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Food Network Fallout: Why There Are Labor Shortages in Restaurant Kitchens

Jennifer M. Dillon

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

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FOOD NETWORK FALLOUT

by

JENNIFER M. DILLON

A master’s thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2018
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Jennifer M. Dillon

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

__________________________
Date

Barbara Katz-Rothman
Thesis Advisor

__________________________
Date

Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis
Executive Officer

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
ABSTRACT

Food Network Fallout: Why there are labor shortages in restaurant kitchens

by

Jennifer M. Dillon

Advisor: Barbara Katz-Rothman

There is a desperate shortage of line cooks and kitchen staff in restaurants all over the world. In New York City, kitchens are running with as little as 50% of staff capacity, due to a lack of people, qualified (defined as certified or skilled) or not, willing to work in restaurant kitchens, so chefs are forced to simplify their menus. I design workforce development programs for homeless men in New York City, 70% of whom have an incarceration background. On paper, the culinary field seems like the perfect match for the population that I serve; there is a huge demand, restaurants do not generally conduct background checks, a living wage is obtainable, and the industry has already established career pathways.

Despite all of these factors, particularly the sheer number of available jobs in New York City, one of the food capitals of the world, the culinary field has not been able to move the needle on filling the bevy of open positions. There are a number of questions to explore here, and one of the most pressing is: why, in an economy as precarious as this one, are these particular jobs remaining empty when they pay a living wage? What is causing the disconnect between a population in need of jobs and jobs in need of a population?
In this thesis, I argue that the labor disconnect will directly impact both haute cuisine and middle class cuisine. Middle class cuisine is defined here as restaurants that incorporate some elements of haute cuisine, but whose menus are specifically priced for middle class consumption. For haute cuisine in particular, what does food as art look like when the artist has no apprentices?

Finally, how much is the source of the labor shortage due to what I call the Food Network fallout? Has the televising of kitchens, which are in no way representative of actual restaurant kitchens, so twisted the expectations of students graduating from both workforce development programs and from full-time from culinary schools that they are unwilling to do the backbreaking labor of kitchen restaurant work?
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INTRODUCTION

There is a desperate shortage of line cooks and kitchen staff in restaurants in urban centers all over the world. In New York City kitchens are running with as little as 50% of staff capacity so chefs are forced to change their menus, in many cases simplifying them due to a lack of people qualified (defined by certified or skilled) or not, willing to work in a kitchen. This 50% capacity is a remarkable statistic from a workforce development standpoint. We, in workforce development, attempt to design education and training programs around market demands so that people who are out of work can get back to work. Programs usually target not only job sectors that have a current need, but those that will have either a continuing or growing need, indicating that such sectors will offer, at the very least, stable long-term employment. I design programs for homeless men in New York City, 70% of who have an incarceration background of some kind. As such, I only work within sectors and with employer partners that are ‘felon friendly,’ where the background of my students will not impede them in not only getting a job, but also moving up established career pathways. On paper the culinary field seems like the perfect match for the population that I serve; there is a huge demand, restaurants do not generally conduct or make employment decisions based on background checks, one can make a living wage and there are established career pathways within the culinary industry. Despite all of these factors, and despite the fact that there are open jobs in New York City, one of the food capitals of the world, the culinary field has not been able to move the needle on filling the bevy of open positions. There are a number of questions to explore here, and one of the most pressing is: why, in an economy as precarious as this one, are these particular jobs remaining empty when they pay a decent wage? What is causing the disconnect between a population in need of jobs
and jobs in need of a population?

What does this now years long labor shortage mean for both haute cuisine and middle class cuisine (defined here as restaurants that may or may not have haute cuisine elements, but are specifically priced for middle class consumption)? Will labor, or lack thereof, cause both of these cuisines to change in unexpected ways? For haute cuisine in particular, what does food as art look like when the artist has no apprentices? This question is especially salient today now that food has stepped in as an art, an art that most people can participate in by if not eating haute cuisine, then by watching shows about haute cuisine and in some cases making haute cuisine at home. Food has become a marker of culture. For restaurants serving middle class cuisine, how do they change the expectations of their guests to match their maximum labor output?

I propose that much of this labor shortage is due to what I call the Food Network Fallout: the televising of kitchens, which are in no way representative of actual restaurant kitchens, has so twisted the expectations of students graduating from both workforce development programs and from full-time from culinary schools that they are unwilling to do the backbreaking labor of kitchen restaurant work. Additionally, there are now many ways to earn a living in the food world that do not include working in a restaurant kitchen. A chef I recently met with suggested that those who used to cook can now just take pictures of the results of cooking and make a living on Instagram, or blog about it, and they are still in effect participating in the culture of food without having to engage in the back-breaking labor. I would argue that the Instagramers and bloggers are in fact more than just participating; they are ‘tastemaking,’ a role that was traditionally filled by experts, chefs and food writers, who were, unlike the new tastemakers, legitimized as experts by their place of employment.

Is the manual labor pool rejecting the work in kitchens in favor of other more lucrative
and/or less physically demanding workforce sectors? Is this phenomenon also a result of the crackdown on restaurants, forcing them to hire only those people (for both front and back of house) who can prove legal status in the United States? In the past New York City restaurants typically relied on undocumented immigrants for 40% of their staffing needs. This precarious situation simultaneously supported restaurants and immigrant communities, but also subjected some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers to horrid workplace practices. Beginning around 2009 the restaurant industry’s employment practices underwent a huge crackdown by the federal government, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in particular, and restaurants were subject to audit and fines for the first time. Once the crackdowns began, restaurants were forced to let go of any staff who could not provide work authorization paperwork, or pay a fine. Once that process was finished, restaurants found themselves having a difficult time filling those low wage/low skill positions. Long gone were the days of the no-risk practice of paying employees cash under the table.

Due to the higher level of skill necessary in producing haute cuisine food, or food with elements of haute cuisine, this kitchen labor shortage poses a particular problem for restaurants serving labor-intensive dishes. This phenomenon has sparked the creation of a flurry of culinary training programs throughout the world and in New York City, targeting marginalized populations in an attempt to address the haute cuisine conundrum. The results of the culinary training programs are both spotty as well as morally murky, and have unwittingly or not, perpetuated the long classist history of cook versus chef, especially in regard to the haute cuisine cook versus the middle-class restaurant cook. This chapter will focus on the history of restaurant labor in France as haute cuisine began to emerge and in New York City as its unique restaurant culture began to take shape. The second chapter will focus on training programs and the third

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will explore how haute cuisine has not only affected nearly all restaurant cuisine, but also the demands that it has placed on a shrinking labor pool.
Chapter 1: Where did Haute Cuisine Come From?

Haute cuisine has always been about the display of food, often of form over function, and at times, even so much so that the ‘food’ itself wasn’t meant to be eaten, but rather admired. While it is generally agreed that modern haute cuisine as we know it started around the 1750’s, largely in the French courts, one could argue that haute cuisine has existed since at least the Middle Ages. This is particularly true if one is using a definition of haute cuisine as the cuisine of a society that has a relationship to the elites of that society. As Sidney Mintz argues, a society must first have a cuisine to then have an haute cuisine. Haute cuisine does not just refer to the food, but also to the cooks, ingredients and methods used to make it.  

Just what would haute cuisine have looked like in the middle ages? For a feast it would not have been uncommon for a roasted swan or peacock to have been presented whole with its skin and feathers sewn back on. Brightness and color of dishes were also important and cooks often dyed sauces and used gold and silver leaf in cooking.

Figure 1: Painting of a 16th or 17th century Boyar Wedding Feast by Makovsky.
Krishnendu Ray also discusses the importance of what haute cuisine looked like even in medieval times.

In *Savoring the Past* Wheaton notes that, in the edible allegorical tableaus that were medieval banquets, visual effects, rarity of ingredients, opulence, and sequence of events were more important than the dishes, ingredients, preparation techniques, or flavors. “Indeed, flavor might even be compromised,” adds Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “for the sake of appearance. These were monumental events, viewed from a distance by crowds of people over many hours.”

The food would have been heavily spiced with pepper, cloves, galanga, cardamom, cinnamon, cumin, nutmeg, ginger and more. The word ‘spices’ in the middle ages refers specifically to exotic substances imported from abroad, pink peppercorns; not sage. Further ‘spices’ were all thought to have medicinal value in addition to adding flavor. The meal would have been balanced in terms of pungent, sweet and sour (too sour for modern sensibility) and in all likelihood would have contained several fresh meats ranging from beef (boiled), goose, peacock, swan, crane, pork (roasted), lamb (roasted), partridge, venison, boar. Had the meal been prepared during lent then seafood would have been substituted in for the protein part of the meal. Vegetable dishes would have been cooked in salt and oil, butter or fat, and there would have been fruits, some were to be eaten at the very beginning of the meal while others at the end. There would have also been bread, as well as copious amounts of wine and beer; water was still not generally safe to drink.

During the Middle Ages we begin to see the ‘art of cooking’ being written down. Recipe collections, such as the famous *Le Viandier of Taillevent*, were available as early as 1392. This collection was written by a working chef, Guillaume Tirel and was presumably intended as a
resource for other cooks also working for the nobility.\textsuperscript{11} This intention of a conversation with other chefs via dissemination of technique through the written word underlines the emerging importance of the methods used in cooking. \textit{Le Viander} was reprinted twenty-three times between 1486 and 1615 by thirteen different publishers. Editors of the publications did not hesitate to update the recipe collection, demonstrating that the content of \textit{Le Viander} certainly changed over time, reflecting both changing tastes and techniques.\textsuperscript{12}

Though haute cuisine was beginning to become codified in the 1600’s, it was not until the mid-1700s that haute cuisine as we know it today took shape. As Amy Trubeck discusses, while chefs were largely still the employees of the nobility, they were producing cookbooks that laid down the principles of haute cuisine:

During the 1700s the recipe and the cookbook took on their now familiar characteristics, and tremendous continuity can be seen in the structure and content of the cookbooks on French haute cuisine throughout the next 250 years. Above all, with the increased use of the written word to transmit culinary knowledge, the cuisine becomes less permeable to change. A recipe exists as part of a permanent record, rather than as part of an oral tradition passed from chef to apprentice. The principles articulated in the cookbooks on French haute cuisine published since 1750 are still taught as the building blocks of haute cuisine and have persisted through the present day as the core of the professional culinary discourse and practice.\textsuperscript{13}

Not only are the principles used in cooking rooted in this time and practice, but so too is the language that was used both in cooking and on menus for the next two centuries. With the rise of the middle class in New York City, in the late 1870s and 1880s, this practice eventually led to a backlash against French cuisine. However, despite the backlash, even today French cuisine is
often still thought of as the penultimate cuisine around the world and its influence on the world of cooking and restaurants cannot be denied nor underestimated. This codification of cuisine allowed the French haute cuisine to be disseminated as the ‘best’ cuisine in the world, both through cookbooks and through the export of the French chef as a product onto itself. French chefs went abroad to work in houses of nobility in other European countries as well as in the emerging taverns, inns, and restaurants in urban centers.

Long before the complete emergence of the contemporary restaurant, there were ways to get a meal outside of the home or to buy cooked food to consume at home, such as street kitchens and inns/taverns which have a long history of providing meals for travelers. These places offered no choices, serving one meal, often at set times. You either ate it or you didn’t. These meals ranged dramatically, in both content but quality, but would certainly not fall into the category of haute cuisine. London serves as the exception. Higher class taverns/establishments sprung up in the 1800’s to serve full dinners accompanied by alcohol to the gentlemen of the aristocracy who served in Parliament and often only had small apartments in the city so needed places to eat. In contrast, the French aristocracy had large private homes (hôtels) near the palaces both in Paris and in Versailles for which they employed private chefs (maîtres d’hôtel and cuisiniers) so this out-of-home dining model was unnecessary. This practice too was a way to emulate the culinary extravagance for which the French court was world-famous. It was in these homes where much of early French haute cuisine was tested. Then a little thing called the French Revolution took place.

