

# **Excellence in the Home Conference Papers**

## **BALANCED DIET-BALANCED LIFE**

**Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life**

**Ethel Tolansky and Helena Scott (eds)**



**HOME RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION**  
RENEWING THE CULTURE OF THE HOME

Excellence in the Home Conference Papers

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## Preface

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The papers in this book are the outcome of a conference in which the efforts of the organizers, executive committee, chairman, contributors, panel coordinators, staff, and all the other people involved, combined to respond to a series of challenges, whose nature only became really apparent as the Conference unfolded.

The first challenge was the very fact of organizing a conference in London. In a country renowned for its focus on efficiency, practicality and know-how, our objective was to provide a space for reflection, an opportunity to step back from day-to-day tasks and offer some philosophical and sociological pointers on the topic.

A further challenge was that of the media. There was a considerable degree of interest in the theme, as evidenced by Prue Leith's magnificent article published in the *Financial Times*, and a feature in a BBC London news programme during the conference itself.

The third challenge we faced was the conference's central theme, "Excellence in the Home" – which some people may think a contradiction in terms. It is indeed, if the home is seen in terms of the material, the everyday, the unimportant, and the repetitive. Present-day social and policy studies, however, are making it progressively clearer that the home is not a trivial subject. It is of decisive importance for a country's whole life, well-being, economy, culture, and much more besides. The devaluation of home and family life costs a high price in terms of a country's economy, and above all in terms of personal and social impoverishment.

We were determined from the outset that the conference did not denounce bad practice but propose solutions, new ideas, examples of good practice, positive messages and convincing models. The aims were to prove that the notion of "home" is well worth salvaging; to support the work of home-makers; and to foster a renewed understanding of the value of the home and a culture of appreciation for home-makers, in a forward-looking sense that welcomes and profits from advances in technology, psychology, sociology and other relevant sciences. We wanted to lay the foundations for higher appreciation of work in the home, so that the social recognition given to it is proportionate to its real impact on society. This means formulating new, professionally recognized qualifications, which will help society at large to understand why this work should be more justly rewarded.

This may seem mere idealism, but it is firmly rooted in age-old traditions and cultures, including Greek, Semitic and Christian ones. Its practical applications are evident in some of the themes dealt with in this book. The content of the following chapters aims to underpin ideals with factual evidence of achievement, demonstrated in various ways in the different topics under discussion.

Prue Leith, author of the first chapter, needs no introduction from me: she is a household name as a journalist and founder of Leith's School of Food and Wine. Her chapter focuses on the fact that excellence in the home is not something that can be taken for granted: it is achieved by acquiring and maintaining definite standards in the spheres of hygiene, upkeep, food, etc. Secondly, for a home to fulfil its true function it is not enough to present a well-balanced diet or technically perfect cooking: people need to be taught to appreciate good food in the right way, and particularly in regard to the culinary heritage of each country.

Thomas Hibbs, Dean of the Honours College and Professor of Ethics and Culture at Baylor University, Texas, USA, deals here with temperance, a virtue that suffers, perhaps, from bad press, and he asks whether the pleasure that we get from eating and drinking is morally licit. In these days, in the prevailing culture, this is not a disputed question at any level. But Hibbs follows Thomas Aquinas and invokes the testimony of noted figures throughout the ages to show the real relationship between the virtue that leads to happiness and such mundane matters as eating and pleasure, and the influence this virtue has, when properly understood, on personal development and all-round fulfilment as a human being.

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The sociological approach is presented here by Kirsten Schlegel-Matthies, Vice-President of the International Federation of Home Economics and Professor of Nutrition at the Faculty of Natural Sciences at the University of Paderborn, Germany. She raises the alarming question of whether our culture has finally lost sight of the value of meals. Factors in this process would include women's employment outside the home, fast food, an accelerated lifestyle and time pressures. On the other side of the picture, however, sociological research seems to show that young people are rediscovering the value of meals at home and the opportunities for exchange and sharing that they provide, offsetting the pressure for technical efficiency at all costs.

Sophia Aguirre, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics, Catholic University of America, Washington, USA, discusses the strong impact of family meals on a country's economy, backing up her findings with unarguable figures. One of her topics is the 1950s famine in China during Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution, which she documents in unforgettable terms. She also looks at the economic aspects of education in this field, and examines the connection between the quality of meals and interpersonal relationships, with its influence on the human, social and moral capital of a country's economy. Policies that favor the family, and especially contact between family members, are by no means negligible in their effects, as shown by the recent statistics that she quotes.

The remaining chapters in Part II tackle the basic theme of the conference in a variety of ways, but always from a practical standpoint. Mary Hunt (USA) takes up Aguirre's thesis, looking at the importance of the home in workplace productivity, and also reverses the viewpoint to consider how people can transfer management skills learnt in the workplace to their homes, with beneficial effects. The sociology of excellence in the home is presented by Marta Elvira (USA) and Jesús Contreras (Spain), looking at the role of the chef and the place of feminist ideologies in this field, the perception of cooking and eating by men and women respectively as indicators of their self-image, and the ways in which perceptions and skills are transmitted and received. Elisabeth Andras (Switzerland) goes on from there to study in depth how professionalism can – and should – begin at home, and points to how specific obstacles to this process may be overcome. In the light of this, Martina Feulner (Germany) looks at the needs of a particular group in the community, elderly people and especially elderly people in care homes, to see how a whole-person approach is essential in all provisions that are made for them – “food and drink must not be reduced to serving food.” The aim is not merely to highlight deficiencies, but to underline positive aspects of a truly balanced diet. The underlying idea is that the family is the first and basic educator for lifelong good eating habits. Finally, Peter Tudehope (Australia) examines the perception of people's needs on the part of agents in the hospitality industry, in the context of communication and culture. He looks not only at the service providers' perceptions of their customers, but of all the people involved in the field, including their own employees, as part of the new approach to excellence. This underlines the influence of the home background on the development of culture and communication, and on the social behaviour of individuals in the community. The positive notes learned by each person in their own families need to extend to the service industry, in hotels, hospitals and corporate food provision, where there is still a lot to be done to transform them into genuinely human places.

It is the hope of all those involved in the original conference that the publication of this book may contribute to bring about a renewed understanding of the value of excellence in the home and point to some ways of bringing it about. To all of them, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the work they put into the whole project. Space does not allow a full list, but this introduction would not be complete without the mention of four names at least: Mercedes Jaureguibeitia, Caroline Wakefield and Marjory Clark, of the Organizing Committee, and the Chairman Bryan Sanderson, who generously gave not only hours of unconditional service, but the input of his thinking and study to bring the whole project to fruition.

## Introduction



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The home awaits rediscovery. Thinkers who theorised everything else in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century West ignored or repudiated it. The traditional family was scheduled for sidelining partly because it was so easy to take for granted, as if it were the indestructible bedrock of society, which no amount of neglect or revulsion could subvert. In part, too, it was easy to repudiate, along with mawkish romanticism and nostalgia, especially by philosophers in flight from unhappy childhoods. Now it is in danger, and its virtues and problems demand attention.

Industrialisation turned a lot of home life vicious or intolerable. Madcap urbanisation crammed uprooted masses in immoral and unsanitary slums, from which social reformers laboured to extract them. Increasingly, meanwhile, mechanisation liberated marginally efficient groups from economic demands. Abstracted from the world of work, womanhood ascended a pedestal and childhood became a distinct rank of society – almost a sub-species of humankind. Artists and advertisers deified women and children and confined them to special shrines in the home, in uniquely Western cults, barely intelligible in cultures where women and children were still men's partners in production. The status looked enviable in European artists' icons of delicately nurtured femininity or cherubic childhood. But it had disadvantages.

Societies that freed children from the slavery of the workplace tried to incarcerate them in schools. Sweeps did not naturally get transformed into water babies and the romantic ideal of childhood tended to be coerced rather than coaxed into being. Compulsory universal schooling demonstrated elite reluctance to trust parents. Brilliantly captured by Ibsen in 1879, women were cast in a role like children's, with similarly restricted rights. For them the fall from the pedestal could be bruising. In vivid works still familiar to theatre- and opera-goers, the fallen woman became the favourite anti-heroine of the age. *The Doll's House* and *The Secret Garden* proved, in practice, to be oppressive pens from which the women and children of twentieth-century Europe had to struggle to escape. Repression commonly worked its intended effects and the maxim 'teach them and beat them' passed from generation to generation throughout the nineteenth century, based on the kind of pessimism about human nature that often sustains authoritarian thought. 'Punish with real severity,' advised a French theorist of 1890, on the grounds that children had no instinct beyond the fear of suffering. It is not surprising that victims of such regimes hated their childhoods and detested their homes. Optimistic parents, who invested love in their children, produced another kind of alienation, inspiring them with egalitarianism not easily contained in hierarchically ordered households, and turning them into revolutionaries. Bakunin's father was 'unfailingly indulgent'. Lenin's was his children's constant chess partner. Freudian psychology further undermined the home, revealing or alleging its deceptions, repression and fragile morals. In the twentieth century Freudian-inspired theories of child development undermined parents' confidence in their authority, which had to be shared with officially-intruded authority-figures – police, social workers, probation officers, teachers. The weakening of discipline and common standards in the home accompanied the welcome collapse of parental oppression.

The left clamoured to dismantle home life; the right added to the family's bad name by extolling it immoderately and demanding the re-empowerment of the paterfamilias unreasonably. Family meals – the focus of *Excellence in the Home* – became, for some critics, a symbol of evil. In 1887, in Edward Bellamy's socialist utopia, family kitchens were banned. Instead, people ordered their dinners from menus printed in newspapers and ate them together in huge and solemn People's Palaces. Strangely, his predictions have been approximately fulfilled. Private enterprise now provides effectively similar eateries in the form of works canteens and fast-food outlets. Families still eat, ever less regularly, at home, but, as many contributors to this volume complain, mealtimes are atomised and individuals choose to eat different things at different times.

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The appearance of this volume, in which professionals and practitioners take major roles, is evidence of a re-awakening to the need to uphold the home and rescue it from a crisis that became acute in the late twentieth century.

The crisis – if that is not too strong a word – arose not so much from the clamour of the critics or the attraction of alternative ways of life as from the unforeseen consequences of social, technological and economic change. In the 1940s, wartime solidarity was an emergency response for most of the societies that experienced it. It was bound to disappear into the generation gap that opened up in 1950s and 1960s. As young people grew up without shared memories of wartime, they turned to libertarianism, existentialism, or mere self-indulgence. Youth could afford to defy parents because post-war economic recovery created plenty of well paid work. Prosperous youth spent money in ways calculated to offend its elders and express its independence: on fashions, for instance, that were first extrovert, then psychedelic. The growth of the generation gap was measurable in the 1960s: pop bands discarded their uniforms and grew their hair; the effects of sexual permissiveness began to be registered in health statistics, with 'epidemics' of sexually transmitted disease and cervical cancer.

Remarkably, the generation gap opened almost as widely in communist countries as in the West. The failed revolutions that marked the coming-of-age of post-war youth in 1968 came nearest to success in Paris and Prague. Student-revolutionaries on one side of the iron curtain denounced the 'crisis of capitalism', while those on the other called for a post-communist 'spring' or 'thaw'. In China, the ruling clique deflected youth rage into the cultural revolution. The revolutionaries' failures were part of a series of disillusioning experiences. In Russia, China, and other countries that communists had taken over, no relief followed for the sufferings of ordinary people, no end to the tyranny of small elites. In the rest of the world, capitalism was working: spreading prosperity, fomenting democracy, winning the approval of working-class voters. The left switched to soft targets, including sexism, so broadly defined as to make it seem politically incorrect for women to choose domesticity, and traditional morality. Further erosion of the traditional structure of home life ensued.

The trends of the next generation, when voters swung right, hair got shorter, fashion re-buttoned, and 'moral majorities' found voice, were widely perceived as a reaction against 'sixties permissiveness'. In reality, they represented the continuation in maturity of the projects of the youth of the previous decade. Demands for personal freedom, sexual liberation, and existential self-fulfilment when one is young transform themselves naturally, when one acquires economic responsibility and family obligations, into policies of economic laissez-faire and 'less government'. To 'roll back the frontiers of the state' became the common project of those who rose to power in the West in the 1980s, but family life did not benefit. Instead, individual gratification – or, to use a widely favored euphemism, 'fulfilment' – replaced broader codes of conduct and came to dominate many people's decision-making: over whether to marry, for instance, whether to divorce, whether to procreate, how to occupy one's time.

The triumph of liberation became inseparable from sex in Western minds. 'Permissive' sex subverted some of the collective loyalties on which Western society traditionally relied. Families periodically scrambled by sexual betrayal or ennui became typical of almost every Western society. Even in the small nuclear families characteristic of Western society, individualism had a dissecting effect, as family activities diminished and family members began to eat separately and scatter for entertainment to personal video monitors, computer screens, or friendships unshared inside the household. In the USA, fewer than one child in five was born outside wedlock in 1980. Only twenty years later the number had risen to a third. By the end of the century, two fifths of American marriages ended in divorce. What had once been normal – parents and children sharing the same household – became exceptional: fewer than a quarter of households in the USA conformed to this pattern by the end of the century.

In the rapidly urbanizing environments of the world, it was impossible for family stability to thrive as it had done in the rural communities from which the new town-dwellers came. 'Street children' crowded the streets of the 'developing world', becoming fodder for journalism and films, and the recruits of criminal gangs, warlords' armies, insurgents, guerrillas, and terrorists. The influence of Western lifestyles, conveyed to the cranies of the world by movies, music, and broadcasting, created generation gaps everywhere. In Japan, commentators called the rootless young 'new humans' – so profound was their rejection of traditional values and behaviour; but the same sort of phenomenon could be observed everywhere.

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In the Muslim world, the young expected more freedom to choose marriage partners and careers; in Korea and parts of Africa and the Americas, they joined new religions and cults in their millions. Of course, every change set off reactions and, while gaps opened between generations, chasms opened within them.

The status of women, meanwhile, provoked some of the deepest difficulties. It offends feminist correctness to say so, but the biggest constraint on the perpetuation of traditional family home life in the twentieth century has been the sacrifice or abnegation of motherly and wifely vocations. This movement began in the West – partly for ideological reasons, because women were justly tired of male hegemony, and partly for economic reasons, because couples needed two earners in the highly competitive, inflation-driven economies of the late twentieth-century West. At the start of the century, no one expected uniformity in the way different cultures treated women. In the West, attention was riveted on the franchise, without necessarily serious consequences for the endurance of women's traditional occupations in the home. In Islam, meanwhile, controversy centered on the rights of women within the home: to choose their husbands, for instance, or to equality with men in respect of marriage law and property rights. The First World War, however, launched a profound revolution in the role of women in Western society.

The dead of the First World War left gaps societies were re-fashioned to fill. The young or old replaced the dead. Meritocracies replaced aristocracies in power. Women replaced men in the workplace. Before the war, only a few marginal countries gave women the vote. After it, Russia, and the USA rapidly enfranchised women; so did Britain and most other Western countries, albeit with some qualifications. So did Japan and Turkey.

Women had wanted to break free from domesticity: it was not necessarily in their interests to do so. Those who engaged in competition with men suffered for it. They had to fight discrimination. To succeed, they had either to be 'superwomen' – the term became current in the 1980s for a woman who managed her life so well as to discharge the traditional roles of wife and mother plus holding a managerial position in business – or accept subordination. Although legislation to equalize opportunities became normal in the West in the last quarter of the century, it was never fully effective. Many women remained willing to accept lower wages or worse contractual terms than men in corresponding jobs, so as to have the freedom to move in and out of work as their family responsibilities demanded. Some workplaces, especially in traditional male preserves, such as the armed forces, the police, the construction industry and some boardrooms in the industrial and financial sectors, had and still have 'boyish' or 'laddish' cultures, in which it was hard for women to fit and hard for men to adapt. Generally, it was economics, not ideology, that drew or drove women into work outside the home. One of the most spectacular facts of the twentieth century was the rise of consumerism: while world population grew fourfold, world consumption increased, by the most reliable reckoning, about nineteenfold. Almost all the per capita increase happened in Europe and the USA, where mothers had to supplement the family income in order to sustain the pace of spending. Now the effects of neglect of the home are increasingly apparent: alienated youth, strained relationships, stress, neurosis and psychosis. Home management is an important job, which conduces to happiness and stabilises society. Ideally, someone has to stay at home and do it. The manager's sex does not matter; what matters is that the job must be well done.

The instability of sexual relationships and the multiplication of sexual moralities have created unprecedented homes. At one level, divorce and permissiveness fragment families and foment single-parent households, or homes in which lone divorcees are sojourners between relationships. Meanwhile, new kinds of extended family have emerged, in which partners share in unpredictable combinations of sexes and generations, and in which ex-partners, stepchildren, half-siblings and even step-in-laws join.

In this context, the shattering of family mealtimes may seem a minor problem. Most contributors to *Excellence in the Home*, however, rightly judge otherwise. Bad eating habits bring other disasters with them: undisciplined individuals, unsocialised adolescents, poor nutrition, ruined health, impoverished farmers in peasant economies, cost-cutting and health-threatening farming methods in industrialised countries, obscenely over-rewarded moguls of fast food. Unlike most other ills of the modern home, moreover, irregular and pre-social meals are relatively easily remediable. Families can, with little trouble, take effective action to put them right by following the strategies recommended by contributors to *Excellence in the Home*, especially: banish microwaves, cook, use fresh ingredients, insist on family mealtimes, demand good manners.

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Ultimately, however, the problem of food is beyond anyone's control and certainly beyond the remit of home management: food is too cheap; therefore it is undervalued. Consumers eat too much of it, while honest producers of it – especially the poor peasants who, in today's conditions, are condemned to produce cheap food for rich markets – cannot make a decent living. Cheap food was a by-product of the success of the green revolution. At the start of the twentieth century, an average American family spent 35 per cent of its income on food. By the end of the century a family at the same economic and social level in the same place spent only 15 per cent – and bought a lot more to eat with it. Abundance of choice grew with abundance of quantity. Big multinational companies made the most of the situation: very cheap, mass-produced foods, with very low unit profits, could make fantastic fortunes if marketed on a large enough scale. McDonald's became a globally recognizable exemplar of this sort of strategy. It began as a local no-frills drive-in in San Bernardino, California, in 1937. By the end of the twentieth century there were McDonalds outlets in 146 countries. Global urbanization favoured the trend: in booming cities, migrants from the countryside were cut off from the sort of food they formerly ate: painstakingly grown plant foods, freshly harvested and locally prepared. A massive switch to mass-produced food occurred in just about every major urbanizing environment in the world – not just in the industrialized West. Paradoxically, while prosperity grew and food became abundant, many people's diets deteriorated.

People no longer learn cooking at home. They need Delia to show them how to boil an egg and instruction from Nigella on How to Eat. Mealtimes have adjusted to new patterns of work. In Britain and America, they are vanishing from weekday lives. Lunch has disappeared in favour of daytime "grazing". People eat while they are doing other things, with eyes averted from company. They snack in the street, trailing litter, spreading smell pollution and dropping fodder for rats. Office workers forage for impersonal sandwiches, grab ready-made from refrigerated shelves and bolt them down in isolation. Before leaving home in the morning they do not share breakfast with loved ones. Family breakfast has been crowded out of daily routines. In the evening there may be no meal to share - or, if there is, there may be a shortage of sharers. Latchkey kids come home alone and fall ravenously on instantly infused pot noodles or beans eaten straight from the tin. Microwaves erode society. In these machines, eaters can heat up whatever ready-mades are to hand. No reference to community of taste needs to be made. No mummy or daddy can arbitrate for a whole family. No one in a household has to defer to anyone else. This new way of cooking reverses the cooking revolution which made eating sociable, and threatens to return us to a pre-social phase of evolution.

At the same time, the science of dietetics failed. In the last forty years of the twentieth century, on dieticians' advice, Western governments promoted massive health campaigns in favour of high-carbohydrate diets. In combination with the glut of cheap foods, and the problems of distribution created by urbanization, the result was a pandemic of obesity. It started in the West, especially in the USA. At the mid-point of the twentieth century, 5 per cent of Americans were classified as clinically obese. By the end of the century, the figure rose to 26 per cent. Particularly alarming has been the rate of increase among the young. Though the USA weighed in at the top of the fat stakes, the same trend was detectable throughout the Western world. By the end of the century it was beginning to be noticeable in much of the rest of the globe, even in countries where obesity was virtually unknown – including China and India and even, incipiently, in Japan, which, starting from a very low statistical base, registered the world's steepest increase in clinical obesity in the 1990s.

Remarkably, late twentieth-century obesity was particularly a problem of the poor. This was a stunning reversal of what had been, almost universally, the pattern of the history of the world up to this time. In just about every previous period, in most societies, the rich were fat and the poor were thin. Now, it was the other way round. Formerly, abundance was a luxury: only the rich could afford to be fat. When copious food became available to the poor, the rich – at least, those of them who were fashion-conscious – fled from fatness into 'dieting'. In the twentieth-century West, wealth could buy you a thin physique by way of expensive 'health-foods' and gymnasium fees. The world became a place in which 'You can never be too rich or too thin,' according to Wallis Simpson. Meanwhile, the poor consoled themselves with calories in quantities never before accessible to them.

In the late twentieth century, the rise of obesity drove health-agencies into panic. But one of the most remarkable facts about late twentieth-century obesity is how little harm it did. Most obese people managed to stay healthy and even to stay alive until a ripe old age. Nonetheless, the dramatically deadly new diseases of

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the period included two major killers to which the corpulent are particularly prone: heart diseases and Type-2 diabetes. More than sixty per cent of Type-2 diabetes cases in America, according to a study done at Harvard in 2001, were directly attributed to excessive weight. For the relatively large numbers of people prone to the effect, fat in the bloodstream coated and clotted their arteries, inducing hypertension and causing strokes.

The family mealtime looks irretrievably dead. The future, however, usually turns out to be surprisingly like the past. We are in a blip, not a trend. Cooking will revive, because it is inseparable from humanity: a future without it is impossible. Communal feeding is essential to social life: we shall come to value it more highly in awareness of the present threat. There is bound to be a reaction in favour of traditional eating habits, as nostalgia turns into fashion and evidence builds up of the deleterious effects of snacking. The advertisers are already beginning to re-romanticise family feeding. Some convenience foods can be adapted as friends of family values: fast preparation time can make fixed mealtimes possible.

A return to the table is inevitable because, as Carlyle once said, "the soul is a kind of stomach, and spiritual communion an eating together". We seem incapable of socialising without food. Among people who like to enjoy other's company, every meal is a love feast. We eat to commune with our gods. The discreetly lit table is our favourite romantic rendezvous. At state banquets, diplomatic alliances are forged. Deals are done at business lunches. Family reunions still take place at mealtimes. Home is a place which smells of cooking. If we want relationships that work, we shall get back to eating together. Along the way, we shall conquer obesity: if we stop grazing, we shall stop gorging.

Twentieth-century food-strategies succeeded in the main objectives of fighting famine and feeding the world. But they failed in just about every other important respect: overproducing abundance, exacerbating poverty, diminishing biodiversity, and undermining health. However, if there are ills beyond ordinary people's practice, there are opportunities, too, in today's homes in the Western world: to adjust values, to banish microwaves and junk foods, to eat in common more often, and thereby to cultivate richer, healthier, more united and more loving family life. Sound bricks make for enduring buildings. Strong families will help our world survive.

## Part I

### 1. Professional Standards: Where do they start? A Professional Approach to Excellence in the Home

Prue Leith OBE



This book demonstrates a bold theme: that what goes on in the home is at least as important as, and probably more important than, what goes on in national parliaments or the United Nations council chamber. "Domestic Science" – cooking, shop ping making beds, child rearing, and cleaning up – is something to be discussed as seriously, by qualified experts and high-profile international researchers, as global warming, terrorism, and the plight of Africa.

It is commonplace to hear people paying lip service to the importance of the home, and the family being the solid foundation of which society is built. And in the UK as a whole, more money is spent on buying, building, decorating and furnishing homes than in any other European country. Yet at the same time, domestic skills are systematically denigrated: expressions like, "You should get out more," "Get a life!" and "How sad is that?" applied to those working in their own homes, imply that being at home, or doing something domestic, is an undesirable, untrendy, unfulfilling and unproductive last resort. "I'm only a housewife" is perhaps the saddest of all.

A former High Mistress of St Paul's School used to declare that the girls at her famously academic school would be taught anything "domestic" over her dead body. They were destined for Engineering, Science, Academia, to rule the country. The fact that even scientists and government ministers need a home life seemed to have eluded her.

