Samurai					
Troy	IwhUA				
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					NwhWO
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump				IwhMA, NwhMA3	
Men in Black					
Seven		NwhMY, NwhMA			
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2			IwhMA		
Spider-man 3				NwhUY	
I Am Legend					
Transformers	NbIMY				
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic			NwhUY		
Pirates Black Pearl				KwhWA	
Pirates Chest	NwhWA				
Pirates World's End	KwhUA, NwhUA				
Pearl Harbor					NwhWY
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy	NmeUA				
Charlie Chocolate factory	IwhUY, NwhUA				
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan			NwhWA		
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven			NwhMA		
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix	NwhMY				
The Matrix Reloaded			NwhUA		
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Boys/men show disgust or disparage another' food or meal or way of eating	Boys/men eat food they do not like to show respect or not to offend who gave it	Men/boys made feel guilty about their desire or need for food	Boys/men use food as symbol of generosity to make another feel guilty	Boys/men use food to scare others
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets				DwhMA	
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven	NwhMY				
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					NwhMA
Spider-man 3				NwhWA	
I Am Legend					
Transformers	NbiWY				
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic	NwhUY				
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest	KwhWA				
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow	NwhMUJ				
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	NwhWO, NwhMC2,	NwhUA			
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia			NwhMC		
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers	NwhWY				
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds	NwhWA				
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Boys/men do not want to eat or use food to save money	Boys/men use food or drink to blackmail, offend or damage others	Men/boys complain about food	men/boys stuff their face or drink much out of greed	Men/boys are unable to identify a food
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets		NwhLA		NwhMC	
Potter Azkaban				DwhMT	
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix				IwhMA, NwhMT	
Independence Day				NwhMA	
Forrest Gump				NwhMY	
Men in Black			IwhWA	DwhWA	
Seven					
Spider-man				NwhMT	
Spider-man 2	NwhMA				
Spider-man 3		NwhUY			
I Am Legend					
Transformers				NbIMY	
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End				NwhWA	
Pearl Harbor		NwhWY			
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible			IwhMA		
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory			NwhWO	NwhMC5	
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship				IwhMO	
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers			NxxA		
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					NwhWA
The Bodyguard				NbiUC	
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Men/boys humiliated by being thrown food at or by being thrown or falling on/in food	Men/boys embarrassed or humiliated by their lack of familiarity with food or meal	Men/boys made fun at because of the food they like or how they eat	Men/boys criticize or make fun of other men's food or the way they cook	Men/boys criticized for their diet from the health point of view.
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man	NwhMT, NwhWT				
Spider-man 2					NwhWC
Spider-man 3		NwhWY			
I Am Legend					
Transformers			IhiWMY		
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic		NwhWY			
Pirates Black Pearl	NwhWA				
Pirates Chest	NwhWA				
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor		IwhWY			
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	NasUA		NwhMC		
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					NbiWA
Ocean's Eleven					IwhMO
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	DwhWA				
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers				NxxA	
Lord of the Rings: Return of King				NwhUO	
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code				NwhUA	
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale				NwhUA	
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	men/boys drugged or poisoned or killed with food or around food	Men/boys add poison to food or drink to get rid of an enemy	Men/boys give or sell to others poisonous or toxic food or drink	men/boys pretend to be poisoned with food	men/boys afraid of being poisoned with food
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets	NwhMC	NwhMC			
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix	NwhWO		NwhMY		
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black	NwhMA				DwhWA
Seven	NwhMA3				
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass		KwhUA			
Gladiator				NwhWA	NwhblWMA
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible	NwhMA, NwhMA				
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3	NwhMA				
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2	NwhWA2				
Terminator 3	NhiWT				
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale	NwhUA				
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					



	Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten	Men/boys are afraid to be eaten	Men/boys fascinated by acts of cannibalism	Men/boys want to eat themselves	Men/boys make others feel disgust for what they are eating
Last Samurai			NwhUA		
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black	KwhWA, KwhMA				
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend	KbiUA				
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator	NwhUA				
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest	NwhWA2				
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy	ImeUA, NmeMA, NmeWA2, NwhMA3, NmeUA				
Charlie Chocolate factory	NwhMC	NwhUA		NwhMC	
King Kong	NwhasblWMYA, Nw	NwhWMA			
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum		NwhWA			
The Matrix					KwhxYA
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers	NwhWY2				
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park	NwhMA, NwhUA, N	NwhUCMA			
Jurassic Park: Lost World	NwhMA3, NwhWA, NwhhiWA	< NwhUA			
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds	NwhxA	NwhWA			
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace		Nxxx			
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Men/boys unable to eat because of embarrassment or emotional sorrow or disgust	Men/boys eat disgusting food out of hunger	Men/boys unable to eat or drink because the stuff is too strong	Men discuss business or negotiate around food/drink	Men offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation or to get close to others
Last Samurai				KIwhasMUA	KwhUA
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					DwhMA
Potter Azkaban					NwhUA
Potter Goblet of Fire	NwhMT				
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump	KwhMA				
Men in Black				NwhMAblMY	NwhMA
Seven	NwhMA, NwhMY				
Spider-man					NwhUA
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					NwhWA
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl				NwhWA2	
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End				KwhUAWY	NwhUA
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					IwhMA
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					NwhUA
King Kong	NwhMA				NwhMA2
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia	NwhMC				
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven				NwhMA	
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix	KwhMY		NwhMY		NwhxA, KwhxA
The Matrix Reloaded					NwhUA
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					NxxA
Lord of the Rings: Return of King		NwhMA			
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard	NwhMA				
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale				NwhUAblWA	IblWA
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					NwhUA

	Men/boys accept food or drink offered by others as sign or friendship or trust	Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	Men/boys use meal/drinking to share memories	boys/men toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community	boys/men toast or eat/drink alone to celebrate their own achievements or victories
Last Samurai				NwhMAasMC	
Troy				DNwhUA	
Potter Sorcerer's stone		NwhMC		NwhUA+MC, NwhMC	
Potter Chamber Secrets		NwhMC		NwhWA+MC	
Potter Azkaban		KwhMA, KwhUMA		NwhMT2	
Potter Goblet of Fire		IwhMT			
Potter Phoenix		NwhMTYAbIMA, NwhMT		NwhMTYA	
Independence Day		IwhUA			
Forrest Gump				NwhMY	
Men in Black				NwhMA	
Seven		NblMO, NwhMYblMO		KwhMYblMO	
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2		NwhWMAY			
Spider-man 3		NwhWUY		NwhMY	NwhUY
I Am Legend		KblUA+whMC		KblUA+whMC	
Transformers					
The Golden Compass		DwhxC		NwhUO	
Gladiator		NwhUO, NblWA			
Die Another Day					
Titanic		NwhMA		DwhWYA	
Pirates Black Pearl		KwhWA		NwhWA2	
Pirates Chest		KwhWA		KwhWA, NwhWA	
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor		NwhWY		DwhWY, NwhWY, KasWY, NwhWY	
The Day After Tomorrow				NwhblMY, NwhUMAbIMA	
Mission Impossible		IwhblIMA, NwhMA		NwhblIMA	IwhMA
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3		NwhWA			
The Mummy				NwhMA	IwhMA
Charlie Chocolate factory		NwhWCAO		NwhWCAO, NwhWUCAO	
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					IwhMA
Terminator 2				NhiWA	
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan			NwhWA		
The Chronicles of Narnia		IxxY, NwhMC		NwhMC	
Armageddon				DwhMY	
Ocean's Eleven		NwhMA3, IwhMA		NwhasblWMYAO	
Night at the Museum		NwhWA			
The Matrix	NwhMY			KwhblxYA	
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	IwhUO	IwhMUO, NwhWY		DwhWYAO	
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers		NwhxCA			
Lord of the Rings: Return of King				NwhWY, NwhWUUCT	NwhWY
Jurassic Park		IwhMA, KwhMAUO,	NwhUO		
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code		KwhMUA			
The War of the Worlds		NwhWA		NwhWA	
The Bodyguard			NwhMO	NwhMAObiUC	
Star Wars I Phantom Menace		NwhUALCxx			
Star Wars II Attack of Clones		NwhUAxxx			
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale		NwhMUA			
Twister		NwhMYA	NwhMYA		
Die Hard with a Vengeance				NwhWA	
Ghost		NwhUA			
Pretty woman	NwhUO	IwhUA			

	Boys/men brought into new community by eating unfamiliar food or in strange environment	Boys/men marvel and enjoy abundance of food	Boys/men taste food or drink paying attention to flavors (even taking notes)	Boys/men eat and/or savor food or drink they like or need	Boys/men discuss or reminisce or ask about foods they like
Last Samurai	KWhWA				
Troy		NwhUA			
Potter Sorcerer's stone	KwhMC, NwhMC	NwhMC			KwhMC
Potter Chamber Secrets	DwhMC	NwhMC			
Potter Azkaban		NwhMT			NwhMT
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix				NwhWO	
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump		NwhMY			DbIWY, NbiWY
Men in Black	KblMY2				
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend		NbiUA			
Transformers					IhiWY2; IwhWY
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					NblWA
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	NwhUA	IwhWO, NwhWMUAC	NwhUC	NwhWACO, NwhWC	IwhWO, NwhUA2
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia	NwhMC			KwhMC, NxxY	
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix			NwhxA		KwhxY, NwhMY
The Matrix Reloaded			NwhUA		
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers				NwhWY	NwhWY
Lord of the Rings: Return of King			NwhWY		NwhMA, NxxA
Jurassic Park				NwhUC	
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					IwhMUA
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister		NwhMYA	NwhMY	NwhMYA	
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Boys/men discuss about the right way to cook or serve food/drink	Boys/men try to understand what they are eating	Boys/men explain to others what they are eating or drinking	Boy/man prepares or offer special food (celebratory) or sign of welcome	Boy/man receives special food (celebratory) or sign of welcome
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone				IwhWA	NwhMC2
Potter Chamber Secrets				DwhMA	NwhUA
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire				NwhUO	
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump				IwhMA, NwhMY	
Men in Black				NbIMA	NwhMA+bIMY
Seven				DwhMY	
Spider-man				NwhUA, NwhWT	NwhWT
Spider-man 2					NwhWY
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					KwhUO
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					NasUA
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3				NwhMA	
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory				NwhWA, NwhUA	NwhWC
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2				NhiWA	
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix		KwhxY	NwhxA, KblxA		
The Matrix Reloaded			NwhUA		NwhMA
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship				IwhMO	
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers	NwhxxWY	NxxA	NwhWY		
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park				NwhUO	
Jurassic Park: Lost World					IwhUA
The Da Vinci Code				IwhUA	
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace				IwhLC	IwhUYA, NwhUA
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Boys/men thank for food they are offered	Boys/men look for food to offer or give to guests or others	Boy/man gives or offers another Food the other wants food the other wants or needs	Boys/men renounce to food to feed another	Boys/men share food with others out of love or affection
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone			KwhMC		
Potter Chamber Secrets	MwhMC				
Potter Azkaban			IwhMA		
Potter Goblet of Fire			NwhMT		
Potter Phoenix					NwhMTYA
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day			NasUA		
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest			KwhWA		
Pirates World's End			NwhUA		
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow			DbILA		
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory			NwhUA2		NwhWC
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia			NwhUO, NwhMC		
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum			NwhWA		
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	NwhMY	IwhMO	NwhWA		NwhWY
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers			NwhWY		
Lord of the Rings: Return of King			NwhWY	NwhWY2	NwhWY
Jurassic Park			NwhMA		
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Boys/men share food or drink with others as a sign of mourning	Boys/men are given food out of charity or to avoid their starvation	Boys/men eat off the garbage out of need	Boys/men get consolation or physical healing or satiety from food or drink	Boys/men drink or eat meal when he gets back from work or activity
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					NwhMA
Potter Azkaban				NwhMT	
Potter Goblet of Fire					NwhWO
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump				NwhMY	
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2				NwhWY	
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					DblUA
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End				NwhWA	
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow				NwhMO, DblLA	
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy				NwhMA2	
Charlie Chocolate factory				NwhWCO	
King Kong		DwhLA2	DwhLA		
The Sixth Sense	NwhMAO				NwhMC
Terminator 2					NwhWA
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded				NwhMA	
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers				NwhMY	
Lord of the Rings: Return of King	NwhUA				
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					IwhMA, NwhMA
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					IwhWA
Die Hard with a Vengeance	NwhWA				
Ghost					NhiWA
Pretty woman					

	Boy/man eat meal or drink to start his day or before starting an activity	Boy/man drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work	Boys/men eat or drink something just to kill time and relax	Boys/men ask for food or drink as a break or a snack	Boy/man desires special food (celebratory or whim)
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone				IwhMA	NwhMA
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban	DwhMT				
Potter Goblet of Fire		NwhWO			
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day	IwhUA	NwhMA			
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black		NwhMA			
Seven	IbIMO	NwhMY, NwhMY, NwhMYbIMO, DwhMA			
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3			NwhUY2, NwhWY	NwhWY	
I Am Legend					
Transformers	NwhMT				
The Golden Compass		IwhUA, KwhUA			
Gladiator		NwhUO, NwhMA			
Die Another Day		NwhUA3		NwhUA	NwhUA
Titanic	NwhUY	DwhWA			
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest		KwhWA			NblWA
Pirates World's End		NwhMAWY			
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow	IwhMY				
Mission Impossible		IwhMA, NwhMA			
Mission Impossible 2		NwhMA, NblMA			
Mission Impossible 3		NwhMA	IwhMA		
The Mummy		NwhMAmeWA			
Charlie Chocolate factory					NwhWCO, NasWA,
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2		NwhWA			
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					NwhMC
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven		IwhMA, IwhMO, NwhMA6, NwhMO			
Night at the Museum		IwhUA			
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded		NasxA			
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship				NwhUO	
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King	NwhMY		NwhWY		NwhUA
Jurassic Park			IwhMA		
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code	NwhWA	NwhMA			
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard	NwhMA	IwhWA, NwhMA2	NwhUA2, IwhMA, NwhMA, NwhMAObIUC		
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones		NxxY			
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale		NwhMUA	NwhUA	NwhUA	
Twister		NwhMY			
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman	NwhUA2		DwhUA, DwhWA		



	Boys/men order food or ask another to go get or buy food	Boys/men ask others to pay for their food	Boys/men want or ask for drink, food or meal out of hunger or need	Boys/men ask for food as a reward for a service or work	Boys/men are asked for food by their children
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3	NwhUY				
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day			NwhUA2		
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End			NwhWA2		
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory			NwhWO		
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia			NwhMC, NxxY	NwhMC	
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship			NwhWY		
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers			NwhWY, NxxA		
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park		IwhMA			
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds	NwhWA				NwhWA
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Boy/man can't afford food he wants for whom (not hunger)	Men/boys can't afford food they need out of poverty	Man/boy consumes food alone to show independence or superiority	Men/boys refuse to eat or drink	Man/boy refuse to participate in food sharing to negate friendship/respect community
Last Samurai					DwhMA; NwhMA
Troy			DwhUA		
Potter Sorcerer's stone	KwhMC				
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire	NwhMT				
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					NwhWA
Forrest Gump					NwhMA
Men in Black					
Seven			(NwhMY)		
Spider-man					KwhUA
Spider-man 2			KwhMA		
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					KbiUA
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					NwhWY
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest			KwhWA		
Pirates World's End			NwhWA		
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory	NwhWC	NwhWO	NwhMC	WasUA, NwhMC, NwhUA	
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2				NwhWA	
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					NwhMA
TheMatrix Revolutions			NwhUA	NwhMA	
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King			NwhUO2		
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace			Nxxx		
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Men/boys refuse food that is offered and that they can't afford out of pride	men/boys throw food as a sign of protest or disagreement or in a brawl	Men/boys destroy a kitchen in a brawl or fight	Men/boys play with food out of fun or for comedy	men/boys step on food showing carelessness or disregard
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire	NwhMT				
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man		KwhWT			
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3				NwhUY	
I Am Legend		KbiUA			
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl		NwhWA2			
Pirates Chest		NwhWA, NwhWA			
Pirates World's End		KwhWA			
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					NwhMC2
King Kong				DwhMA	
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King		NxxA			
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code		NwhWA			
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard		NwhMA	NwhWMA, NwhMAhiWA		
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman				NwhUO	

	Boy/man prepares normal/daily meal as expression of caring	Boys/men try to convince another to eat	Boys/men worry that another gets enough food for health or wellbeing	Boys/men worry that others might drink or eat too much for their own good	Boy/man threatened to be left without meal
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					IwhMC
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day	IwhWY				
Forrest Gump	NwhMA2				
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2			NwhWY		
Spider-man 3	KwhUY				
I Am Legend	DbIUA	DbIUA	DbIUA, NbIUA		
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow	NbIMA				
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3	NwhMA				
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory			NwhUA		
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven			NwhMA	NwhMA	
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers			NwhWY		
Lord of the Rings: Return of King			NwhWY		
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds	NwhWA				
The Bodyguard	NwhMO		NwhMO		
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Boys/men forbid another to eat	Men/boys are scolded or yelled at for being late for a meal	Boys/men asked or ordered to stop eating	Men/boys drop food stop eating or spit drink or throw up out of surprise or fear	Men/boys catch food that is falling
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire			NwhMT		
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2				KwhUY	
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers				NwhMT	
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl				NwhWA	
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor				NblWY	
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy				NmeWA, NwhMA	
Charlie Chocolate factory			NwhMC2	NwhMC	
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense			NwhMC		
Terminator 2				NwhWA	
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon		NwhMO		NwhMA	
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix			KwhblxYA		
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	NwhWY				
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers			NxxA		
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace			Nxxx	Nxxx	
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					NwhWA

	Men/boys reminisce about throwing up food	Men/boys drink or eat out of fear or nervousness	Food or drink are forcibly taken out of the hands of or taken away from men/boys	Men/boys run out or are denied or cannot get the food/drink they want	Men/boys upset because food/drink has been taken away from them
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2			NwhWY	NwhWY	
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass			IwhUA		
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					NwhWA
Pirates Chest				NwhWA, KwhWA	NnaWC, NwhWA
Pirates World's End			NwhWA, KwhWY		
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow		NwhMY			
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory			NwhMC, NwhUC	IwhWA	NwhUC
King Kong		NwhWA			
The Sixth Sense	NwhMA				
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan		IwhMA, IwhWA		NwhMA	
The Chronicles of Narnia				KwhMC? NwhMC	KwhMC
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					NwhWY
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers				NwhWY	
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					NwhWY
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds				NwhWA	
The Bodyguard		NwhWA			
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman					