**The Beginning of the Battle of Cooks Versus Chefs**

While restaurants were in fact emerging in Paris before the revolution began in 1789, especially as places for the populace to eat ‘exotic’ food, it was really the revolution that helped
widely disseminate French chefs. Many chefs found themselves without places to work after their employers had been guillotined or had fled abroad. Some chefs (defined here as those who cooked and ran the kitchens for the aristocracy and thus were required to be able to produce food at a quality that also implied a certain skill set) set up businesses for themselves both in France and abroad. Others went to go work for the aristocracy in other countries, but many chefs set up their own businesses and the high-quality food they cooked was now available for people outside of the aristocracy, allowing haute cuisine to leave the court and enter into society at large.

Thus the revolution, far from hampering culinary creativity or marking a step down from the heights of eighteenth-century cuisine, actually effected a transfer of the art of cooking for the aristocracy to the bourgeoisie and to some extent to the working class as well, by way of an institution-the restaurant-born of the demise of the old guilds. 15

While the guilds were functioning in pre-revolution France, and were in fact permanently dissolved after the revolution, many of the practices of the guild continued to affect haute cuisine and the hierarchal structure of kitchens for centuries to come. The French culinary guilds had divided cooking responsibilities into categories, restricting the types of food that could be cooked by someone with those distinctions. These restrictions or specialization were both for the members of the guild to be able to argue they were artisans (specialized labor) and not manual (general) labor, as well as a method of control of the labor by the guilds. Rising through the guild ranks to become a Master Cook (artisan) could leverage someone out of the lower classes and into the bourgeoisie because Master Cooks would not be working with their hands but would rather be in charge of a staff that did work with their hands. They would be in many ways parallel to an executive chef or the head chef of a catering company.

What these specializations within the culinary world meant was that each cook in a
kitchen was working on a piece of a larger whole, and it took the combined efforts of all cooks to create a finished product (a feast). A team of specialized cooks consisting of a Maître Queux (chef), Cuisinier (cook), Portechappes (master cook, feast finisher) and Traiteur (treats, this could be both sweet and savory) was necessary to complete one meal/feast for a large group of aristocrats. These meals would have been multi-course hours-long affairs, much closer to feasts than what we would consider a meal today. In essence the chef and his labor became specialized, pushing him further away from the unskilled labor class and closer to the skilled artisan class. Other artisans of the time were skilled and often salaried workers who still worked with their hands, producing anything from woodwork to fine leather goods. Master artisans of all kinds, not just culinary ones, would no longer be working with their hands and could have been then considered part of the bourgeoisie. Regardless, one could not be considered an artisan without membership to a guild. Further, the guilds controlled the labor force via the apprenticeship system which theoretically maintained quality standards, and the guild structure and support lent authority to people working in the industry as it designated them as specialized labor.

The guild system did not apply to those cooking for the aristocracy in royal kitchens as royal kitchens had separate internal hierarchies. This means that within France there was a two-tier system: cooks (guild/public) and chefs (royal/private).

The long-term existence of a dual set of work environments for those in the cooking trade, with the courtly sphere primarily inventing “fancy” food and the guild/public sphere producing “everyday” food, had tremendous implications for this labor force. By 1800 a precedent existed for the differentiation within the trade between varieties of production.

The split between the guild chefs and the royal chefs was also echoed among their apprentices.
The young men who sought guild sponsored culinary apprenticeships largely did not come from Paris, but rather from the countryside, and at this time, rural did in general equal poorer. Apprentices had to be registered with the guild and Guild Master Cooks were only allowed to have a certain number of apprentices at one time. This was in part because Guild Masters were theoretically passing their expertise and training to the apprentices and it was thought that a Master could only train so many apprentices effectively at the same time. However, even then, the culinary business had its ebbs and flows and Guild Masters would find themselves short of enough official apprenticeship labor to fill their orders and would fill this labor gap with informal apprentices (illegal labor, usually domestic servants in private households).

Overall, the evidence from the police reports suggests that guilds relied on both formal and informal apprentices, creating a two-tiered system in which the former had access to greater job security, benefits, training, and legal recourse, while the latter merely earned a daily wage with no promise of further employment or general culinary training. This is an early parallel of the use of illegal/undocumented labor in New York kitchens throughout its entire culinary history. Presumably, people working in both tiers, official apprentices and 'illegal apprentices' performed similar tasks and were in possession of a certain level of cooking competency and skill, but only official apprentices had access to legal rights of both culinary education and protection.

The royal households also provided another tier of cooks working outside of the guild system. Royal households trained young cooks, but because these cooks were not required to register with any official entity, the data of where they came from (urban centers versus countryside) does not exist. It would be interesting to know how many people that entered the royal households versus the guilds came from ‘cooking’ families and how much of these labor

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pools were migrant labor. Knowing this would give us a sense of whether or not the royal households were also a way out of poverty for all or just those already connected to royal households, it would give us a sense of just how classed the different tiers of cooks were in France. We do know that these young cooks were trained specifically in cooking tasks that catered to the expectations of the social elites such as pastry making, sugar sculpture and large-scale cooking, and as a result possessed the skills necessary for the production of haute cuisine. These royal cooks could apply to the guild if they wished and skip the apprenticeship and the fees if they presented a letter from their employers. Unlike the apprentices working their way through the guild system, and certainly those outside the guild system, these cooks of royal houses never had to prove that they could in fact cook; their level of culinary expertise was assumed through their employment and validated by the class of people they cooked for. The split between chefs with benefits and cooks without, as well as the split between cooks who learn to be chefs by working their way up through the kitchen hierarchy compared to those who are assumed to have talent based on their educational pedigrees, are still significant splits that exist today.

While it is true that the guilds fell apart during the French Revolution in the 1790s, never to be resurrected, the apprenticeship stage of culinary training remained still operates to a certain degree today. Almost all modern culinary programs have an intern/externship component that functions as the beginning of an apprenticeship, and even chefs graduating with a culinary degree are expected to work their way up in the kitchens for which they are hired. Some may start as a cook/line cook and work their way to Garde Manger (Pantry/Butcher), Sous Chef, and then Chef de Cuisine. The difference for cooks who are hired without a formal culinary degree is that they must start a few rungs farther down the ladder, as a dishwasher or prep cook and work
their way up to line cook; not many people in this labor pool are in fact ever promoted further in the kitchen hierarchy. It is still the case that the more powerful positions in restaurants are held by the white male worker, and some of this is from the culinary school barrier where many restaurateurs want their chefs to have the prestige of a degree, and some of this lack of promotion may be more symptomatic of racism and classism.

Workers of color are concentrated in the lower-level busser and kitchen positions in fine-dining restaurants, and overall in segments of the industry in which earnings are lower. A canvass of 133 fine-dining establishments found that 81% of management and 78% of higher-level non-management positions such as captain, manager, and bartender are occupied by white workers, a disproportionate amount of these male. Mobility for workers of color is limited; of workers that have been denied a promotion, 28% cited race as the primary reason for their lack of opportunities. Overall, after adjusting for education and language proficiency, workers of color receive 56% lower earnings when compared to equally qualified white workers. 23

Prestige for chefs and cooks lies in the quality of the restaurant they work at, which often is connected to how much cultural capital the chef of that restaurant possesses. Working at Le Bernadin under Eric Rupert carries far more prestige than working for a 'lesser chef’ in possession of fewer, if any, Michelin stars. This is the contemporary version of the assumption of skills amassed in royal kitchens.

The Introduction of the Kitchen Brigade System

While restaurants were emerging throughout the nineteenth century, it was really towards the end of that century due to developments in rapid means of transportation and the ability of
the middle class’s ability to travel around Europe in large numbers that a demand for eating well away from the home blossomed. This traveling craze gave rise to luxury hotels, and accompanying restaurants, to accommodate this new tourist trade.

One of the pioneers of this new type of hotel was Cesar Ritz, a Swiss developer who formed a partnership with one of the leading French chefs of the day, Auguste Escoffier. Their first joint venture was the Grand Hotel of Monte Carlo. After that came the Savoy of London, a city noted for fine hotels since the 1820s. After making the Savoy one of the best hotels in the world, the pair opened another hotel in London, the Cecil, where Escoffier prepared his famed “Epicurean dinner,” a French meal that was served to hundreds of people simultaneously in thirty-seven cities across Europe. Following Escoffier’s lead, French chefs spread out across the continent, and the profession of cook became known as one of the most remunerative if difficult of the manual trades.24

Auguste Escoffier’s work is still found on the syllabuses of culinary schools, especially his *Le Guide Culinaire*, but most lasting was his reorganization of the kitchen. When Auguste Escoffier was the chef de cuisine at the Savoy from 1890-1898, he created a kitchen system called the kitchen brigade system. This system was similar to the guild system in spirit but Escoffier’s system broke down the tasks of the kitchen to such a degree that specialization was no longer skilled. Whereas the specialization of cooks in the guild system meant they were culinary experts of part of the larger feast (e.g. the rotisserie chef would only roast meat in this fashion, but would be responsible for the roasting of all of the meats), but in Escoffier’s system, a cook would just cook one piece of meat for one dinner, rather than having the responsibility of roasting all the meat for all the diners. Given the timing and place of the development of Escoffier’s system, there is little doubt that he was heavily influenced by the division of labor popularized during the
Industrial Revolution.

The change in the way food was produced, essentially a breakdown of labor into a series of specific tasks (hence the different stations with different responsibilities –saucier, rotisseur, patissier), allowed for a more expedient and intensive process. The relationship between the individual cook and the craft of cooking was transformed: no single person created the final product; rather, everyone was part of a team.25

The roles in the kitchen would have been broken down into the following ways. The chef de cuisine was in charge of the entire kitchen and responsible for everything from designing menus to purchasing food to directing everything that happened in the kitchen. He or she would ultimately have been held responsible for the quality of the food that emerged from their kitchen. The sous chef de cuisine was the chef de cuisine’s right-hand person. He or she would be on the line (in the kitchen) with the other chefs, but when the chef de cuisine was not present, he or she acted in the chef de cuisine’s place. The Chef de partie would have come next in the hierarchy, and there would be several of these in each kitchen. A chef de partie was in charge of a particular station (e.g. soup, salad, fish.) in the kitchen. Each chef de partie might have had one or more cuisiniers, commis or apprentices working directly under him or her. The Cuisiniers were cooks, not yet chefs and they were responsible for preparing specific dishes at a specific station. Commis were junior cooks who also worked a specific station, but they were generally responsible for taking care of the equipment on that station and they reported directly to the chef de partie. Finally, there would have been apprentices who would eventually become commis, but they were usually gaining much needed work experience and helped with cleaning and prep work and washing dishes. The shift that this caused was that cooks now produced a part of a person’s meal, only the salad or the fish, requiring several chefs/cuisinier’s labor to complete one
person’s meal. Cooks became a cog in a much larger machine rather than a possessor of a larger specialized skill like roasting or baking. The goal here was efficiency of production for the consumer.