Despite all the fashionable downgrading of the domestic sphere, the word "home" still denotes refuge, comfort, safety, love. In any crisis – illness, accident, bereavement – all people want is to get home. How then has it come about that people take the skills that go into making a home into a haven so lightly? Why is it that present day society is content to allow children to grow up with no training in family life and domestic skills?

Many children – even perhaps the majority – are taught almost nothing beyond cleaning their teeth. They are given no responsibility at all in the running of their own home. Few have to make their beds, clean their rooms, wash the family car, change a light-bulb or help in the garden. It is as if children were another species, divorced from the business of living.

The argument for the defence is that parents, struggling with their own lives, simply cannot cope. If that is true, it is because they were never taught by their own parents or teachers how to do anything domestic. They were never taught to budget, to be orderly, clean, or tidy; they were never taught about nutrition, buying, or cooking, or about any kind of thrift such as mending and adapting things. They were never taught about sitting at table with others and learning to communicate; they were never corrected when they were rude, or prevented from shoving, shouting or bullying. Even the well-educated middle classes seem to have abrogated responsibility for teaching their children anything. Many children live almost entirely separate lives from their families: their friends have replaced parents or siblings as confidants and counsellors. Each member of the family eats different microwaved food at different times of the day – in the street, in their bedrooms, or in front of the television; seldom if ever do they sit round a table. Seventy per cent of UK households never sit down together to a "knees-under-the-table" meal; this means there is little hope of adults passing on morals and mores, and little chance for children to learn how to interact with adults, to communicate, or to negotiate without losing their temper. It is not surprising that children have little respect for adults, and adults are so deficient in their understanding of children.

"Home sweet home" is still a current saying. Yet for many people, perhaps for most, home is not sweet at all. If a home is to be a haven, safe, comfortable and loving, the home-maker needs to know how to make it so. Human beings are not born with an instinct, as cats are, to wash themselves. They do not spring from the womb able to make sausage and mash, or with an innate realisation that an exclusive diet of chocolate bars might not be good for children.

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In many respects, Western Europeans have arrived at the same levels of dysfunctional home life through our chosen lifestyles and attitudes, as are prevalent in poverty-stricken Cambodian villages through totalitarian fundamentalist communism. To re-order society into a submissive, communist state where the people's only allegiance was to the new State and never to family, neighbours, colleagues or friends, the Khmer Rouge set out to destroy the country's home foundations, and with them, family values such as respect and kindness, loyalty and mutual help. It was a horribly successful policy, with a thirty-year legacy that still endures. There are still hundreds of villages where self-respect and social mores are so destroyed, and the adults are in such a state of hopelessness, lack of motivation and loss of the will to work, that they allow their children to be taken as sex workers, as the only income for the household.

Hope for Cambodia's villagers now lies not in grandiose rebuilding schemes, but in regaining domestic skills, and with them self-respect and quality of life. The Nginn Karet Foundation for Cambodia works to bring this about. This charity regenerates villages by teaching simple domestic skills like growing, cooking and caring. They have a list of the ten skills that they will teach, and then encourage the villagers to stick to. These are:

1. To get everyone to wash.
2. To keep the house clean, and clear up the litter.
3. To grow their own vegetables and rice.
4. To cook.
5. To fence animals away from the houses.
6. To look after the animals: vaccinate; call the vet; feed well; house them well).
7. To look after the children: vaccinate; call the nurse; send them to school; feed them well.
8. To look after themselves: call the nurse, eat properly.
9. To reduce malaria by eliminating stagnant water, planting lemon grass round ponds, using the mosquito nets they are given, and keeping the lid on the well.
10. To wash their clothes.

This may appear elementary, but it is not easy. Even in an untraumatised society, these skills must be taught, and taught well. But in Cambodia people over forty-five or fifty, once competent at doing all these things, making a fence out of palm branches, extracting palm sugar by boiling in a copper, etc., are still so traumatised by the years of filth and disease, eating jungle roots and seeing their parents and relatives tortured for showing any initiative at all, that they now have first to be persuaded that it is safe and worthwhile to take any initiative – even to clean up the village or get rid of the stagnant water. Those who were children during the Killing Fields years, or not yet born, have never known anything better. They accept the conditions they have grown up in, and no-one has taught them what in effect professional skills are. A major part of the charity's work consists of motivating them to learn.

It is arguable that the current situation of UK society is comparable in many ways to the example of Cambodia as described above. According to the NSPCC, four children in every hundred are maltreated by their parents or relatives in the home. Nearly all abuse of children by adults, sexual or not, is committed in the home. Ninety-eight per cent of all reported food-poisoning incidents occur in the home [*this is our insertion – pending verification by Health Protection Agency*]. So much for the home being a haven. And yet media and legislative efforts on child protection are all in the public space: focused on teachers, youth workers, and priests. Outside the home, children are surrounded by mandatory protective measures: they may not go outside to play in the snow at break-time lest they slip, they must wear face-masks to play conkers, and can only play on the swings if there is a specially designed soft safety-mat installed underneath. How does it happen that we have set such frankly neurotic standards for the professionals, and none or very few for the family?

With reference to hygiene: supermarkets have to dispose of unsold food many days before it would poison anyone. In plenty of homes, by contrast, people allow mould to grow on last month's gravy in the refrigerator; and leave half-empty mugs complete with floating cigarette-ends to accumulate under teenagers' beds. A restaurant could risk prosecution if a waiter breathed onto a wine-glass to polish it, or licked a spoon and dried it on his apron. In plenty of homes, such actions are constant. In plenty of homes, people taste cooking food with a finger, or dip a spoon into several pots, cross-contaminating from one to another.

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In Sweden, houses have to be scrupulously clean at all times, and those selling a house have to satisfy the purchaser that all is spotless behind the refrigerator, inside the oven and under the bed, before the contract can be signed. This can take several "could do better" reports before completion. This is taking things to an extreme, perhaps. But in Britain many houses tend to be filthy. Even someone moderately house-proud, with no shortage of help, may find themselves having to do an embarrassing amount of spring-cleaning before it is in any state to be let to others. Many years may go by without a mattress being turned, or a book taken down for dusting. The bottom of the frying pan may be found to be so terminally encrusted that it has to be replaced; cupboards may be stuffed with ancient non-functioning gadgets, and sofas with long-lost items that have slipped down the sides; a cellar floor may be deep in detritus.

Those who live in those very houses would be disgusted if they found a single hair in a hotel basin. They would be appalled if they suspected the hotel duvet-cover of not being freshly laundered, and speak to the manager about training standards and sackings; yet a few years ago there was an exchange of letters in the *Spectator* on the ethics of changing sheets for visitors to one's house. The middle-class consensus evidenced by this led, perhaps, to a further plummeting of housekeeping standards in many more homes. Friends may still get clean sheets, but family members may now find themselves using each others'. Home-makers are satisfied with having one set of standards for themselves and demanding a completely different set for hotels.

One reason for these double standards may be that strangers' germs are perceived to be dangerous, whereas "family" germs are not. This leads to laxity in ordinary, day-to-day hygiene in the home.

Similar double standards are common with regard to design and maintenance. Those who would unhesitatingly avoid a hotel with peeling wallpaper and worn carpets, accept the same things in a friend's house as "shabby-chic" and a fashion statement, or as evidence of admirable unworldliness and minds set on higher things. To advocate higher standards in this field invites accusations of a return to the anxiously scrubbed doorsteps of the nineteen-forties, and the mothers who insisted on brushing their daughters' hair one hundred times in the morning. There is, however, a difference between fanaticism and common sense here, as everywhere else. Common sense suggests that down-trodden jeans, encrusted with dirt round the hems, are not really as cool as many of their wearers imagine. It also suggests that ironing is a skill that would improve the quality of many people's lives in small but significant ways. Finally, it suggests that order, clean design, a good state of repair and well-mannered personnel are signs of a well-run business and a good home alike.

Home skills, and having things in order in the home, undoubtedly saves time, and confers peace of mind, confidence and a sense of self-respect on those who live there. This can easily be seen, for example, in the case of a dinner-party: if the table is perfectly laid, the house is clean, the towels in the bathroom are fresh, and the cooking is under control, then the hosts feel at ease: they are relaxed when the doorbell rings, and are able to welcome their friends, talk to them, and enjoy themselves.

A large element in home-making is the skill of cooking. It is, obviously, a fundamental life-skill, which acquires particular importance for those on tight budgets. If the middle classes cannot cook, they go to the local supermarket or farmers' market and buy fresh pasta, a chilled ready-made sauce, a packet of pre-washed rocket salad and a lump of parmesan. They can eat very healthily and well, at a price, and may very possibly sit round a table to do so.

However, those in straitened circumstances who cannot cook are in a very different predicament. They do not have the confidence to try new foods, and even if they did, cannot afford the expensive parmesan and rocket, sliced Italian ham or air-dried organic venison. They cannot save money by making a nutritious soup out of a bit of ham hock, a handful of lentils, some root vegetables and cabbage. They will not risk the little money they have on trying something that they have never cooked before and are fairly sure their children will not eat. So they buy chips and take-aways, pot noodles and cheap frozen pizza. It is expensive, but they do not see – do not have – any alternative. And if the supper consists of pot noodles and chips straight from the local take-away, there is no reason for the family to sit together to eat it.

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The obvious answer would be for parents to learn how to cook. This immediately raises two major problems: first, people's resistance to being taught; and secondly, the accusation of being "patronizing to the poor" which inevitably greets any such initiative. People on State benefits, or in the lower income brackets, are not likely to attend cookery or nutrition courses because they feel, rightly or wrongly, that they are doing their best for their own children and have the right to feed them as they see fit. Those who do go to courses, or the cooking clubs for mums organised by some schools, are generally the ones who are interested in cooking and food anyway.

An important role could be played by the big supermarket chains, which parents do not see as threatening places. They could set up a scheme demonstrating how to make easy, fresh, healthy dishes from inexpensive ingredients – the sort that are more assembly jobs than formal cooking, and could encourage parents to try for themselves. Public money would be put to very effective use on a national campaign involving television, radio, the Women's Institute, pubs, libraries, schools and other media, to back up the message that home-produced meals are cool. Such a campaign would virtually pay for itself in reduced National Health costs alone. It is worth noting that the International Forum on Obesity recently predicted that if current trends continue, forty per cent of Europeans will be obese by the year 2010.

School meals and their importance have struck the national consciousness very effectively in the past few years, and it is now generally recognised that poor food adversely affects physical, psychological and mental health, hinders learning, is very expensive, and is of benefit to junk food manufacturers alone. Raised standards of school meals, however, will have comparatively little effect if fizzy drinks, chocolate bars and pot noodles are the norm at home. No national campaign, not even the current "five-a-day" one for fruit and vegetables, will succeed through "awareness-raising" alone: what will make a difference to children's nutrition is being able to cook themselves, as has been abundantly proved in studies of various types. One of the best ways of teaching children to cook is for adults to cook with them.

Obviously it is not easy for most adults to make the time to cook with children; but this is a question of the adult's priorities. The average child, according to statistics, spends five hours a day watching television, and the average adult three hours. This suggests that most families could find, say, half an hour twice a week to cook a relatively simple supper together. An important positive factor in such an approach is the fact that children really do enjoy cooking. Not only children – adolescents may start by considering that it will harm their image, but they soon join in, forget that they ever thought it was "girls' stuff", and take real pride in what they themselves have produced.

A national charity called Focus on Food is dedicated to teaching children to cook at school. Huge mobile kitchens installed in buses provide hands-on lessons, and the children then sit down to eat the food they have cooked. Children who learn to cook at home or at school, who are taught about nutrition at the same time as physically cooking, become interested in trying the food they have cooked, and interested in what goes into their bodies. Cooking with children is a highly effective way of getting them to eat things they do not think they like.

This is a major consideration in most families. In past times, as everyone knows, children had to eat what they were given. In more recent days parental pressure to do so became progressively lighter, and today it is almost invariably the child who decides what goes into his or her mouth. The results are predictable: a diet heavy in sugars and carbohydrates, and totally lacking in vegetables and fresh fruit.

Perhaps this is not surprising. Babies put everything into their mouths, but, ideally, have their mothers to prevent them from eating anything harmful. As they get more independent, there seems to be a natural caution about eating anything new, perhaps as a built-in defence mechanism. Children need to be shown by example or persuasion what is good to eat.

Fergus Lowe, Professor of Psychology at the University of Bangor, Wales, discovered that if children are bribed, cajoled or persuaded to eat fruit and vegetables a certain number of times, they end up liking it. The number of times varies with the type of vegetable: fewer for carrots, and ascending for broccoli, spinach, and sprouts, in that order. By the time a child has eaten the objectionable foods the necessary number of times,

they find they have acquired a taste for them, and, what is more, this taste is permanent.

Parents who take this on board will improve their children's diet for life. There is no reason why very small children should not eat exactly the same foodstuffs as adults, suitably prepared. I saw this for myself as a student au pair for a family in France with two small children. The mother did all the cooking herself, and when the family had, for example, steak and salad, she would sear two tiny steaks in a blazing pan so that they were brown on the outside but still rare in the middle. She would make a little sauce with fresh-chopped tarragon and parsley, a knob of butter, and the juices in the pan, and pour it over the two small plates of steak. She would then carefully tear the salad into mouthful-sized pieces, toss it in French dressing and heap it beside the steaks. A small slice of fresh baguette accompanied each portion. Then one of the plates, steak, sauce, salad and bread, would be tipped into the liquidizer and whizzed up for the six-month-old baby. Both children sat at the table in high chairs; the mother and I sat with them, one of us spooning the purée into the baby. The mother knew the importance of feeding her children well. She took great pains to do so, and we sat knees-under with them and chatted to them while they ate it. And the children ate just about everything: olives, kidneys and spinach included.

To return to a broader view of home-making skills, it might sometimes be hard to maintain the same arguments of enjoyment for knitting, sewing and mending. It is no longer true that making clothes is cheaper than buying them. However, being able to sew, like being able to cook, does lend confidence to the individual and adds genuine pleasure to life. Even if you never have to, making things, including clothes, is one of the great satisfactions of life, even though few of our children may ever experience it. Mending things for a family member is a tangible expression of love and care, and enormously satisfying – even enjoyable.

For the sake of a healthier and saner future, individuals and families in the UK need to bring back the idea of family meals, taking pride and pleasure in delicious cooking, and in re-cycling a cast-off man's shirt into a baby's overall, or sewing on a dropped button and mending a hole in a sock. Satisfaction is not the least of the benefits to be had from a comfortable and well-run home. As a society, we cannot afford to allow children to grow up without such skills.

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## 2. Hungry Souls From Homer's Cyclops to Fear Factor, Hannibal the Cannibal and Babette's Feast

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An abstemious character in the acclaimed film, *Babette's Feast* (1987), explains to the members of his religious community that they should engage in feasting just as the participants in the wedding feast at Cana, where "food was unimportant." The line is unintentionally comic; the humour reposes upon the double mistaking of scripture: no where does it say food is unimportant and it indicates clearly that wine is quite important. Christ is accused of being a glutton and a drunkard (Mark 2: 15-17) and heaven is compared to a banquet (Luke 14:23 and Matthew 22:1-10). *Babette's Feast* is perhaps the greatest artistic statement of the way the communal enjoyment of food and

wine provide more than necessary nourishment for the body. *Babette's Feast* argues for a sacramental union of matter and spirit, human and divine. The feast is a "love affair" that combines "spiritual and bodily appetites." It unites and elevates the entire community in a spirit of gratitude toward those who have made sacrifices and offered gifts on their behalf, especially toward the "giver of every good and perfect gift." It is an anticipation of the heavenly banquet.

In marked contrast to this exalted depiction of the potential role of food in human life, contemporary American popular culture is preoccupied with disordered eating and eating disorders: from the food fight in *Animal House* to the celebration of aesthetic cannibalism in the Oscar winning *Silence of the Lambs* to the documentation of American gluttony in *Super-Size Me*, and the gross-out eating contests in *Fear Factor*. The key questions about food and eating are for the most part suppressed in our culture. What would it mean to speak of a proper ordering of eating and a proper appreciation of the role of food in human life? And why do these things matter? Why should we take food and eating as serious matters for human reflection and deliberation? Through an analysis of contemporary American film, philosophical reflections on the human body and the virtue of temperance, and the classic film *Babette's Feast*, we will consider the way the communal enjoyment of food and drink provide more than necessary nourishment for the body.

The obstacles to our recovery of natural and spiritual virtues of eating are many. Increasing numbers of Americans suffer from obesity; recent polls locate the number of overweight Americans at roughly two-thirds of the population. Among those who are not obese, there is a growing number afflicted with eating disorders. The disorders and their palpable effects on human health and well-being are dramatically and humorously driven home in the documentary, *Super Size Me*, in which the director and main character Morgan Spurlock vows to eat three meals a day at McDonald's for one month. After receiving an initial bill of good health from numerous doctors, he embarks upon his adventure in fast food excess and returns to the doctors on a regular basis during the month. Predictably, his weight increases, as do his blood pressure and his cholesterol. More alarmingly, his liver shows signs of toxic shock, his skin becomes discolored, he experiences chest pains, and his libido declines. Appalled and amazed doctors admit that they expected these sorts of symptoms from binge drinking but never from a month of fast food. To underscore the addictive methods of fast food and its advertising, the film humorously juxtaposes images of Ronald McDonald with a soundtrack from Curtis Mayfield singing "Pusher Man."

When it comes to food and the body, Americans are given to extremes of overindulgence and of obsession with the stringent requirements of the ideal body. Even the physically fit cannot be assumed to have virtuous attitudes toward eating; they often exhibit a maniacal and excruciating devotion to a model of the perfect body. Americans seem to oscillate between thoughtless indulgence and instant gratification, on the one hand, and puritanical self-denial, on the other. The failure readily to achieve an ideal shape can lead to revulsion toward one's body and toward food itself. We may discern here a secular version of what Wendell Berry identifies as a form of "religious insanity," seeing the victory of the soul in its making a victim of the body<sup>1</sup>. Purely negative self-restraint is indistinguishable from "self-hatred." We often construe the virtue of temperance as purely negative and as coming into play only in moments of great temptation, where it requires that we slap down our appetites. The classical understanding of temperance is quite different. Although wary of excess, it is not principally a virtue of negation or repudiation. Indeed, if one's chief experience of the moral life is one

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of restriction, prohibition, and deprivation, then that is a clear sign that one is not yet virtuous, not yet capable of experiencing pleasure properly, as one ought to experience it. And that is the point of the virtue of temperance: to make possible a right ordering of pleasure, an experience of pleasure at the right things in the right way. It is marked by ease and delight, not calculation and anxiety.

Even where we come close to understanding and practicing temperance, we still tend to conceive of eating in an individualistic way. The classical tradition, still dominant in many places in Europe and the Middle East, regarding eating is inseparable from its social dimension. Whether our eating is experienced principally in the form of fast food consumed in the privacy of one's automobile or in front of the television, whether even in our communal eating we are preoccupied with private calculations of carbs and calories—in any case, we exclude the properly social dimension. We are also, as Wendell Berry has eloquently insisted, increasingly cut off from the natural sources of food production, from the planting and nourishing of the sources of food in the setting of the local farm. Food and eating thus increasingly become isolated from natural and social contexts that have traditionally provided them with intelligibility, purpose, and meaning.

Any attempt to recover the proper understanding and proper practice of temperance needs to return to first principles, to some account of what human beings are, of their potentiality for greatness and their vulnerability to vice. In his fine book, *The Hungry Soul*, Leon Kass explains:

*Possessed of indeterminate and potentially unlimited appetites, willing and able to appropriate and homogenize nearly anything in the formed world for his own use and satisfaction, man stands in the world not only as its most appreciative beholder but also as its potential tyrant (98).*

As the great classical myths and religious traditions inform us, human beings are peculiar animals, capable at once of being prudent stewards of created things and of being cosmic devourers. Thus, there is need for prohibition and restriction: "man's protean and indeterminate appetites need to be delimited and constrained." But negation is misconstrued if it is not predicated upon a clear affirmation of the goods the prohibitions safeguard and protect. Thus, our account of human eating must also "embellish and dignify," by "shaping virtually every aspect of human eating; it will determine what, when, where, how much, with whom, and in what manner human beings eat" (98).

To recover a language for the significance of various practices of eating, Kass returns to classical myths, such as Homer's *Odyssey*, and to modern films, such as *Babette's Feast*. In the *Odyssey*, feasting is an occasion for the exercise of the virtues of hospitality and for storytelling and poetic singing. The latter are more than mere accompaniments, since the tales and songs constitute a communal acknowledgment of the virtues, sacrifices, griefs, thanksgivings, and longings of a particular people. But Homer also teaches about the virtues of eating by negative example, most dramatically in the characters of the Cyclops, the famous one-eyed monsters who live isolated from the rest of the world, even from members of their species. The bodily constitution of the Cyclops tells much about their characters. "Cyclops single eye lacks a horizon, all depth of perspective and can see only what is immediately before him here and now. His one eye, lined up directly over his mouth seems to serve the mouth rather than the mind" (111). In the famous episode from Homer's epic, a Cyclops, Polyphemus, takes Odysseus and his men captive by Polyphemus and threatens to eat them all. In an attempt to reason with the Cyclops, Odysseus appeals to the universally recognized obligation of hospitality. But the Cyclops repudiates such obligations, claiming that his kind "acknowledge no gods," and arrogate to themselves a position superior to that of the gods. By making themselves the "measure of all things," the Cyclops abandon any sense of restraint; it is instructive that Homer would select cannibalism, a vice of eating, to illustrate the tyranny of the Cyclops. The choice illustrates how central eating and hospitality were to ancient cultures.

Tied to brutal behavior and reflected in repulsive physical appearance, the vice of the Cyclops is unmistakable. The Cyclops embody a violation of the orders of nature and of the gods. In our time, artistic repudiation of the very notion of natural and divine order is sometimes celebrated as a sort of liberation; indeed, some artists depict in attractive terms a nihilistic inversion of conventional mores. Perhaps the premier mainstream example of such inversion is the Oscar winning 1991 film *Silence of the Lambs* featuring Hannibal the cannibal. An aesthetically refined serial killer with a penchant for eating his victims, Dr. Hannibal Lecter (in an Oscar winning performance by Anthony Hopkins) savors the liver of one victim with a side dish of "fava beans and a fine Chianti." Lecter is the hero or anti-hero of a series of stories, in the novels of Thomas Harris and a

variety of very popular films. Whereas Homer depicts the Cyclops as crude and barbaric exceptions to the order of nature and of human society, Harris depicts Lecter as exceptional in the sense of transcendent. He is a sort of debased Nietzschean super-man who stands beyond good and evil and inspires fear and awe in ordinary human beings, who still hold to an irrational and cowardly order of conventional morality. An accomplished psychiatrist and expert musician, Lecter turns evil itself into an art form. His acts of evil, especially cannibalism, are blunt and offensive repudiations of any code of justice or hospitality; they are nothing more than opportunities for aesthetic self-expression, which itself involves the culinary consumption of other human beings. If we have witnessed a serious erosion of the classical understanding of eating and hospitality, we still witness the symbolic power of eating.

Here, as elsewhere in our culture, the virtues that once formed an intelligibility unity and gave shape and purpose to various human practices are segregated from one another and thus become transformed into some quite alien to the mainstream tradition of the virtues. In such a context, it becomes difficult to give a very rich meaning to the notion of health, since health is, as Wendell Berry astutely notes, in "wholeness" (p. 99). Belonging, signified especially in communal conviviality, is healing. It is interesting that, among the four cardinal virtues, the two instrumental virtues are temperance and courage. But these virtues cannot be understood apart from the overarching order provided by the virtue of justice, an order of communal and individual goods to be defended by courage and sustained by temperance. Apart from a larger sense of such an order of goods, courage is no longer a virtue needed to preserve and defend human goods. It becomes merely a matter of boldness in the face of what most human beings fear. Is this not precisely what is on display in the competitions of *Fear Factor*? Not slovenly intemperance but calculated and competitive intemperance serves the goal of displaying one's courageous resolve in the face of what is offensive. If virtues are now exhibited by overcoming natural inhibitions to the grotesque, then what sense can be made of our prohibition against the consumption of human flesh?

From that perspective, Hannibal has a point. In his world, where the divine, natural, and human orders have utterly dissipated, the only thing that matters is the cultivation and satisfaction of amoral aesthetic taste; all things, including human persons, become mere instruments of cultivated taste. By contrast, in the pagan Homer as in the Jewish and Christian scriptures, the "vulnerable stranger reminds us of providence" (103). As Kass astutely observes, the traditional obligation to hospitality "recognizes necessity and generosity, needy vitality and human self-consciousness, and, above all, the importance of preserving yet moderating the distinction between same and other, between one's own and the alien" (107).