	Men/boys secretly observe others eat	Men/boys sit in a restaurant or at a meal table without eating	Men/boys destroy food	Boy/man steals food or recipe	Boy/man secretly eats food
Last Samurai	NwhMA				
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone				DwhMC	DwhMC
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban				NwhMT	
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3		NwhWY		IwhWA	
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					NwhWA
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow				NblUA	
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory			NwhUA	NwhWA	NwhUC
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense		NwhMA			
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3				NwhWA	
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven		NwhMA			
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded		NwhblxA			
TheMatrix Revolutions			NwhxA		
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship				IwhWY	
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park		KwhMAUO			
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds		NwhWAMT			
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace				Nxxx	Nxxx
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman		NwhUA2			

	Boy/man punished for stealing food	Boy/man gallant tries to help woman in preparation or carrying food	Men/boys help a woman get familiar with food or foodway	Man/boy is present during situation of preparation of food to get close to woman	Men/boys cook together with a woman
Last Samurai		NwhMA		KwhMA	
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone	NwhMC				
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					NwhUY
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman			NwhMA		



	Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink	Men/boys decline invitation from a woman to eat or drink	Men/boys accept invitation from a woman to eat or drink	Men/boys invite woman to dinner or to a drink	Men/boys serve food to a woman
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire	NwhMT				
Potter Phoenix	NwhMTYAbIMA				
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					NwhMA
Men in Black					
Seven	NbIMO				
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2	NwhWY				
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense	NwhMC				
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia	KwhMC				
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum				NwhWA	
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					DhiWA
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard	NwhMA		NwhMA		
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	NwhUA				
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale				NwhUA	
Twister					NwhMY
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost				NwhUA	
Pretty woman	NwhUA	NwhUA2		NwhUA	NwhUA3, NwhWA

	Men/boys tell a woman they will order food for her	Men/boys explain Food to a woman	Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	Men/boys share food or meal with a woman	Men/boys eat alone in front of a woman
Last Samurai			NwhMA		
Troy					KwhUA
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets			NwhMC		
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump			KwhWA		
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man			NwhWO2, NwhWT, KwhUA+UT+WT		
Spider-man 2			NwhWY2, NwhWMAY		
Spider-man 3			NwhWY2, NwhUY		
I Am Legend			KblUA+whMC, NblUA		
Transformers					
The Golden Compass			NwhWC		
Gladiator					
Die Another Day			NwhUA2		
Titanic	MwhUA		NwhUY		
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory			IwhWO, NasUA, NwhWUCAO		
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense			NwhMC		
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia			KwhMC		
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix			NwhMY, KwhMY		
The Matrix Reloaded			NwhblhixYAO, NwhMA		
TheMatrix Revolutions			NwhMA		
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King			NwhUA		
Jurassic Park				NwhUC	
Jurassic Park: Lost World			NwhMA		
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard			NwhMA		
Star Wars I Phantom Menace			NwhUALCxx		
Star Wars II Attack of Clones			NwhUA, NwhWYAU	NwhUY2	
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale			NwhUA2		
Twister			NwhMA, NwhMYA		
Die Hard with a Vengeance			IwhMA		
Ghost			NwhUA		
Pretty woman	NwhUA	NwhUA3	NwhUA		

	Men/boys are jealous a woman serves or prepares food or drink for another	Men/boys ask a woman for food or drink	Men/boys are promised food by a woman as a consolation or comfort	Men/boys asked by a woman if they like the food she serves or prepares	Men/boys compliment woman on food she makes or serves
Last Samurai		NwhMA			
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire		NwhMT			
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump		KwhWA			
Men in Black					
Seven					NbIMO
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2		NwhMY, NwhWY2			
Spider-man 3		NwhWY		NwhUY	NwhUY, NwhWY
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					IwhMA
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense			NwhMC		
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia		KwhMC2	KwhMC2		
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum		NwhWA			
The Matrix	NwhxA				
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister		NwhMA, NwhMY			NwhMYA
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman		NwhUA			

	Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	Men/boys are offered food or drink by a woman so that she can get close to them	Men/boys drink or toast with a woman to celebrate	Men/boys use food to threaten, damage, demoralize make fun or control woman	Men/boys stop others from making fun of a woman unfamiliar with food
Last Samurai					
Troy	KwhUA				
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump	IwhMA, NwhMY, KwhMA				
Men in Black				IwhWA	
Seven					
Spider-man	NwhWT, NwhUT				
Spider-man 2	NwhWY2				
Spider-man 3	KwhUY		NwhMY		
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day	NwhUA2				
Titanic				NwhUY2	
Pirates Black Pearl	NwhWA2			NwhWA3	
Pirates Chest	NwhWA				
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor	IwhWY				
The Day After Tomorrow	NwhMY				
Mission Impossible				IwhMA	
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3			NwhMA		
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					
King Kong	NwhMA2				
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia	IxxY				
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded				NwhUA	
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park				NwhMA	
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard		NwhMA			
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost	NwhUA				
Pretty woman		NwhUA		NwhWA	NwhUA

	Men/boys make fun of their being unfamiliar with food to make a woman feel comfortable	Men/boys argue or disagree with a woman about the cost of food she wants to buy or offer	Man/boy uses situation of communal consumption of food to get close to woman	Men/boys are threatened to get food thrown on them by a woman	Men/boys are refused food by a woman
Last Samurai					KwhMA
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets					
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire			IwhWA, NwhMT		
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2		NwhMA			
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic			NwhWY		
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor			NwhWY		
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3					
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven			NwhMA		
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park					
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard				NwhMA	
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost					
Pretty woman	NwhUO				

	Men/boys get food or drink spilled or poured on them by a woman	Men/boys pour or drop food on a woman	Men/boys pour drink or food on themselves to get close to woman	Men/boys made fun at by a woman about their fear of being eaten.	Men/boys made fun at by a woman about what they eat or drink
Last Samurai					
Troy					
Potter Sorcerer's stone					
Potter Chamber Secrets		NwhLA			
Potter Azkaban					
Potter Goblet of Fire					
Potter Phoenix					
Independence Day					
Forrest Gump					
Men in Black					
Seven					
Spider-man					
Spider-man 2					
Spider-man 3					
I Am Legend					
Transformers					
The Golden Compass					
Gladiator					
Die Another Day					
Titanic					
Pirates Black Pearl					
Pirates Chest					
Pirates World's End					
Pearl Harbor					
The Day After Tomorrow					
Mission Impossible					
Mission Impossible 2					
Mission Impossible 3	NwhMA				
The Mummy					
Charlie Chocolate factory					
King Kong					
The Sixth Sense					
Terminator 2					
Terminator 3					
Saving Private Ryan					
The Chronicles of Narnia					
Armageddon					
Ocean's Eleven					
Night at the Museum					
The Matrix					
The Matrix Reloaded					
TheMatrix Revolutions					
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King					
Jurassic Park				NwhMA	
Jurassic Park: Lost World					
The Da Vinci Code					
The War of the Worlds					
The Bodyguard					NwhMA
Star Wars I Phantom Menace					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith					
Casino Royale					
Twister					
Die Hard with a Vengeance					
Ghost			NwhUA		
Pretty woman					

	Men/boys scolded by a woman for being out of food	Woman adds poison to men/boys food or drink
Last Samurai		
Troy		
Potter Sorcerer's stone		
Potter Chamber Secrets		
Potter Azkaban		
Potter Goblet of Fire		
Potter Phoenix		
Independence Day		
Forrest Gump		
Men in Black		
Seven		
Spider-man		
Spider-man 2		
Spider-man 3		
I Am Legend		
Transformers		
The Golden Compass		
Gladiator		
Die Another Day		
Titanic		
Pirates Black Pearl		
Pirates Chest		
Pirates World's End		
Pearl Harbor		
The Day After Tomorrow		
Mission Impossible		
Mission Impossible 2		
Mission Impossible 3		
The Mummy		
Charlie Chocolate factory		
King Kong		
The Sixth Sense		
Terminator 2		
Terminator 3		
Saving Private Ryan		
The Chronicles of Narnia		
Armageddon		
Ocean's Eleven		
Night at the Museum		
The Matrix		
The Matrix Reloaded		
TheMatrix Revolutions		
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship		
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers		
Lord of the Rings: Return of King		
Jurassic Park		
Jurassic Park: Lost World		
The Da Vinci Code		
The War of the Worlds	IwhWA	
The Bodyguard		
Star Wars I Phantom Menace		
Star Wars II Attack of Clones		
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith		
Casino Royale		NwhUA
Twister		
Die Hard with a Vengeance		
Ghost		
Pretty woman		

## **APPENDIX D**

### **FOCUS GROUP SURVEY SHEET**



Età (Age):

Sesso (Sex):

Titolo di studio (Education):

Per favore, sottolinea i film di cui conosci argomento o trama, e poi metti un circolo intorno al numero a fianco di quelli che hai effettivamente visto. Poi metti una X dopo il titolo di quelli in cui ti ricordi scene che riguardano cibo e uomini

Please, underline the movies whose subject or plot you are familiar with, and then circle those you have actually seen. Then place an X next to those from which you remember scenes involving men and food.

1. Titanic (1997)
2. The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003)
3. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001)
4. Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End (2007)
5. Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2007)
6. Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (2006)
7. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (2002)
8. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005)
9. The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002)
10. Jurassic Park (1993)
11. Spider-Man 3 (2007)
12. The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001)
13. Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (2004)
14. The Da Vinci Code (2006)
15. Independence Day (1996)
16. Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace (1999)
17. Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith (2005)
18. The Matrix Reloaded (2003)
19. The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (2005)
20. Casino Royale (2006)
21. Spider-Man (2002)
22. Spider-Man 2 (2004)
23. The Lost World: Jurassic Park (1997)
24. Transformers (2007)
25. The Sixth Sense (1999)
26. War of the Worlds (2005)
27. Armageddon (1998/I)
28. Forrest Gump (1994)
29. Troy (2004)
30. Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (2003)
31. The Day After Tomorrow (2004)
32. The Last Samurai (2003)
33. Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones (2002)
34. Men in Black (1997)
35. Mission: Impossible II (2000)
36. King Kong (2005)
37. I Am Legend (2007)
38. Night at the Museum (2006)
39. Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991)
40. Ghost (1990)
41. The Golden Compass (2007)
42. The Bodyguard (1992)
43. The Matrix (1999)
44. Pretty Woman (1990)
45. The Matrix Revolutions (2003)
46. Mission: Impossible (1996)
47. Die Another Day (2002)
48. Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines (2003)
49. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005)
50. Die Hard: With a Vengeance (1995)
51. Saving Private Ryan (1998)
52. Mission: Impossible III (2006)
53. Ocean's Eleven (2001)
54. Gladiator (2000)
55. The Mummy (1999)
56. Twister (1996)
57. Pearl Harbor (2001)
58. Se7en (1995)

## **APPENDIX E**

### **FOCUS GROUPS A AND B**

#### **DATA SHEETS**

**Focus Group A - January 12, 2009**  
**Demographics of Participants**

Participant	Age	Male	Female	High School	Bachelor	Masters
A	33	1				1
B	29		1	1		
C	26		1			1
D	23	1			1	
E	25		1		1	
F	24	1		1		
G	25	1			1	
H	31		1			1
I	24		1		1	
J	30		1			1
K	25		1		1	
L	29		1			1
M	34		1		1	
N	27		1			1
O	25		1		1	
<b>Average</b>	27.3333333					
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>%</b>		26.67%	73.33%	13.33%	46.67%	40.00%







**Focus Group B - April 29, 2009**  
**Demographics of Participants**

Participant	Age	Nationality	Male	Female	High School	Bachelor	Masters
A	27	USA		1			1
B	28	USA		1		1	
C	26	Italy		1		1	
D	25	Australia		1		1	
E	29	Australia		1		1	
F	30	Danmark		1			1
G	34	USA		1			1
H	28	USA		1			1
I	37	Danmark		1		1	
J	30	Japan	1				1
K	27	UK	1				1
L	30	Italy	1			1	
M	26	USA		1			1
N	39	Puerto Rico		1			1
O	32	Israel		1		1	
P	57	Canada		1			1
Q	27	South Korea		1			1
R	34	France		1			1
S	25	Ireland		1		1	
T	37	USA	1				1
<b>Average</b>	31.4						
<b>Total</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>%</b>			20.00%	80.00%	0.00%	40.00%	60.00%

**Focus Group B - April 29, 2009**

Movies	Number of movies actually seen																				Total	%
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T		
01. Titanic (1997)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20	100.00%
10. Jurassic Park (1993)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	18	90.00%
44. Pretty Woman (1990)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	18	90.00%
28. Forrest Gump (1994)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	17	85.00%
25. The Sixth Sense (1999)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	16	80.00%
43. The Matrix (1999)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	16	80.00%
03. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	15	75.00%
12. The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	15	75.00%
42. The Bodyguard (1992)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	15	75.00%
54. Gladiator (2000)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	15	75.00%
40. Ghost (1990)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14	70.00%
51. Saving Private Ryan (1998)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14	70.00%
58. Se7en (1995)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14	70.00%
02. The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	65.00%
06. Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (2006)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	65.00%
09. The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	65.00%
21. Spider-Man (2002)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	65.00%
34. Men in Black (1997)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	65.00%
49. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	65.00%
14. The Da Vinci Code (2006)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	60.00%
19. The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Ward	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	60.00%
46. Mission: Impossible (1996)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	60.00%
53. Ocean's Eleven (2001)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	60.00%
07. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (2002)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	55.00%
08. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	55.00%
13. Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (2004)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	55.00%
15. Independence Day (1996)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	55.00%
20. Casino Royale (2006)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	55.00%
30. Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (2003)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	55.00%
05. Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2007)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	50.00%
18. The Matrix Reloaded (2003)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	50.00%
47. Die Another Day (2002)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	50.00%
56. Twister (1996)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	50.00%
27. Armageddon (1998/1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	45.00%
35. Mission: Impossible II (2000)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	45.00%
36. King Kong (2005)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	45.00%
04. Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End (2007)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	40.00%
16. Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace (1999)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	40.00%
22. Spider-Man 2 (2004)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	40.00%
29. Troy (2004)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	40.00%
33. Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones (2002)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	40.00%
38. Night at the Museum (2006)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	40.00%
50. Die Hard: With a Vengeance (1995)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	40.00%
17. Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith (2005)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	35.00%
31. The Day After Tomorrow (2004)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	35.00%
39. Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	35.00%
45. The Matrix Revolutions (2003)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	35.00%
55. The Mummy (1999)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	35.00%
57. Pearl Harbor (2001)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	35.00%
11. Spider-Man 3 (2007)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	30.00%
23. The Lost World: Jurassic Park (1997)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	30.00%
32. The Last Samurai (2003)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	30.00%
37. I Am Legend (2007)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	30.00%
41. The Golden Compass (2007)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	30.00%
26. War of the Worlds (2005)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	25.00%
24. Transformers (2007)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	15.00%
52. Mission: Impossible III (2006)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	15.00%
48. Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines (2003)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>Average</b>





**Focus Group B - April 29, 2009**

Movies	Number of movies with known food scenes																			Total	%		
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S			T	
28. Forrest Gump (1994)	1	1	1	1		1	1					1	1	1	1			1	1	1	14	70.00%	
44. Pretty Woman (1990)	1	1		1	1	1				1			1	1	1	1			1	1	1	13	65.00%
49. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				1		1	1		1			1	1	1	12	60.00%
01. Titanic (1997)	1	1	1	1		1						1	1	1				1	1	1	11	55.00%	
03. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (2001)	1	1		1									1	1				1	1	1	8	40.00%	
05. Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2007)	1	1		1									1	1				1	1	1	8	40.00%	
02. The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003)	1	1		1	1	1						1		1						1	7	35.00%	
07. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (2002)	1	1		1									1	1				1	1		7	35.00%	
08. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005)	1	1		1										1				1	1	1	7	35.00%	
09. The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002)	1	1		1	1	1						1		1						1	7	35.00%	
12. The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001)		1		1	1							1		1		1				1	7	35.00%	
13. Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (2004)	1	1		1									1					1	1	1	7	35.00%	
19. The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Ward	1	1		1	1								1	1	1					1	7	35.00%	
20. Casino Royale (2006)	1	1		1								1				1			1	1	7	35.00%	
43. The Matrix (1999)		1	1	1								1	1	1					1	1	7	35.00%	
06. Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (2006)	1	1		1									1		1		1				6	30.00%	
47. Die Another Day (2002)		1		1								1			1			1	1		6	30.00%	
53. Ocean's Eleven (2001)		1		1										1	1			1	1		6	30.00%	
54. Gladiator (2000)		1	1	1	1									1		1					6	30.00%	
58. Se7en (1995)		1	1			1						1						1		1	6	30.00%	
25. The Sixth Sense (1999)		1		1								1							1	1	5	25.00%	
30. Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (2003)	1	1		1										1							5	25.00%	
04. Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End (2007)	1	1												1			1				4	20.00%	
51. Saving Private Ryan (1998)		1				1						1								1	4	20.00%	
21. Spider-Man (2002)		1	1	1		1															3	15.00%	
32. The Last Samurai (2003)		1												1						1	3	15.00%	
10. Jurassic Park (1993)		1																		1	2	10.00%	
18. The Matrix Reloaded (2003)														1						1	2	10.00%	
29. Troy (2004)				1																1	2	10.00%	
34. Men in Black (1997)		1																		1	2	10.00%	
37. I Am Legend (2007)		1																		1	2	10.00%	
42. The Bodyguard (1992)				1	1																2	10.00%	
45. The Matrix Revolutions (2003)															1					1	2	10.00%	
56. Twister (1996)		1		1																	2	10.00%	
11. Spider-Man 3 (2007)				1																	1	5.00%	
15. Independence Day (1996)		1																			1	5.00%	
23. The Lost World: Jurassic Park (1997)												1									1	5.00%	
26. War of the Worlds (2005)																				1	1	5.00%	
27. Armageddon (1998/I)		1																			1	5.00%	
31. The Day After Tomorrow (2004)				1																	1	5.00%	
36. King Kong (2005)																				1	1	5.00%	
38. Night at the Museum (2006)		1																			1	5.00%	
40. Ghost (1990)	1																				1	5.00%	
41. The Golden Compass (2007)	1																				1	5.00%	
46. Mission: Impossible (1996)				1																	1	5.00%	
52. Mission: Impossible III (2006)		1																			1	5.00%	
55. The Mummy (1999)																			1		1	5.00%	
57. Pearl Harbor (2001)																			1		1	5.00%	
14. The Da Vinci Code (2006)																					0	0.00%	
16. Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace (1999)																					0	0.00%	
17. Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith (2005)																					0	0.00%	
22. Spider-Man 2 (2004)																					0	0.00%	
24. Transformers (2007)																					0	0.00%	
33. Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones (2002)																					0	0.00%	
35. Mission: Impossible II (2000)																					0	0.00%	
39. Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991)																					0	0.00%	
48. Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines (2003)																					0	0.00%	
50. Die Hard: With a Vengeance (1995)																					0	0.00%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>Average</b>	<b>10.65</b>



**APPENDIX F**

**FOCUS GROUP A**

**TRANSCRIPT**

**(ROME, JANUARY 12, 2009)**

## **The transcript has been translated by me from Italian**

Fabio: In the survey, I gave you 58 movies that made more than 250 million dollars outside the US between 1990 and 2007. I asked you to mark which movies you were familiar with and which you have actually seen because I wanted to confirm how well known these movies actually are. In other words, do box office results correspond to actual notoriety for blockbuster movies? From your survey sheets, I would say they do. This is already very important. I would like to discuss with you another topic. We can find food scenes in all the movies except one, the last installment of Star Wars. In all the others, there are lots of food scenes that involve men. My hypothesis is that in movies that do not necessarily focus on food, we do not pay attention to food scenes, or to the presence of food. Food is normal, a part of what happens in the movie. Let's play. Now you don't have the survey sheets in your hands any longer. Give me a number between 1 and 58.