Escoffier’s is the system that is still in place in kitchens today, though most kitchens do not have the space or budget to accommodate Escoffier’s full kitchen brigade (up to 15-25 chefs/cooks per kitchen) and over time the American kitchen has stripped down the full brigade to the following positions. The Executive Chef (formerly known as the Chef de Cuisine) is still responsible for designing menus and recipes to securing food purveyors/purchasing food to directing everything that goes on in the kitchen. Sous Chefs have maintained the same responsibilities. Cooks today are a combination of Cuisiner and Chef de Partie, although the cook categories are still somewhat broken down by area, such as fry, prep, line. The prep cooks now function as both the apprentice (in most cases) and the commis. The Garde Manger, the butcher, pantry, and pastry positions exist in some very large high-end restaurants. While neither Cesar Ritz nor Auguste Escoffier ever made it to New York City, both luxury hotels and French chefs perpetuating the notion of French cuisine as the penultimate cuisine of the world, did. These concepts permeated so strongly that they became something that the middle class in New York City rebelled against.
**New York City's Restaurant Kitchen History**

Nearly from the beginning of New York City’s restaurant history there was a split in the development of restaurants driven by the different needs of the social classes. In the beginning of the nineteenth century most New Yorkers lived close enough to where they worked to go home for a midday meal. After around 1820, this was no longer true for lower- and middle-class working New Yorkers (ranging from business men to shop keepers) who began needing and seeking dining options near their work, which was mostly downtown, and not near their homes in ‘upper Manhattan,’ which at this point was somewhere between Houston and 14th Street. Further, many of these workers were living in hotel rooms, boarding houses or apartments (tenement flats) that did not have cooking facilities.26 For the worker looking for a midday meal there was a proliferation of Oyster Houses that were cheap, but offered little else on the menu. While the menus of Oyster Houses were limited, they did offer entrepreneurship opportunities for immigrants and especially for African Americans. Thomas Downing was considered the king of oysters and was able to amass himself a great fortune by using the skills that he learned from his freed black parents on their oyster farm in Virginia. For 30 years, his Oyster House on Broad Street was perhaps the most famous in New York City.27

By the 1870s sixpenny restaurants arose to feed the business men efficiently, offering no frills, and in some ways acting as the very antithesis to fine dining establishments. As Cindy Lobel so vividly describes them:

Sixpenny restaurants shared a similar arrangement to each other, a template followed by other kinds of New York restaurants: a large, rectangular room with tables for four arranged in long aisles. In, some cases, the tables were booths or ‘boxes” that lined the sides of the room, again separated by a long aisle. Some eating houses also had counters...
that ran the length of the room. Waiters, usually of Irish descent or African American, stood along the aisles, ready to take the orders of hungry and hurried patrons. In place of a printed menu, a ‘large white placard,” or chalkboard outside the door displayed meal options and prices- sixpence for a small steak, three cents for a cup of coffee-or waiters called them out. After taking orders for standard offerings like roast beef, boiled mutton, lamb or fish, these servers shouted them to the runners who conveyed them to the kitchen. The runners then delivered the pre-prepared meals in a flash to diners who quickly bolted them down, paid their bill, and left within thirty minutes of their arrival.28

Figure 2: East-Side Five-Cent Restaurant.29

Following the rising demand, lunch counters, chop houses (a slower version of the sixpenny, with a slightly larger menu), and foreign restaurants popped up. Chinese restaurants were some
of the first restaurants serving foreign food of note within New York City. In 1900, *The Harper's Weekly* wrote about the dining experience in a Chinese restaurant:

> By climbing Park Street into Chinatown, we cross two whole continents within three minutes, from Italy to China, Rome to Canton. Here is the greatest change of all. The vegetable again predominates, but of the tastier varieties—delicately steamed rice, Chinese potatoes, barley sprouts, young onions, and celery, with chopped chicken and young pig covered over with mushrooms and dashed with burnt-bean sauce. Here again is alcohol eschewed, tobacco an acquired taste, coffee unknown, and tea everywhere on every occasion. The Chinaman hates the olives of the Syrian, the macaroni of the Italian, and the strong liquor of the Russian, but he is addicted to a habit which all others regard as a criminal taste—he smokes opium, and in consequence get along on one meal a day, while the Syrian has three, and the Russian four. Steam-cookery predominates, and spiced and aromatic fruits, nuts, and herbs, like lychee and ginger give piquancy to the meal, for opium blunts the taste and high seasoning is imperative. Probably no other foreign element in the metropolitan medley imports as many varieties of food products as do the Chinese. Dried meats come in great barrels and crates, with every variety of from whole suckling pigs, to reed-birds geese, and fresh-water fish. The catalogue is endless, and shows what sparing but dainty eaters the Chinese are. After abundance of rice hunger is appeased, and whatever the purse affords after that is in the nature of a luxury.
While there is a great deal to discuss in *The Harper's Weekly* quote above, not the least of which are the multiple degrees and methods of racism, but what I want to focus on is the actual description of the food: “The vegetable again predominates, but of the tastier varieties—delicately steamed rice, Chinese potatoes, barley sprouts, young onions, and celery, with chopped chicken and young pig covered over with mushrooms and dashed with burnt-bean sauce... Steam-cookery predominates, and spiced and aromatic fruits, nuts, and herbs, like lychee and ginger give piquancy to the meal...” Had this not been embedded in such a deeply racist paragraph, it would have been not only fair to the food through description, but a remarkable demonstration of the consistency in food writing over the last 150 years, how few ways there actually are to describe food.
Women and Early New York Restaurants

Women were as limited in the number of establishments that they could eat in unescorted. They were also limited in the places that they could work, and in general, the food jobs that were available for women were not as profitable or in ‘respectable’ establishments, which is to say there was a stark labor inequality between men and women, which also continues in today’s New York City restaurants.

The typical portrait is a white man working in a fine dining restaurant, earning $16-$22 an hour in tips. In fact, 66 percent of the almost six million tipped workers in America are women; a large majority work at casual restaurants like the Olive Garden, Applebee's and IHOP. Tipped workers median wage including tips is $9.08 an hour: these women suffer three times the poverty rate of the rest of the U.S. workforce and use food stamps at double the rate of the rest of the U.S. workforce.33

While women were certainly workers participating in the food culture of New York City, in early New York City the roles available ranged from 'hot-corn girls' and huckstering to serving in coffee houses and 'risqué' concert halls.34 Huckstering was essentially a form of welfare work. The Public Food Markets at this time were only open from 6 am to 2 pm and butchers were open only until 1pm, but the market was generally considered ‘done’ by 10am. In a pre-refrigeration New York City, the earlier in the day one bought food, the better quality it was, the more variety a person had to choose from, and one paid for these privileges. The later in the day, the food quality depreciated and it became cheaper. The working poor obviously couldn't make it to the market during these hours and relied on doing the bulk of their shopping on Saturdays and buying the rest of their food during the week from ‘husksters’. Meaning that food inequality existed not only along gender lines in the young New York City, but also along class lines, the
poorer a person was, the less access to both fresh foods.\textsuperscript{35} Hot corn girls literally sold hot corn on the street thus limiting not only the scope of their income, but potentially putting them in danger of assault. As Lobel points out, "… street peddling was among the most degraded occupations and a symbol of female poverty in the early national city."\textsuperscript{36}

As for places to eat, almost none of the fine dining restaurants, either in or independent of hotels, would allow unaccompanied women to dine, and later as the rules relaxed, women were required to eat in separate dining rooms.\textsuperscript{37} Coffee and cake saloons, ice cream parlors, and lunchrooms were some of the only eating spots that were open to unescorted women, and then eventually restaurants opened up in department stores, aimed specifically at profiting from the growing number of women looking to eat out while shopping. Macy’s opened their restaurant on the second floor of their flagship department store in 1881.

**Who Was (and is) Cooking Where?**

The rising demands of the middle class for places to eat their mid-day meal at, as well as the rising demand of places that unescorted women could eat at gave rise to a proliferation of restaurants. The scale of restaurant growth in New York City was unprecedented:

A tourist guide to the city published in 1847 estimated that there were about one hundred restaurants in New York, plus the "Oyster Houses and Cellars, which are numerous in all quarters of the city." And by the 1860's, Junis Browne claimed that Gotham had five thousand to six thousand different restaurants.\textsuperscript{38}

No, you did not read that wrong: in a mere 15 years the number of restaurants in the city exploded from 100 to somewhere between 5,000-6,000. The proliferation of restaurants also meant that jobs were created. In nearly all of the research I have done, it is very difficult to pinpoint exactly who was cooking where. This is in part due to lack of records as well as the
overemphasis on chefs and general disregard for the support staff of restaurants. But what we do know is that, not unlike today, restaurants provided one of the few pathways to economic and social mobility for immigrants, African Americans, and sometimes women. A typical restaurant in the 1860’s might require a staff of around 30+ people, including positions ranging from front of house to back of house and laundresses. The high percentage of foreign born workers who participated in these pathways is evident in figure 4 below.

**Figure 4: 1860 Census figures of Foreign-born workers as a percentage in New York City and the United States.**

![Graph showing occupation percentages](image)

As figure 4 and 5 show, the vast majority of those working in the restaurant industry during the 1850 census were foreign-born and this remained the case in 1900. And while we do not know

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exactly who worked where, it can be assumed that foreign born cooks worked in the restaurants whose cuisine they were familiar if only because immigrants tend to gravitate towards neighborhood populated by people from their home regions and they were also likely to find jobs within those immigrant communities, including in the restaurants.

**Figure 5: 1900 Census figures of Foreign-born workers as a percentage in New York City and the United States.**

At the same time, an entirely different set of restaurants evolved to serve the aristocracy of New York City. These restaurants defined fine dining and maintained their grip on this definition for several decades. It’s nearly impossible to read a single food studies book about New York City without the ever-famous Delmonico’s coming up, and this food studies thesis will be no different. The Delmonico brothers, who opened their first iteration of Delmonico’s in
1827, spoke French, among other languages, and by 1830 had modeled their restaurant in the French style. This was the first real fine dining restaurant in New York City. Their menus were in French, requiring diners to read and speak French to order with any knowledge, and both the chefs and waiters were French. The French style and food left such a lasting impression that Delmonico’s essentially established the rules for fine dining in free-standing restaurants in New York City until the 1890’s. Delmonico’s was not cheap: one dinner at Delmonico’s was more than what civilian employees of the government made in a week, and several times what teachers, or retail workers made, and thus dining at Delmonico’s became a status symbol unto itself.

The places that people ate were classed in nature. While it was true that technically, someone who had enough money to eat in the elite restaurants could do so, participating in this experience also required the correct clothing, the ability to read and speak French, and a decent understanding of dining etiquette. Even armed with these codes of high class, New York City restaurants were notorious for making diners who restaurateurs felt were below the class of the establishment feel unwelcome through bad service as well as bad dining room table placement. As a result, the urban middle class began to voice their discontent and restaurateurs quickly realized that there was money to be made in the creation of the middle-class restaurant, and so these restaurants arose. Middle class restaurants featured menus in English, fewer courses, and the ability for the diner to pay per item rather than per meal. Restaurant offerings ranged widely from fifty cent dinners to expensive ala carte restaurants.

Andrew Haley makes the argument in his book, Turning the Tables, that the rise of the middle class changed dining forever, largely by breaking the grip the aristocracy had on the definition of fine dining. I would agree to the extent that I would say the rise of the middle class
created, through demand and purchasing power, a bridge between the dirt cheap and quick meal and the aristocratic black-tie multi-course affairs, but in no way did the rise of the middle class do away with such fine dining altogether. We can see this in the Michelin Star rated restaurants today, which are no less classed than the dining establishments of early New York City.

Although the range of restaurant kitchens has changed from fast food to Michelin Star and everything in between, we can see from the census data that that the composition of the population of people working in kitchens has not varied much since restaurant kitchens first opened in New York City. Below is the census data from 1950 and 2000. Figure 6 and 7 show that the vast majority of kitchen workers (60-70%) in New York City remain foreign-born. It should be noted that those numbers drop dramatically outside of New York City, where in fact foreign-born kitchen workers then become the minority.