The most remarkable artistic account of the sensibility Kass thinks we need to recover can be found in *Babette's Feast*, a film based on a short story by Isak Dineson. *Babette's Feast* is set in Denmark amid a small, austere religious community of Protestant Christians, united in their devotion to their founding pastor, whom they honor as "priest and prophet." The founder's beautiful daughters, Martina and Philippa, named after the great reformers Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon, inevitably attract the attention of worthy suitors. Neither daughter is capable of tearing herself away from devotion to her father and the community he has established. One of Martina's suitors, Lorens Lowenhielm, leaves quickly in frustration and disappointment. Upon his departure, he confesses that he has learned from this religious family that "earthly love and marriage" are mere illusions. He vows to devote himself entirely to his career and ends up becoming a decorated General. Another, Achille Papin, a famous Parisian opera singer, discovers a great musical talent in Philippa. She agrees to his offer of vocal training. But the erotic tenderness and worldly longings expressed in a duet from *Don Giovanni* causes her to cut off the relationship. Papin sings *Don Giovanni's* invitation to Zerlina ("Come, then, with me, my beauty... I'll make you a great lady"). Philippa responds in Zerlina's words: "I tremble, yet I listen / I'm fearful of my joy / Desire, love, and doubting / Are battling in my heart." At the end of the piece, Zerlina yields; but Philippa, "fearful of her joy," is not capable of this. With little inner turmoil, she has her father send Papin on his way.

Later, as war envelops Paris and families are torn asunder, Papin sends a friend, Babette, to live with the family he still admires. A devastated Babette, who has endured the murder of her family, begins work as a cook, preparing the simple meals the sisters insist upon eating. A series of fortuitous events make it possible for Babette to prepare a feast for the entire community, a feast that reveals the elevating and transforming power of the communal meal.

The sisters wish to commemorate the anniversary of their father's founding of their religious community, a community lately afflicted by "testy and querulous" disagreements. What they have in mind is a "modest supper followed by a cup of coffee." Plans change, however, when Babette wins the French lottery and has 10,000 francs at her disposal. She persuades the sisters to let her prepare a French feast. As wine and live sea turtles arrive, the sisters begin to regret their decision, suffer nightmares, and confess to their religious brethren that they may have "exposed" everyone to "evil powers" and a "witches Sabbath." The mildly shocked brethren call upon the virtues of fortitude, forbearance, and moderation. Out of charity, they consent to partake of the meal but they will do so with complete detachment, "as if they never had the sense of taste." They will speak "no word about food or drinks."

It looks at this point as if the stage is set for an evening of quiet misunderstanding, an evening in which the splendours of the senses will be wasted on a community that identifies religious asceticism with a state of disembodied detachment. But another chance event, the last minute arrival in town of General Lowenhielm alters the chemistry of the meal. His presence means not only that there will be twelve at the meal but also that a person of cultivation will taste and provide commentary on Babette's feast.

Although cultivated and successful, the General experiences a kind of spiritual vacuity; just before he leaves for the meal, he remarks to himself, "vanity...vanity...all is vanity." The suggestion here is that one can arrive at a sense of the emptiness of created things by at least two quite different routes, by a distortion of religious devotion and by world-weariness. Neither route is the path of temperance, properly understood and practiced; neither route allows us to experience communion in the concrete embodied conditions of human life. Like fidelity in marriage, fidelity in the social experience of the common meal "preserves the possibility of devotion against the distractions of novelty,...the possibility of moments when what we have chosen and what we desire are the same. Such a convergence obviously cannot be continuous....But fidelity prepares us for the return of these moments, which give us the highest joy we can know: that of union, communion, atonement (in the root sense of at-one-ment)" (p. 117).

This is precisely the surprising possibility glimpsed by the General in the course of the meal. The General is the first to sense the transforming effects of the feast, as he repeatedly expresses surprise and wonder at the quality of the food and the wine. Here the meal is an occasion for the most human and most philosophical of passions: wonder. The dinner is at first characterized by comic incongruity between the General's comments and the non sequitur responses from the other members of the dinner party, who remain steadfast in their commitment not to say a word about food or drink. At one point, a woman, who had earlier described the tongue as a source of "unleashed evil," speaks innocently and happily of the pleasant-tasting wine, which she describes as a kind of lemonade.

The film completely transcends our popular way of framing the debate over appetite, which pits a repressive Puritanism against a celebration of the indulgence of untutored desire. If the religious views of this community are in many ways shallow and repressive, the film's corrective consists not in a repudiation of religion as oppressive. Instead, the film makes clear that bodily goods and sensible pleasures can be vehicles for the manifestation of grace, that is, they can be occasions of communal transformation. The feast achieves what the sisters' attempts at moral and religious reform could not; it achieves reconciliation as warm memories of the departed founder flow forth in speeches from those assembled. As the General recounts famous meals at the Parisian restaurant, Café Anglais, where the renowned chef was a woman (Babette of course!) with a gift for transforming dinner into a love affair in which there was no distinction between spiritual and bodily appetite, he offers an education to the other members of the dinner party. Even if they fail to grasp the full philosophical and theological import of his speech, they confirm its truth by the increasing delight they take, not just in the food and drink, but also in one another's company.

The denigration of embodiment can arise either from religious scruples about the body, which is seen to be a source of evil, and from secular proclamations of the independence of human thought and will from the body, which is construed as raw material or property to be used as the owner sees fit. Following Montaigne, Pascal once quipped that he who tries to make himself an angel ends up as a beast. The forgetfulness of our bodily nature and of the role of the imagination in our complex lives as human beings results not in our transcendence of the human condition but in our enslavement to lower appetites. Walker Percy identified angelism,

the denial of our bodily condition, as a distinctively modern heresy.

Aquinas is acutely aware of the bodily conditions of human knowing and acting. Throughout his reflections on human nature, Aquinas highlights the marvelous union of soul and body. A famous poem by John Donne, entitled "The Exstasie," captures rather nicely this relationship of soul to body, spirit to matter, in which the higher is made manifest in and through the lower and the lower raised to a participation in the higher. Having described a Platonic union of lovers' souls beyond the body, he asks why we forbear our bodies? Donne responds:

*So must pure lovers soules descend  
T'affections, and to faculties,  
That sense may reach and apprehend,  
Else a great Prince in prison lies.  
To'our bodies turne wee then, that so  
Weake men on love reveal'd may looke;  
Loves mysteries in soules doe grow,  
But yet the body is his booke.*

Aquinas provides a complex, rich, and supple metaphysical account of the union of soul and body. In response to the query whether God gave the human body an apt disposition, Aquinas focuses upon the "upright stature" of human beings<sup>2</sup>. The consequences for our relationship to the world are telling. In animals, the senses reside primarily in the face; since our face is not turned toward the ground, our senses are not confined to performing biological functions necessary for survival: pursuing food and fending off attackers. Our senses provide avenues for higher-level interaction with nature and other human beings. Beyond any pragmatic purpose, we take delight in the beauty of sensible things<sup>3</sup>. We are open to and receptive of the whole: "The subtlety of sight probes the many differences of things... and enables us to gather the truth of all things, both earthly and heavenly." Our mouths do not protrude and are not primarily suited for self-defense and procuring food. If our mouths and tongues were like those of other animals, they would "obstruct speech which is the proper work of reason."

It has sometimes been suggested that Western philosophical reflection about mind is wedded to an abstract and detached model of objectivity, with its penchant for comparing mind exclusively to sight. Aquinas's emphasis on the embodiment of reason in speech, and on touch as the most human of the senses, undercuts such a model. In response to the question whether the rational soul is united to an appropriate body, he highlights the importance of the sense of touch<sup>4</sup>. By comparison with the bodies of other animals, the human body is feeble, that is, less immediately equipped with powers serving the maintenance of life. Instead of a "fixed" set of bodily powers, it has reason and the hand, the organ of organs, able to craft limitless tools. Moreover, the human body is ordered to activities eclipsing that of mere survival: knowledge, communication, and love. For these, it requires an "equable complexion, a mean between contraries," giving it the ability to receive and discriminate an array of sensible qualities. Such a complexion is prominent in the sense of touch, especially in the hand, which actually grasps and takes on the form of the thing held. There is a striking analogy here between the hand's grasping of objects and the intellect's grasping of the forms of the things<sup>5</sup>.

The links between touch and intelligence illustrate from yet another vantage point the remarkable union of soul and body. The intellectual soul, we should recall, is the first act of the entire body, animating and informing the whole. This has important ramifications for the sub-rational powers of the human soul. For example, the participation of the lower, sensitive powers in reason is prominent in Aquinas's examination of the passions. Since the passions reside in the sensitive rather than the intellectual appetite, it might seem that they could not be subject to moral appraisal or that the task of ethics would be to create a clear demarcation between reason and passion and then to train reason to check the vagrant impulses of passion. The faulty assumption here is that of an unbridgeable gap between intellect and will, on the one hand, and the sensitive appetite, on the other. Aquinas counters with Aristotle's teaching that, while the lower appetites are not intrinsically rational, they are amenable to rational persuasion and thus may participate in reason<sup>6</sup>. Aquinas divides the passions into concupiscible and irascible. The former (which includes love and hatred, joy and sorrow) pertains to sensible good and evil absolutely, while the latter (which encompasses hope and despair, daring and fear) has a more narrow scope: the arduous or difficult good or evil<sup>7</sup>. The restricted scope of the irascible passions indicates their auxiliary and subordinate role; they are called into action when we encounter

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

arduous goods or onerous evils. Since they concern a restricted good, they pertain to movement alone, as in struggle or flight, not to repose. Thus the concupiscible powers are prior to the irascible and, among the concupiscible, the first is love, whose inclination to the good is the cause of all the passions<sup>8</sup>.

Aquinas's account of human nature provides the metaphysics or anthropology for a proper understanding of a film such as *Babette's Feast*. Pleasure, both bodily and intellectual or spiritual, is natural to human beings. Taking delight in the discrimination of the distinctions of things is woven into the very constitution of our body, as is the communal sharing of that delight through speech. All these themes come together in the communal meal, an event at which the primacy of concupiscible over the irascible passions is made clear. There is certainly a felt and acknowledged need to fend off threats to communal and individual life and a recognition of all the difficulty involved in achieving great goods; all this applies to the irascible appetite. Yet none of this would be worth our effort were it not motivated by a more fundamental love, a desire for human and divine communion, for the feast at which all our longing aims and which scripture never hesitates to use as an image of heaven.

In deploying the meal as symbol, scripture both reveals a dimension of depth latent within our ordinary experience and points us upwards, beyond the symbols themselves, to a divine source, the exemplar of all created things. As M. D. Chenu puts it, "the mental operation proper to symbolism" is a "translation, a transference or elevation from the visible sphere to the invisible."<sup>9</sup> Aquinas explicitly embraces such an understanding when he describes our indirect access to the divine as involving a "translation of likenesses from sensible things to immaterial substances" (*similitudines rerum sensibilium ad substantias immateriales translatae*)<sup>10</sup>. This translation from the visible to the invisible mirrors the ecstasy of which Donne speaks and which Aquinas describes: "divine love makes ecstasy in so far as it makes the appetite incline unto lovable things" ("divinus amor facit extasim in quantum scilicet facit appetitum hominis tendere in res amatores," ST, II-II, 175, 2). Indeed, one of the effects of pleasure on the soul is expansion or dilation<sup>11</sup>. The effect can be seen with respect to both the apprehensive and the affective powers of the soul. With regard to the apprehensive power, the soul is said to be enlarged or dilated (*animus hominis dicitur magnificari seu dilatar*); and with regard to the affective powers, they are said to hand themselves over to continue within the object of delight (*sic dilatur affectus hominis per delectationem, quasi se tradens ad continendum interius rem delectantem*)<sup>12</sup>.

### 3. Family Dining, Diet and Food Distribution: Planting the Seeds of Economic Growth

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#### **Abstract**

Economic growth is an outcome of more than economic processes. It is an outcome of economic, social, and political processes that interact with and reinforce each other in ways that worsen or ease the achievement of economic growth and development. In this paper we seek to establish the relevance of one of these processes, family dinners, for the economy. Empirical evidence indicates a close relationship between family dinners and the production of human, social, and moral capital. Frequent family dinners strengthen the family relations, increase academic performance, and help to prevent substance abuse. Studies also provide evidence of a relationship existing between family meals and economic activity. The existence of family meals affects positively efficiency in the distribution and consumption of food within an economy. Thus, attention to the frequency and the quality of family meals as well as to the patterns of food consumption is of interest for all agents in the economy.

#### **I. Introduction**

The family has a reciprocal relationship with the economic environment; the family is affected by it, but it is also able to shape it. Thus, how families allocate their time is in part a function of what is possible and desired by both its members individually and as a whole, and in part is a function of what is possible and desired given the economic environment in which the family and its members find themselves. Developed countries in the last forty years have experienced economic and demographic changes regarding family life and the allocation of time. These include, among others, the decline in family size, an increase of the rearing of children by single parents, increased maternal employment with the consequent increase in the enrolment of children in early education and childcare, the decline in traditional family activities such as church attendance or visit to elderly relatives, and a decrease in the time spent together by parents and children -which also seems to have affected the frequency and the quality of family dinners. At the same time, there has been an increased concern about the acquisition of skills by children, engaging them in multiple extra curricular activities, while nutritional good habits, especially in America, have significantly declined.

We also know that the family plays an important role in the production of these human, moral, and social capital and therefore, on resources use, economic activity, and economic structures<sup>13</sup>. The ways both parents and children spend their time and consume goods is an indicator of the values parents place on the attainment of certain skills and the quality of consumption. It is also an indicator of the value placed on the context for learning. How they make their choice on the allocation of time and how that has affected family dinners is the subject of this paper. This is relevant for both economic policy analysis and design as the decisions and actions of all members of the household have long-term effects for their development as well as for the growth of the economy.

Since the seminal work of Jacob Mincer (1962) and Gary Becker (1965), economists have become aware of the importance of analyzing the allocation of time not only on work carried out for pay outside the home but on the work of the home and other non-work activities. As a consequence, economic analysis has come to consider that not only the scarce resources but also the allocation of time to various activities affect the relative prices of good and services, the growth path of real output, and the distribution of income. It also affects the development of human, social, and moral capital. Today we know that these last three types of capital are necessary but not sufficient conditions for economic growth to be sustainable<sup>14</sup>.

For the most part, the U.S. research on the allocation of time has centered on the role of time inputs in social accounting, in behavioural models of market and non-market activities, and in the methodological issues around measuring the time used. By contrast, in Europe and developing countries, much of the work concentrated on comparing the time allocation among societal groups or across countries for the purpose of national income accounting. Other studies have attempted to model behaviour and have focused on the use of time within the household to produce market and non-market goods and services such as meals, childcare, housing services, etc. Time allocation research has served two main purposes. At the macro level they have been used in the construction of augmented economic and social accounting systems mainly focusing on non-market production time and inputs of leisure time. The rationale behind this focus has been that leisure activities play an important role in the production of economic welfare. At the micro level, time allocation data has been used to describe and model household behaviour such as the division of responsibility for non-market activities by sex, the allocation of non-market time in children and care of the elderly, and the analysis of leisure time activities. Microeconomic models have examined a set of household production activities involving shopping, cleaning, cooking, repairs and maintenance for housing, etc. Others have used optimization models to analyze household production choices, transportation mode, labour supply, leisure activities, household production and sleep<sup>15</sup>.

In this paper we seek to build on this literature and expand it by studying the connection that exists between family dinners, human capital, and economic activity. We find that frequent family dinners enhance the quality of human and social capital as it improves educational outcomes, strengthen family relations, and deters activities that diminish human, social, and moral capital. Furthermore, we find that family meals are relevant to ensure efficient distribution and consumption of food in the economy.

The next section introduces the theoretical framework for the analysis. Section three presents some evidence of the impact of family dining or the lack of on human, social and moral capital. The forth section deals with the issue of food distribution and its connection to family dinners. The paper ends with conclusions and policy recommendations.

### **The Allocation of time in households**

Becker (1965) and the subsequent household production models (hpm) that followed his original model, introduced a new framework to analyze the response of individuals to market prices, time prices, income, and technologies that would influence the production function for home goods. In it, he proposed the incorporation of the cost of time in the theoretical analysis of choice in the same way that other cost of goods is typically included. Becker viewed the household as a small factory where capital goods, raw materials and labour to clean, feed, raise children and otherwise produce commodities<sup>16</sup>. Thus, in this model, households are both producers and utility maximizers. On the one hand, they combine time and market goods to produce some basic commodities by combining inputs of goods and time according to the cost-minimization rules as the firms do. On the other hand, they also choose the best combination of these commodities in the conventional way by maximizing utility subject to prices and the constraint on resources. Thus, Becker changed the understanding of working hours and leisure in such a way that now the price of consumption is the sum of direct and indirect prices in the same way that the full cost of investing in human capital is the sum of direct and indirect costs. Behind the division between direct and indirect costs is the allocation of time and goods between work-oriented and consumption-oriented activities, i.e., the costs resulting from the allocation of goods and the allocation of time. This means that the two determinants of the importance of forgone earnings are the amount of time per dollar value of goods and the cost per unit of time.

The cost of time, however, is not constant but varies across commodities, as well as over the course of economic agent's life. Whether the time spent in an activity contributes to enhance other activities will also affect its cost. For example, the cost of time is typically higher during the week than during weekends because the first one is not paid if allocated towards consumption-oriented activities while on the weekends, even if time is not allocated to work-oriented activities, it remains paid. For retired persons, however, there will be no differences on the cost of time between weekdays and weekends. Similarly, the cost of time will be less for commodities that contribute to productive efforts such as sleeping, food, or rest. The opportunity cost of time is less because these commodities indirectly contribute to earnings, as sleeping, food and rest contribute towards

the productivity of the household and facilitate the accumulation of human capital.

Households today are more conscious of time: they keep track of it continuously, live in a very tight scheduled, and rush about more. Simultaneously, they seem to be wasteful of material goods. On this count, food is not an exception. There has been a shift from home production of goods and services for the family dinner to their purchase and this has affected the quality of the meal. Using the household production model's framework, such behaviour could be explained, at least partially, as a response to a change in relative costs. One can say that today households have experienced an increase in the cost of time and, this increase in the relative cost of time, has caused a substitution towards more expensive goods. In our case this means that an increase in the value of a mother's time may induce her to enter the labour force and spend less time cooking by using pre-cooked meals, carry-out, eating out or simply hiring workers to carry out the housework, including family meals and the feeding of its members. Household production models predict that changes in the allocation of time should show a change in the methods used to produce given commodities and not a corresponding change in the quality of consumption. This in turn, means that according to Becker's analysis of choice the quality of the family meal should not be affected by substituting it by other way of meeting the food needs of the family members.

As previously mentioned, empirical evidence confirms that as the cost of time increased over the last four decades, the shopping time of both women working outside the home and in the home has increased, with the former registering a significantly larger increase in shopping time than the latter<sup>17</sup>. These results are consistent with the increase of consumption of goods and services that studies have found and that household production models would predict when the relative cost of time increases.

Regarding the quality of consumption as a consequence of the reallocation of time and consumption by households, empirical evidence indicates that rather than remaining the same, the quality of the family meal has declined. Research suggests that families are reducing the frequency with which they sit down together to share meals. With many activities for children conflicting with dinner hours and parents working long hours, families are often unable to eat together at home. Instead, if it takes place, they may sit and rush through meals, eat in shifts, or eat while watching T.V., and thus little interaction takes place<sup>18</sup>. Similarly, empirical evidence has shown a decline in the nutritional value of home meals<sup>19</sup>. Often fast foods, frozen foods, or meals with high energy and fat intakes are used in lieu of healthy meals with balanced diets<sup>20</sup>. The results paint a picture of a lower quality in family dining, which often is accompanied by low interpersonal relations among family members.

The decrease in the quality of meals indicates that family dining is not easily substitutable. Presently, the market produces high quality food products. Thus, the fall in the quality of the food consumed could be either due to lack of knowledge on the part of the household or to income restrictions. The first cause calls for education of the household, the second cause would suggest an overvaluation of the cost of time on the part of the household if one measures this cost strictly as forgone income. The time that the family spends together during meal times, however, cannot be substituted by the market, as interpersonal relationships among specific persons cannot be either bought or sold. Therefore, since families have decreased the time they allocate to family dining, this seems to suggest that it is considered an inferior good. Yet, as we will see later, empirical evidence indicates that for the most part this does not seem to be the case.

Household production models do not include in their analysis the interpersonal relational dimension that some consumption activities, such as family dinners, include. Such dimension is known to be relevant for the generation of human capital<sup>21</sup>. Throughout history, dining has always taken a central role in human interactions and relations. In this regard, not only the content of the meal but the form and the environment in which this takes place has been the subject of great attention by households. Today, in spite of the significant decline in the frequency and the quality of family dinners, its central role has not been forgotten. Empirical evidence finds that most children desire more frequent family dinners, especially when the frequency of them is low. Similarly, 94% of parents who have less than three dinners per week desire frequent family dinners<sup>22</sup>. This indicates that households are aware of the interpersonal relational dimension of family dinners and its importance to the family members. It also suggests that families face barriers, other than lack of willingness, to gathering around the table. These barriers include working hours, after school activities, and long commutes.

Although the presence of women in the workplace has changed, to some extent, women's role in household management, wives have retained primary responsibility for family food shopping and meal preparations<sup>23</sup>. How these conditions affect human capital is what we address in the next section.

### Family Dinners and Human Capital

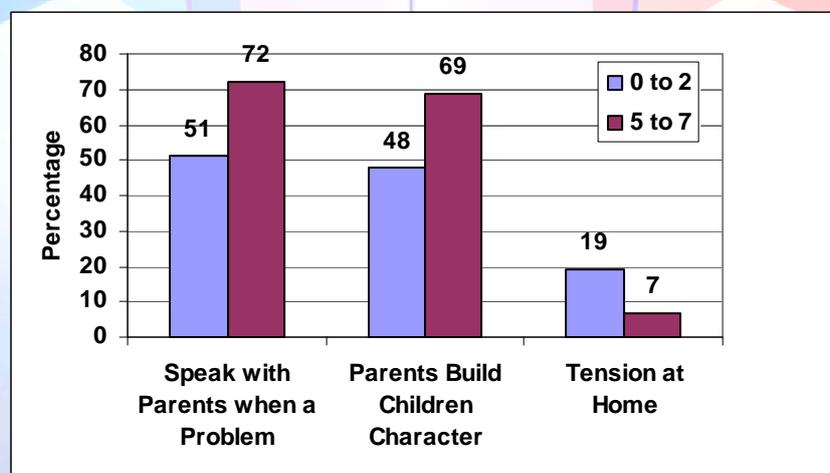
Data from across countries and sciences clearly seems to suggest that healthy families are key for sustainable economic growth. Children develop best within a family that is functional, i.e., with a mother and a father in a stable marriage<sup>24</sup>. Men and women also perform best within a stable family<sup>25</sup>. Empirical evidence also shows that when the family is disrupted, the individual and social costs are very large<sup>26</sup>.

Parental engagement plays an important role, among other things, in the normal physical and psychological development of children, in their academic performance, in their sociability, in their health, and in the prevention of teen substance abuse, violence, and pregnancies<sup>27</sup>. Children in households where there are high relational levels and low levels of tension or stress among family members, where parents reinforce their children's character, and where there is a level of high trust between parents and children, have a significantly higher probability of normal development and are at half of the risk of the average teen for substance abuse<sup>28</sup>. Frequent family dinners are one of the simplest; most effective and important aspects of family life where the engagement between parents and children takes place and strong tides develop.

CASA, the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse in Columbia University, (2005) studies the impact of family dinners on teenagers. Figure 1 presents the relationship between family dinners and strong family relationships. In all cases, where families share dinner frequently, family relationships are stronger. The willingness of children to speak with their parents about a problem and who think their parents are helping them develop a good character are respectively 41% and 43% higher in households where there are frequent family dinners. In contrast, tension among family members is 2.7 times higher in families where family dinners are infrequent. These findings indicate that frequent family dinners facilitate parental engagement and by doing so, contribute to the building of both human capital and positive social capital.

Academic Performance is also affected by the frequency of family dinners. Figure 2 shows that the number of students obtaining B grades or above is 38% higher among teenagers whose families frequently have dinner together. Academic performance is closely tied to both human capital and productivity growth, both important components of economic growth. Empirical evidence shows that human capital affects economic growth both directly through productivity and indirectly through factors of production, mainly technology and innovation<sup>29</sup>.