G: 2

Fabio: In the list, 2 is *The Lord of the Rings: the Return of the King*. Do you remember any food scene in this movie? Nobody does. How many of you saw the movies? All of you! Interesting, because some key moments happen around food. Do you remember the scene where Sam fights with Frodo, after Gollum throws the bread away to accuse Sam of eating it all...

S: I think that is in the second movie...

Fabio. You are right! In the third movie we have the scene where the king, who is going crazy, sends his son to battle even if he knows he will be massacred. And while he does that he keeps on eating a whole banquet, alone in an empty banquet hall. How comes in all these movies we do not remember and at times not even notice these food scenes, even if they are important? In your opinion, what could the reason be?

Io: Probably because our attention is focused on actions and events that are different from acts involving foods. Food is part of the everyday, so it fades into the background in relation to the main action.

Fabio: Other ideas on this?

G: We are not used to see food movies, so we are not used to pay attention to scenes with food.

La: Food is natural for us. So that in a movie there are scenes involving food is just a reflection of our most normal life. Unless our attention is called to it through specific shots, we do not perceive it.

Il: It's like when we see somebody shaving, in a movie. We do not notice it, just like sitting around the table. It's part of daily life.

A: At times the food scenes are not very clear. For instance in the scene involving bread in the Lord of the Rings we just mentioned might not be considered a scene involving food. The bread doesn't really matter. It is a symbol for something else.

Io: The bread is not perceived as food, it's seen an element of the action, something that moves the action forward.

R: Bread is just a symbol for the attempt of destroying the relationship between those characters in the story.

Fabio. Among all the movies in the list, there is some specific food scene you remember in any of them?

Io: Titanic for sure (everybody agrees), the dinner scene with Leonardo Di Caprio.

A: No, I didn't mean that scene, I meant the other scene in the third class ball, where everybody dances

Sa: Both scene underlines social stratification. First the rich table, and then the party of the poor.

Fabio: What do you remember of the upscale meal?

Io: For sure the attempt of Rose's fiancée to embarrass Di Caprio, underlining his low social status, and Di Caprio's ability to defend himself.

Fabio: Do you remember how he defended himself?

G and Si: He says he never liked caviar, the riches' food.

Fabio: Do you remember any other scenes?

G: The breakfast where Rose's fiancée throws all the breakfast on the floor. The fight happens around food. Fights often happen in the kitchen, a familiar place. And here the table represents the relationship between the two of them.

Fabio: What kind of masculinity does Rose's fiancée express?

G: He's very violent

F: A domineering man.

Lo: In that movie, it's also interesting to see the high-class ladies having tea.

G: At the beginning of the movie, Di Caprio is playing in a bar, where people are drinking.

Fabio: So in all these scenes, what is the connection between food and Gender?

P: it's a connection between character, showing difference in choices and priorities between Rose and her fiancée, while between Jack and Rose underlines the difference between men and women, the power of women.

Fabio: Besides Titanic, what other movies?

Confused voices: Pretty woman!

R: The scene of the dinner, and when they eat strawberry and champagne.

La: Because champagne enhances the taste of strawberries!!! (everybody laughs)

Fabio: That's a quote for the movie...

A: There's also the scene where the hotel manager teaches Julia Roberts how to eat, what forks to uses

La: How to eat escargots

R: That's the dinner I was talking about. In another scene they are eating in front of the TV, and on TV there an actress that is crushing grapes with her feet. So there is a reference to food also in what they are seeing.

Fabio: So in reference to the symbolic and narrative values we have been talking about, what's the role of food in Pretty woman?

P: It marks social difference among the characters. I can't remember any specific scenes, but I have a feeling that food was used that way

Si: The escargot is an example. She doesn't know what to do with it. She had learnt how to use forks, and in that occasion she didn't need to use them. So food goes against her.

Fabio: Any other movies you remember?

La: Harry Potter!

Fabio: How many of you remember food scenes in it? Ok, Only L. What scenes do you remember in it?

La: Food is present in all the books and in all the movies. For instance when they get together in the canteen and they eat. The movie shows what they eat, how they eat. They often go to a village and there are shops with candies and a tavern that sells wizard drinks. I have read that they are opening a Happy Potter amusement park, where they will serve all these foods. And then Ms. Weasley prepares meals. It's a moment of love between all the characters

A: I remember when they get to school, they sit at the table and they are divided into school. Another movies is Ghost. I remember a scene where they eat in their new home. And then when the bad guy have her invite him, and there's also the husband as a ghost looking at them.

Mat: Yeah, the bad guy throws stuff on himself.

R: Yeah, so that he can take his shirt off.

Mar: Willy Wonka!

Fabio: How many do not know Willy Wonka? Only two.

Fabio: What scenes do you remember?

Mar: The chocolate stream!!!

F: There's also the dinner of the poor family, where they are very little. In the final scene, after he starts working in the factory, there are lots of things.

La: Also at the beginning he doesn't want to go so that his family, which is poor, can eat.

R: Yes, he wants to sell the ticket.

La: Yes, that's so sad, even if it's not about food.

P: No, it is about food! He wants to feed his family. Chocolate is love

A: And all the elves. The Oompa Lumpa.

Fabio: Do you remember anything about the relationship of Willy Wonka with food?

A: He was anorexic!

P: He suffered from childhood trauma!

F: His father didn't let him eat chocolate because he was a dentist and had put braces on him

Lo: He burns Willy's candy!

R: There is an ambivalent relationship with food.

Mat: In Seven there is a whole part dedicated to gluttony, the capital sin. There's the scene with the fat guy who dies.

Fabio: Who saw that? Everybody but one.

P: I did not remember that scene

A: Morgan Freeman arrives to Brad Pitt's home and interrupts his dinner.

Fabio: Actually Brad Pitt's wife invites him over

Si: She wanted to introduce this new person in the home and in the family

Fabio: So, in Seven, what's the scene that you all seem to remember?

A: The one with the fat guy found dead sitting at the table

Mat: I think the movie was great.



R: I remember in Matrix the woman preparing hi cookies...

Fabio: The Oracle

R: Yes, the Oracle!

A: I remember the disgusting stuff they ate in the spaceship.

Fabio: Who remembers the Oracle? 5. And the disgusting stuff? 4

R: in which movie is the Oracle?

Fabio: All three, None of you remember in the second movies where Neo goes and meet a French guy?

A: I remember in the first one a guy eating a stake

Fabio: Good! In the second one the Merovingian sends a chocolate cake to a woman and she has an orgasm...

La: I remember the Sixth Sense, because it terrified me. The beginning scene when she goes down to the cellar to pick the ones, she is cold down there, but the scene shows attention to wine. And then the meal during the funeral of the girl. And the poison put in the food that killed the girl. There is also a mother ghost with a hole in her head that beats a girl in a kitchen

Io: There is also a scene where at home his wife sets the table for one and he is perplexed about it

R: I think it happens in a restaurant, on the day of their anniversary.

Io: He thinks she doesn't want to talk to him any longer.

La: There's also a birthday party.

R: And that girl throws up all the time. I remember also a scene in Ocean Eleven, when he and she talk at a restaurant table about their relationship and about the fact that she wants her back.

Fabio: Other scenes in Ocean Eleven?

A: Yes, at the beginning when they meet for the first time to scheme There is a guy with a big belly who wears glass, who's eating near the swimming pool.

P: Brad Pitt is always eating something, which makes him more likeable.

Si: Always chewing on small things.

Fabio: Ok we've talked about lots o specific scenes. Now, in movies in general, the ones you remember, what is the relationship between food and man, as it's represented in cinema?

P: It marks social differences among men, roles, hierarchy. Social stratification.

R: Foods that are used and that we mentioned (escargot, champagne, caviar) are all foods that have social meaning.

La: Lots of convivial scenes, although those are harder to notice. For instance, it's normal that if it's a wedding, there's food. Also in the *Pirate of the Caribbean*, they eat...

Fabio: In specific, let's talk about men. It is true that the social stratification often underlines differences among men.

G: Food associated to men who are cooks is considered more prestigious, while women are represented in kitchens but in the family environment. It's like as though food gives man more value.

Sa: It's an instrument of power and conquest, to affirm one's strength.

P: it's also a tie that expresses affection between a mother and her child, between schoolmates that eat together... also it can underline complicity between men and women.

A: I think it's always in the background, when it comes to scenes involving men. You notice more scenes with food when women are in it.

Fabio: What do you think about this?

R: It's true that in movies food is accessory, it is not in the foreground.

A: If you watch a movie and there's a woman sautéing onions, you remember it. If there's a man

G: For me it's the other way round. If I see a woman cooking it's more natural, more daily. (Many agree)

Lo: Maybe we remember men better because they use special ingredients

A: But that's because he uses as a means, it's his profession, he makes a living through food. But when he doesn't use it as a tool, to conquer or to make money, it goes into the background.

Lo: I don't remember a mother who cooks, it's something common, daily. When a man cooks, especially in a niche style, is more noticeable.

A: When food is not used as a means, it's difficult to remember. Unless there is some particular food, like the disgusting stuff in the *Matrix*.

R: I think if it's an accessory, you don't remember it, whether it's used by men or women. If it has a particular role, or the scene focuses on food in a special way, or it's a special shot, you remember it. Otherwise you don't

Si: I tend not to remember a woman at the stove because I associate it to a feminine, maternal figure, who is familiar.

G: It depends on the scenes, the details, the framing, and if it's an important scenes. If it's a secondary scene, you focus more on the action.

A: If you see a movie, it's much easier to imagine the female protagonist cooking.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **FEAST AND FAMINE SEMINARY REPORT**

## **Feast and Famine Seminary**

New York University, February 6, 2009

The Feast and Famine seminary is a discussion gathering that takes place in the New York University Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health. A wide range of guests participates: professors working in Food studies in the North East, authors, food writers, and doctoral students.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> the theme of the seminar was my last book *Bite Me: Food in Popular Culture*. Among the participants were historians Paul Freedman (Yale University), Michael Lacombe (Adelphi University), Amy Bentley (NYU) and Gabriela Petrik (NYU); nutritionists Marion Nestle and Lisa Sasson (NYU); sociologist Barbara Katz Rothmann (City University of New York Graduate Center); food historians Betty Fussell and Ann Mendelson.

Although the seminar was supposed to focus on the introductory chapter of the book, the participants asked me about my research for the dissertation and soon the discussion focused on that.

The first reaction of the audience was surprise that I was focusing on blockbuster movies, rather than on more “interesting movie”. They then asked me how could I find food in those movies, since in their opinion there were no food scenes at all. When I showed them the results of my content analysis and frequency of food scenes in my sample movie, they were even more surprised, and started asking me about specific movies, and specific scenes, at times losing the overall sense of what my research was about.

I received very stimulating observations on my methodology. The interest was elicited by the fact that content analysis has not been often used for moving images, so many questions were aimed at clarifying my strategic choices.

For instance, I was asked about my choice of concentrating on actions and relationship between characters in the scene, including the emotional aspects, rather than actual dishes or food that were being consumed in the scenes. I pointed out that my choice was determined by the fact that the movies take places in very diverse times and places, and focusing on actual foods would have led to a description of the scenes rather than a classificatory taxonomy, which is more useful in terms on analysis. The abstraction of the situation descriptions allows them to be applied to very different scenes: it doesn't matter what the characters eat but how.

Along the same lines, I was asked if the fact for instance that a meal was shared by middle age knights on horses and by Greek warriors made them different. I explained that they are classified in the same way if the interaction among the character is the same. I referenced Vladimir Propp's analysis of folk tales, where he analyzed very different tales looking for narrative units that repeated themselves in different contexts, but presented similarity in their inherent dynamics, in the interaction of the character, and in their role within the larger narrative arch. This approach is also justified by the fact that in many

movies the narrative arch is quite similar, to the point that I was able to identify some wide genre according to the role of the main male character and his evolution in the movie. In this context, it makes sense to look for similar scenes that might play a similar role in a similar narrative arch.

Another question was about the role of women. How come I have excluded women from the taxonomy? My answer was that women are not excluded, but in these movies when food is involved they always appear together with men. Food scenes involving women only without men are negligible.

Other observations focused on the actual power of images in pop culture. Do they really influence the way men perceive and analyze reality? I made clear that I do not agree with the point of view expressed for instance by the Frankfurt school, according to which the masses have no defense against the ruses of power and propaganda, and there are forced to accept whatever is given to them in terms of communication. I told the audience that I rather subscribe to Stuart Hall's theory of encoding/decoding, where the producers of the media message can only hope that the receivers decode according to their desire, but it is often not the case. I also mentioned de Certeau's concept of poaching to explain the consumer's tactics to deal with the power's strategies, and Arjun Appadurai's observation that imagination and fantasy have become social activity, also at the transnational level. I concluded pointing out the elements in this transnational repository of pop culture materials, as hegemonic as they might appear, need to be negotiated by specific subjects in different contexts.



## **APPENDIX H**

### **KEY INFORMANTS**



## Email Exchange with Alice Julier

From: Alice Julier <a.julier@comcast.net>

Date: 17 December 2008 22:40:03 GMT+01:00

I have had written comments on your dissertation proposal and the scene occurrences on my desk, but have never typed them in. i don't know where time goes...

Let me tell you briefly the one thing that comes to mind -- other than that I think the approach is brilliant and your construction of the problem is dead on perfect.

I like the "situational units" idea and the ones you have are exhaustive and, I think, fully executed. You stand poised to make a good argument about how it's so ordinary that we don't even notice the way food is used to demarcate lines. I am not 100% sure what you had planned for the data itself, but it has all the qualities of material good for cross tabulation. This gets at a particular point: it seems to me that these situational units are not self-contained and yet they are. That is, the types of scenes are well demarcated and your typology makes sense. But they are, I think, in a real Marxist sense, relational.

Each unit compares up and against units in which one or two key "variables" are different. Most obviously, the scenes in which men are served food by women stand in contrast to scenes in which women are served food by men. The comparative frequency will tell you one thing (perhaps it turns out that the ratio is roughly equal), but then you can tease out what additional key variables make the contrast work. So, perhaps it is not that men are served more frequently than women, but the other variables and consequently the meaning attached to it gives it different weight (consider: in scouting associations, both boys and girls are taught to cook, but girls are taught an ethos of care-giving along with it that boys do not get -- i think that's jay mechling's point...). From a quick look at the categories and frequencies, it seems to me that you might want to gather comparative data on scenes where women are sharing news or making plans over food, where community and friendship are affirmed, or where disgust is shown for others' foodways. Even though your analysis is about men, you need to be able to say "how frequently and in what form in comparison to same situational unit for women?"

Does that make sense? I would love to spread the document out and look at it visually with you and talk about what compares to what. Too bad we are not nearby....

all the best,

Alice

On Dec 17, 2008, at 6:03 PM, F. P. wrote:

Thanks for your feedback! It's really great!!!!

I had actually thought about the women's scenes, but in those movies (action blockbusters, most of them) as you can imagine there are few women around, and when they are there they mostly act around men (and so they appear, indirectly, in the situational units) !! Not the right sample to do any solid comparative work, but once the methodology is worked out, I think it could be applied to other kinds of movies where both women and men are equally present...

I hope to get interesting information by crossreferencing age, ethnicity, class, and also in what kind of scene the most frequent occurrences are visible.

Doran is working on the statistics. Actually I have taken off work from Monday through Jan 12 to lock myself at home, work on the main core on the dissertation, and above all work theoretically on the methodology. It seems the application of content analysis quantitative methods is not common, so I think making the methodology sound is almost more important than the actual results. And I think it could be the more productive part of the dissertation (due to the not very interesting nature of the movies I'm analyzing, although the whole point is that we need to start analysis food when food is not at the center of the stage, as is happens in most "food movies", to unpack elements that are otherwise hidden...)

As soon as I write the analysis of the data breakdown I'll send it to you

Fabio

From: Alice Julier <a.julier@comcast.net>

Date: 18 December 2008 5:08:44 GMT+01:00

Did you talk to Laura L. about the methodology at all? Here are some possibilities (again, you know me well enough to recognize that there are just possibilities, not directives):

I am sure there isn't much like this in the realm of film studies -- and so yes, your methodology needs to be very sound. But within anthropology and sociology, there is certainly a well developed approach to content analysis that would easily apply to things we can call "situational units" --- when I teach ethnography, I am essentially teaching students how to categorize and code observed events that fit into that slot. In *Making Sense of Qualitative Data*, Coffey and Atkinson have a nice chapter on concepts and coding. It is either in their chapter or in the work of James Spradley (*Participant Observation*) where there is this wonderful grid for categorizing observations and developing codes. I will try to find it and scan it and send it to you. Basically, you should ground your argument for the methodology in the existing literature in these disciplines, without belaboring its appropriateness. I can point you to good pieces that will provide you with the legitimacy you need. Interestingly, Marjorie DeVault (of *Feeding the Family* fame) is also a specialist in qualitative methodology. She has a great piece called "Novel Interpretations" that talks about how to be a social scientist and use fiction as a source of data. This is pretty similar to what you are doing. And there is a big push within qualitative methods to quantify findings -- programs that code for you and so on.