Figure 6: 1950 Census figures of Foreign-born workers as a percentage in New York City and the United States. 46
Despite the percentage of foreign-born workers working in kitchens remaining essentially the same, the labor gap has widened, implying that the foreign-born workers who have traditionally worked in kitchens are choosing to work in other sectors, and no other group has stepped in to fill the gap of open positions left by them.

Given that the labor gap in restaurant kitchen has been a problem since 2010, it is safe to say that this phenomenon may be a permanent state of affairs. The solution to closing this gap lies in two places. The first is that if the traditional population is no longer filling the labor pool, restaurants must fill their kitchen positions with populations that have not traditionally worked in the restaurant industry. This is exactly what most culinary workforce development training programs, including mine, are trying to do both outside and in New York City. This however is deeply problematic because it is an extremely difficult task to train a labor force for a work environment for which they have no context. The next chapter will focus on this phenomenon.

The second solution lies in changing the structure of kitchens themselves so that fewer cooks can...
produce the same level of quality of food expected by the restaurant’s customers. In this case, restaurants will have to rethink the way their food is produced, and/or what that final product will look like. This change would be the first change in kitchen structure in almost 130 years, and it brings up the question as to how the cuisine that we consume in haute cuisine and middle-class restaurants might change. The third chapter will focus on this potential solution.
Chapter 2: Culinary Training Programs: Getting Non-traditional Populations to Fill the Culinary Labor Gap

Melting Pot Foundation

The labor shortage in restaurant kitchens can no longer be considered a new problem given that it has now been a stress on the culinary industry since 2010. There have been a variety of responses to the problem, the most common of which has been a flurry of culinary training programs throughout the world, targeting marginalized populations, as well as populations who have not traditionally staffed restaurants. One of the most well-known of these programs is Claus Meyer’s the Melting Pot Foundation. Claus Meyer was the co-owner of the world-famous Noma in Copenhagen which he opened with Chef Rene Redzepi in 2003. These two chefs have largely been credited with changing the face of Nordic cuisine, essentially bringing it into the 21st century and putting Scandinavia on the culinary world map by earning the country its first Michelin Star in 2005. Before these two chefs set out to change the cuisine of the Nordic region, haute cuisine did not exist in this part of the world at all (more on this later). This also meant that the labor pool to staff the kitchens of haute cuisine restaurants, including Noma's, also did not exist in any long-term sustainable way.

The Melting Pot Foundation started out in 2010 as a cooking program for inmates in Danish prisons. Here the mission was initially simple: give inmates a shot at real, lasting rehabilitation by teaching them a trade. Both common sense and all kinds of workforce development data shows that the best way to stop recidivism is to educate, train and employ people with incarceration backgrounds, so Claus Meyer's approach was not novel per se. There is a long history, albeit not a very successful one, of offering education and training courses in prisons including in New York state. The connection between recidivism and employment are unsurprisingly linked, 89% of New Yorkers who commit parole or probation violations are
unemployed at the time of their violation. The RAND Corporation conducted a meta-analysis studying the effect of correctional education (which included vocational training) on recidivism and/or employment and they found that inmates who took classes had were 43% less likely to recidivate than inmates who did not. This, coupled with the reality that the United States is currently desperate to add skilled labor to the workforce, as a direct consequence of decades-long cuts to vocational education programs and apprenticeship programs which have left skilled trade employers dependent on a workforce that is near retirement without anyone to fill those soon to be empty jobs, opens up an opportunity for skilled labor training for those with incarceration backgrounds. The culinary industry has always been incarceration friendly, as previously mentioned, thus The Melting Pot approach was not unique, but the approach in Demark had the additional bonus of helping fill a growing labor shortage of cooks with haute cuisine skills in this whole region of the world, created by not only the opening of Noma, but also other haute cuisine restaurants in the region. Given that haute cuisine did not previously exist, neither did cooks with the skills and training needed to cook in haute cuisine restaurants.

The Melting Pot Foundation then went international in 2012 and opened Gustu in La Paz, Bolivia. Here, The Melting Pot Foundation’s goal was not to train an incarcerated population, but rather to create jobs in a region that desperately needed them, by bringing in a new industry (haute cuisine). Gustu's training program aimed to train poor local young people in both front of house (servers, bussers, runners) and back of house (kitchen) positions. The program initially guaranteed employment for those students who finished. However, due in part to The Melting Pot also establishing a network of entry level cooking schools in the area, called Manq’a, labor has quickly outpaced available jobs and now many graduates of these culinary programs are having to establish businesses of their own to create jobs for themselves or work in fast food or
hole-in-the-wall restaurants, positions for which the now haute cuisine trained cooks were vastly over qualified.\textsuperscript{52} Here, there is a mismatch between the number people trained for the number of positions, which is a great demonstration of one of the realities within workforce development which is that not all training models can scale, and some of the most successful programs are so successful because they are tailored to a specific locale. Conversely, successful program models can fail when the local conditions are not full understood or considered. As of 2016 Gusto was not yet profitable as it relies predominantly on tourists as it is too expensive for locals to regularly frequent.\textsuperscript{53} Gustu is very expensive for Bolivians (if considered cheap for tourists), and that reflects itself in the fact that the majority of Gustu's patrons (60\%) are foreigners/tourists and only 40\% are those who live in the area.\textsuperscript{54}

The Melting Pot Foundation then went to Brownsville in Brooklyn, New York City, and here the program is described as a “40-week apprenticeship-based model that provides participants with the skills to succeed in culinary careers.”\textsuperscript{55} This model includes a 10-week externship opportunity with industry partners, but does not aim to place the trained residents of Brownsville into Meyer’s 1- Michelin Star winning haute cuisine restaurant Agern, located in Manhattan’s Grand Central Station. While it is true that the kitchen labor shortage is quite stark in New York City and there is no shortage of middle class and haute cuisine kitchens that need skilled labor, it remains a fact that Meyer’s training model is no longer aimed at giving the local population, disenfranchised or not, the skills that they need to work in one of the 20\% of restaurants that offer living wages, such as his own. Further, New York City already has a number to culinary training programs scattered throughout the city ranging from those at community based organizations (CBO's, like the one I work at) to those at community colleges. I consider the current Melting Pot Foundation model a failure given that despite its considerably
longer training period, it offers no more in the way of living wage employment than the other already shaky programs in New York City. Further, this program restricts enrollment to people aged 18-34, limiting those that can benefit.

**Haute Cuisine Impact on Training Programs**

Before returning to the topic of training programs, it is important to understand the place and effect that Noma has had on haute cuisine itself, which in turn leads us to perhaps the most famous and influential haute cuisine chef and restaurant in the world, Ferran Adrià and elBulli. Understanding this will be important for what I see as the shifts coming in haute cuisine addressed in the next chapter. What was particularly interesting about haute cuisine in the Nordic countries was the active involvement by the culinary community in controlling the international dialogue about what Nordic haute cuisine would consist of. This was in part because haute cuisine restaurants did not exist in this region of the world and those who traveled to the Nordic countries as tourists were warned of the fare that they might encounter in what passed for restaurants (none were mistaken for haute cuisine) in the region. Part of this lack of high-end food history is routed in accessibility: food is not easy to grow in the Nordic countries given that they have a growing season that is as short as 4.5 months and they have to import up to 50% of their food to feed their population.\textsuperscript{56 57}

If the Nordic people were to attempt to eat a purely localized diet, or what might be considered a 'traditional' diet, they would find themselves eating a lot of root crops (turnips, rutabaga, carrot, cabbage, potato), berries, mushrooms, seafood (usually smoked, dried or pickled fish, whale), game (lamb, goose, duck, reindeer) and dairy products. Because of the short growing seasons, a large part of the characterization of 'traditional' Nordic cuisine is foods that are part of the 'storage economy'. Due to the Nordic region’s harsh winters, food had to be

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preserved to last through the long winter months. This is reflected in the dry, flatbread and knekkebrod crackers as well as the smoking, drying and pickling of proteins.\textsuperscript{58} There are also other factors at play:

In northern Europe, food has for a long time been associated with nutrition and health: this gave food culture(s) a dimension other than taste and typicity and obviously created some dialectic distance with the "culture of food". One might add that throughout history, in periods dominated by scarcity and poverty, food has been associated with necessity rather than abundance and pleasure. This is partly due to the vulnerability associated with short seasons, but also affected by puritan Lutheran ethos (as pointed out by Furst, 1991). This might have contributed to a strong symbolic bond between nature and food in Nordic food culture(s), as manifested in the widespread and important leisure activities of hunting and angling or in the fact that eating outdoors represents important cultural values and practices.\textsuperscript{59}

This doubling up of the ideas of necessity as well as the puritan ethos led to a Nordic food culture that up until about the late 1990's early 2000's, was characterized both in the private (home) and public sectors (restaurants) as not very culinarily exciting/appetizing nor was it thought that it should be. Therefore, eating out as a cultural activity was not part of Oslo's culture (as an example) as it has been in other European capitals. To get a sense of what traditional Nordic cuisine had comprised of, here are several examples of traditional Norwegian dishes:

- Faikal (the national dish, a pottage of mutton and cabbage),
- Fenalar (salted, dried, cured leg of lamb)
- Pinnekjott (stick meat, a dish made from salted and dried lamb ribs),
- Smalahove (dried fish, usually cod),
- Rommegrot (porridge),
- Brunost (brown cheese, made form goat or cow milk)
- Gravlaks (raw, cured, salmon)
Thus, in many ways when the idea of bringing haute cuisine to the Nordic countries arose and the dialogue began about what that cuisine should look like, the chefs involved in this movement had nearly a blank slate to draw on. The controlling of the Nordic haute cuisine narrative was done in part by Chefs René Redzepi and Claus Meyer who organized the Nordic Cuisine Symposium from which arose the Manifesto for the New Nordic Kitchen in 2004, signed by not only Meyer and Redzepi but over a dozen other Nordic Chefs.

The aims of the New Nordic Kitchen were:
1) To express the purity, freshness, simplicity and ethics we wish to associate to our region.
2) To reflect the changes of the seasons in the meal we make.
3) To base our cooking on ingredients and produce whose characteristics are particularly in our climates, landscapes and waters.
4) To combine the demand for good taste with modern knowledge of health and well-being.
5) To promote Nordic products and the variety of Nordic producers - and to spread the word about their underlying cultures.
6) To promote animal welfare and a sound production process in our seas, on our farmland and in the wild.
7) To develop potentially new applications of traditional Nordic food products.
8) To combine the best in Nordic cookery and culinary traditions with impulses from abroad.
9) To combine local self-sufficiency with regional sharing of high-quality products.
10) To join forces with consumer representatives, other cooking craftsmen, agriculture, fishing, food, retail and whole sales industries, researchers, teachers, politicians and authorities on this project for the benefit and advantage of everyone in the Nordic countries.60

This manifesto is important because it makes clear the desire that “New Nordic Cuisine” be seen as a regional food movement, not limited by a singular country. Further, the chefs who signed this manifesto decided as a community what haute cuisine was going to be for a whole region of the world. To my knowledge, this deliberate creation of an haute cuisine community had never been done before and has not been replicated since. Several others of the Nordic chefs who originally signed the manifesto also went on to open Michelin star winning restaurants.
In addition to being leaders in the New Nordic Kitchen movement, Meyer and Redzepi went on to open the Nordic Food Lab, a non-profit research center in 2008 that was part of the Department of Food Science at University of Copenhagen. Their mission statement is as follows:

Nordic Food Lab is a non-profit, open-source organisation that investigates food diversity and deliciousness. Established in 2008, we combine scientific and humanistic approaches with culinary techniques from around the world to explore the edible potential of the Nordic region – the flavours that say something about us and imbue the foods we eat with a connection to this place and this time. We work to broaden our taste, generating and adapting practical ideas and methods for those who make food and those who enjoy eating.