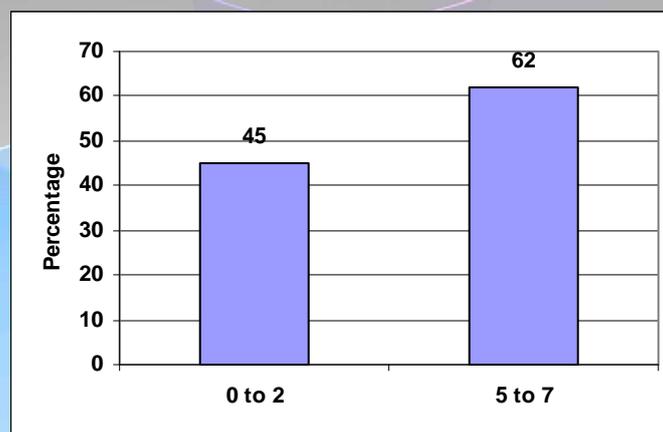
**Figure 1**  
**Family Relationships and Its Relation to the Frequency of Family Dinners**  
 (% of Teens)



Source: *The Importance of Family Dinners II*, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University.

These results shed some light in explaining some of the reasons for the difference in academic performance of children that have been found in the U.S. *vis a vis* other developed countries. In spite of higher educational expenditures per capita in the U.S., the academic performance of children in the U.S. is lower than in other developed countries. For the most part, for men and women across countries the time spent in paid work as well as housework is roughly the same between developed or developing countries. Yet, the time spent in social interactions is substantially higher in the U.S. than in any other developed countries while the frequency of family dinners is higher in other developed countries than in the U.S. This suggests that what type of social interaction children receives make a difference in their academic performance. Spending time driving children to a myriad of activities, attending basketball and football games, etc... cannot replace the time spent in family dinners as the former are not perfect substitutes of the latter. It also indicates that the relative cost of time to family dinners is higher than the cost of time towards other modes of spending time with one's children.

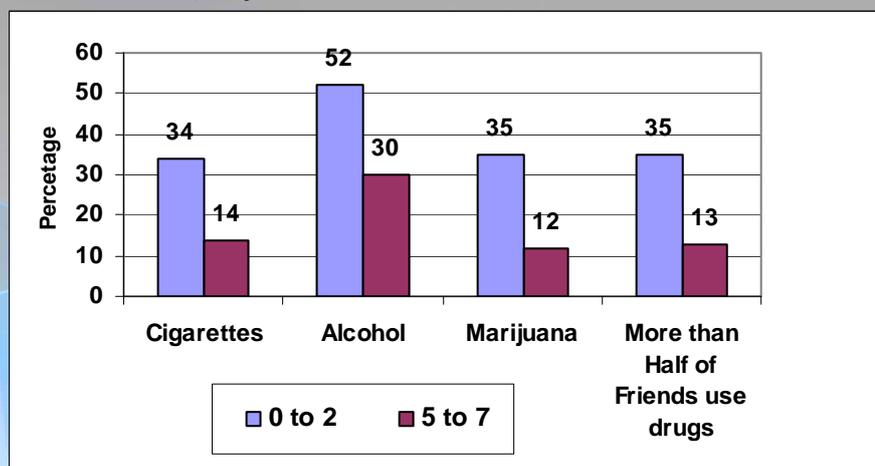
**Figure 2**  
**Academic Performance and Its Relation to the Frequency of Family Dinners**  
*(% of Teens Obtaining Mostly A or B Grades in School)*



**Source:** *The Importance of Family Dinners II*, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University.

Figure 3 presents the effects of frequent family dinners on substance abuse among teenagers. The evidence shows that teenagers whose families have less than two family dinners per week are two and a half times more likely to smoke cigarettes, one and half times more likely to drink alcohol, and three times more likely to try marijuana. In addition, infrequent family dinners increase the risk of teenagers relating to other children who use drugs by 169% (35% vs. 13%). The negative effect of substance abuse in education is well-documented fact. Also well documented is the crime and decline in moral capital connected with such behavior. Empirical evidence shows that declines in moral capital have negative effects in both investment and economic growth<sup>30</sup>. Eating family dinners together has also been found to be associated with less aggression overall, as well as less delinquency in youth from single-parent families<sup>31</sup>. Thus, results suggest that in the efforts to decrease substance abuse among children and adolescents, the frequency of family dinner play need to be included. From this perspective, parental education and awareness is essential. It is important to note that substance abuse imposes a significant burden on the government finances not only due to rehabilitation costs but also because of the spillover on crime and neighborhood security, narcotic traffic, and productivity of workers.

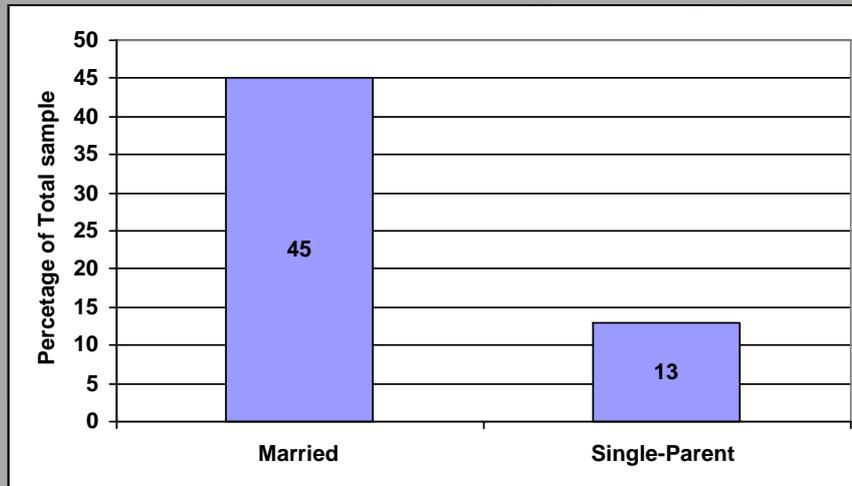
**Figure 3**  
**Substance Abuse and Its Relation to the Frequency of Family Dinners**  
*(% of Teens Who Have Tried Abuse Substances)*



Source: *The Importance of Family Dinners II*, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University.

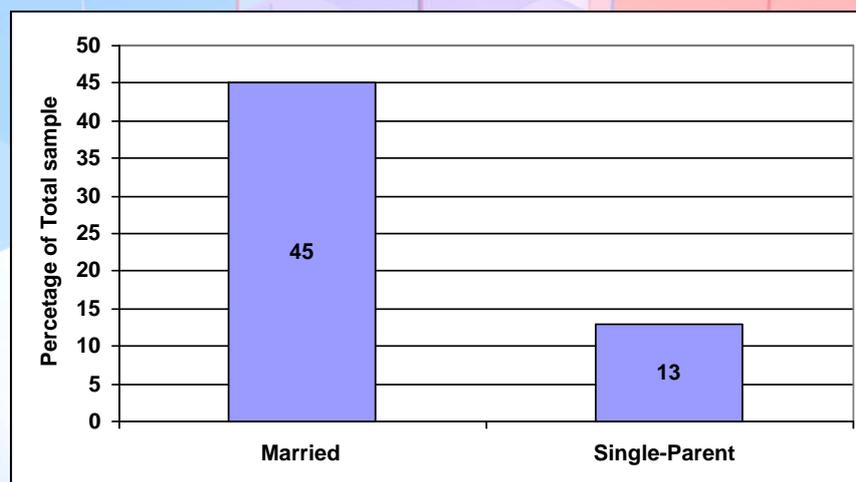
It is also relevant to consider the quality of family dinners. Figure 4 presents this information. Here family dinner is measured by whether television is usually on or off during dinner, whether dinner lasts too long or is not long enough, and whether there is enough conversation and sharing of matters in life. Once again, teenagers in households where family dinners are infrequent report the worse quality of family dinners. 45% of these households eat with the TV present, 29% report that the dinners are rushed, and 37% report low levels of interaction among family members. By contrast, in household where family dinners are frequent, use of TV during meals and rush dinners are 1.2 times and 2.5 times less frequent. Also, lack of conversations during meals is 3.1 times more infrequent in these families. This is very relevant for human capital formation as empirical evidence reveals that low levels of parental-children relationships are detrimental to their physical and psychological health as well as to their academic performance and sociability. In addition, many hours of television has been found to be a relevant factor in the obesity of children and adolescents. In turn, obesity has been found to increase health care costs as well as to decrease academic performance<sup>32</sup>.

**Figure 5**  
**Percentage of Children Whose Families have Family Dinners by Family Structure**  
 (% of children)



The frequency of family dinners is connected to the family structure. We know that family structures are closely connected to the welfare and well-being of its family members. In all cases single parents are significantly worse off than married couples<sup>33</sup>. Hofferth *et al* (2000) reports a significant difference in the time spent in family dinners each week across family structures. While on average children of married couples spend 8 hours a week in family dinners, children from single-parent families spend 4.06 hours in family dinners. Similarly, the percentage of children having family dinners is 3.5 times higher in married couples than single-parents households (Figure 5). Empirical evidence also shows that single mothers spend less time in meal preparation and consumption<sup>34</sup>. Thus, indicating that marriage is more conducive to frequent family dinners, which in turn strengthens the development of human and social capital. These results are consistent with the large body of literature that suggests that stable families are best for human beings that in turn, strengthen human capital.

**Figure 5**  
**Percentage of Children Whose Families have Family Dinners by Family Structure**  
 (% of children)



Sources: Administration for Children and Families, Department of House and Human Services.

In Summary, the data thus far indicates that the frequency of family dinners affect the quality of social and human capital generated in the family. Frequency of family dinners strengthens the family relations, increases academic performance, and helps prevent substance abuse. However, it is not enough for a family to eat together. The quality and the family structure where the family dinner takes place are important as well. Married couples eat more frequently together. We now turn to the analysis of the impact of family dinners in the economic activity.

## Family Dinners and Economic Activity

The operation of any economy can be summarized in three fundamental activities: production, exchange, and consumption. When studying family dinners, it is this last activity, which is relevant. To consume one first needs to obtain goods and services. In order to obtain goods and services one needs buying power and distribution power, which takes place through income and redistributed profits<sup>35</sup>. This redistribution is influenced by history, luck, and nature, as well as by every economic agent's behavior<sup>36</sup>. It is this influence exercised by each economic agent that demonstrates the need of human capital for a fair and equitable distribution system to enable goods and buying power to meet the needs of the family. Studies are unanimous in concluding that there are substantial returns to scale in consumption in the economies of home production<sup>37</sup>. In order to examine how family dinners influence distribution and consumption in an economy the 1958-1961 famine in China as well as the most recent change in the consumption patterns of Chinese children are of assistance.

What makes the Chinese famine a useful case is that it occurred at a time when China had enough supply of food available. In addition, it acquired unprecedented magnitudes, as in a short period of time it produced 30 million casualties and about 33 million postponed births<sup>38</sup>. Studies have found a variety of causes to explain it, including bad weather, reduction in sown acreage, government's high grain procurement, forced collectivization, allocation of resources away from agriculture to heavy industry, bad management, and collapse of incentive mechanisms. Another factor to which the famine has been attributed to is the sudden withdrawal rights from the collectives<sup>39</sup>. Although these theories offered some explanations as to the magnitude of the catastrophe, they failed to explain why the famine first started when there was not only enough supply but in fact the grain per capita income available for both agricultural and non-agricultural populations had registered an increase in 1958. In a 1997 study, Chang and Wen suggest that the primary cause of the famine was not the collapse in grain production but the failure in consumption rationality that took place when family dinners were replaced by the communal dining system<sup>40</sup>.

In 1958, with the aim of reinforcing the communist ideology in China, Mao and the Party created more than 2.65 million communal dining halls. Commune members were instructed to dine in them in stead of at their homes<sup>41</sup>. The Party advertised the new policy as a means to liberate more labour, especially women, from housework for productive purpose. As a consequence, private kitchens were destroyed in many places, peasants' private food stocks were collectivized, and cooking woks and pots were collected and melted down to serve as iron or steel. Furthermore, under the illusion of unlimited food supply, communal dining halls provided free meals to members, and communes no longer allocated grain and other food products to individual farm households. Instead, food products were channelled directly into communal dining halls, thus peasants had no other option but to rely on them for meals<sup>42</sup>.

A popular slogan of the communal dining halls was "open your stomach, eat as much as you wish, and work hard for socialism." As a consequence, peasants ate more than they needed, leftovers were thrown away, and much of the food was wasted in the process of transfers from storage to cooking simply because of neglect or poor management. This over consumption and waste quickly exhausted the food and by the end of 1958 there was a reported food shortage and/or starvation in some areas<sup>43</sup>. In spite of this, Mao refused to revert his policy until the mid of 1961 when farmers were allowed to decide whether to keep communal dining halls or prepare meals in their own kitchens. Also, small private plots were returned to the peasants. As a result of this reversal on policy, most communal dining halls were closed and the grain output started to grow. The famine was ended within six months<sup>44</sup>.

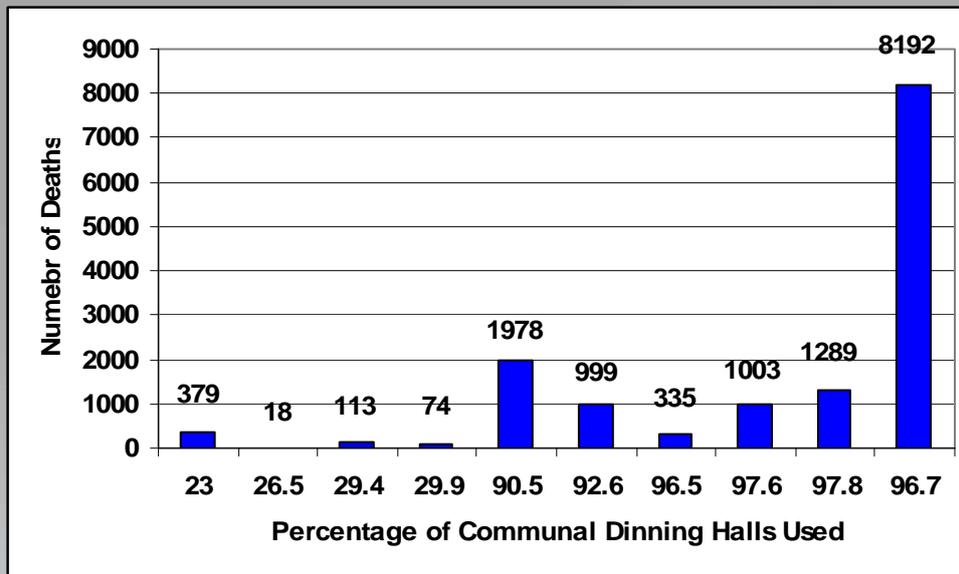
Figure 6 depicts the relationship between the use of communal dining halls by the population and the number of deaths generated by the famine. Although with some outliers, that reflect the impact of other factors in mitigating or exacerbating the famine, an inverse relationship can be found.

Clearly the experience of the Chinese famine of 1958-1961 speaks to the relationship that exists between family dinners and efficiency food consumption and distribution. The elimination of family dinners precipitated within six months a famine that lasted until family dinners were re-instated. Although other causes, as previously mentioned helped contribute to the catastrophic development, family dinners played a crucial role in the beginning of the famine and in its end. The Chinese experience also indicates that when economic policy

**Figure 6**  
**Number of Death by Percentage of Population Use of Communal Dining Halls**

Source: Chang and Wen (1997), Table 5.

Samples were chosen by using 30% of lower as a criteria for low use of communal dining and 90% or above as a criteria for high use of communal dining. The total data



included 25 provinces.

undermines family dinners, the consequences for the economy of a country could be disastrous and economic growth becomes unsustainable.

Today, forty five years later, China is facing another distribution and consumption food problem but of a different nature. Various surveys on children's consumption have reflected that, since the late 1990s, in Chinese urban families, children's consumption is higher than that of adults. Studies have found that parents unceasingly satisfy children's wishes of food consumption, but ignore what children really need for their healthy growth, thus wasting resources and jeopardizing the development of their children. Some provide to them excessive in between-meals and unbalanced diets that destroy their such as liquid food supplements when they do not need them. Thus the family meal has been replaced by milk, cookies, and cold drinks, or by health supplements, all of which contribute to stomach diseases. Not surprisingly, the number of digestive medical conditions among children has doubled in five years<sup>45</sup>.

Children's luxury consumption is mainly reflected in between meals snacks. Expensive candy and canned drinks are bought by parents if they are in fashion. Researchers have indicated that such pattern of consumption can not be sustained by all families and therefore it is lowering the parents' living standards. Concerns on this issue have been accentuated by the rapid aging population that China is suffering and by the negative human capital as well as distributional effects that this waste of resources can have in upcoming years. They sustain that if parents unconditionally satisfy children's food desires, it is easy for children to be led to the one-sided pursuit for material goals and go astray if their family cannot satisfy their expanded material desires<sup>46</sup>. Thus, resources are used inefficiently when decisions on consumption are made in such a way that weaken family dinners rather than strengthening them. This, in turn, hampers the sustainability of real economic growth as it affects negatively not only the efficiency of distribution and consumption of goods and services in the economy, but also affects savings and thus investment.

## Conclusions

Economic growth is an outcome of more than economic processes. It is an outcome of economic, social, and political processes that interact with and reinforce each other in ways that worsen or ease the achievement of economic growth and development. In this paper we have sought to establish the relevance of one of these processes, family dinners, for the economy. In doing so, we attempted to establish the relationships that exist between family dinners, and human, social and moral capital, as well as with economic growth. Empirical evidence indicates a close relationship between family dinners and the different types of capital previously mentioned. Frequent family meals enhance human, moral, and social capital, the existence of all of which are necessary conditions for sustainable economic growth. Frequent family dinners strengthen family relations, increase academic performance, and help prevent substance abuse. Furthermore, the role of frequent family dinners in the economy indicate that many of today's human, social, and moral capital problems are not going to be resolved in court rooms, legislative hearing rooms or classrooms, by judges, politicians, or teachers. Rather it will be solved in living rooms, dining rooms, and across kitchen tables – by parents and families.

Studies also provide evidence of a relationship existing between family meals and economic activity. The existence of family meals affects efficiency in the distribution and consumption of food within an economy positively. Furthermore, the Chinese case indicates that is not enough for an economy to produce enough food. The context in which the food is distributed and consumed, as well as the quality of meals are also important for the interpersonal relational dimension of consumption, which in turn plays an important role in developing human capital and strengthening social and moral capital. Thus, attention to the frequency and the quality of family meals as well as to the patterns of food consumption is of interest for all agents in the economy.

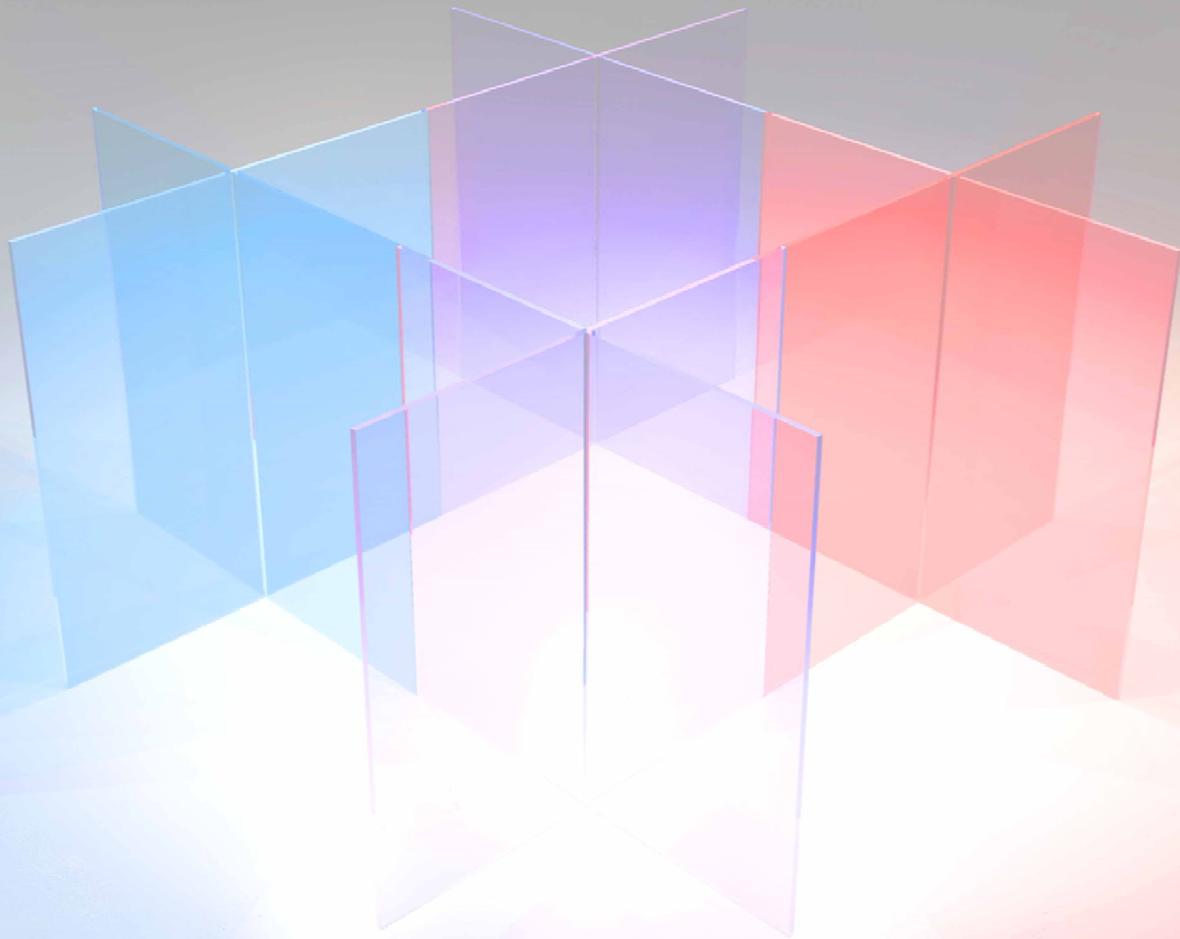
The frequency of quality family dinners is higher in healthy families, where both parents are present. It follows that good economic policies with regard to family dinners foster a healthy constitution, preservation, and development of the family. As in any other aspect of the economy, it is not enough to seek the implementation of remedial policies, i.e., those who seek to solve or assist dysfunctional situations or their consequences. Friendly family policies are needed at both the micro and the macroeconomic level and facilitating frequent family dinners is one way of doing this. For this, all sectors of society need to be engaged.

Governments can foster and promote the family through using multiple tools: taxes, education, health care, homeownership, and work participation policies. Within this context, if governments aim at increasing the quality and frequency of family dinners, three issues need to be addressed: working hours, after school activities, and long commutes. In the area of work and school activities, the structure itself seems to be in need of revision. Long working hours and short school hours combined with a myriad of extra curricular activities are not conducive to frequent family dinners. In both areas, much remains to be done. An important change in paradigm is required if these policies are to effectively address the family dining needs. In order for policies to be effective they must address the needs of the family as a unit and not the needs of each of its members independently of each other. The relative cost of time to family dinners also demonstrates that time should be crucial component of public projects involving time savings, mostly transportation.

At the private sector level, businesses also need to respond to the need of strengthening the family. The length of the workday as well as its structure requires immediate attention. Some of these initiatives can include systems of flexible working hours for men and women, work sharing, and the provision of facilities that allow parents, especially mothers, to work from their home some days of the week. At the individual level, education and information regarding the importance of frequent family dinners, their role in the creation and growth of human capital, as well as the normal development of children needs to be imparted. Only in this manner the allocation of time will be optimal in this area. In this endeavour, mothers have a special role, as it is generally she who has primary responsibility for the performance of household tasks, especially in the area of food shopping and meal preparation, even though she might also work outside her home.

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

Elsewhere, I have argued that it is within the family that the need for distribution is mainly felt and that it is for this reason that it is through the family that the economy transcends the mere individual level. Distribution within the family is usually carried out through the women. One can see, therefore, the importance of the women's role in the economy. Woman, because of her characteristics, has the capacity to distribute goods in a just manner, according to the specific needs of each member of the family. This is an important idea when thinking on income distribution theory and policy as well as on sustainable real economic development<sup>47</sup>. The study of the family meal and its effect on human capital as well as on consumption reinforces this idea.



#### 4. Balanced Home – Balanced Diet? Sociological Aspects of Food Culture and Family Life

Prof. Dr. Kirsten Schlegel-Matthies, University of Paderborn



##### The Ideal Model of Family Meals and Family Life

In Germany the family meals and woman's role are strongly connected. "Cooking is Love" is an old proverb that shows the traditional understanding of family meals and woman's role in the family. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century women had to prepare the dishes and meals taking into account their husband's taste. They had to care for the children and prepare their daughters for their future role as a housewife. With her housework the German housewife created family and family life.