The fact that you are analyzing food "sidestage" is clear and, I think, what's brilliant here. I think your argument for that is already well stated.

There was a woman who used to come to ASFS who wrote about food and film -- she was at a small university in Tennessee and she and her husband were the editors of a journal of popular culture, although both her name and the name of the journal escapes me. I will find it -- I was in touch with her a lot when we were doing the masculinities issue because she had written about food in the Sopranos. I believe one of them was in English. I recall that her work was more exhaustive in its coding of instances than anyone else I've read.

I also think that what I'm suggesting is rather than spending time looking for and coding instances where women appear in scenes about food, what you need to do in the analysis is talk about (a) the absence of such scenes and (b) how the scenes with men stand in contrast to something that isn't visually presented or developed. consider the theoretical notion of absence, of how invisibility or erasure is the flip side of privilege. I think this will help you keep focused on the relational elements even as they are not actually present and also make the argument deeper -- freeing you from the potential accusation that it is, after all, obvious that what is being dramatized center stage in blockbuster movies, are men and men's lives (food or no food). that's true, but there's a lot more to it than that -- Jackson Katz makes this point nicely in Tough Guise (the film produced by MEF), about how the privileged need to have their lives constructed in contrast to an oppressed opposite and how they appropriate tropes from that group while simultaneously denigrating those who are defined by them. The true function of privilege is the ability to engage in acts that mark others as not privileged and be free of the stigma. Shawn McGuffey demonstrates this in his article about boys and girls in what he calls the "gender transgression zone" -- the popular cool boy at the top of the heap can "cross over" and play jump rope with the girls and not be diminished in status. the activity gets re-configured as "cool" as long as he is doing it, but then when he stops, it is no longer so.

If you need full references for any of the things I mention, let me know. It's late and I'd better get some sleep before I return to the food and labor curriculum...

many hugs,

Alice

On Dec 18, 2008, at 1:58 AM, F. P. wrote:

Hi Alice,

Laura did look at this, she had to give the approval to my project, as my co-advisor.

The path you indicate is precisely what I'm trying to follow: showing the soundness of content analysis where it has been already applied, and find a way to applying to the moving image. The big "problem" here is to define and categorize the moving part of the

image, and if you have any references of applications of quantitative (statistics based) content analysis in anthropology and ethnology, that would be great.

Of course, I'll work on the argument that a totally quantitative analysis does not make sense. And pointing of the absences (women, old people, ethnic others, low-class male food producers) will be one of the main points.

As I said, any reference in the field, and the work of the Tennessee woman, would be more than welcome.

So far, the only chapter I have actually closed in the general introduction about the development of the theories on masculinities. If you are interested, I can send it to you. If we ever work on the project on masculinity, that part could be definitely used (after adaptation).

Then I will proceed with the literature review on men in movies, men in film, and men in food. I had started thinking that each of these sub-sections would be a chapter, but now the analysis and method part is growing so much that they will be collapsed in one chapter on literature review.

Then the core of the dissertation:

- methodology
- statistical content analysis (with statistical spreadsheets)
- film commentary (sort of a qualitative description of each the movies)
- discussion of the findings (and here the "absence" theme will be very visible)

I'll also have hefty appendixes

- all the humongous spreadsheet used for the content analysis
- film synopsis (pointing out the situational units as the plot develops for each of the movies; more than a 100 pages, so that the reader can actually go and check what I'm talking about)
- Exchanges with you and other informants
- result of a focus group: on Jan 12 I will have the students of the program in journalism and communication for food and wine, which I am teaching, to discuss food and masculinity in movies. I think I will keep it very open: I'll launch some provocations, and then I'll let them free to talk
- research log

**From:** Alice Julier <a.julier@comcast.net>

**Date:** 18 December 2008 12:45:52 GMT+01:00

This all sounds great. I'll keep thinking about more references on the methodology. You are staking out some pretty important territory and it's hard to believe no one has done anything like this (but if anyone knows, it'd be Laura).

BTW, I am teaching a Sociology of Gender course at Pitt this spring -- 40 students. If you want me to do a focus group of some sort, I can. Classes start up on the 5th and we will be doing masculinities later in the semester.

take care,

Alice

### **Email Exchange with Allen Weiss**

From: "Allen S. Weiss" <asw3@nyu.edu>

Date: September 29, 2008 1:34:17 PM EDT

Dear Fabio,

I just read, with great interest, your dissertation outline of "Food and Men in Cinema." As you requested, I offer the following observations. Please note that if you indeed wish me to continue working with you on this project, which I would be pleased to do, I should explicitly state that I have seen very few of the films you deal with, so that my feedback will be limited.

Sincerely, Allen

### **METHODOLOGY**

Having written my first PhD in philosophy (Ontology and Aesthetics in the Later Writings of Merleau-Ponty), the use-value of philosophy is of abiding interest to me. I have one major question — perhaps reservation — about your proposal. Your methodological statement crosses over numerous fields (Cinema Studies, Performance

Studies, Queer Studies, Semiology, etc.), which in themselves are composed of numerous philosophical styles and methodologies (narratology, psychoanalysis, etc.) It is beyond my grasp how one can reconcile the obvious epistemological discrepancies between these philosophies. If their use-value is reduced in your thesis is reduced to sheer instrumentality (i.e., to methodology), you'll really need to justify this.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Your vast bibliography is both an asset and a liability. An asset in its far-ranging scope; a liability since anything missing is all-the-more glaring, given the appearance of comprehensiveness. Here I'll give just one example, and it is, alas, something that I have previously experienced in working with PhD students: what appears to be a certain "anxiety of influence." I must say that I find it rather surprising that I have been asked to respond to a doctoral thesis in a field where I've written and edited about a dozen books and special issues of journals, without a single one of them being cited in the bibliography! I'll give a few examples, with consequent suggestions for bibliographical additions.

Though I never thought of it in this light before reading your thesis proposal, the question of masculinity is at the center of my "Flamme et festin." It would have led you to the excellent book by Alberto Capetti, *Le goût du nouveau*, with its chapter on cuisine and bachelors. Also, it's bizarre that you do not note the work of Michel Onfray, whose two books on cuisine, "La raison gourmande" and "Le ventre des philosophes" must be read in the light of his "Sculpture du soi," truly combining cuisine and masculinity. Finally, the thesis of Noëlle Châtelet, published as "Le corps à corps culinaire," is not without interest.

In the issue of the journal *Lusitania* that I edited, "Taste, Nostalgia," there are several articles that should be of direct interest, notably those by Jeff Weinstein, Lawrence Schehr, George Bauer, Clayton Eshleman, Alphonso Lingis, Rin Scapp.

On the book I co-edited with Lawrence Schehr, "French Food," see the articles by Michael Garval, Frabc Schuerewegen, Lawrence Schehr, George Bauer, Pierre Verdaguer.

Out of modesty (false, of course!), I suspect that my "Feast and Folly" must have some pertinent material. Please note that I write all the above concerning your bibliography as about 10% criticism and 90% suggestion for amelioration.

From: Fabio Parasecoli <parasecoli@aol.com>

Date: September 29, 2008 2:01:33 PM EDT

Dear Allen,

I did receive your email. Thank you very much for the feedback, it is extremely useful! I forgot to tell you that I attached the bibliography to the proposal in the very first phases of my research. It has now grown considerably. I am actually familiar with most of the texts you mention, and I will make sure to take them in due consideration. I have been advised to keep the philosophical questions at the margin, and your email as "official" key informant now gives me the chance to put it back where it belongs! Thanks!!!

As for the methodology, my usual way of proceeding is much more attuned to philosophical questions. There have been CLEAR indications to tone it down and focus on the methodology as a tool to approach movies in a social science environment that is very driven by practicality and where all experience and research must be replicable, like in a lab. So the methodology has to focus on content analysis, which is strongly based on statistics. But I could not limit my work to that, so the others chapters are basically to show how there are different approaches to the questions that can complete and integrate the content analysis approach. Any thoughts about the way I applied that approach to film analysis?

If you don't mind. I will send you chapters as I close them. My priority now is to get done just the way they want me to get done, and then go back to my REAL work!! And my next book will be about food and masculinities in food, but believe me the approach will be different!

From: "Allen S. Weiss" <asw3@nyu.edu>



Date: September 30, 2008 8:38:20 AM EDT

Dear Fabio,

Somehow the last paragraph of my comments didn't get copied to the email I sent yesterday.

Sincerely, Allen

## SEMIOTICS

First, I should mention that you might have a look at the journal Communications, which was so very important in the early years of semiotics and narratology. Second, I would like to ask a question about your use of this discipline, and the more general implications of your thesis. Is there, at the core of your study, a claim about cinematographic media specificity and male gastronomy, or is the cinematic aspect of the thesis merely a convenient manner of gathering information on an international scale.

**From:** Fabio Parasecoli <parasecoli@aol.com>

**Date:** September 30, 2008 8:54:14 AM EDT

Dear Allen,

As you can see from the category of analysis in the spreadsheet, I have been focusing not so much on gastronomy as on food and ingestion in general. What I am trying to ascertain is if there are any recurrent images, themes, or narrative bits that can start to give some idea about how masculinity and its relationship with food and ingestion is represented and communicated to an international audience.

The adoption of content analysis as the main analytical tools allow me to comply with the social science environment of the institution where I am doing my research, but does not allow me to concentrate on the specific cinematic media, as it mostly focuses on content. so, in a way, yes, at this point the cinematographic aspect of the thesis is a way to gather

material about representations that are exported internationally.

Of course, due to my background, I'll try to enrich that sort of statistical analysis with my observations. For each movie, there will be a content analysis section (basically a synopsis that signals all the food related scenes, so that readers can verify the information themselves) but also a commentary, where I will assess all the stuff that does not belong to statistical content analysis. Furthermore, the introductory chapters basically will allow me to delve into the philosophical, semiotic, and communication aspects of the analysis, but unfortunately they will be there only as an integration to the main statistical part. So there will be a chapter on food and film, and one on film and masculinity, where I can deal with the strictly cinematic aspect of the topics.

I am familiar with the journal *Communications*, but again I need to keep my interests (semiotics and narratology) at bay. All the good stuff will be the subject matter of my next book. Actually I had started this project as my next book, but then the administrative and bureaucratic requirements of Hohenheim University required that I change my plans, and leave the book for after. However, I hope that familiarizing with content analysis will bring a new layer to my research, especially in terms of narratology.

## **Meeting With Dana Polan**

New York City, February 12 2009

You need masculinity and food to figure out the content: qualitative analysis is a prerequisite. First you need a theorization and qualitative definition of your object before you can define your methodology and the way you can apply content analysis to your sample.

As for the sample, why blockbusters? Is the box office the best way to gauge the relevance of a movie? Maybe some less successful movie has a deeper impact on audiences, but more difficult to measure. At any rate, the box office success does not explain what happens to people when they enter the movie theater.

To understand the influence of movies on how people think and perceive and act is it necessary a theory of the collective unconscious and sedimentation? Do scenes with food, which are usually forgotten or not noticed by the audiences, contribute to reinforce certain cultural concepts, values, and behaviors? Do they have an actual ideological impact? Or is it rather necessary to make a distinction between the message and an ideological formation?

I pointed out that in the dissertation I limit myself to analyze what are the most common food related scenes involving men in movies that because of their commercial success have been seen by large audiences, and for these reason have become part of the pop culture inventory of images, behaviors, and values. It would be the task of subsequent research using surveys and focus groups to analyze the actual impact of individual and collective psychology in the various cultural communities where the movies have proven successful. Besides, without going into the impact onto individual, it is possible to identify images that are refracted and multiplied in pop culture though different medias: for their sheer presence and the fact that they are often used, it would seem that these elements have a special status and a special relevance.

Dr. Pollan also pointed out how to make something countable in content analysis it is necessary to abstract. If taxonomy allows to go beyond a precise description, at the same time doesn't it entail a loss of details? For example, I have a category "Men have a snack". Would it be the same thing is they consume chips or granola? Doesn't that say something about their character and their masculinity? Is it possible to reach a balance between the abstractness of typology and the specificity of the single text?

It would be interesting, after creating the typology, to go back to one single work and do a close analysis, to see if the application of the general categories actually succeeds in explaining all the richness of the details.

### **Email Exchange With Janet Chrzan**

From: jchrzan@sas.upenn.edu

Date: March 26, 2009 11:40:42 PM EDT

Fabio,

I have just finished reading the intro and methods chapters. Very interesting! The intro made me think - repeatedly - of one of my favorite movies, the Big Lebowski, since every character is a parody of a stereotype, often of masculinity. And is the central character an anti-hero (read as a parody of an anti-character) or unique? That is the question...

For the methods chapter, I will state right off that social theory reporting demands that theory be tied to method to outcome, usually damned explicitly. So you need to demonstrate that method is appropriate (and I have no doubt that it is) and that it curls back into the theory and links the theory to the outcomes. The vehicle-field-site-whatever for this is the hypothesis, since it embraces the theory, demonstrates the method, and examines the query.

Loved the visuals as code explanation of masculinity on film. Made me think of some youtube clips we were watching Wednesday night; I had found a session at Davos 2009 to show my students, and Larry, in the midst of trying to find a way to download the whole thing (so I wouldn't be dependent on bandwidth for a smooth showing) discovered that there were a ton of 1970s arena rock band videos of all the bands he loved. Boston, America, Journey, etc. All these weedy long haired guys with thin stick arms and, aside from the regular whacking of guitar strings, very feminized movements and material culture (clothes, etc.) identities. And lots of tenors. And I thought how fascinating that as America reached the apex of her cultural and poli-econ empire the images of manhood were so fluidly feminine in code and seeming substance, yet unabashedly heteromale. And now, as we are a declining nation, our masculine imagery is so large, bombastic, deep-voiced, 'heroic' and almost a parody of a testo-poisoned archaic male. Masculinity is no longer fluid, it's a representation of a culturally-projected and mythologized essentialism.

So, two questions before I read the next chapter. what are your explicit hypotheses and what is the background of the people who will be reading this dissertation?

Cheers, Janet

From: parasecoli@aol.com [mailto:parasecoli@aol.com]

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2009 6:14 AM

Janet,

Thanks for reading that material already! Anni didn't seem to have a problem with the methodology. She asked me to change a few things, which I did.

The theory is:

1. Masculinities are socially constructed, plural, and ever-changing. The idea of a solid stable masculinity is an ideological construction.
2. Food is pervasive and it is at the center of frequent and significant social interactions that mark various elements of subject identity, including gender.
3. Film provides a media for representations of masculinities to be made visible and become part of a shared repository that constitutes the social activity Appadurai defines as fantasy of imagination

As a consequence my hypotheses are :

1. food scenes provide an apparently neutral and natural space for representations of masculinity to be conveyed. For this reason these scenes tend to be invisible even if numerous (as it was proved by the focus group and feast and famine)
2. These scenes allow us to identify some prevalent traits in the represented masculinities.

In order to test my hypotheses, I chose content analysis, which allows

1. to show that food scenes are actually present, and in large number
2. to use frequency of recurrent traits to make inferences about the ones that are more culturally relevant.

Maybe the last chapter, the conclusion, should just be about this, brief and a little dumb... but I am under the impression that in this style of writing EVERYTHING has to be stated clearly and in good order and a little dry.

Should I also make it clearer in the intro and methodology?

I also need to write a two-page abstract that will be circulated among the whole faculty (everybody can demand to read the dissertation)

From: jchrzan@sas.upenn.edu

Date: March 27, 2009 10:24:07 AM EDT

Fabio,

OK, yep, I had picked those up from the intro and methods. Some place you should lay that outline explicitly out; social science writing bludgeons the reader with the outlines rather than rely on inductive reading. I'm not sure where (not the intro, except as you already have it – it's fine) but either in the methods or this results chapter. I'll ponder where as I read. I guess the reason to do this is that whomever reads this is going to do it fast – so you need to do really clear signposting. It's a different kind of reading and writing than for publication. You want to help your readers get through it so that they like it a lot J

From: jchrzan@sas.upenn.edu

Date: March 27, 2009 4:00:33 PM EDT

I still think you need to expand your section on the focus groups to discuss more of what they thought, how you integrate that into your hypotheses and code-testing validity needs, and exactly how their lack of awareness of the movie scenes constructs masculinity models. Are they unnoticed because the messaging is so culturally targeted and perfect that it fails to register, or is the lack of notice simply because (as they indicate a bit) the focus of the movie is narrative action so it's a wallpaper scene. Or is it a bit of both, and therefore even MORE likely to construct models of identity?

### **Email Exchange with Barbara Katz-Rothman**

From: BKatzRothman@gc.cuny.edu

Date: June 3, 2009 3:53:10 PM EDT

I've just printed out chapters 1, 2, 4 and 6. If my printer were happier I'd do the rest, but it needs a breather.

I'm wondering about the organization. There are many different ways to do things -- I need to know if this organization is your own choice, a requirement of your dis. advisors, or something else again.

My reason for asking is that the organization may itself be part of what's giving you trouble. For a journal article, the presentation of 'results' separately makes sense -- for a book-length project like this, it may not. I haven't read yet, so what do I know, but -- it just kinda surprised me to see the masculinity discussion in a chapter by itself -- not bits in the lit review and most in the analysis. I'll read, and maybe it'll all clarify. But if you have options about organization, I'd like to know that -- if we can reintegrate things, it might help.

If there has to be this troublesome separate 'analysis' chapter, then so be it, we'll figure it out. Just wanted to understand the parameters of the problem.

From: Fabio Parasecoli [mailto:parasecoli@aol.com]

Sent: Wed 6/3/2009 5:17 PM

The structure of the dissertation is the result of 5 rewritings of an original project that was way too "humanities". As you will see, the chapter on masculinity is actually about the development of the concepts inside and outside academia, while the following chapter is a lit review about how food studies and film studies have dealt with the concept.