Diversity is our starting point and our goal. It forms a loop of feedback mediated by ecology, necessity, and appetite. There is no single food that can nourish us on its own. The pursuit of good food is in itself also the pursuit of biocultural diversity, the pursuit of a future where everyone can not only eat but eat well. Diversity – of autochthonous genetic material, of organisms, of cultural practices, of ideas – is what keeps our world at its most resilient and robust. It is the cloth that weaves our fates together and upon which we share our meals.

Yet infinite choice can be paralysing. By acknowledging geography as the foundation of gastronomy we give ourselves limitation, a constraint through which we gain freedom to experiment and play. Exploration of our edible surroundings offers a possibility to create foods that speak truly of their birthplace and their future.
Here the pursuit of Nordic terroir becomes more deliberate, as evidenced by the phrases, "to explore the edible potential of the Nordic region - the flavors that say something to us and imbue the foods we eat with a connection to this place and time," and again in the closing line, "Exploration of our edible surroundings offers a possibility to create foods that speak truly of their birthplace and their future." This creation not only of terroir but actual 'tastemaking' (the influencing of what is considered 'good' food usually by experts) is demonstrated in the food now served in the restaurants of Oslo, and not just the fine dining ones; haute cuisine has begun its trickledown effect that I will discuss in the next chapter.

When discussing wine, “terroir” references the soil, water, climate, and growing methods that influence the taste of wine, making it unique to a particular place. As an example, the Syrah and Shiraz wines are grown from the same varietal grape but because Shiraz (largely grown in Australia and New Zealand) and Syrahs (largely grown in Europe and California) are grown in vastly different soils, water and climate, Syrah and Shiraz taste quite different. Thus, the terroir of a wine is unique to the place that it comes from.

Terroir, when discussing food, has a number of the same principles in play, but I would argue that food is more culturally complicated than wine. While it is true that food grown in different soils and under different conditions have different terroirs (organic versus non-organic as one example), growing conditions aren't the only terroir affecting food. Food is also tied to both our cultural and personal histories, to our memories, to people and context and place.

Terroir is therefore not only a descriptive device for a certain geographical relationship between produce and the land, but it is equally a device to grasp an intrinsic relationship between taste and place; in other words, food and drink are thought to possess unique tastes dependent on their place of origin. Terroir and gout de terroir - the "taste of the
earth’ - are both categories that frame the perception and practice of food as a material version of local indemnity. They can thus be used to inform us of the dynamic between "people" and "place", whether sensual, practical, or habitual.61

Much of haute cuisine plays on or against these ideas (more on that in the next chapter). What is of particular note is that this Michelin starred restaurant model-- the controlling of narrative, the dissemination of ideas and products, the creation of a food lab-- had all been done before by Ferran Adrià of elBulli under whom René Redzepi studied.

Ferran Adrià was the first to use these tactics deliberately in as early as the 1990's. M. Pilar Opazo describes his strategies in great detail in her book Appetite for Innovation: Creativity and Change at elBulli. Opazo argues that Ferran Adrià deliberately formalized the diffusion of the discourse, not only about elBulli but about Ferran Adrià himself. In short, due to his success at elBulli, which was scaffolded by the three golden legs of the restaurant stool: exclusivity, culinary creativity and awards, Ferran Adrià was able to take the validity of himself as a creative force a step further with the deliberate dissemination of that lauded creativity by training a significant number of other chefs in an equally exclusive internship program. The internship process is of particular note because many of the interns are now world-famous Michelin starred chefs themselves. Notably, René Redzepi (Noma) was an intern under Adrià (elBulli). Chefs who trained under Adrià then took this training worldwide, propagating not only the techniques learned, but also the mythos of both elBulli and Adrià himself. This dissemination legitimized the innovations of elBulli by not only experts (chefs) validating it, but also the public consuming the very products of that validated innovation through those chefs imitating Adria’s cuisine in their own restaurants, and in doing so, tastemaking.
Through these factors Ferran Adrià himself became a product, both culinary and intellectual, so much so that his name has become synonymous with creativity to the point that: Mr. Adrià became an ambassador for Telefónica, linking his name to the company — he makes appearances for it — in exchange for what amounts to corporate sponsorship of his foundation. Neither he nor officials at Telefónica would reveal the company’s total investment in his foundation, but the relationship has been good for Telefónica. Surveys done by the company in the first half of 2014 showed that the portion of respondents who viewed Telefónica as having a “vision of the future” jumped to 70 percent from 59 percent once they were made aware of the connection to Mr. Adrià, according to José María Sanz-Magallón, the company’s global director for institutional relations and sponsorship. The share of respondents who gave Telefónica favorable ratings in the “innovative” category increased 13 percentage points.62

This caused an interesting separation between the brand of elBulli, which was associated with haute cuisine, and the brand of the person Ferran Adrià, which could be associated with commercial ventures. This in turn, turned Ferran Adrià into a product himself, most often used commercially.63

One of the most important ways elBulli changed the field of haute cuisine was through the innovative food and techniques associated with techno-emotional cuisine (here is an example of haute cuisine playing with notions of food terroir). This approach to cooking, thinking, conceptualizing and experimenting with and around food and cooking may in fact end up being Ferran Adrià’s lasting legacy. Opazo found that 60% of the haute cuisine restaurants in which her chef interviewees worked were now closed for some period of time in each year to explore
cuisine and create recipes, and many had test kitchens or laboratories of their own. Given that elBulli closed its doors as a restaurant in 2011 to become “a creative think tank,” one could argue that Noma has taken up the mantel as the model to aspire to.

Certainly, there has been a wave of interest in what is now referred to as Nordic cooking, speaking not only to a particular style, but also the intense locavore focus. This alone speaks to the level of success that both restaurants, like Noma, and Chefs, like Redzepi and Meyer, have had in changing the food landscape. Interestingly, it is Meyer that embodies Adrià’s entrepreneurial spirit, while Redzepi remains dedicated to food as craft/art. The split that Adriàs was able achieve as a product between self and restaurant, between haute cuisine and commercial creativity (which paid for the haute cuisine side of the venture as elBulli was not a commercially successful venture on its own) is a split that can also be seen in some, but not all, other Michelin starred chefs. Where the line is between haute cuisine and fine dining? Is it the line between innovation and imitation or is it deeper? It is an acceptance that the restaurant won’t be profitable so the venue ceases to be a business, and instead chooses to create artistically conceptually food to be experienced as an interactive art form? Meyer recently sold off his shares of Noma due to rising tensions between Redzepi and himself in part over Redzepi’s resistance to what he saw as Meyer’s attempt to “hijack the Noma brand.” Redzepi now “rejects the manifesto as a public relations stunt that never had any influence on his cuisine.” Whether this true or not, the mythos of Noma and of the Nordic Food Lab has long been successfully disseminated and imitated.

**Workforce Development and Culinary Training Program Design**

Even restaurants at the Michelin level, including Noma, are having a hard time staffing their kitchens. It is with little doubt that Meyer’s desire to give back to his community by...
helping prisoners in the first iteration of The Melting Pot Foundation was also a potential solution to a real labor problem. Similarly, what posed a problem for restaurants in New York City opened up an opportunity in workforce development training programs.

In the fall of 2015 the Mayor of New York, Bill de Blasio published the *Career Pathways: One City Working Together* report. This report recommended a shift away from the rapid attachment model that had been used in the past and moved deliberately towards getting New Yorkers into jobs that were in workforce sectors that were growing, were likely to continue to grow, and possessed pathways for promotion. Prior to this, the mentality of workforce development in the city was if someone was unemployed, he or she should grab a job, any job, and then once employed, could figure out how to improve his or her circumstance. The larger and shortsighted goal of this rapid attachment approach was getting people off of unemployment insurance or just employed at all, but it did not consider the benefits of preparing job seekers for positions that had for job stability, growth, or living wages.

As such, occupational training programs were geared to be quick (4-8 weeks) and tended to target low skill/low wage jobs, such as manual labor jobs in construction and building maintenance, where a 10-hour OSHA card was often all that was needed to employ someone on a job site in a low skill position. After many years of analyzing data, the MDRC found, what all of us working on the ground already knew, that the rapid attachment model did nothing but perpetuate the cycle of poverty. So, when the city made the shift in both philosophy and funding away from rapid attachment and into career pathways, occupational training programs had to adjust. Occupational training was no longer the catchphrase of the day; workforce development came into vogue.
To be considered a workforce development program, providers now had to offer education, training, and job placement services. Previously, funding did not mandate that CBOs offer all three legs of the workforce development stool and were often focused on just one of the three. Programs might focus on just adult literacy, or just training or just job placement, but now they were being told that if they did not have all three components, they would not receive funding. There was of course offered no additional funding for programs to add the staff necessary to provide these additional services.

I work for The Doe Fund, a CBO in New York City that has been in existence since 1985. The Doe Fund’s flagship program is Ready, Willing and Able which operates three single-male homeless shelters in partnership with the city’s Department of Homeless Services. By the time the *Career Pathways* report came out, The Doe had already been a full-fledged workforce development program since 2010. I had a background in restaurants, including restaurant management and knew that there were good paying, career track jobs in this industry, especially in larger restaurant groups. The Doe Fund already had a culinary program geared towards targeting industrial cooking jobs in places like hospitals, schools, and corporate dining rooms. In comparison to restaurant jobs, these jobs aren’t as plentiful, nor do they pay as much and there isn’t much room for growth either in position or in salary. When I started designing a new culinary program, I knew that I wanted to target restaurant kitchens where the labor gap, as previously discussed, is as high as 50%.

The gap implies not only that jobs are available, but also that people who are employed in this field can remain so as long as they perform well on the job. This labor gaps also provides an employment stability that is crucial to the population that I serve, which in addition to being homeless, 70% of program participants also have an incarceration background.
It was critical to me that the training, called Chef-in-Training, was taught by a chef who was currently working in kitchens. My concern with a teaching chef who had been out of the industry for any number of years was that the chef would no longer possess the skills currently necessary to excel in restaurant kitchens today because of the speed at which haute cuisine changes. The skills I was most concerned with were precise plating, and the use of molecular gastronomy such as sous vide machines and nitro gases. These techniques while not strictly 'new' (5 years) are certainly newer techniques in the middle-class restaurants. This level of presentation matched with the speed necessary to get the plates to the diners in a timely manner was the skill I was most concerned with passing to students. If the people in my program could leave with both the desire to work with food and at least a basic knowledge of the skills needed, I knew I would be doing not only the people in my program a service, but also the kitchens of New York. The strongest workforce development programs are those that bring together an employer in need of employees and the employees willing to do the work and aware of the challenges ahead. While it is true that a living wage can be made in restaurants it should also be noted that this is the case in only 20% of restaurants.\(^6\) Each year at least six of the 10 lowest-paying occupations in the census are restaurant occupations.\(^7\) Consequently, I challenged myself to get the students of my program into not just any restaurant job but jobs in middle-class restaurants.