##### *Meal time as family time*

In Germany, as well as in most other Western countries, three daily common meals became a symbol of family life. Relatives met in an ideal way during meals at home and meals structured the day. They formed an area free of the obligations and necessities of the world outside. Meals were important for communication in the family and for the socialisation of children – and meals were prepared with love by housewives.

The proper meal (Mary Douglas) in the family is defined differently in the different cultures. It needs generally  
a typical carbohydrate supply  
a typical protein supply  
typical tasty supplements (vegetables, sauces) and spices

In England and Germany a "proper" meal consists of "meat, potatoes, vegetables and sauce". In the 20<sup>th</sup> century this meal order became the social orientation model and was culturally dominant even though the work and living conditions of large parts of the population opposed it. (Barlösius 1999, S. 182)

##### Changes and Challenges

During the last 100 years we can find changes and challenges in different dimensions that have influenced family meals and family life.

##### *Dimension of Food Offer*

The agrarian revolution and the industrial food production secured for the first time food and nutrition for all people. The improvement of the traffic infrastructure and the spreading of new preservation methods brought new food products from all over the world into homes.

##### *Dimension of Food Demand*

Food supplies depend more and more on the money economy and that was connected with the loss of control over food. Different timetables (working time, family time) have to be synchronised. Meals and the preparation of meals and dishes are accelerating.

##### *Dimension of Household and Family Life*

All these technological and economical changes have had effects on food Culture and family meals. "Scientific management in the home" became a slogan in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The kitchen became a workshop with new kitchen devices and furniture. Cooking became more and more scientifically based. The housewife was a lonely worker in her kitchen.

Women's role in family life changed extremely. With women's emancipation in society and the rising employment of women, traditional competencies and skills for preparing food and meals have been lost over the last 50 years. On the other hand, men do not feel responsible for nutrition and everyday life. The German historian Uwe Spiekermann called men trendsetters for incompetence and continued that women copy them successfully.

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

Time structures and balances within the households have changed with changing household and family forms and the different timetables of the family members.

Convenience and half-convenience products were used to save time during meal preparation. Family time became more and more immersed in the media, and eating out increased. Nowadays common family meals have become rare and shift to weekends and / or special occasions.

Decrease of cooking talents

Increase of convenience food (fast food at home)

The younger the person, the smaller the household, the smaller the competencies

80% of men cannot cook (exception: 2/3 of homosexual men cook gladly)

Women can cook increasingly less

Decrease of time for food preparation

Approximately 40 minutes per day for three core meals

The younger the person, the smaller the household, the less is cooked

Nowadays people are more and more alienated from the origins of food. Everything is available all the time and everywhere. An increasing acceleration of meals and preparation together with a standardisation and internationalisation of taste can be observed. The woman's role has changed fundamentally, but what about the man's role? Who does the work in the family? The neglect to the meal is a negative part of positive emancipation.

### **New Trends: Young People as Agents for Change?**

Communication at mealtimes is increasing in significance (Barlösius 1999) and participation in family meals is increasingly becoming an option for young people (Bartsch 2006). Today, food provision is no longer exclusively linked to shared mealtimes. A general tendency towards a more liberal upbringing is also manifested where food is concerned and family meals are seen by young people as a significant forum for conversation (Bartsch 2006)

### **Between Nature and Nurture – New Approaches in Nutrition and Consumer Education**

Nutrition and consumer education deals directly or indirectly with individual life and lifestyle. Teaching nutrition in school therefore includes – whether openly or hidden – a reflection on personal food habits. Teachers often extravagante in ignoring and defending sensibilities of individual, familiar and sociocultural eating habits.

Nutrition and consumer education need teachers who know about their own individual, familiar and sociocultural eating habits and those of their students. Furthermore, they have to know and to reflect on the problems involved. The German REVIS concept is a framework for teachers and schools in that way. The educational goals and competencies will be shown in the following charts.

**REVIS – Educational goals and competencies**

Educational Goals	Competencies: Students are prepared and able to	This includes the aspect that they...
Students evaluate the history of their eating habits in a critical and self-determined way.	...deal with influencing factors, limitations, and alternative ways of developing their individual eating habits.	know and understand the effects that sociocultural and historical factors have on our eating habits, are able to identify, analyse, and evaluate everyday images of food, nutrition, and the body, are able to recognize and understand how their eating habits have become what they are, are able to develop different ways of acting in different situations and apply these in the further development of their eating history.
Therefore, students develop healthy eating habits.	...see the correlation between nutrition and health and take responsibility for themselves and others.	see and reflect upon the correlation between food and nutrition and its significance for personal health, heed body signals such as thirst, hunger, appetite, and satiation, know and understand foods, their ingredients and their effects on metabolism, know nutrition recommendations and rules and are able to look critically at general information about nutrition.
Students act competently in the culture and techniques of nutrition and meal planning.	...deal with cultural conditions, the meaning and function of meals.	are able to plan and prepare meals according to different situations and are able to appreciate the work involved, arrange food and meals and chose groceries in consideration of health and sustainability, know and understand techniques of food preparation and know how to apply them, reflect critically upon information on food and instructions for food preparation.
Students develop a positive self-image through food and nutrition.	...deal with the interrelation of body and eating habits.	deal with and accept their own body and its processes, deal with and reflect critically upon the dependency of our body image on societal and historical factors, are aware of the meaning of food and nutrition and apply this awareness, develop behaviour toward their own bodies that is both pleasurable and responsible with regard to food and drink
Students develop personal resource management and are capable of taking responsibility for themselves and others.	...deal with future possibilities and risks	know the variety of individual and societal resources and understand their meaning as well as their developments and limitations, know and understand the principles and possibilities of financial and preventive management and are able to apply its instruments, understand and are able to apply the principals of short-, middle-, and long-term resource management, know and are able to make use of offers of advice and information.

<p>Students make critical and self-determined consumer decisions.</p>	<p>...identify sociocultural conditions and take them into account when making decisions.</p>	<p>recognize the demands that lead to consumption and know and apply different ways of fulfilling those demands, are able to analyse their own consumer biography and its relevance for the development of a personal life style, understand and reflect critically upon market mechanisms and the economic system, are able to evaluate processes of consuming and decision making and shape them to fit different situations.</p>
<p>Students critically develop their role as consumers with all its rights and responsibilities.</p>	<p>...reflect critically upon their role as a consumer and arrange their actions accordingly.</p>	<p>know their rights and duties as a consumer and are able to evaluate and apply them accordingly, know possible consequences of consumer decisions in regard to contractual conditions and financial duties, are able to act confidently towards experts and institutions, are able to obtain information and special offers from institutions and evaluate and critically use them.</p>
<p>Students make consumer decisions in point of quality.</p>	<p>...understand sustainability, health, and functionality as vital factors in the context of nutrition and consumption.</p>	<p>know, understand, and are able to evaluate examples of the production, processing, and disposal of products, know the effects of manual and industrial processing on the quality of a product and use this knowledge when making consumer decisions, understand the factor "work" within the production of goods as well as its local and global effects, take into consideration the local and global correlation of the production of goods and personal decisions.</p>
<p>Students develop a sustainable life-style.</p>	<p>...deal with habits and routines of consumer behaviour in every day life.</p>	<p>know and understand the concept of sustainability, are able to analyse their own everyday actions and consumer behaviour on the basis of sustainability and use this ability for their decisions, identify and reflect upon different ways of life and hence develop strategies and routines for their own life style, develop the ability to take responsibility in processes of sustainability.</p>

## Part II

### 1. Home Management Education in the Workplace

Mary Hunt, HomeAdvantage Plus, USA

#### Introduction

Our homes have a unique and essential influence on the overall sense of well-being, happiness and effectiveness in our personal and family lives. Business consultants provide education to improve management practices within all types of organizations. Organizations are consistently concerned with enhancing job performance and employee satisfaction. One factor that influences employee satisfaction is the effort to balance the many demands of life. This paper describes how more effective home management can have a positive influence on work-family balance.

Work-family conflict was formally defined over twenty years ago as a form of interrole conflict where the demands of work and family are incompatible such that the activity of one role is made more difficult due to participation in the other role (Greenhaus & Bueutell, 1985). At the heart of the work-life issue is the question of how individuals make work and nonwork demands compatible in their personal lives, with their families and, within organizations (Kossek and Lambert, 2005). While care for children or aging parents is easily seen as having a direct impact on work-family strain, the daily challenges of managing home life are often overlooked in the work-life balance equation.

Attention to work-family conflict paralleled the rise of women in the workplace in all industries. Women are now equally immersed in the workforce with men. In some countries there are limited social support systems for household and child care and so it typically falls on these working women. Several years ago we recognized the lack of skills and confidence that many women have when it comes to managing their homes. Otherwise well-educated professional women often feel incompetent or overwhelmed when it comes to caring for their own homes. This growing skill gap among younger women seems to come from the fact that in more recent decades mothers have not been able to pass on basic homemaking knowledge and skills to their children. While this may be the result of a lack of time, it also may be a consequence of the fractured, fast-paced nature of our technological societies. Regardless of the reasons for the slackening of homemaking skills, we now see a resurgence of interest in the irreplaceable value of the home.

HomeAdvantage launched an effort to bring education in home management skills to the workplace to address these current issues. This paper describes some perspectives on the importance of the home for workplace productivity and the impact of stress on our ability to integrate the demands of work and home. Finally we share an approach that some businesses have adopted to help their employees transfer management skills used in the workplace to their homes.

#### Brief overview of corporate work/life balance practices

The evolution of "work/life" or "work/family" balance has its roots in the full entrance of women into the traditionally male dominated business workforce in the early 1970's. By the mid-1980's the influx of women into the workforce was such that while in most ways they adapted to a business structure developed by men, it was inevitable that they would have a feminine influence on the workplace that was based on their specific needs, challenges and priorities.

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

Over these past 20 years we have seen a clear movement of working families towards a positive focus on home life that fosters the essential dignity of the person and the family. Following the economic growth of the 1980's, the last decade witnessed an increased concern among individuals to reassess their personal priorities. Several social factors contributed to this trend, yet one key influence is the realization among many workers that family life has suffered from an unbalanced commitment to the organization that consumes their time and energies. As they realize that the peaks and valleys of the marketplace have little concern for individual well being, more and more employees now look for practical ways to give priority to their family life alongside their commitment to the corporation.

We see this in:

- An increased desire among women to discover ways that allow them to focus on raising their family and creating a home;
- A greater willingness among men to set limits to their working hours in order to spend more time with their family or to enable their wives to take on outside employment;
- The rapid emergence of flexible work arrangements and teleworking opportunities that reduce the amount of time that workers spend away from home.

Yet this shift has also been a daily struggle and at times a source of confusion for conscientious workers within this demanding economic culture.

Despite efforts to leave "personal concerns" at the door when going to work, employees are individuals who cannot fully compartmentalize their lives. All of the aspects of life are integrated into one mind and one heart so it is inevitable that concerns from one part of life will spillover into another. We all acknowledge that we are often distracted at home with a current work problem and similar spillover from home to work is also inevitable. Consider the common mid-afternoon concern—for a working parent a typical thought in the middle of the afternoon or perhaps in the midst of a meeting with a colleague or client is the daily question of "What's for dinner?"

Common work-life benefits include employee assistance programs, parental leave, wellness programs and elder care services. With technological changes in the 1990's we saw the mainstreaming of telecommuting and off-site work arrangements. Traditional work/life benefits have focused on child care and flexible work hours. Some businesses have added concierge services to assist workers in accomplishing basic daily errands but until recently these work/life benefits have overlooked the practical need for day-to-day home management skills.

In developed economies we have also created a misplaced expectation that one should be able to "have it all"-successful, advanced career options and a thriving family life. In recent years more professional workers, particularly women, have recognized that given the limited amount of time and the nature of family life we may not be able to "have it all" all at once. Many other employees, perhaps in non-professional roles, have fewer options-they must work and raise their families "all at once"-and they need to find workplace cultures that support this need while still reaching business objectives. Each of these notions has practical consequences and they represent challenges we still face in creating workplaces that fundamentally support work/life balance or integration. In order to make work and family life compatible, individuals need the practical skills and knowledge both on-the-job and at home.

### **Home Management: A Key Element for Work/Life Balance**

Two generations ago the majority of women worked full-time in the home. Their primary professional work was the care of their home and family. Today over 70% of married couples in the U.S. have both spouses working outside the home. Women in their 20s and 30s are the second generation of this trend. Their mothers were already working outside the home and had little time to pass on basic homemaking skills. As a result we see that today highly successful women feel less than competent in caring for their homes with a sense of professionalism and ease.

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

Regular outside assistance with homemaking is not as common as it may have been in some Western societies in past generations. Workers commute longer hours and therefore have less time at home. Above all people are managing multiple roles and responsibilities—just when the home has become even more important for personal and family life, we now have less time and knowledge needed to care for the home.

All around us we see the signs of interest in everything related to the home—television programs, magazines, and furniture and accessory stores all point to the rising interest in creating a comfortable, attractive haven in our homes. And so we face a real paradox—there is less time, attention and accountability for the work of the home yet there is more focus on improving and enjoying the home to bring greater balance to life.

The HomeAdvantage educational design offers practical education in home management with the goal of helping people gain professionalism in their approach to the work of the home that will result in greater blending of work and home responsibilities.

### Home Management Solutions to Reduce Work-Life Stress

Despite the well-accepted fact that most of us feel we don't have enough time, in fact a recent Federal Reserve Board working paper asserts that we now enjoy an average of 5.1 more hours of leisure today than in 1965. Economists categorize our use of time away from work as either consumption (enjoying friends, reading, watching TV) or production (household work, cooking dinner, doing laundry). Improved technology (microwave ovens) and the growth in restaurant and takeout meals are indicative of areas where we save production time at home. The widespread number of women working outside the home has spurred demand for these types of conveniences but not all work at home can nor should it be outsourced. There remain a certain number of daily responsibilities that must be cared for. The better one is equipped with the skills to manage these daily tasks, the more effective one's ability to balance work and home.

Stress is always a factor near at hand when evaluating work-life interaction. Time plays a key role in an attempt to understand work-life stress. The more time-sensitive or urgent the task, the greater is the stress involved. Consider the nature of paid work tasks—typically our paid work is linear, project oriented or based on discretely identified goals. These tasks nearly always have an end in sight and with that end comes approval and a satisfying sense of completion. Contrast this with many household tasks—the stuff of daily living is cyclical, not linear. Eating, sleeping, clothing—many things related to household work are repeated day after day. This is human nature. Along with the repeated nature of these tasks comes the time sensitive need to get the task done—meal preparation must be done daily, children need to be picked up at school at a certain time day after day, eventually the laundry must be done so that we have clean clothing to wear. The time-sensitive nature of this kind of work brings with it an increased level of stress. Unfortunately the cyclical nature of household work also does not lend itself to accolades and the same sense of project accomplishment. The many responsibilities that fill our day are significant and yet often go unacknowledged and certainly seem less glamorous than the accomplishment of a project on the job.

Meal planning or meal preparation could be considered one of the most stressful of household tasks precisely because it is absolutely necessary. The need for nourishment does not wait. We each need to eat at regular intervals each day; while we do have the option of going to a restaurant or getting take-out and prepared foods, there always comes a point when the desire for healthier, home-cooked family meals means that we must face the challenge. With better skills and knowledge we can alleviate some of the stress of meal preparation thereby enhancing our home lives and improving the quality of life. And so, businesses are now recognizing the value of providing employees with the education needed to alleviate the stress of home management.

## Transferring Skills from Work to Home

So how does this education take place? It was asserted earlier that many well-educated, successful workers today feel incompetent when it comes to homemaking. Part of this sense of incompetence comes from the view they have of the work involved in caring for a home. It is seen as something completely distinct from the other aspects of life; something that either comes naturally or does not.

In fact, caring for home is a management responsibility that requires the use of many of the management skills that equip professionals in their working lives. The most fundamental management skills—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—are all necessary for effective home management. When put in these terms businesses have realized the value of offering education to their employees that helps to transfer their management skills from work to home.

HomeAdvantage takes these basic management skills and applies them to the home, encouraging people to recognize the professional nature of the work that is done at home and thereby raising the quality of that work.

By way of example, consider the daily challenge of meals. If we apply management skills to this challenge it becomes much less daunting. Begin with planning and consider the time management involved in planning for the week ahead, thinking of the schedule of the household, making a list, choosing realistic menus that fit the needs of the family without being overly time consuming. Planning leads to accomplishing the shopping in a more organized fashion and consequently saving time with reduced trips to the market. Organization ensures that meal preparation is more streamlined. When one knows the inventory in the pantry, what is on-hand in the refrigerator—when the dishes are done and the cabinets are well-organized, the process of putting meals on the table becomes much less of a concern.

Delegation at home is also essential. All good leaders delegate—at home it is very important to engage others—we see how it teaches them skills and virtues that are invaluable for life. And so HomeAdvantage advises finding ways to delegate meal preparation; encouraging children to set the table, help with the dishes or prepare a salad or dessert. We encourage people to look at their skill strengths in the workplace and apply these same professional qualities to their approach to the work of the home.

When one looks at the home with a professional outlook and applies the management skills that work so well in other areas of life the result is an ability to manage the multiple priorities of the home with greater ease and confidence. The need to retain productive workers in the business world has caused employers to look at ways to improve work/life balance and has led some to adopt the creative approach of offering home management education in the workplace. We see this as a progressive trend pointing to a healthier future that recognizes the value of the home not only to the person and the family but to business world as well.

## 2. Understanding the Professionalization of the Culinary Field from a Sociological Perspective

Dr. Marta Elvira – Lexington College, Chicago, USA

"I soon saw, as I considered every aspect of the pleasures of the table, that something better than a cookbook should be written about them; and there is a great deal to say about those functions which are so ever-present and so necessary, and which have such a direct influence on our health, our happiness, and even on our occupations."

(Brillat-Savarin, 2000:20)

As Brillat-Savarin brilliantly stated over two centuries ago, the very necessity of nourishment might explain why societies often take for granted a fundamental aspect of human culture. Yet gathering and sharing meals is a central social action with important consequences for physical and psychological wellbeing, as well as for the structure of occupations in society. Much has been written about the relationship between food, health, and culture. Less attention has been paid to understanding how culinary occupations have evolved and what the culinary profession brings to society and culture.

The recent trend toward an increasing professionalizing of the chef's role within all forms of foodservice organizations, especially in terms of how women and multicultural subgroups are advancing into upper level managerial roles during the past two decades, brings to the fore the changing face of professional identity for chefs. This complex theme is ripe for research applying sociological frameworks (e.g., cultural theories) to study the evolution of culinary career paths. Sociology's insights concern individual behavior in the context of their social environment. Thus, it can illuminate our understanding of social behavior around food, eating, cooking, and dietary lifestyles. What and how we eat, who prepares it and how it is prepared tells us what we value and who we are as a society.

Sociologists have studied food and meals mostly in the past two decades (Mennell et al., 1992, Beardsworth & Keil, 1997). They have also studied extensively the professionalization of various professional service fields such as law, medicine, and accounting (Abbott, 1988). Relatively less is known about the content or the social organization of culinary work (Fine, 1996; Ruhlman, 1997; and Simons, 2004 are welcome exceptions). In *The Invention of the Restaurant*, Trubek (2000: xi) affirms: "Often missing were the voices of those who made the food, the men and women who labored every day to transform raw ingredients into sumptuous meals. Few if any, have documented the history of cooks or chefs de cuisine; other than cookbooks and anecdotes, the past is mute. And great meals, unlike great buildings leave few traces. [...] We don't know where the food came from, who cooked it, how the diners enjoyed their meal." One way of approaching this research opportunity is by examining culinary work, knowledge, and practice, together with culinary experts' identities, values and beliefs, and the structure of culinary occupations' training, credentialing, and careers.

The renewed appreciation of the central role that culinary work plays in modern society springs partly from an increasing value given to human's dependence and its cultural impact, as well as the jobs that address those fundamental human needs (Kass, 1999). "As earthly beings, we are bound by natural laws; they support our only powers. We must still eat, drink, breathe, and die." (Symons, 2004, 341). Among sociologists, cooking has been typically viewed as secondary to its cultural aspects, overlooking (a) those who perform the cooking, (b) what cooks actually do, and (c) how their work is organized. Below I explore how to understand further culinary arts as service professions for an enduring appreciation of the occupations involved.

Abbott's theory of professionalization in *The System of Professions* (1988) provides the most widely respected framework to advance this knowledge. For our purposes it suffices to define professions as Abbott (1988) does: "Exclusive groups of individuals applying somewhat abstract knowledge to particular cases." In this view professions are not closed systems: some exhibit diverse forms and are hard to categorize. In fact, culinary occupations are included in various industries, categorizations and classifications even in existing Department of Labor and government statistics. Cooking as an occupation exhibits a variety of job titles, employing organizations etc. One can potentially explain culinary evolution as a craft (guild roots), a profession (recognized by certifications, degrees), and a science (research chefs, food science).

The professionalization process depends on several factors in Abbott's framework, including:

- Professional work: nature of the tasks
- Organization of knowledge (legitimization, university programs)
- Claim of jurisdiction over an occupational turf
- Implications of exclusion and mechanisms of jurisdiction (e.g., certifications)
- Internal differentiation and stratification: client differentiation
- Cultural /contextual environment
- Workplace structure and internal divisions of labor.

Starting with the first point, professional work: What do Cooks do? Symons describes their work from multiple angles. First it is a work of acquisition concerning food supplies; second it entails distribution, a process in which we share food as well as lives; third, there is alchemy, the change process inherent to cooking where the science comes in; and finally, art, given that a cook is "an artist whose single vocation is to make others' lives happier" (Symons, 2004: 55).

Beyond the tasks performed by cooks, there is a need for legitimizing the structure of expertise over their work. As Abbott notes, the power of professions depends on the power of their knowledge systems, their abstracting ability, of defining old problems in new ways. Professions control their knowledge and skill in two ways: a) technique per se, where occupations typically using this are called crafts; and b) abstract knowledge, from which the practical skills derive. Typically techniques can be delegated to other personnel, whereas abstraction is the characteristic that best identifies the professions. "...The rising amount and complexity of professional knowledge, and the new types of legitimacy claimed for that knowledge, and the rise of the university has tied the professions to a central cultural institution of their societies" (Abbott, 1988: 177). As in other occupations, cooking has evolved from a type of craft learning through certifications to university degrees.

Together with this expertise and legitimation evolution is the developing cultural and social environment. "Changes in the system of professions begin sometimes in external events, sometimes within the professions themselves. Tasks can be created or destroyed by changes in technology and organizations. New groups can emerge through client differentiation or through the cultural forces" (Abbott, 1988). Very broadly, the occupation has evolved from the domestic arena through royalty and secretive culinary arts (e.g., Escoffier/Ritz) and expansion of culinary education (especially after World War II), passing by the home realm of Julia Child and Martha Stewart and to Alice Waters, to revealed culture of restaurant kitchens. As with the rest of our culture, we are now focusing increasingly on community sustainable agriculture, cookbooks, celebrity chefs, and mass media dissemination.

These cultural changes relate to the evolving nature of the clientele served by culinary occupations, which in turn stratifies the profession internally and shows in job title differentiation. The chef's role in an industrial setting to meet "the demands of work that are rooted in a symbiotic service and production culture--from an organizational perspective--hinges upon how chefs must learn to compromise many different and competing demands that incorporate the aesthetics of culinary arts with the temporal constraints of "client demand, organizational efficiency, resource management, and segmentation" (Fine, 1996: p.195).