There is very little analysis of various masculinities in themselves. The analysis, although guided by my theoretical hypotheses, was to be as neutral and objective and possible. My intention was to figure out what kind of masculinity is outlined in blockbusters, and then in the conclusion to tie everything up with the masculinity chapters.

At this point, after being approved by the advisors, the proposal has been accepted by the dissertation committee at the university, so I think it would be better not to stir waters too much.

From: BKatzRothman@gc.cuny.edu

Date: June 8, 2009 10:33:34 AM EDT

OK, Fabio, I read most of the dis -- will read the rest some other time just for my own interest, skimmed what I didn't read, and only looked at some of the appendices. But I think I do see what the problem is with this chapter.

First -- please forgive me if all this sounds harsh. I'm just writing it in simple, declarative 'do this' and 'you need that' sentences, in the interests of efficiency. I think the project is interesting, a lot of good stuff is (buried) here & all of what I am saying is only in the interests of making a better and stronger dissertation, opening up for some solid academic publications. So -- put on your thickest skin, grab a red pencil, and let's get going.

You need a narrative. You need to write this analysis chapter with a story line. In its present form, it's just an endless presentation of raw data.

(Disclosure. I've only seen maybe 5 or 6 of those movies. I'm the total academic here.

This may well be true of your other academic readers, your dis. committee.)

You have that chapter 5 in which you give plot lines of each movie -- that should be an appendix too I think. I didn't read all the appendices, didn't even open all of them, and maybe some of them need to be moved into the chapters. But this chapter doesn't really belong as it is.

However, with each of those summaries, you have a couple of sentences of real findings: how food is used in the movie. Those need to move, in an organized way, into the analysis chapter.

It took me several readings of the first few pages of CH 6 to understand the 'groups' you had -- and then realized you just grouped in terms of the number of food scenes. That is not OK. That is not an analytic category. It's meaningless raw data that gets in the way of an analysis. The total number of food scenes, or the average per movie -- meaningless. A hundred sentences with numbers and percentages just doesn't give anything meaningful.

So. I'd start the analysis chapter by saying something along the lines of: Blockbuster movies fall into X basic types: and those I think are your 'interpretive types.' You do this early in the chapter but are too tangled up with your food scene data at first. (and this



chapter doesn't have the pages numbered, which is going to make my comments a bit harder to follow, sorry!) You just drop in, for example, that in the involuntary hero type of movie, 'the sensitive undertones in the main characters....' Now that sentence, found on the fifth page in of the chapter, is PRECISELY the kind of thing you ought to be doing -- and it's jut a sentence randomly dropped in once in a while, and shockingly data free!

Instead, if you present these movie types, with a couple of examples drawn from the (now appendix) former chapter 5) of specific movies and plots that demonstrate the type, a bit richer than what you have here, we readers will begin to have a sense of how these movies are structured, what a "Blockbuster" consists of really.

Then ALL the analysis of food scenes should be by type of movie.

You start analyzing the movies by grouping them by number of food scenes, which gives you Charlie and the Chocolate Factory to start with,(one of the ones I saw!) which is clearly an outlier. It's a kid's movie, probably ought to go in with the cartoons. If you start with the MOST COMMON TYPE OF BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE, tell me what that movie typically is, then you can tell me how food is used in THAT TYPE OF MOVIE.

Your presentation of data would be drive by the analysis. You could describe a prototypical use of food in the most common type of blockbuster. You could describe then other uses of food in that most common blockbuster. How is food used in blockbuster movies -- that was the question. Start answering. In "Involuntary Hero" movies, food most typically shows up to....Give me -- along with the numbers -- a few rich descriptive examples: who was eating what, or cooking what or how food moved the characterization along, or whatever.

Then 'other uses of food in this kind of movie include: yadayadayada. The numbers could definitely be used, you have them, but they'd be used in the interests of your narrative about how food is used in movies. Every example would drive along your point that food is a hidden language, hidden plot device, hidden mechanism. You'd pull it up and out and show it to me.

Instead, what you have here, is that food is used more often in movies than I thought. And then 8 million numbers of what and when and not enough of how or why. (If this is sounding all nasty and harsh, I'm sorry. And if you're closing down and freaking, as a lot

of us do when the work is being criticized, then take deep breaths, call me, and we'll sit down over a cup of coffee and I'll explain it again-- and better)

A sentence like "The most substantial group of movies (over 44% of the total) is the one containing between 11 and 20 occurrences, with over 40% of occurrences." Fabio – so what? 40% of the food scenes are explained by, duh, 40% of the movies? So what? Like who cares and all that. But if you say that in a certain type of movie, food is used quite often to accomplish a certain task (developing the hero's soft side, or showing the hero in ugly/threatening mode) then I have some understanding of what you're trying to show me, the way that food is used.

"Many" and "almost no" food scenes -- so what? It's not really meaningful. I saw Tom Jones a billion years ago, and the sex/food scene (a man was eating, facing a woman, and he was very clearly not just eating dinner) stuck in my head forever. In the way you've done this chapter, had that movie been included, it could show up in any one of the groups -- I have NO idea how often food was used in that movie -- and the whole MEANING of it would be lost. Whereas if you had a category of movie for that (I don't even remember what the plot was!) and showed how food was used as a visual metaphor for sex, blah blah blah....you'd be explaining something, analyzing something, not just counting things.

All this data is in this chapter. Let me repeat -- I am asking you to reorganize around analytic categories rather than around numbers. Numbers should be there to explain and justify the analysis, not for their own sake. You should do this more as a narrative, more explaining to the reader how food is used in these movies, with more examples, and you can fit all your data into that. (By the way, the word 'arc' as in narrative arc, is spelled without an h in English -- arc, not arch) I am asking YOU to have a narrative arc for this chapter.

Your experts at the end -- if you listen to them, you can incorporate some of that in the analysis. In other words, food and power -- when you get to a discussion of food used as power device in this or that kind of movie, you'd be drawing it out, explaining it.

This is a funny kind of thing, to have the critics at the end and then seemingly not to have done what they say. Instead, use their comments to help you think thru the analytic categories.

You don't have to be afraid of description. You are so busy being 'quantitative' in this chapter that we have no idea what is being counted! You need to describe typical scenes, typical uses of food, and then support the 'typical' by giving the numbers. The point was raised that 'type of food' has meaning -- yes, true enough, you don't have the numbers for granola vs. pork chop, but you saw the movies! You could in your descriptions which should explain the numbers, tell us more. Examples from the movies -- those can be specific and explanatory. You need to acknowledge the argument you claim to be making -- that food is important. Otherwise, this would be like counting up all the times the color orange shows up in blockbuster films, and organizing films by amt of orange in them. It could be done. But for what earthly purpose? Food, you are saying, (in this dis, in your life work) is important socially. It's not some random thing that shows up. So write the chapter that way, using your data, not being used by it. Let the analysis drive the chapter, the data support the analysis.

With fond thoughts, & appreciation for the work, Barbara

**APPENDIX I**

**SPREADSHEETS OF**

**INTERPRETIVE TYPES, GENDER AND**

**BODY IMAGE OF CRITICAL CHARACTERS,**

**RACE, CLASS, AGE OF PROTAGONISTS,**

**DIEGETIC FUNCTIONS AND DESCRIPTORS**

## Gender and Body Images of Critical Characters

	Protagonist gender	Main buddy gender	Secondary buddies gender	Romantic interest gender	Main antagonist gender	Protagonist body type	Main buddy body type	Main antagonist body type
Last Samurai	M	M	M	F	M	A	A	N
Troy	M	M	M	F	M	A	A	A
Potter Sorcerer's stone	M	MF	M	n/a	M	N	N	N
Potter Chamber Secrets	M	MF	M	n/a	M	N	N	N
Potter Azkaban	M	MF	M	n/a	M	N	N	N
Potter Goblet of Fire	M	MF	M	F	M	N	N	N
Potter Phoenix	M	MF	M	F	M	N	N	N
Independence Day	M	M	M	F	n/a	NA	NA	n/a
Forrest Gump	M	M	M	F	n/a	A	N	n/a
Men in Black	M	M	M	F	n/a	A	N	n/a
Seven	M	M	n/a	F	M	N	N	N
Spider-man	M	M	n/a	F	M	A	N	A
Spider-man 2	M	n/a	n/a	F	M	A	n/a	A
Spider-man 3	M	M	n/a	F	M	A	A	A
I Am Legend	M	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	A	n/a	n/a
Transformers	M	MF	n/a	F	n/a	N	N	n/a
The Golden Compass	F	M	M	n/a	F	N	N	N
Gladiator	M	M	MF	n/a	M	A	A	A
Die Another Day	M	F	n/a	F	M	A	NA	A
Titanic	M	M	F	F	M	N	N	N
Pirates Black Pearl	M	M	M	F	M	N	N	N
Pirates Chest	M	M	M	M	M	N	N	N
Pirates World's End	M	MF	M	MF	M	N	N	N
Pearl Harbor	M	M	M	F	M	N	N	N
The Day After Tomorrow	M	M	M	F	n/a	N	N	n/a
Mission Impossible	M	M	MF	n/a	M	A	N	N
Mission Impossible 2	M	F	M	n/a	M	A	N	N
Mission Impossible 3	M	MF		F	M	A	N	N
The Mummy	M	M	M	F	M	A	N	N
Charlie Chocolate factory	M	M	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N	n/a
King Kong	M	M	M	F	n/a	O	N	n/a
The Sixth Sense	M	M	n/a	F	n/a	N	N	n/a
Terminator 2	M	MF	M	n/a	M	A	N	A
Terminator 3	M	M	M	F	F	A	N	A
Saving Private Ryan	M	M	M	n/a	M	N	N	N
The Chronicles of Narnia	MF	M	n/a	n/a	F	N	N	N
Armageddon	M	M	M	F	n/a	A	A	n/a
Ocean's Eleven	M	M	M	F	M	N	N	N
Night at the Museum	M	M	n/a	F	M	N	N	SO
The Matrix	M	MF	MF	F	M	A	A	A
The Matrix Reloaded	M	MF	MF	F	M	A	A	A
TheMatrix Revolutions	M	MF	MF	F	M	A	A	A
Lord of the Rings:	M	M	MF	n/a	M	N	N	N
Lord of the Rings: Two	M	M	MF	n/a	M	N	N	N
Lord of the Rings: Return	M	M	MF	n/a	M	N	N	N
Jurassic Park	M	M	n/a	F	M	N	N	O
Jurassic Park: Lost World	M	MF	n/a	F	M	N	N	N
The Da Vinci Code	M	F	n/a	n/a	M	N	N	N
The War of the Worlds	M	MF	n/a	n/a	n/a	N	N	n/a
The Bodyguard	M	n/a	n/a	F	M	A	n/a	N
Star Wars I Phantom	M	MF	M	n/a	M	A	N	AS
Star Wars II Attack of	M	M	M	F	M	A	A	AS
Star Wars III Revenge of	M	M	M	F	M	A	A	AS
Casino Royale	M	F	n/a	F	M	A	N	N
Twister	M	MF	M	F	M	N	N	N
Die Hard with a	M	M	M	n/a	M	A	N	A
Ghost	M	F	n/a	F	M	N	N	N
Pretty woman	M	M	n/a	F	M	N	N	O

Interpretive Types; Race, Class, Age of Protagonists; Diegetic Functions

	Interpre tive Type	Protago nist Race	Protago nist Class	Protago nist Age	Interpre tive Occur rences	Descrip Tive Occur Rences	Key Occur rences	Narra Tive Occur rences
Last Samurai	WH	Wh	M	Y	0	3	0	3
Troy	W	Wh	U	Y	1	4	0	12
Potter Sorcerer's stone	H	Wh	M	C	7	3	0	75
Potter Chamber Secrets	H	Wh	M	C	0	0	0	14
Potter Azkaban	H	Wh	M	T	1	1	0	2
Potter Goblet of Fire	H	Wh	M	T	4	1	5	21
Potter Phoenix	H	Wh	M	T	0	0	0	6
Independence Day	FH	WhBl	WMU	YAO	1	1	1	8
Forrest Gump	HR	Wh	M	Y	1	5	6	3
Men in Black	F	WhBl	M	YA	5	0	0	3
Seven	F	WhBl	M	YO	3	1	2	12
Spider-man	HR	Wh	W	T	1	3	0	7
Spider-man 2	HR	Wh	W	T	0	4	0	11
Spider-man 3	HR	Wh	W	T	1	5	9	7
I Am Legend	HF	Bl	U	A	10	3	0	13
Transformers	H	Wh	M	T	0	0	0	26
The Golden Compass	H	Wh	M	C	0	0	0	22
Gladiator	WF	wh	U	A	2	2	4	8
Die Another Day	WG	wh	U	A	7	0	0	5
Titanic	HR	wh	L	Y	0	0	0	2
Pirates Black Pearl	HR	wh	W	YA	1	2	0	9
Pirates Chest	HR	wh	W	YA	1	0	0	5
Pirates World's End	HR	wh	W	YA	4	0	0	17
Pearl Harbor	FR	wh	W	Y	2	2	1	12
The Day After Tomorrow	F	wh	M	TA	1	2	2	16
Mission Impossible	W	wh	M	A	1	1	8	14
Mission Impossible 2	W	wh	M	A	0	1	4	11
Mission Impossible 3	W	wh	M	A	1	2	2	9
The Mummy	F	wh	W	Y	0	4	0	14
Charlie Chocolate factory	H	wh	LU	CA	3	0	0	13
King Kong	G	wh	M	A	1	0	0	10
The Sixth Sense	R	wh	M	A	5	2	4	10
Terminator 2	F	wh	W	CA	1	4	0	32
Terminator 3	F	wh	W	YA	2	0	0	3
Saving Private Ryan	F	wh	M	A	1	2	1	16
The Chronicles of Narnia	H	wh	M	C	0	0	4	12
Armageddon	F	wh	M	YA	2	1	2	24
Ocean's Eleven	G	wh	M	A	1	0	3	24
Night at the Museum	H	wh	W	A	2	0	0	9
The Matrix	H	wh	M	Y	0	0	0	10
The Matrix Reloaded	H	wh	M	A	0	0	0	0
TheMatrix Revolutions	H	wh	M	A	1	0	0	8
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	H	wh	WMU	YAO	0	0	0	3
Lord of the Rings: Two	H	wh	WMU	YAO	4	4	0	24
Lord of the Rings: Return of	H	wh	WMU	YAO	3	0	9	13
Jurassic Park	H	wh	M	A	2	0	1	4
Jurassic Park: Lost World	H	wh	M	A	1	2	0	11
The Da Vinci Code	H	wh	M	A	2	1	3	2
The War of the Worlds	H	wh	W	A	0	0	9	9
The Bodyguard	WR	wh	M	A	0	0	0	13
Star Wars I Phantom Menace	W	wh	M	YA	2	0	0	14
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	WR	wh	M	YA	1	0	0	8
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith	WR	wh	M	YA	1	0	0	16
Casino Royale	WG	wh	U	A	0	0	0	4
Twister	FR	wh	M	A	0	3	0	13
Die Hard with a Vengeance	F	wh	M	A	4	0	0	5
Ghost	R	wh	M	A	1	2	2	1
Pretty woman	GR	wh	U	A	1	0	0	13
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>96</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>691</b>

## Race of Characters in Food-Specific Occurrences

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Unable to Determine	Middle Eastern
Last Samurai	4	1	1	0	0	0	0
Troy	12	5	0	0	0	0	0
Potter Sorcerer's stone	74	0	11	0	0	0	1
Potter Chamber Secrets	12	0	2	0	0	0	0
Potter Azkaban	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
Potter Goblet of Fire	25	5	1	0	0	0	0
Potter Phoenix	5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Independence Day	9	3	0	0	0	0	0
Forrest Gump	2	15	0	0	0	0	0
Men in Black	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seven	17	0	0	1	0	0	0
Spider-man	8	0	0	3	0	0	0
Spider-man 2	15	1	1	0	0	0	0
Spider-man 3	18	0	5	0	0	0	0
I Am Legend	26	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transformers	23	0	0	0	0	2	0
The Golden Compass	15	0	0	0	0	7	0
Gladiator	12	6	0	0	0	0	0
Die Another Day	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Titanic	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pirates Black Pearl	10	0	2	0	0	0	0
Pirates Chest	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pirates World's End	21	1	1	0	0	0	0
Pearl Harbor	11	5	1	0	0	0	0
The Day After Tomorrow	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mission Impossible	20	2	0	0	1	0	0
Mission Impossible 2	15	0	1	0	0	0	0
Mission Impossible 3	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
The Mummy	18	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charlie Chocolate factory	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
King Kong	11	2	0	0	0	0	0
The Sixth Sense	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terminator 2	38	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terminator 3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saving Private Ryan	16	7	0	0	0	0	0
The Chronicles of Narnia	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armageddon	29	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ocean's Eleven	28	0	0	0	0	0	0
Night at the Museum	5	0	0	0	0	6	0
The Matrix	8	0	0	0	0	2	0
The Matrix Reloaded	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TheMatrix Revolutions	7	0	0	2	0	0	0
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
Lord of the Rings: Two	30	3	0	2	0	0	0
Lord of the Rings: Return of	20	0	0	0	0	5	0
Jurassic Park	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jurassic Park: Lost World	8	7	0	0	0	0	0
The Da Vinci Code	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
The War of the Worlds	17	3	0	0	0	0	0
The Bodyguard	11	1	1	0	0	1	0
Star Wars I Phantom Menace	9	0	0	0	0	0	8
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith	16	1	0	0	0	0	0
Casino Royale	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Twister	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Die Hard with a Vengeance	3	3	0	3	0	0	0
Ghost	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pretty woman	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>