This all sounds wonderful until it occurred to me that I was training people to prepare, know, and cook food for which they had no context in which to do so and in a context that might be potentially misleading. These are not men whose families and friends had worked in the kind of restaurants I was training them for. In fact, a number of the trainees in the Ready, Willing and Able program were resistant to the culinary training because their culinary experiences had been
limited to working in a fast food restaurant or cooking in prisons. How, as a teacher, could I ask students to learn to precisely prepare a dish when they have, in many cases, never eaten or seen most of the elements of the dish? Have never gone out to eat, and certainly not in an haute cuisine, or haute cuisine influenced restaurant? What does this mean to teach someone to participate in food as only a preparer and not as a consumer? Am I perpetuating a cycle of workers being alienated from their work? Kai Erikson reminds us what Marx would say about worker alienation:

Marx would brief us, presumably, by saying that alienation is most likely to issue from those locations in the workplace (a) where workers are separated both from the products of their labor and from the means of production, (b) where people contributing to the overall production process do not have a very clear sense of the pattern of the whole and are not really sure what their own roll is in it, (c) where the work process is controlled by an external force or condition to which the worker has to adapt her own movements, and (d) where the work task has been splintered into so many specialties that only a fraction of the worker's intelligence and skill is required for completion.71

The last sentence of Erikson's quote above is especially true of restaurant work under the kitchen brigade system. When Escoffier's broke kitchen labor down to minute parts by design, the cooks were separated from meal they are helping make as a whole, and certainly even further separated from the collection of meals that might be served to a table. Restaurant work is often doubly alienating due to its offset hours. Most restaurant workers work in the evening, meaning that if they have families, they are not with them during this traditional family time. Restaurant workers find themselves out of step not only with their families but with most of society; they go
out drinking after work when the bars are full of nearly only other restaurant workers and when people in most other professions are sleeping. High alcohol consumption is normalized, as is eating dinner at 11pm and getting out of bed at noon.

**Food Network Fallout**

Here too I worried about what I call the Food Network Fallout. Much of what my potential students knew about restaurants and restaurant kitchens was from the television set but working in actual kitchen looks nothing like it does on television. Further, because of recent trends on food shows on television, the work of cooking has been all but removed from view. If all kitchen labor is invisible, then so too is the laborer. Originally, cooking shows on television, largely on PBS, were aimed at teaching the viewer to actually cook a dish. Julia Child (PBS) taught Americans how to cook French food, imparting at the same time the cultural capital that goes with knowing the difference between a sauté and a sear, or fois gras and country pate, as Kathleen Collins points out:

A five-thousand word *Forbes* magazine article published in 1976 titled: *The Kitchen: America's Playroom* declared, "Cooking, once a demeaning activity fit only for servants, sissies and overweight mother-in-laws has begun taking on glamour." A bit blunt, but the kernel of truth is there. The ability to cook, entertain, and discuss food with ease was taking on ever-mounting social value. Food had become an accessory and a way to conspicuously exhibit personal taste. As food studies scholar Pauline Adema observed, "Knowing and using the language of cuisine, including exercising one's educated palate, separates those with cultural capital from ordinary eaters."72
Both the *Galloping Gourmet* (Graham Kerr, CBS in the US, 1969-1971) and the *Frugal Gourmet* (Jeff Smith, PBS, 1983-1997) then came on the scene, putting men into the kitchen. While the *Galloping Gourmet* was the beginning of cooking shows as entertainment, both the *Frugal Gourmet* and the *Galloping Gourmet* were still squarely in the arena of cooking shows as instructional moments. Not unlike with Julia Child, the overall message was: cooking takes some effort but it can be fun, delicious and/or impressive. The sets for both shows were domestic, showing a kitchen that could conceivably be in a person’s home and this home-centered setting remained consistent until the arrival of the Food Network.

The formation of the Food Network was first and foremost the creation of a new cable television channel and therefore was a business that needed to be profitable to survive. Initially, in 1993 when the idea of a 24-hour channel only about food was being considered, there was doubt that there was enough interest in food to sustain all day programming. To a certain degree this was a legitimate concern, in that there probably wasn't enough interest in 24-hours’ worth of instructional cooking shows, but the 1990's was also a time of a food revolution within the United States. Nouvelle cuisine, as a lighter, healthier version of the traditional haute cuisine, came to New York, and a whole generation of people who had been raised in the late 70’s and 80’s on pre-packaged, pre-made food were interested in getting away from this and invested their time and money in not only eating out, but beginning to cook again at home. The accumulation of the cultural capital surrounding food became valuable again on a wholesale scale as Isabelle de Solier discusses in her work:

In his sociological analysis of class distinction, Pierre Bourdieu famously states: Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier…Bourdieu argues that an individual’s taste in goods and practices is reflective of their class status. Taste is used by social subjects as a
distinguishing mechanism, both to differentiate themselves from others, and to gain distinction through the construction of aesthetic hierarchies. Food has long been a field in which such distinctions of taste are played out (see Bourdieu, 1984; Mennelll, 1996; Ferguson, 1998). The power of culinary taste to signify class status was summed up in the early nineteenth century in the famous aphorism of gastronome, Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin: 'Tell me what you eat: I will tell you what you are' (1970, p.13).…Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital offers a productive framework through which to consider the types of culinary education offered to viewers by TV cooking shows. In this embodied form, cultural capital may be broadly understood as an individual's accumulation of cultural knowledge, be it the long-lasting dispositions of the habitus, or the product of formal education or auto-didactism.73

Thus, the Food Network developed (over time) several different types of culinary shows, each appealing to different audiences and disseminating different levels and types of cultural capital. Of course, there remain some instructional cooking shows (e.g. Pioneer Woman, Giada at Home, Tyler's Ultimate Tips); there are lifestyle shows where the hook is as much the lifestyle that might come with a certain cuisine (e.g. Naked Chef, Barefoot Contessa, Nigella); travel shows (e.g. Diners, Drive-In's and Dives, Throwdown with Bobby Flay); and competition shows (Food Network Star, Cupcake Wars, Chopp'd).74 With these different categories, there were not only several different types of cuisine on display, but a number of ways to engage with watching food, some of which have little or nothing to do with actual cooking, but rather with entertainment.

Several academics have put forth the idea culinary television has democratized food in the sense that haute cuisine becomes available to viewers who have not been to a fine dining
restaurant, while others including Kathleen Collins have pointed out that culinary television has also popularized food and food labor:

What was once considered a "trade" as opposed to a "profession," cooking is now a red-hot hobby and career-path. It has cut across class lines in both directions. Kids from working-class families are now able to enter the high falutin' world of professional chefdom, and patrician offspring can now justifiably join the erstwhile low-rent world of cooking for a living. Television cooking shows, and the media in general, are largely responsible for glamorizing what will always be in actuality, toiling, sweaty labor. Likewise, food TV has brought deserved attention to a previously uncelebrated class of laborers and artisans.75

The flip side to that argument is that it has also participated in dangerous culinary myth making especially when it comes to kitchen labor:

The kind of cooking that is portrayed on food television is not the same kind that's carried out by a low paid immigrant workforce in restaurant kitchens or in the homes of a paycheck-to-paycheck striving family. The expensive ingredients, the well-equipped kitchens, a host's aesthetic- these elements imply a social status that is at odds with the buoyant words emitted by the host.76

The mythmaking is perhaps most perpetuated in the gameshow culinary shows like The Next Food Network Star, in which the goal is to be a TV star and not a chef. Here the idea is that if you know enough (but not necessarily a lot) and have the right elements, you too can pretend at being a chef. None of these elements needed to be a star include participating in kitchen labor. Even though the prize that Top Chef offers is ostensibly to start a restaurant, thus forcing the focus of the show more to the food than on The Next Food Network Star, the Top Chef prize of
$100,000 is certainly not enough to start a restaurant in New York City and thus perpetuates the myth that to become a celebrity (or even restaurant owning) chef, all one needs is a little talent and a relatively small amount of capital. Gone are the years of learning and the labor that goes with learning. *Chopp’d* has professional chefs competing with each other in gleeful arena fueled by mystery ingredients in a basket, many of which the viewers will never have heard of and thus cannot imagine what the dishes created would taste like. Here you see chefs rushing to complete courses in the allotted times, but the rushing is associated with the fun of competition and not with the pressure and labor involved in rushing around in kitchens for hours on end. In all three of these shows, the idea that anyone can become a celebrity chef is perpetuated, and the actual labor done by most working cooks/chefs completely erased.

This mythmaking deeply concerns me because I want the students of my culinary program entering the workplace with their eyes wide open, not filled with stars. People must understand that to become either Food Network Star or a Michelin starred chef is just about as likely as becoming a famous singer or actor and that kitchen labor, while potentially offering a living wage, is back breaking labor no matter how many Michelin stars the restaurant has.

In addition to providing multiple ways in which to 'watch' food, without doing any actual cooking, the growing culinary industry has also provided a number of different ways for people to make money in the food industry without having to participate in the labor of restaurant kitchens. Many culinary school grads now have the options of going to work for the Food Network (and the like) as food stylists (the people who actually cook the food seen on television) or as part of a production team for a television show instead of working in kitchens and cooks and chefs. This phenomenon also contributes not only to the labor gap present in today’s restaurant kitchens, but also a training gap. If the more deeply trained labor is going elsewhere,
who is left in restaurant kitchens to train the staff who didn't or couldn't go to culinary school about how to successfully create haute cuisine?

There is an awareness gap here. A participant in a culinary training program, especially in a program serving marginalized populations, might not care very much about the haute cuisine aspect of the food they are preparing; they may only be interested in getting into a kitchen, and getting steady work. They aren’t necessarily concerned with the skill gap, or even aware of it. However, skill gaps can and do show in food that is served in restaurants. I had the experience recently of eating at Belga in Washington D.C., where the chef was a previous Top Chef winner. The restaurant was a couple of years old at the time, and clearly the celebrity chef is no longer in the kitchen. The entrees that my party received, were all haute cuisine in presentation, including the deconstructed dishes, one of beef bourguignon and the other of steak au poivre. However, the temperatures of the plates were all off: the sauces warm, but the meats cooked but cold and the vegetable elements at varying temperatures ranging from ice cold to lukewarm. It was clear that the cooks in the kitchen were plating the dishes for service off of pictures (a very common practice in kitchens) and had no sense of the food itself. It was also clear that no cook in the kitchen was tasting the elements as they went out, or they would have noticed the temperature differential of the various elements on the plate. Nor, was there a cook in the kitchen that knew when to fire (tell the cooks when to start cooking) the elements of the dish. It was a direct result I felt, of what happens when training programs are geared only to teach cooks how to work underneath an authority figure, and not to think about the dishes as a whole or to think much at all about the food they are making. This differential again, is in the training itself, and graduates of culinary programs like CIA are expected to have a larger and deeper context for the foods they are making, than those graduating from programs like mine.

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Currently, there are at least 18 culinary programs in New York City, 12 of which are run by CBO's like mine. The other 6 are run by community colleges or are state level programs. The immediate difference is that most of the CBO programs train their students for between 6-12 weeks while the other programs are training participants for as long as a year. While the CBO training programs may help fill the labor gap, this is currently only a trickle: as of 2016, 697,580 individuals were employed in New York City’s culinary sector and there were 1,467 open culinary jobs (and I think this is a low estimate) in the tri-state metropolitan area.77 To get a sense of scale, my program, if it were completely full each cycle, could only train 60 people a year. If we assume similar capacity in the other 12 CBO culinary programs then the number of workers added to the labor pool would be around 720, half of what is needed. As I said, this is mere trickle of labor when what the industry needs is a flood.
Chapter 3: What is Haute Cuisine and Why do we Care?

Defining Haute Cuisine

Let's define haute cuisine. Earlier when discussing haute cuisine in the middle ages, I defined haute cuisine as cuisine that has a relationship with the elites of a society. At the base, this definition still holds true, and it remains a crucial element. Over time the phrase haute cuisine has been morphed, mutated, adopted and conflated with other terms. Since 1750, when the French took over the culinary world claiming their cuisine to be the best, the phrase haute cuisine has been nearly synonymous with high-end French cuisine and sometimes that is still the case. Then came nouvelle cuisine (a lighter, prettier version of French based haute cuisine), avant-garde cuisine (Redzepi, Achatz), molecular gastronomy (Smith), techno-emotional cuisine (Adrià, Andrés), all of which are often synonymous with haute cuisine, even if what these phrases are in fact trying to do is differentiate themselves from the now muddied and generalized category of haute cuisine.