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

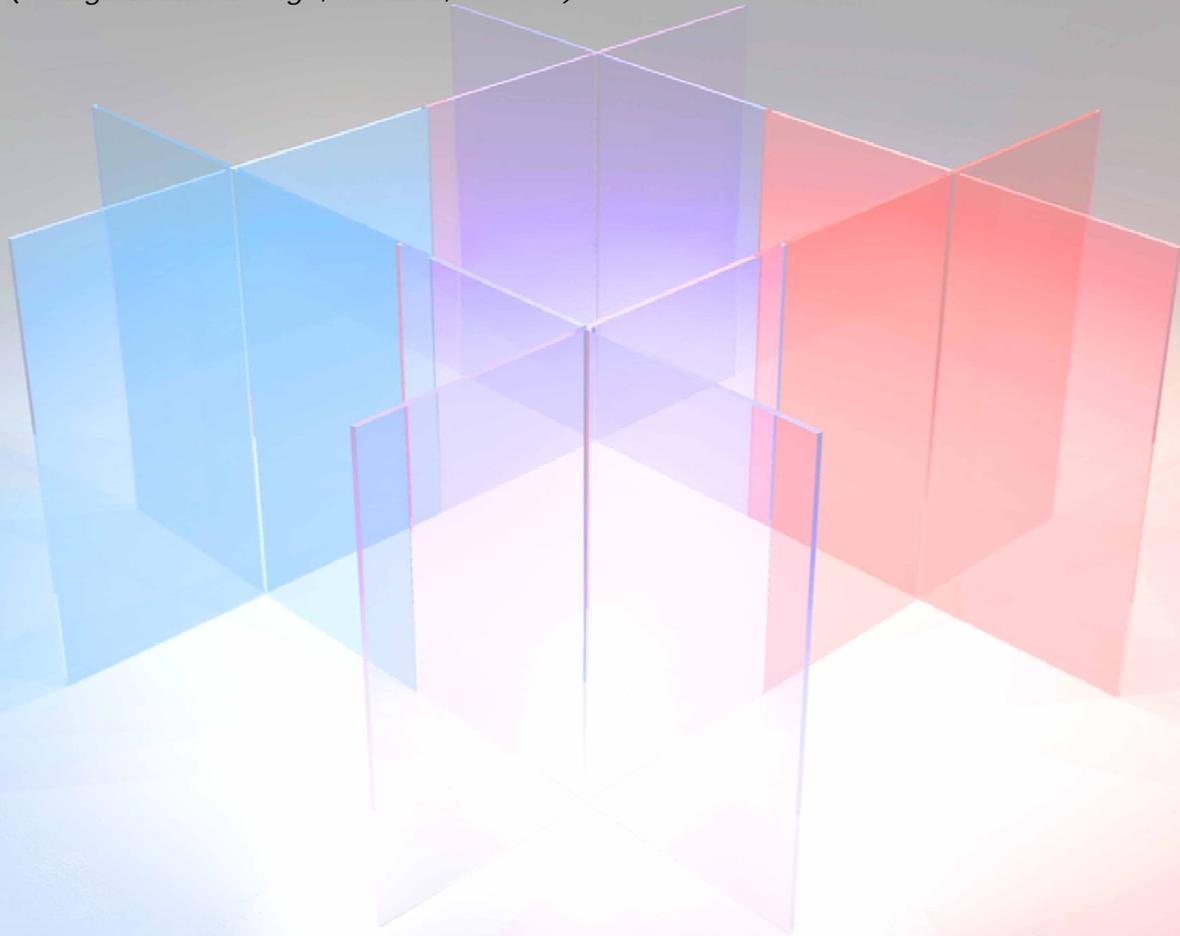
In closing, the culinary profession is worth taking deeper look into. Understanding where work comes from, who does it, and how they retain claim to the knowledge involved, helps understand why professions evolve as they do. Each aspect of the professionalization process requires study and is part of Lexington College's team research agenda. Here I have briefly outlined how using sociological approaches can illuminate the value and status of culinary occupations in society. Advancing the understanding of cooking from the "stardom" of celebrity television to the roots of its social foundation will help place culinary occupations within the realm of professions.

Looking back at human and culinary history, it seems fitting to end with Symons' words of admiration:

"We risk cutting ourselves off from nature, society and culture. Yet to be truly human, we need to become better cooks, and cooks of erudition and taste, practical and generous..."

As people who embody the human virtues of warmth and generosity, cooks warrant our gratitude. As people who command an enormous range of knowledge and skills, they demand to be admired. As people committed to our pleasures, cultural development and survival, they are to be worshipped." (Symons, 2004: 351)

*Note: This article is based on a joint presentation at the Balance Diet, Balanced Life conference with Dr. Michele Grottola (George Brown College, Toronto, Canada).*



### 3. "Tell me what you learn and I'll tell you how you'll eat"

#### The different ways of food and cooking "learning" and its influence in decisions of consumption.

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#### Cooking is still a predominantly female task, after all

For a few decades already, the extension of the work-related life outside the house for women has shaped a new situation within the home, without giving rise to a new distribution of roles at home. With a few exceptions, it is stated that the majority of cooking activities are carried out by the adult woman of the household group. Generally speaking, it is admitted that women – wives or mothers – are the main cooks while children and fathers only "help":

"My mother is the one who cooks at home. I set the table, I clear it, I wash the dishes, all of those things..."

"My mother is the one who cooks ... My father only sets the table."

"My mother is the one who cooks, but if we eat things like fried food or something like that, my father makes it. I make my bed. Sometimes I wash the dishes and set the table."

"My mother is the one who cooks. My father... well, at weekends, when we go to a country house we have, he makes the paella..."

Food preparation and cooking activities still, therefore, appear as linked to one of the adult women, so that the gradual increase of their participation in the work market has not come with shared responsibility of the household tasks for the men's part or for the rest of the family group members. In this case, the following testimony of a man who, despite carrying out some domestic tasks related to cleaning never participates in domestic tasks related to cooking, appears illustrative. He expresses his statement in such a way that he seems to point out that he is doing his wife's job:

"At home, I don't do anything in the kitchen. Well, I set the table... Yes, my wife works, but I really don't like it, honestly. At my age, I still don't know how to fry an egg. I admit it, I really dislike cooking. However, I mop and clean the floor *for her* and I sweep the floor *for her* and if the kitchen has to be cleaned, I do it *for her*..."

In general, women say they carry out all the tasks related to the kitchen and that their husbands or partners hardly participate.

"At home, my husband doesn't do anything at all. While I'm at home, he doesn't help. My husband only goes to the kitchen to open the fridge."

Men, for their part, specify their participation in cooking tasks according to meals or activities where they participate more or less sporadically: *'she cooks during the week and I cook at weekends'*:

In short, cooking is a task carried out by women in most cases (76%) as is buying food products (70%). This is in contrast to the 3.4% and 4.9% of men cook and do the shopping themselves. This last task, however, is mostly shared by the men and women in families made up of couples without children—young people and retired couples according to our own data, which represent 30% of cases. In families with children, it is only shared in 8% of cases. Regarding the distribution of food related tasks depending on the work situation of the members of the couple, we can observe that in 1990, according to Subirats and Masats (1990), when the head of the family works outside the house, cooking and buying food is mainly a female role (82.8% and 79.7%) rather than a male one (2.6% and 3.2%). When the head of the family and the wife are both working outside home, cooking and buying food are still mainly female activities (63.2% and 57.9%). The proportion of mainly male dedication hardly changes in this situation (3.3% and 3.6%). However, the indicator which considers the participation of both members of the couple together does change significantly: from representing the 4.8% and 8.9% in the first situation it goes to the 19.3% and 29.4%.

Ten years later, according to the *Metropolitan Survey of the Area of Barcelona* (2000), the people in charge of cooking and buying food are still mainly women: 73.2% and 54.4%. In the year 2000, the percentage of men in charge of cooking and buying food was 4.8% and 6.7% respectively. But the most significant factor is the increase that has taken place in the level of 'both together'. According to this source, cooking is a joint activity in 11.2% of cases and grocery shopping is a joint activity in 26.7% of cases. On the other hand, the distribution of food related tasks between other members of the family reaches percentages of little relevance. Sharing cooking and purchasing tasks is more common between mothers and daughters than between mothers and sons (2.8% and 2.5% against 0.8% and 0.8%). This is another significant piece of information. Although this result is worked out in terms of percentages, it shows us that sons, generally speaking, do not share the daily food related tasks with the woman responsible for the housework. It also suggests that, in the case of sharing them, they are mainly shared between women, so that the daughters, although they assume a limited food related responsibility, are more participative than the sons. This confirms that we are dealing with a job assigned to women.

### **Cooking: the only household task where the time dedicated to it is decreasing**

The mechanization of household work and its realization by *third* parties (public and private services), in the last decades is favourable, for part of the contents assigned to household tasks to be replaced. However, according to several sources of information, women work at home three times harder than men (Burnett, 1989; Fischler, 1995; Segalen, 1992). Regarding the time spent on 'cooking', according to the data of the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2004), women spend 1 hour and 57 minutes every day on this specific task while men spend 49 minutes. We can confirm, once again, that the gradual participation of women in the labour market has not changed the daily life as it could be expected: their greater incorporation has not come with a higher share in responsibility for men in the household tasks. On the other hand, such incorporation has not reached levels of equality regarding male participation.

All this has led to solutions which have meant a reduction of time and effort dedicated to food shopping and preparation: concentration and reduction of the times of shopping, resorting to ready-food, resorting to collective and private catering and simplification of the structure and contents of meals. In general, we have been able to state that 'mothers' are the ones who decide what to buy and eat. 66.8% of the interviewed people declare that, in their home, the one who decides the meals and menus is the 'mother'. We have been able to establish, however, that her decisions are influenced by the need to satisfy several simultaneous imperatives: time organizing, the family budget and the personal tastes of the different members, among others. Even, when the woman –wife and mother- devotes herself exclusively to the household work, timetable restrictions do not disappear as she adapts to the various time tables of the other members of the group. This situation can, also, be the cause for a restructuring of her own food behaviours, as well as a large increase of the food related tasks.

Some men still try to justify the fact that women are the only ones responsible for the home by claiming that women have 'natural aptitudes' for domestic work. They even refer to 'the family values' so that the situation does not change at the same time as they can complain, for example about the fact that, today, "girls are educated in the same way as boys".

Some men declare not to be interested at all in participating in the household tasks in general and particularly in the cooking tasks, although they admit that they are tasks that involve daily work and effort. In an attempt to 'reward' their wives for their daily work, some men plan their holidays in places where everything is done for them.

"The only tribute I give my wife, which I seriously enjoy, is when we go on holidays. We went to Cadiz one year, for example, and rented an apartment. During the holidays, I do not allow my wife to go into the kitchen at all, not for breakfast, or lunch or dinner. We normally go to a hotel, because I do admit that my wife is really involved with this. "

Clearly, the phrase "*finding everything done*" does not mean the same for men and women. While the former considers spending the holidays in an apartment a good idea, women believe that they are not proper holidays. In the 'vacation' apartment the same distribution of household tasks takes place as throughout the rest of the year, that is to say, they carry on working:

No. You pay for a week in a hotel where they make the bed for you - that is a real holiday for me. If I'm going to go to an apartment and I have to do the washing, prepare the meals - for ten people rather than for four - and then, run to go to the beach... At eleven o'clock it is already too late to go to the beach. Yes, you do spend two hours sitting on the beach later on, but you're exhausted. When mid-day comes, I have to heat up the food, clear up, wash up, clean the floor... clean the bathroom from everybody's shower...

The idea of "tribute" appears repeatedly. In any case, what these momentary "tributes" - which, occasionally, include the purchase of electrical appliances that supposedly will "lighten" and "speed up" "women's" household work- highlight is the fact that there is still a great lack of equality in the distribution and realization of food related tasks. The same happens with the so declared male participation in the kitchen at weekends, which usually goes further than the preparation of a *barbecue* or a *paella*. Most men like "specialities"

I gave my wife a microwave for Christmas...

My husband gave me a termomix as a Christmas present.

We almost always eat out, especially in the winter, the autumn and on Sundays, as a tribute to her.

When I'm at home, I make a barbecue - on Sundays, I make a good quality meat barbecue.

The fact that there is an evident lack of equality in the distribution of cooking tasks does not mean that there are no men who, from their own initiative, and pointing out that they like cooking, carry out part of the daily cooking. It is significant that, when this is the case, this co-participation is measured up in terms of percentages. This points to the fact that it is considered something that has to be specially valued, at least, in relation to the participation that men usually offer:

I participate in 40% of the household tasks, but, to be honest, cooking is something I love. My wife really loves the fact that I phone her and tell her, 'listen, don't worry about the food, I'll deal with that.' The kids also enjoy it when I tell them 'come on, I'm inspired today.' For my wife, food is an obligation and, for me, it requires some imagination. I enjoy it.

### Are things changing?

Men and women agree, however, in stating that there has been a change and that 'things are changing'. There is a kind of unanimity in considering that the most important changes will be noticed, not so much in this generation of husbands but in the younger couples, where relations between genders are, apparently, more egalitarian regarding household tasks. This view comes from parents whose ages range from 35 to 45-50. It is striking that these men still see themselves as belonging to a 'generation of older people' brought up according to traditional values, even though the majority of them lived their adolescence in the seventies, a decade when many of these values started to be questioned, though not in a widespread way. Some of the men interviewed explained that the first ones to avoid the 'help' from the men, help offered by sons or sons-in-law, were the mothers themselves or mothers-in-law who, however, did demand this help from their daughters and daughters-in-law.

- Things are much more equal in young couples. They share the shopping as well as the shopping list, and the cooking.

- They take it as one more responsibility to be shared. I see it in my elder nephews who have partners and in friends who are a bit older than my eldest daughter. They are beginning to do something, perhaps not as a rule but from time to time. When you go to the supermarket you see more and more young people. I don't know about people from our generation, because there are still men whose biggest contribution to housework is to opening a tin. As for us women, we do something at home, even though we might not like doing it. I don't like it at all, not at all, but you have to do it in the end. It's something you have to learn to live with.

- The biggest problem I had with my mother-in-law was when I wanted to clear the dishes for her the first day. She gave me a funny look. She didn't understand that I had been brought up in a family where my father and mother had always worked, and where I saw both my father and mother washing up. I also did the washing up, so it did not appear striking to me. I suppose, in those days it wasn't the done thing...

- Here in the village, at my mother-in-law's house, we always had a glass of milk with cake or some other sweet thing. As soon as her brothers finished eating and my sister-in-law, who is getting married now but was 9 at the time, had put the last spoonful of food in her mouth, my mother-in-law would say to her, 'Mari Carmen, get up and bring the milk for your brothers.'

The first conclusion that arises from the previous statements is the little consideration given to household tasks nowadays. Because this lack of consideration is found in both men and women, the different household tasks, when accomplished, are carried out interchangeably. No specific abilities are attributed to either the man or the woman, and when it comes to distributing the work and 'the cooking, the task can fall in anybody's hands.

### **"Today's women don't like cooking"**

We can observe a significant change in women's attitude to housework, especially when it comes to cooking: 'Today's women don't like cooking at all'. With all the nuances that may be observed, this statement is commonly shared by men and women, as well as by older people and younger people.

'My wife doesn't like cooking. She simply doesn't like it. That's it. She doesn't like it. I'll tell you why: because women nowadays study. She has been brought up the same way as boys, studying, and they don't know how to sew or anything'.

In some cases, the greater or lower inclination to cooking simply comes out in terms of enjoyment: a person enjoys cooking or they do not. Among other views, there is a more realistic and contextualized opinion: young women have not been or are not socialized for the kitchen. It would seem that there has been a break with the culinary learning process as a consequence of women continuing with their studies after completing A levels in a proportion almost superior to men's and/or carrying out a paid job outside the home.

'My mother has always worked outside the home...'

'Our generation is one that is really breaking away from tradition - that's the tradition we started, breaking away from things - but this generation now is even breaking away even more.'

Among the different household responsibilities, it seems that cooking is the least appealing to women. Other responsibilities, regardless of whether they are more or less enjoyed, seem to be accepted with greater devotion or resignation in comparison to cooking. The different 'value' given to one task or other, as we will see, could be an explanation of this situation.

## Time, a determining constraint

Time seems to be a very important problem in our society. More specifically, time constraints directly affect the restructuring of the practices related to food and not necessarily in a positive way. The increase of female paid work, commutes, and the length of the working day (as well as the variety of timetables which have to be made compatible within each home) turn time into one of the most important variables regarding food choices carried out by the individuals throughout their days. It is plausible to consider that the progress made in agricultural productivity, domestic culinary technology and food services have been encouraged by the time problems of the middle and working classes and are, therefore, the result of an evolution of the economy and urban life. This is one of the paradoxes of modernity: to eat a lot and quickly (*fast food*) is a sign of poverty and to eat little and slowly (*slow-food*) has become a privilege of the well-off classes. Many problems arise from managing working time and from the constraints that "cooking" entail. Furthermore, the compatibility between eating well and eating healthily, or eating good food and eating healthily, do not always work out easily.

The problem with timetable constraints is that they have different expressions and they, therefore, affect the quality of one's diet in different ways. On the one hand, the amount of time which can be spent buying food or cooking has to be combined with the amount of time that one must, or would like to, dedicate to other tasks and activities. In any case, the time devoted to food provisioning and to cooking has decreased considerably, especially, among the younger and middle age generations. There is a general consensus regarding the fact that 'there is very little cooking being done. Eating is done fast. Everything is bought already made'. Therefore, 43.3% of the population identify themselves with practices which are all related to the 'lack of time':

- ✦ 18.2% are 'trying to do the shopping in one shop only'
- ✦ 15.1% are 'eating quickly'
- 10% 'lack the time to do the shopping'.

Time constraints can have a more or less direct effect on:

- the decrease in the frequency with which food is bought.
- the use of service food and/or meals.
- the amount of food eaten throughout the day.
- the minutes spent eating.
- commensality.

## Cooking: not valued and stressful

Insofar as household tasks are not very much shared, specially those related to food preparation, it can become a particularly stressful task for the people responsible for them, considering the various objectives, sometimes in conflict, that they have to satisfy: health, price, time, tastes, etc. For all these reasons, and considering also the already mentioned strong devaluation of household work, it does not seem strange that, today, the transfer of food and cooking knowledge becomes difficult within the home. As a consequence, the difficulties for having a healthier diet increase and food choices are made conditioned by the same lack of this type of knowledge. Throughout the last decades, the relative lack of interest in tasks related to the daily diet has caused a break or reformulation of the transfer of cooking know-how. Present generations of women, the main recipients of this know-how, are no longer educated to become mothers and cooks, because they are not learning the minimum culinary principles and dietary values from their own mothers or grandmothers.

This fact becomes evident in the 62.5% of the population who state, 'I would like to learn some more.' There is a desire to gain more knowledge and culinary abilities, especially considering the increasing pressure those responsible for family food preparation have to deal with, be it the decline in the quality of diets or the inadequacy of the food habits developed both in children and in adults. Therefore, it seems that people are becoming aware of not having enough training in this field. The remaining 38% of the interviewed people say they know 'just enough to get by' (11%), or that their knowledge is 'virtually nil' (9.2%) or that they do not know 'because nobody taught them' (8.9%) or because 'they are not interested in it' (8.1%).

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

When observing the different answers according to gender, we find that the attitudes toward the acquisition of cooking competences still show a clear distinction between men and women, in the sense that the former wash their hands of it more than the latter. Compared to the 15.8% of men who say that nobody taught them how to cook or that their knowledge is virtually nil (14%), the percentages presented by women go down considerably to a 1.9% and 4.2% respectively. The most significant difference is found, however, when comparing the attitude women have towards wanting to learn more (84.9%), to men's attitude, which does not exceed 40.2%.

### The breakdown in learning to cook

The break with the conventional handing down of cooking knowledge is a consequence of two different, but complementary, circumstances. On the one hand, it is a consequence of the fact that girls do not spend as much time with their mothers at home (they study and work) and they, therefore, do not have the opportunity to engage in this slow learning process, made possible through contact. On the other hand, it is stated that young girls do not want to learn either. Out of the various household responsibilities, it seems that cooking is the least appealing to women. Other responsibilities, independently of whether they are accomplished with more or less dislike, seem to be accepted with more devotion or resignation than cooking. The different 'value' that some tasks or others have had is presented by some women as an explanation of this situation.

✦ 'Women like us who have studied have reached a point... we have our husbands who are demanding, and we've had children. With the little ones we've had to get our act together, because you have to go to the paediatrician where they tell you this and that, and you don't have your mother beside you. I didn't have my mother's help at all'.

✦ 'Cooking is not valued. My mother loved cooking and, from my mother, I've hardly learnt anything. I have some idea from having seen her, but she used to tell me to go away and she just did it herself. I also found studying more worthwhile than learning how to cook. It's just the circumstances'.

✦ 'The only thing my mother valued is for us was getting a degree. We didn't have time. When I was at university, I didn't have time to think about what to make or what not to make for myself. You didn't realize and didn't even think about food. I believe that this is the problem: we have valued other things more and we have left the cooking to our mothers'.

The loss of cooking knowledge can be, at least partially, compensated by the great variety of resources that industries have presented homes with, to make nutrition and cooking less imposing. On the one hand, while it is true that studying has estranged young people from the home and from greater possibilities of culinary knowledge, it is also true that, in many cases this same estrangement 'forces' young people to 'learn no matter how' and without 'teachers'. This allows us to suppose that nowadays young people are not only much more receptive to products that make cooking 'easier', but also, to the recommendations from the different types of experts who 'inform' them about nutrition. For all these reasons, it is relevant to ask ourselves: what is the relation between the different types of food knowledge (about food, cooking, diet, meals, etc.) and the different favourite products? In which way is this knowledge updated in order to adapt to the new social and family circumstances of the home and to the new needs of those in it (health, safety, etc.)?

'My children have found themselves studying away from home and since they have to cook for themselves, they go to the market. Now the salads come already cut, so you don't have to spend time preparing the lettuce. He eats healthy, good and cheap food, even though he eats quickly. He has boiled rice and fish and some bread and cold meats. I find that it's easy and cheap. Obviously, if you have to study away from home it is not the same. I understand that he is not going to prepare some kinds of food for himself'.

In homes with children, only a minority of parents get their children involved in carrying out the shopping, preparing the food and serving it. Parents admit that children do little at home but that it is their own fault because they have given in again in this field and have let them "duck out." Among other things, they say it is because "there are not many options". Family roles, some say, have changed extraordinarily to keep up with the changes in society, and today children are not interested in household tasks. This is the case not only with general household tasks, but particularly with food related tasks. They only seem to be interested in

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consuming food or purchasing food they are willing to consume. The majority of parents say that their children are "hyperpassive" and that they show little or no interest in learning all the while assuming that these tasks are their parents' responsibility.

The picture some parents draw of their children is that of a son or daughter "living in their bedroom" consuming the fruits of other people's work and using common spaces to satisfy their own needs. It comes up with some reiteration that, after the age of twelve, children are at home on their own, while their parents are working. In this situation, the children "do what they like." If they want to watch television they do, and if they want to "nibble some food", they do, and "they eat whatever they like the most", etc.

✦ When they are alone at home they eat whatever they find... whatever they like.

✦ Young people have a really passive attitude. They stay in their rooms, out of their own interest, in order to have everything under their control and to avoid letting their parents have a go at them. They are lodgers everywhere: they don't go shopping and, if they do, it's to eat what they buy for themselves... If it's for them, yes, but if it's to participate and collaborate with what's done at home, no.

✦ My husband is the type of man who helps out, or at least he has that intention. Our son, however, does not. I don't know if it is because we have only one, and as an only child he has to grow up a bit more. His father says, 'it's because he has two servants: his mother and father'. From what I can see, young people don't lift a finger...

"Not lifting a finger!" This is more or less the general complaint from parents regarding their children. Furthermore, parents admit that they are responsible for this "great passivity" because "they have given in". In any case, they also admit that, at some point, they will start cooking because, after all, "we do have to eat..."

I've told him. I've told him he has to get in the kitchen with me and learn how to make an omelette, and how to make a casserole. I want to get on the case these holidays, which is when I have time.

Some parents believe that is necessary for children to participate in the household tasks even if it takes an *agreement*, to use soft terminology, or *blackmailing*, that is, threatening to take away all other benefits if they do not collaborate. However, the majority of parents say that "being a son/daughter" means "being selfish" and that one has to live with that. There are parents who say that getting children involved in household tasks is part of the process of socialization. What they end up doing or not doing depends on the extent to which you make them responsible people, which might involve fights and conflicts between the different family members (parents/children, brothers and sisters between them) and making them contribute in the preparation of the different meals. As teenagers begin to have to deal with some of their food intake themselves, they also begin to participate in the preparation of more or less simple meals, such as pasta, meat, fried or grilled eggs. Others think that, because it is necessary and useful, this participation must not be imposed as a continuous activity on a daily basis:

My daughters are always distributing the work between themselves: the dog has to be taken for a walk and the table has to be laid. They'll say, 'okay, one of us lays the table'. Because neither of them wants to take the dog for a walk, they stay at home to lay the table but, if they don't have to take the dog for a walk, neither of them wants to lay the table. They are the ones who wanted a dog, so they have to take care of him. What happens? Saturday or Sunday comes and their mother has taken the dog out so the only help that is left is to lay the table, which neither of them wants to do, so they fight to not have to lay the table. It is the same with house work. If one of them has not made her bed, the other one will say, 'Miriam hasn't made her bed, so I'm not making mine'.