## Class of Characters in Food-Specific Occurrences

	Lower Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Upper Class	Unable to Determine
Last Samurai	0	3	3	0	0
Troy	1	4	2	12	0
Potter Sorcerer's stone	0	37	22	30	0
Potter Chamber Secrets	0	0	0	14	0
Potter Azkaban	0	3	1	0	0
Potter Goblet of Fire	0	8	23	0	0
Potter Phoenix	0	1	0	5	0
Independence Day	0	4	2	5	0
Forrest Gump	0	0	2	15	0
Men in Black	0	4	2	2	0
Seven	0	1	10	9	0
Spider-man	0	4	4	2	0
Spider-man 2	3	4	8	0	0
Spider-man 3	0	5	15	3	0
I Am Legend	0	19	5	3	0
Transformers	0	13	6	7	0
The Golden Compass	0	12	1	0	3
Gladiator	0	5	13	0	0
Die Another Day	0	0	10	0	0
Titanic	0	0	2	0	0
Pirates Black Pearl	0	3	9	0	0
Pirates Chest	0	5	0	1	0
Pirates World's End	0	0	21	0	0
Pearl Harbor	0	17	0	0	0
The Day After Tomorrow	0	21	0	0	0
Mission Impossible	0	22	0	1	0
Mission Impossible 2	0	12	1	5	0
Mission Impossible 3	0	1	12	2	0
The Mummy	2	2	14	1	0
Charlie Chocolate factory	0	4	11	1	0
King Kong	0	3	10	0	0
The Sixth Sense	0	1	20	1	0
Terminator 2	0	11	1	26	0
Terminator 3	0	3	2	0	0
Saving Private Ryan	0	0	23	0	0
The Chronicles of Narnia	0	8	2	6	0
Armageddon	0	19	7	4	0
Ocean's Eleven	0	12	2	15	0
Night at the Museum	2	0	0	4	6
The Matrix	0	1	0	7	1
The Matrix Reloaded	0	0	0	0	0
TheMatrix Revolutions	0	9	0	0	0
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	0	3	0	0	0
Lord of the Rings: Two	0	8	23	5	0
Lord of the Rings: Return of	0	0	19	1	0
Jurassic Park	0	2	3	3	0
Jurassic Park: Lost World	3	0	10	4	0
The Da Vinci Code	0	1	0	6	1
The War of the Worlds	0	0	7	0	9
The Bodyguard	0	0	4	5	1
Star Wars I Phantom Menace	0	4	10	3	0
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	0	0	9	0	0
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith	0	14	3	0	1
Casino Royale	0	0	2	1	1
Twister	0	8	1	7	0
Die Hard with a Vengeance	0	5	4	0	0
Ghost	0	0	0	5	0
Pretty woman	0	1	13	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>23</b>



## Age of Characters in Food-Specific Occurrences

	Child	Adolescent	Young Adult	Adult	Old	Unable to Determine
Last Samurai	0	0	1	4	2	0
Troy	1	0	0	13	1	2
Potter Sorcerer's stone	38	0	1	40	11	9
Potter Chamber Secrets	0	0	0	14	0	0
Potter Azkaban	0	0	0	4	0	0
Potter Goblet of Fire	0	0	10	21	0	0
Potter Phoenix	0	0	0	6	0	0
Independence Day	0	0	0	8	2	0
Forrest Gump	2	0	0	15	0	0
Men in Black	0	0	2	6	0	0
Seven	3	0	0	12	3	2
Spider-man	0	0	0	9	0	1
Spider-man 2	0	0	1	12	1	0
Spider-man 3	1	0	0	22	0	0
I Am Legend	0	0	15	6	5	2
Transformers	0	0	11	8	4	0
The Golden Compass	1	0	12	2	0	0
Gladiator	0	0	2	16	0	0
Die Another Day	0	0	0	10	0	0
Titanic	0	0	0	2	0	0
Pirates Black Pearl	0	0	0	12	0	0
Pirates Chest	0	0	0	6	0	0
Pirates World's End	0	0	0	17	3	1
Pearl Harbor	0	0	16	1	0	0
The Day After Tomorrow	0	0	0	21	0	0
Mission Impossible	1	0	0	22	0	0
Mission Impossible 2	0	0	1	17	0	0
Mission Impossible 3	0	9	0	4	0	0
The Mummy	10	0	0	9	0	0
Charlie Chocolate factory	0	9	0	1	6	0
King Kong	0	6	2	4	7	1
The Sixth Sense	18	0	0	4	0	0
Terminator 2	0	0	2	32	4	0
Terminator 3	0	0	0	5	0	0
Saving Private Ryan	0	0	10	6	4	3
The Chronicles of Narnia	0	9	0	5	2	0
Armageddon	1	0	20	7	0	0
Ocean's Eleven	0	0	24	3	0	1
Night at the Museum	2	0	1	3	0	0
The Matrix	0	0	4	4	0	0
The Matrix Reloaded	0	0	0	0	0	0
TheMatrix Revolutions	0	0	0	9	0	0
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship	0	2	0	1	0	0
Lord of the Rings: Two	3	0	1	25	5	1
Lord of the Rings: Return of	19	0	0	0	1	0
Jurassic Park	0	0	0	5	0	2
Jurassic Park: Lost World	0	0	3	6	2	2
The Da Vinci Code	2	0	0	4	2	0
The War of the Worlds	0	0	10	6	1	0
The Bodyguard	0	0	0	10	0	0
Star Wars I Phantom Menace	0	0	0	16	1	0
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	5	0	0	4	0	0
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith	0	2	0	16	0	0
Casino Royale	0	0	0	4	0	0
Twister	0	0	11	5	1	0
Die Hard with a Vengeance	0	2	6	0	0	0
Ghost	0	0	0	5	0	1
Pretty woman	0	0	10	4	3	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>28</b>

**APPENDIX J**

**INTERPRETIVE TYPES,  
SITUATIONAL SCRIPTS  
AND  
GENERAL CATEGORIES**

## Occurrences per movie

Movie	Interpretive Type	Occurrences	% of Total Occurrences	Occurrences per movie	Number of Movies per Group	% of Total Movies	Occurrences per Group	% of Total Occurrences
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	H	86	9.15	>40	1	1.72	86	9.15
Pretty Woman	GR	38	4.04	31-40	3	5.17	101	10.74
The Bodyguard	WR	32	3.40					
Forrest Gump	HR	31	3.30					
Spider-man 2	HR	29	3.09					
Spider-man 3	HR	28	2.98	21-30	11	18.97	264	28.09
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship f the Ring	H	26	2.77					
Lord of the Rings: Return of King	H	25	2.66					
The Chronicles of Narnia	H	25	2.66					
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	HR	23	2.45					
Last Samurai	WH	22	2.34					
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers	H	22	2.34					
Harry Potter: Sorcerer's Stone	H	22	2.34					
Ocean's Eleven	G	21	2.23					
Pirates of the Caribbean: Black Pearl	HR	21	2.23					
Seven	F	20	2.13					
Jurassic Park	H	18	1.91					
Potter Chamber Secrets	H	18	1.91					
The Matrix	H	18	1.91					
Pearl Harbor	FR	17	1.81					
The War of the Worlds	H	17	1.81					
Casino Royale	WG	16	1.70					
Men in Black	F	16	1.70					
Pirates of the Caribbean: World's End	HR	16	1.70					
Harry Potter: Goblet of Fire	H	16	1.70					
Spider-man	HR	16	1.70					
The Mummy	F	16	1.70					
Titanic	HR	16	1.70					
I Am Legend	HF	15	1.60					
King Kong	G	15	1.60					
Die Another Day	WG	14	1.49					
Harry Potter : Prisoner of Azkaban	H	14	1.49					
The Day After Tomorrow	F	14	1.49					
Twister	FR	14	1.49					
The Matrix Reloaded	H	13	1.38					
Mission Impossible	W	12	1.28					
Mission Impossible 3	W	12	1.28					
Gladiator	WF	11	1.17					
Jurassic Park: Lost World	H	11	1.17					
Harry Potter: Order of Phoenix	H	11	1.17					
Star Wars I Phantom Menace	W	11	1.17					
Star Wars II Attack of Clones	WR	10	1.06	0-10	17	29.31	102	10.85
Terminator 2	F	9	0.96					
The Sixth Sense	R	9	0.96					
Transformers	H	9	0.96					
Independence Day	FH	8	0.85					
The Golden Compass	H	8	0.85					
The Da Vinci Code	H	7	0.74					
Armageddon	F	6	0.64					
Ghost	R	6	0.64					
Night at the Museum	H	6	0.64					
Troy	W	6	0.64					
Saving Private Ryan	F	5	0.53					
Die Hard with a Vengeance	F	4	0.43					
TheMatrix Revolutions	H	4	0.43					

Terminator 3	F	3	0.32					
Mission Impossible 2	W	2	0.21					
Star Wars III Revenge of Sith	WR	0	0.00					
<b>Total</b>		<b>940</b>	<b>100.00</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>100.00</b>

## The Situational Scripts (in Order of Frequency)

<b>Situational Script Description, n = 151</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>% of</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	45	4.79%	4.79%
Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	43	4.57%	9.36%
Boy/man drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work	42	4.47%	13.83%
Boys/men toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect	40	4.26%	18.09%
Men/boys are eaten or in danger of being eaten	29	3.09%	21.17%
Boy/man serves food or drinks	24	2.55%	23.72%
Men/boys drink to pass time and relax	20	2.13%	25.85%
Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	20	2.13%	27.98%
Boys/men discuss or reminisce or ask about foods they like	18	1.91%	29.89%
Man/boy consumes food alone to show independence or superiority	18	1.91%	31.81%
Men/boys stuff their face or drink much out of greed	17	1.81%	33.62%
Men offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation or to get close	17	1.81%	35.43%
Boy/man prepares or offer special or celebratory food as sign of welcome	17	1.81%	37.23%
Boys/men disgust or disparage another's food or meal or way of eating	16	1.70%	38.94%
Boy/man gives or offers another food the other wants food the other wants or needs	16	1.70%	40.64%
Men produce food (farmers, fishermen hunters etc)	15	1.60%	42.23%
Boy/man drinks Self-destructively alone	15	1.60%	43.83%
Boys/men want or ask for drink, food or meal out of hunger or need	15	1.60%	45.43%
Boy/man prepares meal or drinks	14	1.49%	46.91%
Men/boys drugged or poisoned or killed with food or around food	13	1.38%	48.30%
Boy/man receives special food (celebratory) or sign of welcome	13	1.38%	49.68%
Men/boys ask a woman for food or drinks	13	1.38%	51.06%
Boys/men get consolation or physical healing or satiety from food or drink	11	1.17%	52.23%
Boy/man eat meal or drink to start his day or before starting an activity	11	1.17%	53.40%
Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink	11	1.17%	54.57%
Men/boys throw food as a sign of protest or disagreement or in a brawl	10	1.06%	55.64%
Men/boys drop food stop eating or spit drink or throw up out of surprise or fear	10	1.06%	56.70%
Men/boys use food to threaten, damage, demoralize make fun or control woman	10	1.06%	57.77%
Men/boys talk about food production	9	0.96%	58.72%
Men/Boys sell food	9	0.96%	59.68%
Boys/men buy food	9	0.96%	60.64%
Boys/men drink/eat unusual quantity or unusual substances to show power or lack of	9	0.96%	61.60%
Boys/men marvel and enjoy abundance of food	9	0.96%	62.55%
Boys/men drink or eat meal when he gets back from work or activity	9	0.96%	63.51%
Men/boys run out or are denied or cannot get the food/drink they want	9	0.96%	64.47%
Man/boys prepare food as a job	8	0.85%	65.32%
Men/boys carry food	8	0.85%	66.17%
Men/boys unable to eat because of embarrassment or emotional sorrow or disgust	8	0.85%	67.02%
Boys/men brought into new community by eating unfamiliar food or in strange	8	0.85%	67.87%
Boys/men eat and/or savor food or drink they like or need	8	0.85%	68.72%
Boy/man desires special food (celebratory or whim)	8	0.85%	69.57%
Boy/man prepares normal/daily meal as expression of caring	8	0.85%	70.43%
Men/boys sit in a restaurant or at a meal table without eating	8	0.85%	71.28%
Boy/man steals food or recipe	8	0.85%	72.13%
Boys/men use food or drink to blackmail, offend or damage others	7	0.74%	72.87%
Men discuss business or negotiate around food/drink	7	0.74%	73.62%

Boys/men asked or ordered to stop eating	7	0.74%	75.11%
Men/boys upset because food/drink has been taken away from them	7	0.74%	75.85%
Men/boys serve food to a woman	7	0.74%	76.60%
Men/boys look for food or try to gather food	6	0.64%	77.23%
Boy/man uses food as a metaphor about life or an aspect of it	6	0.64%	77.87%
Men/boys humiliated by being thrown food at or by being thrown or falling on/in	6	0.64%	78.51%
Men/boys are afraid to be eaten	6	0.64%	79.15%
Food or drink are forcibly taken out of the hands of or taken away from men/boys	6	0.64%	79.79%
Food used as a metaphor to make fun of boys/men	5	0.53%	80.32%
Boys/men toast or eat/drink alone to celebrate their own achievements or victories	5	0.53%	80.85%
Boys/men taste food or drink paying attention to flavors (even taking notes)	5	0.53%	81.38%
Men/boys refuse to eat or drink	5	0.53%	81.91%
Men/boys drink or eat out of fear or nervousness	5	0.53%	82.45%
Men/boys compliment woman on food she makes or serves	5	0.53%	82.98%
Man/boy uses situation of communal consumption of food to get close to woman	5	0.53%	83.51%
Man/boys drink secretly to hide their alcohol consumption	4	0.43%	83.94%
Men/boys complain about food	4	0.43%	84.36%
Men/boys use meal/drinking to share memories	4	0.43%	84.79%
Boys/men explain to others what they are eating or drinking	4	0.43%	85.21%
Boys/men share food with others out of love or affection	4	0.43%	85.64%
Boy/man secretly eats food	4	0.43%	86.06%
Men/boys invite women to dinner or to a drink	4	0.43%	86.49%
Men transform food for consumption or sale	3	0.32%	86.81%
Boys/men drink alone in front of others	3	0.32%	87.13%
Men/boys embarrassed or humiliated by their lack of familiarity with food or meal	3	0.32%	87.45%
Men/boys made fun at because of the food they like or how they eat	3	0.32%	87.77%
Men/boys criticized for their diet from the health point of view.	3	0.32%	88.09%
Men/boys add poison to food or drink to get rid of an enemy	3	0.32%	88.40%
Men/boys accept food or drink offered by others as sign of friendship or trust	3	0.32%	88.72%
Boys/men share food or drink with others as a sign of mourning	3	0.32%	89.04%
Boy/man can't afford food he wants for whim (not hunger)	3	0.32%	89.36%
Men/boys play with food out of fun or for comedy	3	0.32%	89.68%
Men/boys explain food to a woman	3	0.32%	90.00%
Men/boys share food or meal with a woman	3	0.32%	90.32%
Men/boys are promised food by a woman as a consolation or comfort	3	0.32%	90.64%
Men/boys find food	2	0.21%	90.85%
Boys/men set the table for the meal	2	0.21%	91.06%
Boys/men drink something strong to calm down and stop physical pain	2	0.21%	91.28%
Men refuse or destroy alcohol to promote or to show reform	2	0.21%	91.49%
Men equate food to flesh. Food used as metaphor of power/control	2	0.21%	91.70%
Filmmaker uses food image as a metaphor about life or an aspect of it	2	0.21%	91.91%
Boys/men use food as symbol of generosity to make another feel guilty	2	0.21%	92.13%
Men/boys afraid of being poisoned with food	2	0.21%	92.34%
Men/boys eat disgusting food out of hunger	2	0.21%	92.55%
Boys/men try to understand what they are eating	2	0.21%	92.77%
Boys/men thank for food they are offered	2	0.21%	92.98%
Boys/men renounce to food to feed another	2	0.21%	93.19%
Boys/men are given food out of charity or to avoid their starvation	2	0.21%	93.40%
Boys/men order food or ask another to go get or buy food	2	0.21%	93.62%
Men/boys destroy a kitchen in a brawl or fight	2	0.21%	93.83%
Men/boys destroy food	2	0.21%	94.04%
Men/boys decline invitation from a woman to eat or drink	2	0.21%	94.26%
Men/boys tell a woman they will order food for her	2	0.21%	94.47%
Men/boys drink or toast with a woman to celebrate	2	0.21%	94.68%
Boy/man forced to prepare meal	1	0.11%	94.79%
Boys/men forced to wash dishes after a meal	1	0.11%	94.89%
Boys/men prepare or get or wrap food for travel	1	0.11%	95.00%
Boys/men consume a meal in a public establishment	1	0.11%	95.11%
Men/boys wants to drink to forget their sorrow or problems	1	0.11%	95.21%

Boys/men eat food they do not like to show respect or not to offend who gave it	1	0.11%	95.32%
Men/boys made feel guilty about their desire or need for food	1	0.11%	95.43%
Boys/men use food to scare others	1	0.11%	95.53%
Boys/men do not want to eat or use food to save money	1	0.11%	95.64%
Men/boys are unable to identify a food	1	0.11%	95.74%
Men/boys pretend to be poisoned with food	1	0.11%	95.85%
Men/boys fascinated by acts of cannibalism	1	0.11%	95.96%
Men/boys want to eat themselves	1	0.11%	96.06%
Men/boys make others feel disgust for what they are eating	1	0.11%	96.17%
Men/boys unable to eat or drink because the stuff is too strong	1	0.11%	96.28%
Boys/men ask others to pay for their food	1	0.11%	96.38%
Boys/men ask for food as a reward for a service or work	1	0.11%	96.49%
Boys/men are asked for food by their children	1	0.11%	96.60%
Men/boys can't afford food they need out of poverty	1	0.11%	96.70%
Men/boys refuse food that is offered and that they can't afford out of pride	1	0.11%	96.81%
Men/boys step on food showing carelessness or disregard	1	0.11%	96.91%
Boys/men try to convince another to eat	1	0.11%	97.02%
Boys/men worry that others might drink or eat too much for their own good	1	0.11%	97.13%
Boy/man threatened to be left without meal	1	0.11%	97.23%
Boys/men forbid another to eat	1	0.11%	97.34%
Men/boys are scolded or yelled at for being late for a meal	1	0.11%	97.45%
Men/boys catch food that is falling	1	0.11%	97.55%
Men/boys reminisce about throwing up food	1	0.11%	97.66%
Men/boys secretly observe others eat	1	0.11%	97.77%
Boy/man punished for stealing food	1	0.11%	97.87%
Boy/man gallant tries to help woman in preparation or carrying food	1	0.11%	97.98%
Men/boys help a woman get familiar with food or foodway	1	0.11%	98.09%
Man/boy is present during situation of preparation of food to get close to woman	1	0.11%	98.19%
Men/boys cook together with a woman	1	0.11%	98.30%
Men/boys accept invitation from a woman to eat or drink	1	0.11%	98.40%
Men/boys eat alone in front of a woman	1	0.11%	98.51%
Men/boys are jealous a woman serves or prepares food or drink for another	1	0.11%	98.62%
Men/boys asked by a woman if they like the food she serves or prepares	1	0.11%	98.72%
Men/boys stop others from making fun of a woman unfamiliar with food	1	0.11%	98.83%
Men/boys make fun of their being unfamiliar with food to make a woman feel	1	0.11%	98.94%
Men/boys argue or disagree with a woman about the cost of food she wants to buy or	1	0.11%	99.04%
Men/boys are threatened to get food thrown on them by a woman	1	0.11%	99.15%
Men/boys are refused food by a woman	1	0.11%	99.26%
Men/boys get food or drink spilled or poured on them by a woman	1	0.11%	99.36%
Men/boys pour or drop food on a woman	1	0.11%	99.47%
Men/boys pour drink or food on themselves to get close to woman	1	0.11%	99.57%
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about their fear of being eaten.	1	0.11%	99.68%
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about what they eat or drink	1	0.11%	99.79%
Men/boys scolded by a woman for being out of food	1	0.11%	99.89%
Woman adds poison to men/boys food or drink	1	0.11%	100.00%