Regardless of the nuances, most of us think of haute cuisine as being fancy food that rich people eat. ‘Fancy’ might be broken down in to different categories. Fancy food might be made from ingredients that most of us can’t afford, ingredients such as caviar or sea urchin (or spices back in the day). Adventurous eaters might define haute cuisine as cuisine made from foods that aren’t easily accessible, whether that is elk, truffles or fetal pig. Still others might define haute cuisine as simply being the best that a cuisine has to offer, which gets us back to Sidney Mintz’s argument that a society must first have a cuisine to then have an haute cuisine. This might be true, but not all cuisines born of societies have developed an haute cuisine. Sometimes the food, often referred to as ethnic, was considered too low-brow (or not French enough) to ever develop...
into an haute cuisine. So, no, the very best burrito you have ever had is not haute cuisine, even if you have never forgotten it. The only restaurant on the 3-star Michelin New York City list of 2018 that was not distinctly French Cuisine was Masa (Japanese). The other marginally not entirely French 3-star restaurant is Chef's Table at Brooklyn Fare, which is "inspired by Japanese cuisine, and French Technique".79

**Can Food be Art?**

The difficulty in defining "haute cuisine” points to the ethereal nature of haute cuisine itself, especially if we categorize haute cuisine as food that transcends mere sustenance into an art. Just as there has been a long struggle for the culinary industry to be recognized as a skilled profession, there too has been a struggle for haute cuisine to compete in the art world. Unlike with its often-compared cousin haute couture, haute cuisine chefs struggle for their place as artists in a way that clothing designers do not. This is in part because, as Krishnendu Ray points out, long standing definitions of what can be considered art purposefully exclude food:

For G.W.F. Hegel the five fine arts are poetry, music, painting, sculpture, and architecture, which manifest the Absolute Spirit becoming conscious of itself. Natural beauty is not art, no matter how beautiful, because it has no consciousness. Similarly, literal taste is unconscious, subjective, and too intimate to allow for any discursive elaboration.80

Most haute cuisine chefs would argue that their use of food to create experience and reaction and to transcend a culinary moment from just eating into something experiential is in fact art, in part because the reactions of the participant (eater) are unconscious, subjective and intimate and often deliberately provoked. How is the provocation of thought, emotion or experience any different or less for an eater of haute cuisine than for a listener of a concerto that may also have the exact

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same things evoked by music? The provocation isn't different; it is merely that taste and food carry less cultural capital than music.

What is so interesting about the Nordic food movement’s attempt to control the narrative about what their haute cuisine would be, what their art would present to the world and what it would say about the region from where it comes, is that in the end, while bringing a whole new set of flavors to food, Nordic cuisine ended up looking the same as haute cuisine from a number of other countries. In fact, haute cuisine so resembles itself regardless of country of origin that it has led to what is called 'restaurant fatigue' from those people who travel the world either physically or virtually in the search of new foods and flavors.

In writing about Oslo's growing food scene Tom Downey wrote:

…our global chef culture has its dangers. As chefs everywhere start to learn and cook together- as stagiaires (trainees), as participants in international conferences and other global exchanges, events through social media- they begin to cook the same way. For me, the antidote to that globalization and homogenization lies in cooking that is extremely provincial (and I mean that in the neglected, and utterly positive sense of the word). 81

The stagiaires that Downey mentions are crucial to the globalization of a homogenous haute cuisine.
For example, after studying under Ferran Adrià at elBulli (Spain), Rene Redzepi's food was clearly influenced both in technique and in presentation by his time at elBulli. They are figures 8 and 9, Adrià's dish is shown in figure 8 and Redzepi's dish is shown in figure 9. Note that the similar use of micro plants, both commenting on nature, making sure the diner connects to the idea of where the food came from. Figures 9 and 10 show dishes from Achatz and Masa that also have similar themes in their plating. Grant Achatz also studied under Adria, while Chef Masa did not. However, these are all great examples of the homogenization of cuisine that Downey is talking about in the quote above, as well as why there might be such a thing as restaurant fatigue.
Culinary Internships: Bad Business

The sheer brutality of apprenticeships, including the ones at elBulli, undermine the argument for cooking as a profession because of the unpaid nature of them and they undermine restaurants as business models because if a business relies on free labor, then the model itself is not sustainable. Chefs that aspire to work in or eventually own or run their own Michelin star winning restaurants are expected to do internships at already Michelin starred restaurants. These internships are called 'stages' short for stagiaires and the intern works for free. These internships may or may not include housing and do not include meals outside of the 'family meal' that is served to restaurant staff before the dinner guests arrive. This means that only those interns who can afford to work for free can take advantage of this opportunity. As the world continues to move towards a global oligarchy, only the wealthy will be able to “work” as interns and when one can afford not to work and does so for free that is called a hobby no matter how hard one works at that hobby. This dynamic creates the possibility that, in the future, instead of apprenticeships being a way into the artisan/skilled labor market for the lower classes, apprenticeships will become a marker of the elite. This dynamic undercuts the idea of cooking as a profession that can leverage people out of poverty, devaluing the hard labor as not actual work, but something someone chooses to do in their spare time.

Without these interns (free labor) many of the haute cuisine restaurants would not be able to produce the food as art that they do because these businesses could not pay for the labor necessary in the making of many haute cuisine dishes. The preparation for one dish at elBulli is described:

Oriol shapes a few pieces of modeling clay into "gnocchi," then starts assigning tasks.

Luke brings over the plates; Jose Luis takes them to the salamander to heat, then returns
them to the center table. Pablo places six gnocchi on the plate, grouping them in pairs so that they form a triangle; Laia drizzles a tablespoon of Parmesan cream over each. Antonio follows with ground coffee beans, carefully applying them in a line. Diego places three capers in the middle of a triangle; Mike lays on two pieces of yuba. Jorge spoons a bit of saffron-infused cream on top of the two strips of yuba. Last comes Roger with a pipette, squeezing a few drops of hazelnut oil onto the bottom of the dish. For anyone counting, ten cooks were required to prepare this one dish. This was just one of the 30 dishes that a guest would have consumed during their tasting menu experience. The labor cost of the above would be untenable for any business that needed to generate a profit to sustain itself. The above is also an extreme example of both the alienation from the end product of the workers work that Marx speaks about and that the kitchen brigade system creates. Each of the above chefs was in control of a tiny element of the dish. Can one claim on their resume to be a hazelnut oil pipette expert and does that claim contain any value? The stagiaires of the elBulli kitchen, the vast majority of whom were professional chefs in their own right, not only worked for free for six months (a very long stage, most are shorter), but they were not allowed to taste the dishes, other than to check the seasoning of the components that they were responsible for. This underlines the fact that they were not high class enough either as chef or as customer to eat the food of elBulli, to taste the creation of their master.

There is a long history of apprentices and apprenticeships especially in relation to the arts. Even Michelangelo had apprentices and without them, his work could not have been done. It is important to remember that in Michelangelo's time and during the time of the guilds in France, the exchange of apprenticeship for room and board was actually an exchange of something of value for the apprentice. That apprentice actually might not have had either room

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or board in Paris without the apprenticeship with the Master Chef. While apprentices remained largely unnamed by history, they remain part of the creation and the final product would not exist without them. In addition to providing the means to survive, like room and board, apprenticeships also offered apprentices an opportunity to refine their skills and to establish themselves as professionals in their own right:

Apprenticeships have been traditionally viewed, especially in crafts and creative industries, as a well-established and legitimate way for individuals not only to learn new skills and knowledge, but also to ‘signal’ (Jones, 2002) proximity to the master’s offering. If the signaling allows the apprentice to claim familiarity with the master, the knowledge acquired through the apprenticeship allows the apprentice to learn the practices of the profession well enough to introduce novelty in her or his products once the apprenticeship is concluded. In other words, the master–apprentice relationship is an avenue for an apprentice to show continuity with the master’s creative arena as well as to develop a personal signature style (Elsbach, 2009) that differentiates the apprentice as a creative professional.87

This too is the case with haute cuisine; elBulli would not have existed without the interns, making the apprenticeships both predatory and legitimizing. This experience is predatory because the business needs the free labor and is not providing the basic necessities for survival like room and board, but it is also legitimizing for the career of that apprentice. Thus, to answer the question above, the point of the 'stage' at elBulli was not only the skill set learned, but also the gathering of cultural capital through sheer proximity to Ferran Adrià. It might not be a surprise, but elBulli was not a profitable venture on its own (as most 3 star Michelin restaurants

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are not) and was funded supplementally from Ferran Adrià's ability to market himself as a creative force, not least of which was his ambassadorship for Telefónica mentioned in chapter 2.

What Happens When the Artist has no Apprentices?

As this thesis has pointed out, the apprentices (labor pool) are disappearing and this no longer seems like a short-term problem. If that is the case then the face of haute cuisine will and must change drastically if it is to survive at all because there are not enough people interested in performing kitchen labor. Many of the cooks and chefs that might have followed the career path towards being a chef in a Michelin starred restaurant are instead reaching for television stardom as mentioned in the previous chapter.

The rise in popularity of food and cooking made the culinary field at first a decent career choice and then a glamorous one. "I think now if you went and surveyed five hundred high-end chefs I think most of them would say then Food Network has had a positive effect on their business and what they do," said Judy Girard. She added that the culinary school industry claims that the Food Network has had an enormous effect on people's interest in going to culinary school and, she said, "if you tracked the growth of culinary schools in the last ten years it matches the growth of the Food Network.: According to national and local reports, both the number of enrollments in professional and recreational cooking schools has increased exponentially since the 1990s.

The fact that cooking is seen is glamorous is deeply problematic, because it is only so on the television set. The shrinking number of culinary school graduates entering the field is causing a labor gap in even the haute cuisine restaurants and the labor pool that training programs like mine are attempting to introduce to the culinary world are not likely to ever work in a Michelin

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starred restaurant because they possess neither the hard skills nor the cultural context for the types of food being made in haute cuisine restaurants, and above all, cannot afford to work for free.

Perhaps a result of this labor gap will be that haute cuisine restaurants might become rarer and even more expensive or maybe they will become something else entirely. If we define haute cuisine as the cuisine of a restaurant/venue whose goal is creativity and not profits then that begs the question: Is there a place for food only as art? Would this cuisine be served/presented/curated at a place other than a restaurant? Is this even possible given that no matter how conceptual a cuisine becomes, one still needs a kitchen, or something resembling it, to create said cuisine? Further, the attendees would still need a way to eat said cuisine, and is there an environment to do this that does not in many fundamental ways resemble a restaurant? Perhaps there will be a true split between haute cuisine (food as art) and fine cuisine (dinner for the elite) and the drastic paring down, if not outright disappearance, of brick and mortar middle class restaurants.

There has been a legitimization of haute couture as an art form by museums which are dedicated to textiles (e.g. Victoria and Albert Museum in England, The Costume Institute in Kyoto, Japan and the Musée de la Mode et du Textile in the Louvre Museum in Paris, France), but also by mainstream museums like the Metropolitan Museum of Art (which also has a costume institute) hosting exhibitions like Manua x Machina: Fashion in an Age of Technology. With one notable exception, the same cannot be said for food. The one exception occurred in 2007 when Ferran Adrià was invited to participate in Documenta, an art fair held every five years in Kassel, Germany. Ferran Adrià's contribution to the festival was preparing dinner for two guests each day of the festival, and this contribution was controversial. 90
Skeptics complained that including a cook signaled the banalization of Documenta. "Both Adrià's participation and contribution see ridiculous to me,' sniffed the art critic Robert Hughes, adding definitively, if reductively that "food is food." Even the show's organizers seemed unwilling to make a conclusive statement on the questions. "We aren't saying that cooking is a new art form. We're saying that Ferran Adrià shows artistic intelligence," said the curator, Ruth Noack.91

Given the sentiment expressed above, it cannot be said that haute cuisine as art has been a largely accepted concept by the art world, even if those who dine in such places might vehemently disagree. Krishnendu Ray suggests:

I think it is the movement of cooking from domestic work and invisible craft to art, design, and discourse that is giving us so much trouble. In particular, some of us are reacting to the very techniques that make such aestheticization and discursivity possible, by giving durable form—pictures and words—to what is ephemeral. The very visibility of something that was mundane, trivial, and habitual is somewhat embarrassing.92

The crucial difference between haute couture and haute cuisine is that cuisine is far more ethereal than couture. While both food and clothing are necessities, food is far more temporally limited; it cannot and will not last, not matter how finely crafted.