My daughter, the eldest one, is quite old now and she is starting to cook. I have made an agreement with her whereby she cooks two days a week. You can't impose a continuous and daily activity on her; they have to be more sporadic things. The youngest one has had the duty to lay and clear the table, to put the dish washer on and to tidy up the dishes for years.

If we take into account the fact that those who express themselves in this last way are mainly young people, especially boys, we confirm the hypothesis that led to the statement of a partial/total cooking incompetence and, consequently, to the effects that can be derived from this, nutritionally as much as socially. Indeed, between the ages of 12 and 17, 23.6% of the people interviewed said that their knowledge is *virtually nil*; 20%, that *nobody taught them*; and, 21% know *just enough to get by*. Of these, only 27.7% say that they would like to learn more. In the following age group, composed of 18 to 24 year olds, the results are a bit contradictory. Although the number of people who claimed *not to be interested* (13.4%) or *to know just enough* (24.1%) increases, the percentage of young people who said that *nobody taught them* (9.9%) or that their knowledge is *virtually nil* (14%) decreases. Most importantly, the desire to *learn more* increases considerably in relation to the previous age group (42.3%).

As a general rule, the involvement of children and teenagers (10-13 years) is limited to tasks such as laying and clearing the table or partially participating in the shopping, (usually to get small items, such as bread or a drink) or to include little treats for themselves in the shopping basket when they accompany their parents.

I buy things for myself. My mother gives me money and I buy phoskitos (a type of cake), coca-cola, ice-cream, sweets...

We go shopping with my father and mother. On Saturdays, the three of us also go and do the shopping for the whole week, but my brother never comes with us.

We go with my mother and we always get something.

When we go shopping, I buy sweets for myself, chocolate, tidbits, little packets...

#### A last comment

In Spanish society, children and young people are not gaining basic cooking abilities (abilities and/or knowledge related to what to buy, prepare and cook) in the general process of socialization. It is a relatively logical situation if we take into account that the majority of the population would like to learn more, admit their own limitations, and agree that cooking daily is an activity where one has to spend more time than one would like to or has. The transfer of skills is not taking place at home or at school, or only partially. At school, the food related transfer is taking place by adapting to the worries that prevail in this institution, that is, orienting food knowledge towards health (prevention) and, for those who eat in school, the acquisition of rudimentary table manners. This suggests that the knowledge and abilities passed on to the students are of a nutritional and/or behavioural nature and limited to relatively specific contents: groups of food, the more adequate quantities, possible diseases, hygiene habits, the proper way to sit or attitudes about food. It is not surprising, therefore, that despite gaining nutritional knowledge in more or less depth during their school years, the cooking knowledge is not guaranteed in children, and neither is the correspondence between what they consume and what nutritionists, or the gained nutritional knowledge, would recommend. It is not surprising that, given the institutional emphasis on nutritional education rather than on diet, boys and girls show a similar and acceptable level of dietetic knowledge, gained at school, while their cooking abilities and knowledge (shopping, preparation, cooking) are nonexistent or very limited. Likewise, it is common for their consumption not to comply to that recommended by nutritionists or their gained nutritional knowledge.

The fact that there is proof of a break with and a dispersion of the passing on of food related knowledge in its usually oral and generational form, does not mean that, once women abandon the origin group to make a new one, individual or shared, they will not regain this responsibility, perpetuating therefore, a model of gender division of the household work that is not very different from the previous one.

#### 4. Professionalism begins at Home

Elisabeth András

Housewife

Switzerland

##### I. Introduction

I studied law and completed my studies with a Masters degree. After my studies I worked for some time before I got married and started a family. From that time onwards, bringing up my family was my profession. I raised four children and the youngest is now 12 years old.

Even though I studied law, I strongly believed that if I ever had a family that this would be my priority in life.

All the work and the skills done and taught within the family, all the values we live up to and we teach the children become a part of their every day make-up in a very natural way. Things that children do not experience at home are not naturally acquired and they will be less aware of them later on. The children have difficulties in believing these values and seeing no sense in passing them on. Our children are the future professionals, educators, teachers, etc., who are responsible for the rules in our society and will set the standards of our culture. Within the home the foundations of our adult lives are learnt. Over a longer period of time it's been observed that there is less and less appreciation of home economics. If we want to improve this, we have to change the attitude of anybody involved in the child's education, especially the mothers and the fathers, and put more emphasis on this work.

##### II. Professional standards begin at home

Mothers are the ones mostly responsible for the care of the child and the work done at home. Statistics show that women still do most of the work at home, even if both follow a professional career outside the home. Mothers educate their children in various fields involving home economics, nutrition, hospitality or other related themes through their daily work. They can pass on all the practical skills. If the mother's work is done with dedication, commitment and pleasure in her caring responsibilities, it becomes professional work. I refer to James B. Stenson, an American pedagogue, who says: "professionalism isn't just a set of appearances – neatness, good grooming, "shop talk" and the like. Nor is it just technical skill; ... Professionalism is, rather, a set of internalized character strengths and values directed towards high quality service to others through one's work." He then specifies the professional attitude: sound judgement, know-how, business savvy, mature responsibility, problem solving, perseverance and ingenuity... The home making skills achieved in such a professional attitude will surely be well appreciated by all family members. This is the starting point for following a professional carrier in this field, if a child has the needed capabilities.

##### III. The perception of home economics in the society

The Swiss federal department for Statistics quoted in 2004 that they had not yet done any important research and statistical evaluation of volunteer work or non paid work. Among the non paid work, the household represents by far the biggest part. It amounts to 8 billion hours a year compared to 6.7 billion hours a year for paid work. The federal department calculated that the non paid work in the Swiss households would amount to 172 billion of Swiss Franks a year. The Department continues to record that there is an outdated but still widespread opinion that house and family work is recreational and enjoyable or considered as being a consumer function. The work experience that mothers accumulate over the years should be taken into account in a later entrance in the professional world.

Why is housework looked upon as inferior to other professions? Is it due to the fact of it being an unpaid occupation, which has no immediate results? To answer this question would go beyond the scope of my short statement. What I would like to do is to list the most important values and skills, which mothers pass on to their children in the domain of preparing food, cooking and everything related to it.

#### IV. Values – Skills

##### 1. Healthy, well balanced nutrition

Obesity is a worldwide phenomenon in the industrialised countries. Over the last twenty years the number of obese children has tripled in Switzerland. In the UK a third of all children are overweight. Prof Colin Waine, the chairman of the National Obesity Forum, said they revealed a public health time bomb. "This is serious news because obesity in adolescence is associated with Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases." Barbara Harpham, the director of the charity Heart Research UK, said: "Parents need to wake up to the fact that it is up to them to make sure their children eat properly and lay down a foundation for good health." The public is aware of it and there are a lot of proposals for changing eating habits or doing more exercise. But where should we tackle the problem first?

The answer is as Mrs. Harpham proposed: at home. We must produce healthy food. Children get used to the taste. Whatever tastes like Mum's cooking is usually loved. If youngsters are not acquainted with healthy food, they will not try and will continue to eat junk food.

At home we can give them the chance to help prepare meals and learn how to cook and develop a concept of nutritional values.

When a family sits down to eat around the table, everybody gets served an appropriate portion and what you eat is in a way controlled. This does not happen when every member grabs his TV-dinner and eats it by himself with or without company.

##### 2. Planning and Organising

Mothers are managers of a little enterprise: cooking, bringing children to all their extra school activities, preparing a nice dinner for guests, keeping the house clean, helping children with their homework, caring for the sick children etc... Sometimes we are expected to do everything together. If we want to complete it calmly, without stress and for everybody in a relaxed atmosphere, we have to be well organised. We have to plan our meals ahead, we have to write lists of what we want to buy, we have to organise our day to find time to go to the supermarket plus all the other tasks. At the end we need to allot enough time for preparing the meal. That is the only way of having relaxed family meals at a set hour of the day, on which everybody can rely.

Our organised way of daily life is an example for the children and they will adopt it to other domains too.

A lot of families have to draw up a detailed budget and need to dispose accurately of their income. Setting up a budget is a good example for your children of how to deal with money, when they have to live on their own.

##### 3. The power of family meals

In autumn 2005 Miriam Weinstein published a book with the title "the surprising power of family meals". She writes about her family meals when she was a child, but also about researches accumulated in very disparate fields showing "that eating ordinary, average everyday supper with your family is linked to lower incidence of bad outcomes, such as teenage drug and alcohol use and to good qualities like emotional stability and stress resistance." There is also a well known field study made at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, undertaken with adolescents. The research results in the fact, that young people whose families routinely eat meals together spend more time on homework and reading pleasure... they have a better nutritional intake and a decreased risk of obesity and misuse of drugs and alcohol. Concluding, they are emotionally and physically healthier. I think that we do not need such a vivid imagination to understand the consequences of regular family meals: it means being able to exchange opinions and the development of the awareness of each other's emotional needs. Ideally, a family should have one meal together a day, even if this creates problems with older children's plans. Regular meals at the same time give the family stability. The social scientists call it a ritual. Rituals give a feeling of togetherness and strength.

#### 4. Helpfulness, Teamwork

The easiest way to raise helpful persons, who are concerned about giving a hand and not just being served, is to involve your children in the work in the home, especially in the kitchen. There are so many tasks to hand out: setting the table, washing the dishes, preparing meals, helping to peel carrots, potatoes, stirring the ingredients for cakes etc... These everyday tasks carried out together give a spirit of teamwork required later in every profession. I would like to point out the husband's cooperation, as a helpful example for the children.

#### 5. Manners

Eating together is the best place to teach the children good manners and civilized behaviour. Parents should make a conscientious and sustained effort to practice etiquette at home. Table manners are much more than social forms without content. One learns personal restraint and respect for one another. Later in life, the good manners enhance the children's social and professional lives. The knowledge of the right behaviour gives them self-assurance to interact in any social group as well as in professional situations.

Manners also include the practice of hygiene; washing one's hands before eating, using serviettes, blowing one's nose...

As manners declined over the past years, courses in learning good behaviour for adults and even for children have increased immensely.

Why pay for expensive courses, when all this can be acquired at home?

#### 6. Hospitality

Eating with friends demands getting to know them, widening our horizon, having to deal with other opinions and lifestyles. It is always enriching and extends our individualism. Inviting friends to your home is a personal way to show who you are. The way you live, cook and present the dishes, gives a good insight into your personality and your family. Friendships have to be cultivated and nurtured. If the children are used to guests at the table and to different conversations, they feel confident and at ease at parties and later on in any professional environment.

#### 7. Celebrating

A family has a lot of occasions to celebrate: birthdays, first communion, coming of age and all the religious feasts such as Easter, Christmas etc. The nicest and most personal way to do it is at home with a special meal, maybe the favourite dish of the special person. These celebrations are part of the family tradition every member likes to remember and wants to get prepared for. In our faceless and fast changing society these traditions give us stability. Celebrating somebody is also a sign of respect and love for this person.

#### 8. Creativity

The majority of the housework can be done in a very creative way. I want to mention only some examples: cooking, preparing a meal for guests, decorating the table for an invitation or for a birthday party, decorating the house for Christmas, arranging flowers etc. We can also involve the children in doing little handicrafts for special occasions. There is no limit to one's fantasy. These little things often give a special touch to a meal.

#### 9. Clothes, Outlook

Finally, I would like to touch briefly on the theme of clothing: it makes a difference to how the person is dressed. The household done by somebody, who has a pride in how she looks, portrays her esteem for the work.

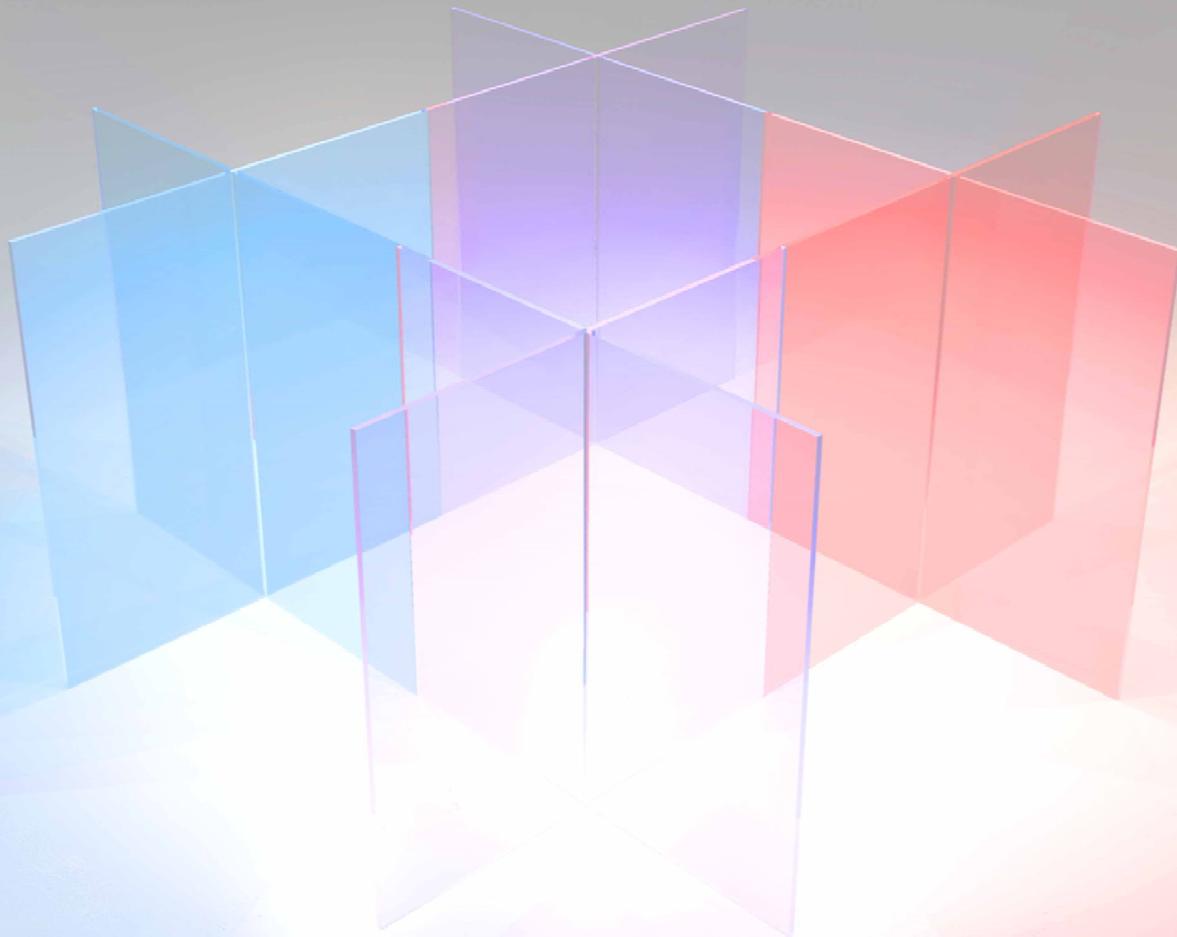
## V. How to build up positive perception of the work done at home

The first place to build up a positive perception is through the example of the parents at home. The appreciation of the father, who comes home and gets a well cooked dinner on a nicely set table, is important for the children to get a positive attitude. A little thank you or compliment helps the children to see that the commitment is not taken for granted.

The work done with care and love for details, not in stress and a haphazard way shows that every job has equal importance.

If every family member has his own tasks, they know what it means and start to appreciate the work done at home. Furthermore they are able to judge the value of the home economics done outside of the family: in the hospitals, hotels, old peoples home, schools etc..

The excellence in home economics and nutrition begins at home through achieving the work in an excellent and professional way, with the support of all the family members.



## 5. What's really important?

### **Demands on the nutrition of people with dementia and what we can learn about the nutrition of the elderly**

Martina Feulner

Diploma in Nutrition & Home Economics, Department of Catering & Hospitality

Caritas, Germany

#### **I. Introduction**

The programme of our panel discussion on food, health and family announces: "Benefits of healthy eating from the early years to old age". My contribution is to take a look at the special nutritional requirements of the elderly;

a topic which is only beginning to be discussed – at least in Germany.

I shall do this with my experience in a specialist area which is known in Germany as "Hauswirtschaft"; in English "Home Economics".

Home Economics includes topics on nutrition, meal preparation, the care and cleaning of living space, laundry and the design of the living environment. The basic assumption of home economics is that every person has a household as their economic and living base, that is, that everyone lives in a household.

As personnel there are primarily the housewives and "househusbands" who care for their families, but also home help who work directly in the families as well as service providers for private households. For people living in care facilities personnel include the workers in the canteen kitchen, service personnel in the dining hall or restaurant, cleaning and laundry services. My professional focus is on household services in care facilities such as nursing homes and at facilities for the handicapped.

#### **II. Nutrition and the Elderly: What do we know?**

Concerning nutritional problems to be solved within families and in care facilities, we must deal with the fact that we are constantly aging. We find that today there are more and more very elderly people to care for. The population of the elderly is increasing along with the actual age of the average nursing home resident where people who are eighty, ninety and one hundred years old are becoming the norm.

Healthy nutrition for the very elderly raises new questions. The very elderly have had a long life with a lot of memorable experiences, personal and societal events. They have developed a deeply ingrained relationship with their own nutrition, developing lifelong habits and preferences which should not be neglected. We are well aware that these individual preferences, habits, and the social settings in which meals are consumed are an important factor as is the nutritional value provided by the food itself. It is especially notable with the very elderly that their nutritional methods played an important role in their lives: They have gotten very old with their way of living and eating.

Objective approaches to determine nutritional needs do remain important. They are considered the most important factor in the creation of menus. It is necessary to ask how the body's nutritional needs change in as person advance in age. At the same time the body requires more vitamins, minerals and vital nutrients for its difficult functions since the ability to optimally utilise the ingredients in food and drink recedes with advanced age.

There is little awareness of the special nutritional needs of the elderly in the nutritional sciences and medicine. Nutritional experts in all countries have developed benchmark figures which determine the need for nutrients. In Germany, these are the so-called D-A-CH reference values which have been collectively agreed upon by Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

But with regard to the informational value of these rates two points must be criticised: first, the oldest group defined is "older than 65"; values for the very elderly do not exist. A second critical point is the so-far non-existent discussion of the change and adaptation processes with which the human body must arrange itself during its lifetime.

Here are some pictures of Anna Langer to show how she has changed over the years. The question of nutritional needs for the elderly can only be limitedly oriented on nutritional recommendations. The pictures of Anna Langer, born in 1904, reveal how a body can change during a lifetime; how historical events for example the war years or the post-war years can mark a body. At the same time the body has developed compensation methods to hinder, for example, starvation or surplus weight. Later, age leaves its mark. Body mass becomes reduced. Dehydration processes take hold and bodily functions change. All this happens very individually – in a different way for each person. Established measurement procedures such as determining the Body Mass Index (BMI) have never been examined with regard to the elderly although it is still being used in Germany today. Slowly, critical voices are being heard and test results have shown that these procedures are only partially adequate to make a statement about the nutritional status of people.

In the final phases of life, situations may arise that make assistance, support or care necessary in order to offset or treat forgetfulness due to old age, physical handicaps or critical illnesses such as dementia. Here it is important to remember that these are adults who have lived their lives responsibly and independently for decades. It is not easy to find an appropriate way of helping the elderly who need support and aid. Aid measures should not incapacitate them but support their self-determination and participation. With children and teenagers this is easier because adults fulfil the role of educator. Children often express this very simply: adults make the rules – at least until the child comes of age.

But what does the role of aid giver for the elderly look like?

Caritas deals intensively with the question of how self-determination and participation in everyday life and in the life of the community can be supported through its service and facilities. But often we are limited since we have found it is absolutely necessary to know something about each person's life in order to support them according to their needs even if they cannot fully communicate.

It becomes especially apparent with food and drink that some things can only be enjoyed by the elderly if they complement his life, his likes and dislikes. As gerontologists and practical experiences have shown, with regard to the elderly, habits, likes and dislikes are especially important. With increasing age they become more and more a significant part of the structure of everyday life.

In Germany we have just ascertained during a project that a quality level of food and liquids for people in nursing homes has been developed which is supported by scientific literature. The data and general awareness is inadequate but the facilities do call for a discussion of this issue because the Health Insurance's Medical Services – the controlling authority in Germany for the quality of care in facilities – has been warning for some time about deficient specialist knowledge in the field of nutrition. The subject of malnourishment has become an important topic and solutions have been indicated. These requirements have been directed towards a care system for the elderly who in the past have considered this type of care solely a maintenance task and often regarded it only from the cost aspect.

### III. One Area of Insight: Nutrition of the Elderly suffering from Dementia

During the past years an intensive discussion about the care of people with dementia has taken place. This in turn has strongly influenced the conceptual planning of facilities for the elderly.

The main conclusion was that people with dementia should live in an environment which on the one hand protects them and on the other hand offers stimulation to help orient themselves in their everyday life, weekly routines and in the course of the year. Facilities are criticised for offering meals on a tray arriving from the canteen kitchen and delivered to the residents who live in groups because it does not resemble normal everyday life.

Small living units in which everyday life is experienced together are supportive and helpful. Here residents can prepare meals together and share many other experiences of daily life. In the context of such small living units ("Haus- und Wohngemeinschaften" as they are called in Germany), Jan Wojnar has collated important conclusions on nutrition which, from the point of view of home economics, are important for the nutrition of the elderly and can be used as a basis for the development of a supportive culinary culture at facilities for the elderly.

Let us now take a look at the situation of people with dementia. Some of the typical accompanying phenomena of dementia are disturbances while eating and drinking:

The refusal of food which used to be eaten willingly  
 Food and drink arranged on the table are not recognised as such  
 Feelings of hunger and thirst are ignored although they are obviously there  
 Intensive questioning or force feeding leads to fits of rage.

Malnourishment, dehydration and pneumonia as after-effects of a weakened immune system are mentioned in epidemiological studies as the most frequent cause of death among patients with dementia.

The clinical picture of dementia reveals that with changes in the brain certain abilities are lost, for example, dealing with nutrition as we are accustomed to:

We can interpret feelings of hunger and thirst  
 We think about food and decide what we want to eat, when and with whom we want to eat it  
 We are aware of the daily task of caring for ourselves.

These abilities are lost in the advanced stages of dementia.

Jan Wojnar has observed in people suffering from dementia that their basic need for nourishment, the ability to sense hunger and their appetite for food is disturbed due to the illness itself and medication. The foundation for independent decision-making concerning food intake is missing. People suffering from dementia are constantly dependent upon someone to explain interrelationships and offer hands-on experience.

Upon this background Jan Wojnar developed specifications for the nutrition of people suffering from dementia. After reviewing these proposals, I feel they should form the basis of a nutrition concept in facilities for the elderly.

Most importantly the care of dementia patients requires an adequate supply of energy and enough fluids which should be administered with the least amount of stress possible for the patient and his caregiver. It is always helpful to remember that the patient cannot feel hunger or thirst, cannot determine the time of day and cannot remember what meals have already been eaten. The caregiver must also understand that the environment, that is the caregiver or caregivers and their intentions cannot be recognised. Reactions and the behaviour of dementia patients are determined by coincidental memories and inherited behavioural traits.

For people suffering from dementia, food and drink are more than just nutrition. Offers of food and drink should be oriented towards the meal at which they will be consumed. The following points are important as well:

A relaxing and pleasant atmosphere  
 Food consumption according to the patient's capabilities and inabilities  
 Suitable food and drink.

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

I consider it very important that the meal is considered not only a time for food consumption but also a social event which structures the day. It also has its own space and all persons who are in the room during the meal contribute to the meal's atmosphere. Here are some examples:

### **The Atmosphere**

If food is prepared entirely or partially in the living unit there are always sounds and smells which can be associated with the impending meal. Cooking can be observed and it offers the opportunity for participation. Having a kitchen and being present during meal preparation can reinforce the feeling of being at home.

It is important that care givers and patients sit and eat together during the meal and that each meal begins with a ritual. This can take the form of a prayer or the wish to enjoy the meal ("Bon appétit"! ). Through their own food, patients with dementia are reminded to eat. Familiar motions are activated and specific actions support the eating process such as serving the food and passing a beverage. These are accompanied by expressions such as "We haven't had that in a long time" or "That tastes good – try it" or a conversation about the food and drinks.

The design of the room, the choice of dishes and table decorations should not be accidental. When dealing with dementia patients, less is often more.

Colour contrasts are important so that the food can be recognised more easily.