### General Categories and Situational Scripts Falling under Them

General Categories	Frequency
<b>Food Production and Preparation</b>	
Men produce food (farmers, fishermen hunters etc)	15
Men transform food for consumption or sale	3
Men/boys talk about food production	9
Man/boys prepare food as a job	8
Boy/man forced to prepare meal	1

Boys/men prepare or get or wrap food for travel	1
Men/boys carry food	8
Men/Boys sell food	9
Boy/man prepares normal/daily meal as expression of caring	8
Boy/man gallant tries to help woman in preparation or carrying food	1
Man/boy is present during situation of preparation of food to get close to woman	1
Men/boys cook together with a woman	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Food Service</b>	
Boys/men forced to wash dishes after a meal	1
Boys/men set the table for the meal	2
Boy/man serves food or drink	24
Men/boys serve food to a woman	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Food Procurement</b>	
Men/boys look for food or try to gather food	6
Men/boys find food	2
Boys/men buy food	9
Boys/men order food or ask another to go get or buy food	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Food Consumption</b>	
Boys/men consume a meal in a public establishment	1
men/boys stuff their face or drink much out of greed	17
Boys/men marvel and enjoy abundance of food	9
Boys/men taste food or drink paying attention to flavors (even taking notes)	5
Boy/man steals food or recipe	8
Men/boys secretly observe others eat	1
Men/boys eat alone in front of a woman	1
Boys/men drink or eat meal when he gets back from work or activity	9
Boy/man eat meal or drink to start his day or before starting an activity	11
Boy/man drinks or eats during an activity/work or as a break during work	42
Boy/man drinks Self-destructively alone	15
Men/boys wants to drink to forget their sorrow or problems	1
Man/boys drink secretly to hide their alcohol consumption	4
Boys/men drink something strong to calm down and stop physical pain	2
Boys/men drink alone in front of others	3
Men refuse or destroy alcohol to promote or to show reform	2
Boy/man secretly eats food	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>Food as Negotiation, Power and Control</b>	
boys/men drink/eat unusual quantity or unusual substances to show power or lack of fear	9
Men equate food to flesh. Food used as metaphor of power/control	2
Boys/men show disgust or disparage another's food or meal or way of eating	16
Men/boys made feel guilty about their desire or need for food	1
Boys/men use food as symbol of generosity to make another feel guilty	2
Boys/men use food to scare others	1
Boys/men use food or drink to blackmail, offend or damage others	7
Men/boys humiliated by being thrown food at or by being thrown or falling on/in food	6
Men/boys embarrassed or humiliated by their lack of familiarity with food or meal	3
Men/boys made fun at because of the food they like or how they eat	3
Men/boys criticized for their diet from the health point of view.	3
Men/boys make others feel disgust for what they are eating	1
Men discuss business or negotiate around food/drink	7
Men offer food or drink to obtain favor or close business or negotiation or to get close to others	17
boys/men toast or eat/drink alone to celebrate their own achievements or victories	5
Man/boy consumes food alone to show independence or superiority	18
Men/boys refuse to eat or drink	5
Men/boys refuse food that is offered and that they can't afford out of pride	1
Men/boys destroy a kitchen in a brawl or fight	2

Boy/man threatened to be left without meal	1
Boys/men forbid another to eat	1
Men/boys are scolded or yelled at for being late for a meal	1
Boys/men asked or ordered to stop eating	7
Food or drink are forcibly taken out of the hands of or taken away from men/boys	6
Men/boys sit in a restaurant or at a meal table without eating	8
Boy/man punished for stealing food	1
Men/boys decline invitation from a woman to eat or drink	2
Men/boys tell a woman they will order food for her	2
Men/boys use food to threaten, damage, demoralize make fun or control woman	10
Men/boys stop others from making fun of a woman unfamiliar with food	1
Men/boys make fun of their being unfamiliar with food to make a woman feel comfortable	1
Men/boys are refused food by a woman	1
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about what they eat or drink	1
Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	20
Men/boys scolded by a woman for being out of food	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>
<b>Food as Metaphor</b>	
Boy/man uses food as a metaphor about life or an aspect of it	6
Filmmaker uses food image as a metaphor about life or an aspect of it	2
Food used as a metaphor to make fun of boys/men	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Food Sharing</b>	
Men/boys drink to pass time and relax	20
Boys/men eat food they do not like to show respect or not to offend who gave it	1
Men/boys accept food or drink offered by others as sign or friendship or trust	3
Men/boys use meal/drinking to share news or information or make plans	45
Men/boys use meal/drinking to share memories	4
boys/men toast or eat/drink together to celebrate or show friendship/respect community	40
Boys/men brought into new community by eating unfamiliar food or in strange environment	8
Boy/man prepares or offer special or celebratory food as sign of welcome	17
Boy/man receives special food (celebratory) or sign of welcome	13
Boys/men thank for food they are offered	2
Boy/man gives or offers another Food the other wants food the other wants or needs	16
Boys/men renounce to food to feed another	2
Boys/men share food with others out of love or affection	4
Boys/men share food or drink with others as a sign of mourning	3
Boys/men are given food out of charity or to avoid their starvation	2
Boys/men try to convince another to eat	1
Boys/men worry that another gets enough food for health or wellbeing	7
Boys/men worry that others might drink or eat too much for their own good	1
Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink	11
Men/boys invite woman to dinner or to a drink	4
Men/boys compliment woman on food she makes or serves	5
Men/boys asked by a woman if they like the food she serves or prepares	1
Men/boys share food or meal with a woman	3
Men/boys ask a woman for food or drink	13
Men/boys drink or toast with a woman to celebrate	2
Man/boy uses situation of communal consumption of food to get close to woman	5
Men/boys accept invitation from a woman to eat or drink	1
Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	43
Men/boys are jealous a woman serves or prepares food or drink for another	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Food and Danger</b>	
men/boys drugged or poisoned or killed with food or around food	13
Men/boys add poison to food or drink to get rid of an enemy	3
men/boys pretend to be poisoned with food	1
men/boys afraid of being poisoned with food	2
Woman adds poison to men/boys food or drink	1



<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Cannibalism</b>	
Men/boys are eaten or in danger to be eaten	29
Men/boys are afraid to be eaten	6
Men/boys fascinated by acts of cannibalism	1
Men/boys want to eat themselves	1
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about their fear of being eaten.	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Food as Emotion and Desire</b>	
Men/boys complain about food	4
Men/boys unable to eat because of embarrassment or emotional sorrow or disgust	8
Men/boys unable to eat or drink because the stuff is too strong	1
Boys/men discuss or reminisce or ask about foods they like	18
Boys/men get consolation or physical healing or satiety from food or drink	11
Boy/man desires special food (celebratory or whim)	8
Men/boys drop food stop eating or spit drink or throw up out of surprise or fear	10
Men/boys drink or eat out of fear or nervousness	5
Men/boys run out or are denied or cannot get the food/drink they want	9
Men/boys upset because food/drink has been taken away from them	7
Men/boys are promised food by a woman as a consolation or comfort	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Food and Money</b>	
Boys/men do not want to eat or use food to save money	1
Boys/men ask others to pay for their food	1
Boys/men ask for food as a reward for a service or work	1
Boy/man can't afford food he wants for whim (not hunger)	3
Men/boys can't afford food they need out of poverty	1
Men/boys argue/ disagree with woman about the cost of food she wants to buy or offer	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Food and Hunger</b>	
Men/boys eat disgusting food out of hunger	2
Boys/men are asked for food by their children	1
Boys/men want or ask for drink, food or meal out of hunger or need	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Food Spilling and Fights</b>	
Men/boys throw food as a sign of protest or disagreement or in a brawl	10
Men/boys play with food =out of fun or for comedy	3
Men/boys step on food showing carelessness or disregard	1
Men/boys catch food that is falling	1
Men/boys reminisce about throwing up food	1
Men/boys destroy food	2
Men/boys are threatened to get food thrown on them by a woman	1
Men/boys get food or drink spilled or poured on them by a woman	1
Men/boys pour or drop food on a woman	1
Men/boys pour drink or food on themselves to get close to woman	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Food as Knowledge</b>	
Men/boys explain food to a woman	3
Boys/men explain to others what they are eating or drinking	4
Men/boys are unable to identify a food	1
Men/boys help a woman get familiar with food or foodway	1
Boys/men eat and/or savor food or drink they like or need	8
Boys/men try to understand what they are eating	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>

## Situational Scripts Involving Women

<b>Situational Scripts</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	43	28.10%
Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	20	13.07%
Men/boys ask a woman for food or drink	13	8.50%
Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink	11	7.19%
Men/boys use food to threaten, damage, demoralize make fun or control woman	10	6.54%
Men/boys serve food to a woman	7	4.58%
Men/boys compliment woman on food she makes or serves	5	3.27%
Man/boy uses situation of communal consumption of food to get close to woman	5	3.27%
Men/boys invite woman to dinner or to a drink	4	2.61%
Men/boys explain food to a woman	3	1.96%
Men/boys share food or meal with a woman	3	1.96%
Men/boys are promised food by a woman as a consolation or comfort	3	1.96%
Men/boys decline invitation from a woman to eat or drink	2	1.31%
Men/boys tell a woman they will order food for her	2	1.31%
Men/boys drink or toast with a woman to celebrate	2	1.31%
Boy/man gallant tries to help woman in preparation or carrying food	1	0.65%
Men/boys help a woman get familiar with food or foodway	1	0.65%
Man/boy is present during situation of preparation of food to get close to woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys cook together with a woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys accept invitation from a woman to eat or drink	1	0.65%
Men/boys eat alone in front of a woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys are jealous a woman serves or prepares food or drink for another	1	0.65%
Men/boys asked by a woman if they like the food she serves or prepares	1	0.65%
Men/boys stop others from making fun of a woman unfamiliar with food	1	0.65%
Men/boys make fun of their being unfamiliar with food to make a woman feel	1	0.65%
Men/boys argue or disagree with a woman about the cost of food she wants to buy	1	0.65%
Men/boys are threatened to get food thrown on them by a woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys are refused food by a woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys get food or drink spilled or poured on them by a woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys pour or drop food on a woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys pour drink or food on themselves to get close to woman	1	0.65%
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about their fear of being eaten.	1	0.65%
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about what they eat or drink	1	0.65%
Men/boys scolded by a woman for being out of food	1	0.65%
Woman adds poison to men/boys food or drink	1	0.65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### General Categories Involving Women and the Situational Scripts Falling under Them

<b>General Categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Food Production and Preparation</b>	
Man/boy is present during situation of preparation of food to get close to woman	1
Boy/man gallant tries to help woman in preparation or carrying food	1
Men/boys cook together with a woman	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Food Service</b>	
Men/boys serve food to a woman	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Food Consumption</b>	
Men/boys eat alone in front of a woman	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Food as Negotiation, Power and Control</b>	
Men/boys decline invitation from a woman to eat or drink	2
Men/boys tell a woman they will order food for her	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

Men/boys stop others from making fun of a woman unfamiliar with food	1
Men/boys make fun of their being unfamiliar with food to make a woman feel comfortable	1
Men/boys are refused food by a woman	1
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about what they eat or drink	1
Man/boy uses offering of food or drink to get close to woman	20
Men/boys scolded by a woman for being out of food	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Food Sharing</b>	
Men/boys called or invited by a woman to eat a meal or drink	11
Men/boys invite women to dinner or to a drink	4
Men/boys compliment woman on food she makes or serves	5
Men/boys asked by a woman if they like the food she serves or prepares	1
Men/boys share food or meal with a woman	3
Men/boys ask a woman for food or drink	13
Men/boys drink or toast with a woman to celebrate	2
Man/boy uses situation of communal consumption of food to get close to woman	5
Men/boys accept invitation from a woman to eat or drink	1
Men/boys are served or given food or drink by a woman	43
Men/boys are jealous a woman serves or prepares food or drink for another	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Food and Danger</b>	
Woman adds poison to men/boys food or drink	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Cannibalism</b>	
Men/boys made fun at by a woman about their fear of being eaten.	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Food as Emotion and Desire</b>	
Men/boys are promised food by a woman as a consolation or comfort	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Food and Money</b>	
Men/boys argue or disagree with a woman about the cost of food she wants to buy or offer	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Food Spilling and Fights</b>	
Men/boys are threatened to get food thrown on them by a woman	1
Men/boys get food or drink spilled or poured on them by a woman	1
Men/boys pour or drop food on a woman	1
Men/boys pour drink or food on themselves to get close to woman	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Food as Knowledge</b>	
Men/boys explain food to a woman	3
Men/boys help a woman get familiar with food or foodway	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that:

I wrote this dissertation without any help from others and without the use of documents and aids other than the reported sources. External sources (including electronic sources) have not been copied in word or content without specific reference;

I have mentioned all used sources and I have cited them correctly according to established academic citation rules;

This work has not been submitted either in Germany or abroad in the same or similar form to an examination committee. The production of this work was based on a formal request presented to and approved by the UHOH Agricultural faculty to open the doctoral process.

New York, September 8, 2009

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## EDUCATION

- Universität Hohenheim** **present** **Stuttgart, Germany**  
Institute for Social Sciences in Agriculture – Center for Gender and Nutrition  
All-but-dissertation status (ABD), candidate for the doctorate in Agricultural Sciences  
Dissertation: *Food and Men in Cinema: An Exploration of Gender in Blockbuster Movies*.  
Expected graduation Fall 2009 (December 17, 2009)
- TOEFL Text of English as a Foreign Language 2008** **New York, NY**  
Certificate, 117/120
- Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies** **1997** **Rome, Italy**  
Certificat en Islamologie (Certificate in Islamic Studies)  
Thesis on *Jihad and Contemporary Islamic Fundamentalism*
- Istituto Universitario Orientale** **1991** **Naples, Italy**  
Laurea, 110 e lode (Masters with Honors), Political science - major in Eastern Asian Studies  
Thesis in History of Modern and Contemporary China: *The Crisis of Reformist Policies in China: 1983-1989*.
- Beijing University** **1989** **Beijing, People's Republic of China**  
Graduate Fellowship, History Department  
Contemporary History of China
- Università La Sapienza** **1988** **Rome, Italy**  
Laurea, 110 e lode (Masters with Honors), Modern Foreign Languages and Literature - major in Chinese and Japanese languages and cultures  
Thesis in History of Far East Asia: *China 1978-1982: The Years of Readjustment*.
- Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente** **1986** **Rome, Italy**  
Diploma in Lingua e Letteratura Cinese (Certificate in Chinese Language and Literature)
- Liceo Classico Statale Virgilio** **1983** **Rome, Italy**  
Maturita' classica, 58/60 (High school diploma in humanities)

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

- **Food and Communication:** Semiotics of Food; Food in the Media, in particular Film and Pop Culture; Food Journalism and Reporting; Food Media Industry.
- **Food and Politics:** Geographical Indications (International Trade and Policy Debates, Socio-cultural and Sociopolitical Aspects of Geographical Indication, Geographical Indications and Socio-Economic Development); EU Consumer Policies (Common Agricultural Policy, Food Safety, Consumption Trends); Food and Identity Politics in Europe
- **Food and Tourism:** Food Heritage and its Valorization; Consumer Perceptions, Gourmet Tourism and Communication; Food Tourism and Politics; Food-Related Tourism and Local Communities
- **Food, Gender, and Race:** Food and Masculinity; Food, Gender, and Body Image in the Media; Food and Gender in Afro-American Popular Culture.

## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

**Universitat Oberta de Catalunya** **2009 - present** **Barcelona, Spain**  
 On-Line Masters in Food System, Culture, and Society  
 Members of the Advisory Committee  
 Professor - Instructor: Food History, Food and Communication, Socio-political Aspects of Geographical Indications

**GustoLab Center for Food & Culture** **2009 - present** **Rome, Italy**  
 Academic Director  
 Establishment of short- and long-term food-related academic programs in Italy for USA universities: development of new programs and course, creation of curricula and syllabi in cooperation with Study Abroad offices and with US faculty.