**Why is Haute Cuisine Important?**

The importance of haute cuisine is simple: it is everywhere and affects the food that we eat in non haute cuisine settings, whether we are aware of it or not. There may be no better example describing the trickle down effect of haute (anything) into the mundane products of the everyday than the monologue from the film *The Devil Wears Prada*, screenplay written by Peter Dillon, Food Network Fallout
Hedges:

Oh, ok. I see, you think this has nothing to do with you. You go to your closet and you select out, oh I don’t know, that lumpy blue sweater, for instance, because you’re trying to tell the world that you take yourself too seriously to care about what you put on your back. But what you don’t know is that that sweater is not just blue, it’s not turquoise, it’s not lapis, it’s actually cerulean. You’re also blindly unaware of the fact that in 2002, Oscar de la Renta did a collection of cerulean gowns. And then I think it was Yves St Laurent, wasn’t it, who showed cerulean military jackets? And then cerulean quickly showed up in the collections of eight different designers. Then it filtered down through the department stores and then trickled on down into some tragic “casual corner” where you, no doubt, fished it out of some clearance bin. However, that blue represents millions of dollars and countless jobs and so it’s sort of comical how you think that you’ve made a choice that exempts you from the fashion industry when, in fact, you’re wearing the sweater that was selected for you by the people in this room.93

The trickle-down effect of haute cuisine is no different that the trickledown effect of haute couture described above and as such, has had a huge influence on middle class restaurants, food television, and how we cook at home. In restaurants, the influence can be seen in micro greens on salads, sauces drizzled or piped on to your plate in perfect little dots, crumbles of groundnuts dusting plates, the careful presentation in all dishes, even the chicken wing. The haute cuisine influence doesn't stop at the middle-class restaurant; it weaves its way into to the middle class 'grab and go' food market, in additions like the chili dusted tortilla strips on the southwestern chicken salad prepared foods section of Whole Foods. We see the influence in the expansion of accepted flavor combinations, the goat cheese and cranberry combination, once so cutting edge.
is not only now passé, but also everywhere. If you stand at Maison Kaiser, Pret A Manger, the Whole Foods Grab and Go case, or any place like it, you will see the haute cuisine influence in nearly every offering, like fairy dust sparkling bringing both aesthetic and gastro pleasure and a higher price tag.

The haute cuisine influence seeps into our households through the invasion of chef tools into home kitchens, microplanes, mandolins, home sous-vide machines and dehydrators. The availability of the chemicals used in haute cuisine for purchase online ranging from agar-agar to powdered tomato to specialized molds. The haute cuisine influence beams into your household through the television set, for there is not one dish, even the losing dishes, produced on Top Chef or The Next Food Network Star whose foundations are not deeply embedded in the haute cuisine roots. The message comes across that even those dishes we create at home should be plated and garnished should perhaps, above all, be pretty to look at.

The work of spectacular cooking has become fashionable today, and television has much to do with this fashion. As a medium, tv is better suited to displaying work than are print or aural media…Flavor cannot be witnessed. Appearance can. Flavor is momentary. Appearance endures.  

Just as there is now a plethora of ways to watch food, there are also a number of ways to eat haute cuisine-influenced middle class food. The obvious one is delivery from local restaurants. Where delivery services were once limited to the lower end of the food market like Chinese food, delis, pizza), high-end delivery services like UBER eats and Caviar are bringing a level of food into the take-out market that had not been previously available. Restaurants that would never have delivered their food in the past are doing so and passing the cost on to the customer

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with delivery fees as high as $4.99 and service fees (tip) included. The cost of the food and
delivery for one meal can easily run a tab equivalent to what a box from a meal kit company will
for a week, at least $60 for two people. While some might argue that this access -- not having to
go to the restaurant to participate in this level of cuisine--is part of the democratization of
cuisine, I see it more as an indication of haute cuisine influenced restaurants’ need to survive,
they simply cannot turn away the business. Let's make no mistake, very top of the haute cuisine
restaurants still do not deliver, and likely never will.

Further, meal delivery services like Blue Apron, Hello Fresh, and Purple Carrot, allow
people to make meals of the quality and type of food associated with haute cuisine inspired
restaurants at home. Many people who eat out, especially those who enjoy chasing adventure,
usually eat out at places where they can get food that they wouldn’t normally make at home, but
meal kit services bring those not so common ingredient combinations to your door. As it stands
right now, the meal kit delivery services are a $5 billion a year business. However, customer
retention is hard for these companies: customers try them and then the vast majority (59%) stop
using them because they end up feeling the service is too expensive. The average cost of meal
kit delivery services is about a $60 week for 3 meals for 2 people, which is not cheap, but also
not terribly expensive. I can tell you from personal experience that if time is what you are short
on, these services allow you to make good, interesting food at home in usually between 30-40
minutes. For me, the time that I don't have to think about what to make 3 nights a week, as well
as the time saved not shopping is worth the price tag. However, it occurred to me as I was frying
chopped rosemary and walnuts for a Blue Apron recipe, what I think is more likely is that most
people don't want to perform the labor involved in cooking this level of cuisine for themselves at
home, but are not likely to admit that on a survey. For despite what food television would have
us believe (it's so EASY!), cooking requires effort and the more complicated the food, the more the effort needed. In fact, Eddie Yoon found that only 10% of Americans say that they love cooking and he suggested that some of this has to do with food television:

   Beyond the numbers, it also suggests that our fondness for Food TV has inspired us to watch more Food TV, and to want to eat more, but hasn’t increased our desire to cook. In part, Food TV has raised our standards to discouragingly high levels: How many of us really feel confident in our cooking skills after watching Iron Chef? (My high school chemistry teacher quit the cello in college after playing a semester next to Yo-Yo Ma.) This may be one reason why consumers now spend more on food in restaurants than on groceries. Despite all the buzz about the growth of pre-prepped meal kits like Blue Apron, or the promise of Whole Foods under Amazon’s management, cooking itself is on a long, slow, steady decline. The top 25 food and beverage companies have lost $18 billion in market share since 2009. Grocers are watching customers make fewer trips to stores, and many chains are in a prolonged price war, with prices declining 1.3% last year.96

   The haute cuisine trickledown effect has also placed new demands on the labor for not only middle-class restaurants but also the 'grab and go' market as well as the meal-kit market. The haute cuisine touches require more skills (knowledge and technical skills), and the 'grab and go' and meal kit markets have created more jobs, while the culinary labor pool has remained stagnant. The awareness of the labor gap has brought some automation innovation efforts. The Wall Street Journal, Forbes and the Atlantic have all run articles in 2017 and 2018 with titles like: “Robots Will Transform Fast Food”,97 “Robotic Chefs Arrive in Restaurant Industry”,98 “Restaurants Look To Automation To Cut Labor, But Will Consumers Buy What The Drone Is
These articles feature robots with names like Flippy (a burger flipping robot) and Sally (a salad making robot) and statistics about high percentages of jobs that could be automated in the culinary industry. In 2013 the University of Oxford came out with a report where it estimated that that over 81% of fast food cooks and over 92% of “combined food preparation and serving workers” in fast food could be replaced by automation and that 47% of total US employment was at risk of automation. This automation could mark a shift in the labor market, where humans who have worked in fast food will be shifted into working in the middle class food market where their skills in making things pretty and being able to solve kitchen problems in real time might still be higher than a robot. Or, the darker side of that equation is that given the difference in skill level between fast food and middle class restaurants, the automation may mean only fewer low wage/low skill culinary jobs are available.

Chefs too are struggling to tap into markets that they wouldn't have in the past, mostly thus far in the 'delivery-only' market. In an attempt to avoid the rising costs of running a restaurant, some chefs are starting food establishments that only make food for delivery and do not have a store front or in-person dining area. David Chang of the Momofuku empire recently attempted a delivery only start-up model that failed. It seems that, on the higher end food market, people are not yet entirely comfortable ordering delivery from a restaurant that they can't actually go to, even if only in their imagination. I don't think Chang is wrong, I think the coming trend in middle-class restaurants is that there will be fewer brick and mortar places to eat out. I think too that perhaps people would be more likely to eat food created almost entirely by robots if they can't see the robots making the food, making middle class cuisine potentially open to automation as well. Above all, we are perhaps moving towards a market where human crafted food becomes a luxury onto itself.
The overall higher skill level demand of middle-class restaurants, ‘grab and go’ and meal kit markets was the very problem that I was trying to address in the designing of The Doe Fund's Chef-in-Training program. The ultimate goal of the program was to train participants to obtain the skills necessary to work on the line in a middle-class restaurant kitchen, or in any of the other similar skill leveled markets. Here I believed existed a true pathway to living wage jobs, particularly if we were careful to place the participants of the training programs with larger restaurant groups, like Union Square Hospitality Group, who care about their company culture and provide opportunities and benefits for their employees. While living wage jobs may be in reach for the population I serve, no matter how well designed my program was, eight weeks in a classroom and a 2-week internship in a restaurant is not enough time to give the participants the skills or knowledge they would need to make it to a Michelin star restaurant. This in part is what was so disappointing about Claus Meyer's Brownville iteration of the Melting Pot. He had the opportunity to take a disenfranchised population, train them, and put them to work at the top of the industry in his own restaurant, Agern, but he has declined to put his money where his mouth is as of yet. But why would he take the risk in a city full of chefs already eager and qualified, who require no investment of training, to work in Agern?

Despite the rhetoric of America as the land of possibility and the narrative of the culinary industry as one free of barriers to upward mobility, these are both false narratives. There is little to no chance that the trainees of The Doe Fund's culinary program will ever become culinary stars either as chefs of their own Michelin starred restaurant or chefs de cuisine at any restaurant. They have almost no likelihood of finding stardom on television and the fact that the previously mentioned possibilities are denied them irks me to no end. There are stories abound about dishwashers who have become restaurant owners, or bar backs eventually becoming pub owners.
and these stories are told with all the hope and wonder of fairytales. While they are no doubt true stories, forgotten are the thousands and thousands of culinary workers who toil day in and day out and whose stories have no such extraordinary ending. The reality of the line cook’s day in the kitchen is hot and brutal, both mentally and physically. These positions pay $15-17 per hour (minimum wage is now $13 in New York City on the high end, meaning that line cooks in New York City are earning about $30k a year, which in New York City, that puts you just above the poverty line for a family of four. *Bon Appétit* recently ran an article profiling a line cook at Le Coucou in New York City who, at 31 years old, works 11-hour days, and already wonders how sustainable her career choice is.¹⁰²

If the restaurant industry continues shifting towards human cooked food as a luxury, it seems to me that I am guilty of feeding a system where there are increasing only two classes: under and upper, or as we used to refer to it, servants and elite. The implication is also that I unwittingly have been participating in training workers for an increasingly binary and classist restaurant system. This is of course not what I set out to do, and nor does it deny the positive aspects of getting people into the workplace that might not otherwise have work at all. Yet, given the shifts in the industry and the increasing lack of desire for Americans to cook for themselves the questions remains: who will cook all the food that Americans do not want to cook for themselves?
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