**University of Gastronomic Sciences** **2008 - present** **Colorno, Italy**  
 Master of Italian Gastronomy and Tourism  
 Master of Food Culture and Communications  
 Lectures on Food and Tourism, Food and Media, Globalization of Italian Food

**University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana** **2007- present** **Rome, Italy**  
 Program “Food, Media and Culture in Italy”  
 Creation of Curriculum, Logistics, and Lectures on  
 Program “Branding Italian Food” (College of Communication, Department of Advertising)  
 Lectures on Food and Culture, Food Politics, Food and Media

**Kingsborough Community College – CUNY** **Fall 2006** **New York, New York**  
 Adjunct Lecturer  
 Department of Tourism and Hospitality  
 Course Taught: Food and Culture in Italy

**Rome University Tor Vergata/BAICR** **2005-2006** **Rome, Italy**  
 Adjunct Professor  
 On-Line Master Program in Food and Gastronomy  
 Course taught: European Profiles (History and Culture of European Cuisines)

**New York University** 2003 – present New York, New York  
Adjunct Assistant Professor  
Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health  
Courses taught: Food and Film, Food and Pop Culture, Comparative Cuisines, Food History, Food and Society, Research Methods, Food Markets, Theoretical Perspective in Food Studies

**Gambero Rosso School** 2002 – 2009 Rome, Italy  
Professor  
Program for Journalism and Communication for Food and Wine  
Courses taught: Semiotics of Food, History of Food, Food and culture, Food Writing

**New York University, Villa la Pietra** 2002 – present Florence, Italy  
NYU Nutrition and Food Department Summer Program  
Lectures on Food History, Food Politics, Food and Media. Geographical Indications

**Nuovo Millennio Foundation for Political Studies** 1996-1998 Rome, Italy  
Classes taught: History of Islamic Political Thought, History of Eastern Asian Political Thought

#### **OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

**Citta' Slow International Association**  
Member of the International Scientific Committee

**Conference: Organic Food in the US and Europe** New York, New York  
February 12, 2009  
New York University, Casa Italiana  
Organization of the conference, choice of the speakers, coordination of the scientific activities on behalf of the NYU Dept. of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health and Alce Nero Organics

**Course on Food and Beverage Management and Innovation** New York, New York  
January 5-9, 2009  
New York University, Casa Italiana  
Organization of the course, choice of the instruction, coordination of the activities on behalf of the NYU Dept. of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health and PIT 2 – Region of Puglia, Italy

**Conference: The Mediterranean Diet: Fact and Fiction** Florence, Italy  
May 22, 2006  
New York University, La Pietra  
Participation in the organization of the conference with NYU Dept. of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health and the James Beard Foundation

**Conference “Food Culture”** Strasbourg, France  
Member of the Scientific Board for the congress, which takes place yearly under the high patronage of the Council of Europe. Organizations of seminars during the conference

**Food Culture and Society Journal**  
Member since 2006 of the International Advisory Board for *Food Culture and Society*, the journal of the Association for the Study of Food and Society, published by Berg, Oxford



## AWARDS

2009 Steinhardt Teaching Excellence Award, New York University

## EMPLOYMENT IN THE MEDIA

<b><i>Gambero Rosso Publisher</i></b>	<b>1992 – 2009</b>	<b>Rome, Italy</b>
Magazine Staff Writer, Book Editor and Book Acquisitions		
<b><i>Gambero Rosso - Città del Gusto</i></b>	<b>2002 – 2009</b>	<b>Rome, Italy</b>
Coordination of didactic activities, public relations with foreign press and academia. Actively involved in the creation of the school curricula.		
<b><i>Gambero Rosso Channel</i></b>	<b>1999 - 2009</b>	<b>Rome, Italy</b>
Frequent guest as a food expert. Writer, producer and host of TV segments.		
<b><i>Gambero Rosso, Inc.</i></b>	<b>1998 – present</b>	<b>New York, New York</b>
US Bureau representative		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Media and Press relations</li><li>- Organization of the Tre Bicchieri events in New York and San Francisco (average 1,500 guests)</li><li>- Management of the US activities (distribution, promotion, administration etc.)</li><li>- Articles about food in the US, Canada, and the Caribbean</li></ul>		
<b>Foreign Correspondent</b>	<b>1991 - 1998</b>	
Freelance assignments concerning Middle East and Eastern Asia politics and culture for newspapers and magazines in Italy ( <i>Gambero Rosso</i> , <i>Città Nuova</i> , <i>Manifesto</i> , <i>Mondo Economico</i> , <i>Limes</i> , <i>Espresso</i> ), Spain ( <i>El Mundo</i> , <i>Alfa y Omega</i> ) and Mexico ( <i>Proyección Mundial</i> ), including articles on South-East Asia, China, Mexico, Vietnam, Cambodia, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, and Uzbekistan.		
<b><i>Radio Città 103</i></b>	<b>1995 to 1997</b>	<b>Rome, Italy</b>
Radio programs on international politics (freelance)		
<b>LUX VIDE TV Production</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>Rome, Italy</b>
Script reviewer: evaluation of incoming scripts for fiction and non-fiction production History consultant for a fiction project on the Crusades (Freelance)		
<b><i>Città Nuova Press</i></b>	<b>1994 - 1995</b>	<b>Rome, Italy</b>
Press Office Manager (Freelance)		
<b>I.Media News Agency</b>	<b>1993 – 1995</b>	<b>Rome, Italy</b>
Managing editor of the monthly bulletin <i>Themes and Issues</i> (Freelance)		

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

### **Association for the Study of Food and Society**

Member since 2001, president 2007-2009.

### **Institut Europeen d'Histoire et des Cultures de l'Alimentation (IEHCA, European Institute of Food History and Cultures)**

Member since 2003

### **Foreign Press Association, New York**

Member since 2000

### **Ordine professionale dei giornalisti (Italian Journalist Professional Association)**

Member since 1996

## MANUSCRIPT PEER-REVIEWS

University of California Press Food Series

Gastronomica

Food & Foodways

European Planning Studies

Food, Culture & Society

Text and Performance Quarterly

Food & History

## PUBLICATIONS

### **Books**

*Bite Me: Food in Popular Culture*, Berg, Oxford 2008

*Food Culture in Italy*, Greenwood Press, Westport CT 2004

*Libano: Ritorno al Paradiso*, (Lebanon: Back to Heaven), Liber Internazionale Press, Pavia 1996.

### **Edited Books**

*A Cultural History of Food*, 6 volume set, general editor with Peter Scholliers, Berg Oxford (forthcoming 2011)

*Questione di Gusti* (Matters of taste), editor with Jennifer Berg, Gambero Rosso, Rome 2006

### **Peer-Reviewed Articles**

“Shared Meals and Other Delectable Symptoms: Food, Identity, and Community”, in *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* Vol. 4, no.2, special issue Food, Culture and the Environment: Communicating About What We Eat (forthcoming 2010)

"The Gender of Geographical indications: Women, Place, and the marketing of identities" in *Cultural Studies/Critical Methodologies*, special issue on Food and Power (forthcoming 2010)

"Bootylicious: Food and the Female Body in Contemporary Pop Culture", in *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 35: 1 & 2, pp.110-125 (Spring/Summer 2007). Special Issue "The Sexual Body" edited by Shelly Eversly and Jennifer Morgan

"Feeding hard bodies: Food and nutrition in men's fitness magazines". *Food and Foodways*, vol. 13 no. 1-2, 2005, pp. 17-37. Special issue "Food and masculinity" edited by Alice Julier and Laura Lindenfeld Sher. Reprinted in *Food and Culture*, ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, Routledge 2007

"Food and Pop Culture: Teaching Critical Theory through Food". *Food, Culture and Society*, vol.7 no.1, 2004, pp. 147-157

"Postrevolutionary Chowhounds: Food, Globalization and the Italian Left". *Gastronomica*, vol.3 no. 3, 2003, pp. 29-39

"Deconstructing soup: Ferran Adrià's culinary universe". *Gastronomica* vol.1, no.1, 2001, pp. 61-73

### **Book Chapters**

"World Developments", in *Antiquity, vol. 1 of A Cultural History of Food*, Berg Oxford, forthcoming 2011

"World Developments", in *The Medieval Age, vol. 2 of A Cultural History of Food*, Berg Oxford, forthcoming 2011

"World Developments", in *The Renaissance, vol. 3 of A Cultural History of Food*, Berg Oxford, forthcoming 2011

"World Developments", in *The Age of Enlightenment, vol. 4 of A Cultural History of Food*, Berg Oxford, forthcoming 2011

"World Developments", in *The Age of Empire, vol. 5 of A Cultural History of Food*, Berg Oxford, forthcoming 2011

"World Developments", in *The Modern Age, vol. 6 of A Cultural History of Food*, Berg Oxford, forthcoming 2011

"God's diets: The Bible as Eating Guide" In *The Lord's Supper: Eating in the Christian Tradition*. Ken Albala and Trudy Edens, eds. Columbia University Press (forthcoming 2010)

"New York et la nouvelle scène gastronomique" (New York and the New Food Scene) in *Voyages en Gastronomies*. Paris, Autrement 2008

"The Chefs, The Entrepreneurs, and Their Patrons: The Avant Garde Food Scene in New York City" in *Gastropolis: Food and New York City*, Columbia University Press 2008

"Hungry Engrams: Food and Non-Representational Memory", in *Food and Philosophy*, Blackwell 2007

"Identity, Diversity, and Dialogue", in *Food: Identity and Diversity in Culinary Cultures of Europe*, Council

of Europe, Strasbourg 2005 (50th Anniversary Publication)

“Low-carb Dieting and the Mirror: A Lacanian Analysis of the Atkins Diet”, in *The Atkins Diet and Philosophy*, Open Court, Chicago 2005

### **Essays**

“Slow Food” and “European Union” in *The Business of Food: Encyclopedia of the Food and Drink Industries*, ed. Gary Allen and Ken Albala, Westport CT, Greenwood Press 2007

“La tavola come paesaggio: le dimensioni del gusto giapponese” (The table as a landscape: dimensions of Japanese taste), Introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition “L’estetica del sapore: un’arte giapponese” (The aesthetics of taste: a Japanese art), Japanese Culture Institute, Rome, February 17th-March 31st 2006

“Chinese Foodways in Italy”, in *Flavor and Fortune*, vol. 12 no. 2, summer 2005

“Il Triangolo d’oro: da regno della droga a crocevia geopolitico” (The Golden Triangle: From Kingdom of Drugs to Geopolitical Crossroads), *Limes – La rivista Italiana di Geopolitica* vol 3 no. 1 (1995)

### **Invited Book Reviews**

Peter J. Atkins, Peter Kummel, and Derek J. Oddy, eds. *Food and the City in Europe since 1800* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007) in *Gastronomica* vol. 9 no.2 (Spring 2009) pp. 104-105

Katarzyna J. Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity* (London: Reaktion Books 2007) in *Food & Foodways*, 2007

Ferran Adrià, Juli Soler, and Albert Adrià, *El Bulli 1998-2002* (Barcelona : El Bulli books, 2002) in *Food, Culture & Society*, vol. 7 no. 2 (fall 2007) pp. 160-162

Miguel Sanchez Romera, *La Cocina de los Sentidos* (Barcelona, Planeta 2001) in *Gastronomica* vol.3 no.1 (Winter 2003) pp. 110-11

## **INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS**

“Food as a gateway to cultural exchanges”, Conference: Food and Culture Programs: Exploring and Designing Brands, Chicago Expo, July 18 2009

“La transmission des valeurs culinaires, une préoccupation citoyenne” Symposium Food Culture, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, July 2, 2009

“Food, Film, and Masculinity”, Hohenheim University, Stuttgart, June 24, 2009

“Shared Meals and Other Pleasurable Symptoms”, Presidential Address, ASFS Annual Conference, Penn State University, May 30, 2009

“God’s Diets: The Bible as Eating Guide”, ASFS Annual Conference, Penn State University, May 30, 2009

“Roundtable: Food as Intangible Cultural Heritage” ASFS Annual Conference, Penn State University, May

29, 2009

“Food, Politics, and Media in Europe & the US: Research and Pedagogy Aspects”, University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, European Union Center & Department of Advertising, April 1, 2009

“Gastropolis: Food and New York City” Panel Discussion, New York University, March 13, 2009

“China’s Economy on the Brink: A Future Food Superpower?” Conference “Dumpling and Dynasties: The Evolution of Modern Chinese Cuisine”, New York University, November 14, 2008

“The Mediated Meal’ in the series of conferences and events “Feeding Frenzy”, New York University, September 27, 2008

“The Discovery of the Mediterranean Diet: Food, Culture and Media in Contemporary Italy”, Conference: “Exploring the Mediterranean Diet in Italy: Food, Culture and Education”, Chicago Navy Pier, September 20, 2008

“Le goût et le cerveau”, Congrès Cultures et Saveurs d’Europe, Strasbourg, July 10 2008

“La redécouverte des identités culinaires en Italie”, Congrès Cultures et Saveurs d’Europe, Strasbourg, July 9 2008

“Food, Identity, and Cultural Rights”, Hohenheim University, Stuttgart, June 30 2008

“Marketing identities: Geographical indications between Elitism and Local Politics” Presidential Address at the 2008 ASFS Conference in New Orleans, June 6, 2008

“Bittersweet flavors: Sicilian food from the page to the screen”, Princeton University, Department of French and Italian, March 27, 2008

“The Future of Italian Food: Slow Food, Cultural Rights and Intellectual Property”, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Italian Dept. March 24, 2008

“The Power of the Pen: The Role of the Editor in Writings on Food”, Panel at the Fales Library, New York University, March 13, 2008

“Sicilian Food in Film and Literature”, A Taste of Sicily Symposium, Boston University, February 23, 2008

“Le rapport entre traditions gastronomique et identités locales et nationales en Europe”, Council of Europe, Europalia Festival, Bruxelles, Belgium, January 18, 2008

“Evoluzioni e tendenze della cucina Italiana”, Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Luxembourg and Council of Europe, Librerie Altrimenti, Luxembourg, January 17, 2008

“Black men in Fat Drag: Film, Food, and Race in Contemporary American Culture”, Conference “SEX/CHANGES: Historical Transformations of Sex, Gender, and Sexualities”, Brown University, Providence, RI, November 2-3, 2007

“The Mediterranean Diet in America: Translation and Marketing”, Conference on “Italy and the Mediterranean Diet: Food Culture, Nutrition, and the Question of Quality”, Casa Italiana, New York

University, October 19, 2007

“Contemporary Food and Media in Italy”, College of Communications, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, September 13, 2007

“A Plea For Pleasure” Presidential Address at the 2007 ASFS Conference in Victoria, British Columbia, June 2, 2007

“Promotion touristique et gastronomie: entre tradition et avant garde, l'exemple de New-York” (Tourism and gastronomy, between traditions and avant-garde: the New York case), Colloque Jacques Cartier: Gastronomie et rayonnement touristique, Université Lyon 2, Lyon France, December 5-6, 2006

“From Here to There: The Chains and Systems of Food”, Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, NYU, New York NY, October 19th 2006.

“Post-revolutionary Chowhounds: Food, Pleasure, and the Italian Left”, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006

“Exporting the Mediterranean Identity: Gambero Rosso, Slow Food and the New Italian Food Scene”, Third Annual Robert Dombroski Italian Conference, University of Connecticut at Storrs, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2006

“Jams, Juice, and Forbidden Fruits: Edible Black Masculinities in US pop culture”, ASFS Conference, Boston University, June 7-11, 2006

“Italian Regionalism and its Role in Food Culture and Identity”, The Mediterranean Diet: Fact and Fiction, NYU La Pietra, Firenze, Italy, May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006

“Futurist Dinners”, Williams College, Williams MA, March 4th 2006

“Identity and Diversity in the Culinary Cultures of Europe”, Council of Europe panel, Gourmet Voice Festival, Cannes, France, January 28<sup>th</sup> 2006

“The Cultural Impact and Implication on the American Table of Las Vegas and the Las Vegas/New York Connection”, Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, NYU, New York NY, June 15th 2005.

“Quilting the Empty Body: Lacan and the Mirror”, ASFS Conference, Portland OR, June 9-12, 2005

“Soul Food and the Black Female Body”, CAAR (Collegium for African American Research) Conference, Tours April 21-24, 2005

“Food Culture in Italy”, NYU Casa Italiana, November 9, 2004

“Bootylicious: food and representations of the female body in contemporary black Pop Culture”, ASFS Conference, Culinary Institute of America at Hyde Park, NY, June 10-13, 2004

“Il Turismo Enogastronomico” (Food and Wine Tourism), Press Forum, BITEG - International Food and Wine Tourism Convention), Riva del Garda, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2004

“Food and Masculinity in Health Magazines” ASFS Conference, Austin TX, June 12-15 2003

“Savoring signs: toward a semiotics of food”, American Philosophers' Association Conference, 24-26 April

2003, Cleveland OH

“Tasty utopias: Food and Politics in Science Fiction”, ASFS Conference, 14-16 June 2002, Loyola University, Chicago IL (under review for Food and Foodways)

“Hungry Engrams: Food and non-representative Memory”, Food and Philosophy Conference “Know Thyself: Food and the Human Condition”, Mississippi State University, Starkville MS, 5-6 April 2002,

“Of Breasts and Beasts: vampires and infants”, ASFS Conference, 7-10 June 2001, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis MN

### LANGUAGE SKILLS

Italian (native speaker)  
English (fluent)  
French (fluent)  
Spanish (fluent)

Chinese (good)  
Japanese (elementary)  
Portuguese (elementary)  
German (elementary)

### IN THE MEDIA

Elisabeth Cadot/Jean-Michel Bos, Carrefour, Deutsche Welle July 24, 2009, <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4513580,00.html>

Michael Greenberg, “Gastropolis”, Times Literary Supplement, March 13, 2009

Lulu Lafiandra, Federico Fiorentini, “La dieta mediterranea è in cerca di nuova linfa vitale nel marketing”, Markup, February 9, 2009

“The Bookshelf”, James Beard Foundations Notes, p. 3, February-March 2009

Canal U –Colloques et Conférences Télé - Le Goût et le cerveau, July 11 2008  
<http://www.canalc2.tv/video.asp?idVideo=7890>

Canal U –Colloques et Conférences Télé - La redécouverte des identités culinaires en Italie, July 10 2008,  
<http://www.canalc2.tv/video.asp?idVideo=7798>

Pascale Remy, “En quête de légitimité” *Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace* N°205 - Samedi 14 Juin 2008

David Leveille, “L’Espresso”, *interview for PRI’s The World Radio Show*, February 27, 2008

Samuel Hoste, “L’Europe se met a table”, *La tribune de Bruxelles*, Belgium, 24-30 January 2008

“Experts Discuss the Way Food Is Produced and Distributed”, *NYU Today*, November 27, 2006, p. 4

Rachel Black, “SAFN at the Association for the Study of Food and Society Conference”, *Anthropology News*, October 2007, p. 61

Angela M. Piga. "Placere, nutrizione e buona cucina" *L'Avanti* Italy

Susan Tax Freeman, "Culturing Food", in *Gastronomica*, vol. 6 no 4 (2006) pp. 99-107

Sarach Hack, "Future pays Dodd a visit", in *Williams News*, March 2006

Annette Frisch "Eigentlich gehe ich nicht gerne einkaufen", in *Morgemacher*, Germany, February 2006, p. 2

"Europa da leggere" in *Europa Informa* Italy, November 30 2005, pp. 4

Maria Paola Gianin, "Torna la cerimonia della Spada" in *Cronache Cittadine* Italy, June 12, 2005, p 6

Eleine, Showalter, "My Dinner with Derrida", in *The American Prospect* ([www.prospect.org](http://www.prospect.org)), January 1, 2002