### **Supportive food intake**

Food intake often needs specific supportive measures:

- a comfortable and upright sitting position
- handing over spoon and fork and the careful support of movements while eating
- silverware and dishes which can be easily handled
- filling food and drink into appropriate containers so that the patient can eat as independently as possible (for example, yoghurt in a bowl)
- preparing food as finger food
- a specific massage or touch to encourage swallowing

### **Suitable Food and Drink**

The choice of suitable food and drink is not determined by earlier habits or recommendations for healthy and balanced nutrition but by the attempt to offer the patient what he or she enjoys eating and eats enough of. It is therefore important to know which foods and drinks are preferred and what type of preparation whets the appetite thereby reinforcing food intake.

Experience has taught us that:

- Sweets are preferred which can be traced back to a change in the sense of taste. If certain foods are refused, these should be sweetened slightly to avoid a bitter taste. Meat, for example, can be served with a sweetened sauce; sandwiches with cold cuts or cheese can be refined with a sweetened spread.
- Fatty foods are also preferred. This has to do with fat being an important taste provider.
- During the chewing process, stringy foods or small accessories such as chopped almonds are considered bothersome and are often spit out.
- Floury and crumbly foods feel like sand in a dry mouth and are therefore pushed around with the tongue without creating a swallowing reflex.
- Because of disturbances while swallowing, pure water or mineral water should be avoided. Fruit juice is more appropriate.

Initially there is a food and drink menu consisting of food and beverages which will really be consumed. This goes so far as to push certain diets to the background in favour of food intake. For example, in the case of diabetes mellitus, food intake takes preference over the special diet for diabetes. However, blood sugar must be closely monitored as well as other signs which indicate raised blood sugar levels (for example thirst, tiredness or increased amounts of urine).

With regard to food and drink menus in nursing homes I refer to the important insight that we must see food and drink as the patients experience it. For this reason the rooms in which the meals are eaten and the people in them take on a new meaning. Especially with the elderly, not only nutritional satiation is important but also meals which structure the day as well as contact to food service personnel or employees who assist patients while eating. I refer again to the statement that food and drink is more than just nutrition and the provision of liquids. Or as Justus von Liebig once said: The whole is more than the sum of its parts. This conclusion becomes especially important when we realise that facilities for the elderly have systems in which personnel from different occupational groups fulfil tasks to cooperatively organise care.

#### IV. The Task: Developing a culinary culture supported by all employees

Facilities for the elderly are still confronted with working out the topic of integrating food and drink into everyday life. The aim must be that food and drink, and especially the meals themselves, satisfy the needs of the patients while at the same time preventing deficiencies.

In my considerations for an age-based culinary culture, I act on the following assumptions:

- Food and drink cannot be considered detached from its related contexts. When reduced to food on a plate or a drink in the feeding cup, a meal consists only of nutrients and amounts of liquid. Important elements are ignored: the enjoyment of a meal, food as a sensual experience, the nice feeling of being a guest who can sit at the set table and have food served, the awareness that a meal was consciously prepared for him as a guest. If detached from its related contexts, it is easily forgotten that food and drink are directly connected to everyday life and the comfort of the residents.
- Different professions participate in food and drink even if they are not fully aware of this. These include kitchen and home economics personnel as well as care personnel. They, too, are responsible for food and drink: They must be aware of this responsibility so that catering can really be geared towards and used by all residents.

I have chosen this general point of view to satisfy a number of conceptual approaches in facilities for the elderly which also influence catering. There are many types of centralised and decentralised catering services at facilities for the elderly. Some employ private caterers while others hire their own personnel. These are complemented by conceptions of care which are based on different specialist principles. The solution – in my opinion – does not lie with a defined catering concept combined with a certain care concept. Finding a sensible solution calls for recognising the value and meaning underlying the topic of food and drink. From this the cornerstones for sensible catering concepts can be developed and implemented.

#### V. Cornerstones for culinary culture in facilities for the elderly

The following cornerstones can be devised on the basis of these conclusions:

##### Cornerstone 1

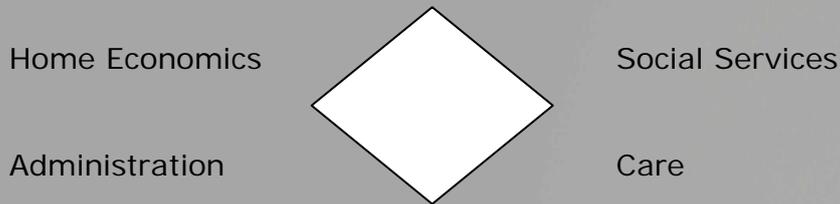
Each facility must develop its own **culinary culture** as a basic principle founded on the residents' needs.

Catering offers must be specified according to the residents' needs. Their needs form the basis for all considerations. The gauge for catering offers are not the meals themselves and how they are listed on the menu but how these meals are served to high-maintenance care patients, residents suffering from dementia and residents who are terminally ill. It is important to think of food as a meal until it has been consumed. Where the meal takes place becomes just as important as service and support while eating.

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### Cornerstone 2

Food and drink is a topic which touches on all specialist areas of a facility. It can only be handled as a cooperative effort in which everyone follows the same aim.



But in practice, approaches from the past hinder the development of new methods. In the past, these approaches allocated certain topics to certain groups of employees and did not look at these processes in their entirety.

### Cornerstone 3

Therefore there are also important **specific professional points of view to overcome:**

Food and drink must not be reduced to serving food.

Kitchen personnel must think of the catering process right up to the resident.

The meaning of service must no longer be ignored.

In our approach we begin with the meals which take place in everyday life. We do not follow the approach that adaptive solutions must be found for a deficient situation. Taking everyday life as a basis without, for the moment, considering special circumstances like, for example, the necessity of a stomach tube (PEG Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastronomy), special needs of dementia patients or psychological problems, the following becomes clear:

- The production process must be taken into account which, as a rule, is the responsibility of kitchen personnel.
- This is followed by the serving of food, an area often neglected. Food is served by different people; often by people from different professions.
- The third phase involves the food itself and whether or not it can be eaten independently or with aid; in this case involving other personnel as well.

Mistakes and sources of risk become apparent when we take a closer look.

Here are two situations from everyday life:

- Serving a meal when I do not know what it is.
- Cooking a meal if I do not know who my guests are.

I refrain from further comment. "In many facilities these situations are – unfortunately – still reality." By operating in narrowly defined fields of responsibility, barriers are created between caregivers and residents. Tasks unable to be delegated were ignored.

Where theory and practice met to focus on the relationship between a balanced diet and a balanced life

#### Cornerstone 4

If the resident is really the focus of attention, perceptions and actions will change. With this perspective, food and drink become a central and enjoyable event appealing to all the senses.

If a topic interests more than one group of employees then it becomes a topic of discussion. Here management is called upon to highlight the topic of food and drink in the facility so that a consistent plan of action can be developed and implemented for all personnel.

Both the physical environment and social setting of a meal play a role in determining how much we eat. Disturbances such as uncomfortable surroundings, disagreeable company at the table, unfriendly service or too little time are all factors which seem unimportant. But it is especially these things that strongly influence food intake. The atmosphere of a meal is of utmost importance.

Here we are confronted with a basic experience and conclusion from the area of Dietary Nutrition. Findings from Bober in the area of communal catering show that the food itself is secondary as to how much is actually consumed. Most important is the social, personal and spatial environment!

#### Cornerstone 5

Decisive for the implementation of a culinary culture in facilities for the elderly is to familiarise oneself more than ever with the perspectives of the residents.

And of course, the food on the plate is important, too. Do I recognise it as food? Does it taste good? Is the eating environment appropriate – alone or with others? Who is at my table? Is the environment pleasing or not? Are aid measures really supportive or are they bothersome?

Here it is very important to put yourself in the position of the residents who for the most part have found their last home at the facility. Then certain aspects of food and drink take on a significance which has often been neglected in the past.

It is essential that in a facility, this basis – a defined culinary culture – exists. Building up on this or derived from this, cases of malnourishment, eating disorders or refusal of food can be treated. The first important step is that between the actual provision of food and drinks and the meal itself there are many steps and opportunities for creativity which increase in importance when dealing with the elderly. These can play a decisive role in experiencing food and drink as an agreeable and pleasant event.

## 6. Perception of People's Needs

Peter Tudehope

### Perception Is Reality

Our value system is developed as we grow up. In the first few years of our life our parents are the sole influence. As we grow other outside influences like friends, school, religion, the media, sports and clubs start to shape the way we think, and the values we believe in. This has a direct impact on how we operate in the hospitality work environment, how we deal with guests, staff, suppliers, and owners, from different cultures, socio economic backgrounds and demographics. Often our belief system already has certain perceptions in place and therefore we tend to provide service based on these perceptions. In hospitality we are mainly selling an intangible product called service. People's perception of the service they receive is their reality regardless of whether they have perceived it correctly or not. The perception of the service provider is likewise of capital importance. Jan Carlzon's much-quoted phrase is key: "In the 1990s we saw a customer in every individual. In 2000 we see an individual in every customer."

Every hotelier's dream is for the customer to feel so welcome that the hotel is a home away from home. There is no better comment than this that can be made to a General Manager by a guest staying at their hotel. What is it we all like so much about home that hoteliers try and replicate in their hotels? In my mind it is the following: predictability, familiarity, relaxed environment, safety, genuine service and staff, and home cooking. (It is hard to believe that one of the most popular dishes on our room service menu is sausages, mashed potato and peas.)

A home, ideally, offers a comforting environment, the familiar sounds of music or TV or friendly voices, the smell of fresh flowers (and the absence of offensive odours), the feel of laundered linen, and the taste of home cooking. In their efforts to create a homely environment for their guests, hoteliers start with the five senses. The first visual impressions are lasting. The look of the public areas, the uniforms on staff, the layout of the room all have to be visually pleasing. The ambience created by background music, running water, the quietness of the guest room, the quality of the TV sound are all worked on behind the scenes. They create a sense of safe familiarity with fresh flowers in the public areas, non-smoking floors, fragrances of bathroom amenities, the fresh smell of clean linen, and fresh cooking smells. The quality of linen, towelling, crockery, cutlery, and glassware, and the general feeling of cleanliness, are just some of the areas that impact on the sense of touch.

Why do Hotels call people who stay with them Guests, when they actually pay for the privilege? Being a Guest normally means free of charge. Preparing a meal at home will vary depending who is going to attend the meal. Think about how we would prepare a meal for the following scenarios: A family member, the boss, a friend. The first thing you do is try and understand the needs of the person having dinner and the outcome you would like to achieve. The same principles apply when dealing with guests from different market segments. A corporate guest wants fast efficient service where everything just works. Leisure guests have more time on their hands and want more interaction and generosity of time. A tourist wants added value by way of information on local amenities and services. Air crew need rest, and probably the offer of a friendly wake-up service. If you get the service mixed up you end up with frustrated and unhappy customers. This would happen in the home, if you prepared a meal for your boss in the same way as you would for a family member.

The family home is where important hospitality skills are developed. A family meal requires all the people participating to communicate, listen, share, anticipate each other's needs, have manners, help in the preparation, serving and clearing. All these are essential skills in the hospitality industry too. These skills are translated into proactive service, attention to detail, good communication skills, the ability to work in a team, and a strong work ethic.

When teaching employees to deliver service to our guests, the fundamentals are based on the same values that are taught in the family home. They can be summarized with the acronym S.E.R.V.I.C.E. These fundamentals would be:

**Smile / Self Esteem:** Smiles are universal. Whether the guests speak English or not, everyone understands the message of a smile. For self-esteem, hotel managers need to hire positive people and to treat them as they themselves would like to be treated.

**Eye Contact / Exceed Expectations:** Staff need to make regular eye contact with guests to show they are listening and understanding what they are saying, and also to show that they are approachable and willing to help. Staff can exceed expectations by being consistent in all their dealings with guests. They cannot argue with customer perceptions; but they can learn from the manager to anticipate changing market needs, and to treat customers consistently well.

**Recognition / Recover Opportunities:** Staff need to use guests' names whenever possible, and remember details about them. This shows them that they are important to the hotel, and helps them to feel at home. Guests' complaints are opportunities for staff and manager to improve the level of service in ways that might not have occurred to them otherwise. They should therefore listen carefully to guests' complaints, without assuming that the guest is merely being difficult. To be pro-active in this area, managers can ensure that they find out what their guests really think of the hotel, by setting up surveys, contacting regular users, and employing "mystery shopping" techniques.

**Voice / Vision:** Staff need to take the time to speak to guests, especially those from abroad, in a clear voice. This conveys a sense of service and assists guests in understanding what is being said. The manager should ensure that his or her vision for the hotel is shared by the staff, creating a culture dedicated to service excellence. This includes planning and preparing for the future – today. The manager should take into account the lifetime value of customers, since repeat business is extremely valuable.

**Informed / Improve:** All staff must know the answer to basic questions about the hotel, its services and the products it provides. Employees and managers must take the initiative in looking for better ways of doing things, mindful of the fact that in service provision, little things can make a big difference. Another way for the management to improve is to invest in training and continuous development for all staff, including themselves.

**Clean / Care:** Staff presentation conveys the professional impression of the hotel. All staff must be clean and well presented, which gives the guest confidence that staff care not only about themselves but about the guests. This confidence cannot be just a surface impression – employees must genuinely care for their work and the guests they are providing services to. The management's care of the guests includes ensuring that the hotel uses customer-friendly systems for reservations, requests, and payment, making easy to do business with the hotel. In the area of quality service provision, "near enough" is not good enough for guests.

**Everyone, Everywhere / Empowerment:** Staff should take ownership of simple guest requests: no matter what a guest asks them for, as long as it is legal and moral, staff should do their best to deliver and should not refer the guest to another department. Management should aim to make employees responsible and answerable for holistic service to guests, and should make every member of staff a valued team member. This will involve taking calculated risks and learning from mistakes, as well as supporting and coaching employees.

## Setting the Benchmark

The family environment creates a strong platform to teach children the value of genuine “willingness to please”. This sets the benchmark for people’s future actions and attitudes. A hotel manager needs to interview and hire staff on the basis of their desire and willingness to provide genuine “anticipatory” service. It is not easy to teach someone to do this after they enter employment – it must have been a value taught from a young age.

To finish with four quotations covering the various areas discussed above:

• *The quality of our work depends on the quality of our people.*

Unknown

• *Home ought to be our clearing-house, the place from which we go forth lessoned and disciplined, and ready for life.*

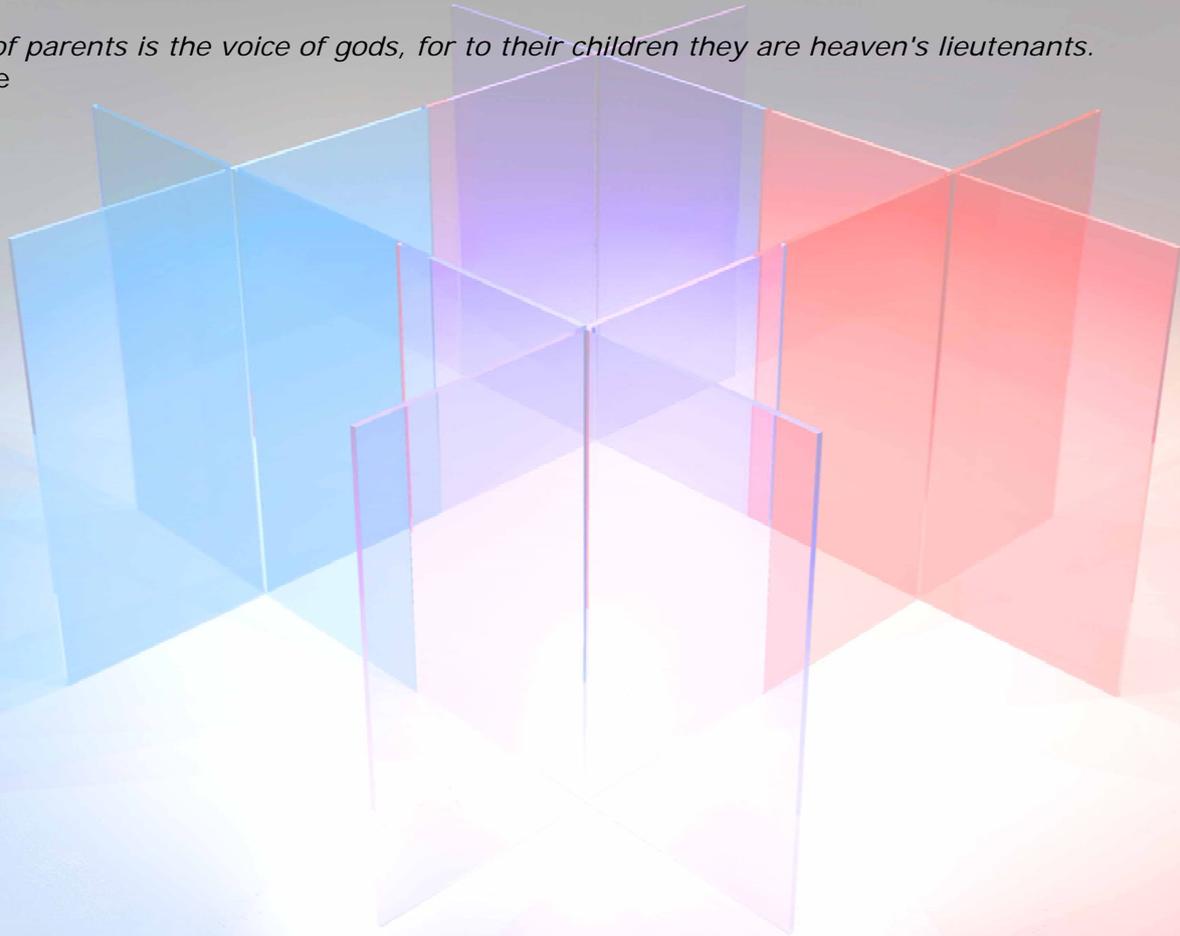
Kathleen Norris

• *Being on par in terms of price and quality only gets you into the game. Service wins the game.*

Tony Allesandra

• *The voice of parents is the voice of gods, for to their children they are heaven's lieutenants.*

Shakespeare



## Conclusion

Marjory Clark

Work in the home and associated with the home receives fewer accolades than any other type of work. The hospitality industry employs the largest workforce in the U.K. – 2.5 million people – and basically their work is the work of the home. The meal is central to hospitality and, more importantly, central to the home, because it is essential to the human being in both survival and social development.

The family meal in Britain is no longer seen to be necessary by many people; however, it has been demonstrated that the breakdown of family eating is producing a breakdown in social relations between families and between people at work. A *Balanced Diet*, in short, should lead to a *Balanced Life* and vice versa. It is not just what we eat but where we eat it, how we eat it and most importantly who we eat it with that produces effects for good or bad on the whole person.

This is not just a problem in Britain but throughout the developed and developing world.

The various angles on this question presented in this book show that there is a growing awareness of the situation on the part of academics, professionals and practitioners, and many studies support a change of behaviour and lifestyle. According to one viewpoint, the economics of a country are negatively affected by the breakdown of the family because then State social support services become an expensive necessity. Patricia Morgan, however, in her recent study *The War between the State and the Family* (Institute of Economic Affairs, 2007), points to some of the economic factors and ideological motivations which make the modern State want to increase, rather than decrease, citizens' dependence on it, with the resulting decline of the family unit.

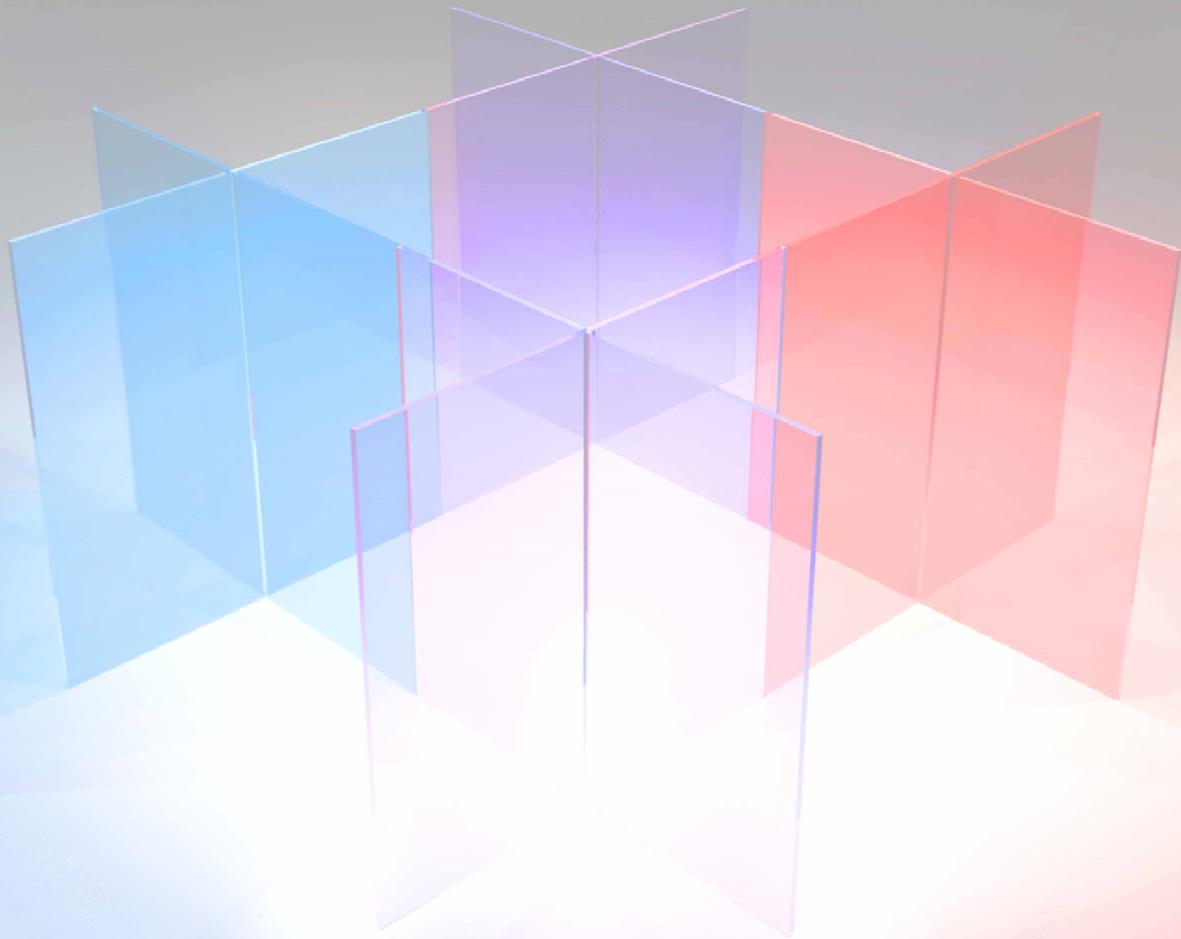
It has been conclusively shown that people underachieve both educationally and socially through poor nutrition and life-work balance and also through lack of social skills previously learnt in the home. The effect of the deterioration of the family unit is repeatedly shown to have far-reaching negative effects on the individual's emotional maturity and stability. A change of behaviour and lifestyle is the answer not just to personal development but to greater fulfilment in a person's working life, which in turn affects the dynamics of society.

The first part of this book highlights the wider issues which also encompass the political and economic spheres involved in the question whereas the second part concentrates on some practical solutions that are already in place and seem to work in the home, in care, in hotels, in training centres and in the general workplace.

A common thread throughout the book is the care for and service of people so as to treat them as valuable human beings in their own right. As general manager of the Radisson Plaza Hotel, Sydney, Peter Tudehope shows very clearly that service, whether in the home or in a hotel, is something to be esteemed, since it means looking after people in fundamental ways. Service needs to be reintroduced into our society in its true meaning, taking into account the part of the giver and the receiver. He highlighted the fact that the family, and our relationship with it, is always part of us and therefore it is part of us at work and affects how we work. The chapters in this book not only underline the importance of eating together but also raise questions about food advertising. In this regard James Ferguson, author of *The Vitamin Murders. Who killed Healthy Eating in Britain?* (Portobello Books, 2007), while doing research on the renowned food scientist, the late Sir Jack Drummond, found out that Britons actually ate better during the Second World War because the country needed to keep fit. Had Sir Jack Drummond's work been followed up and applied consistently in subsequent years, we would now not be in the position that we find ourselves with regards to children, teenagers and the problems of obesity, heart disease etc.; and Jamie Oliver and Prue Leith would not have to be once again working so hard, with government support, to change the nation's eating habits despite the pressure of advertising.

In 2005 Stephen Overell, award-winning journalist and head of media at The Work Foundation, published an article in *Personnel Today* (12<sup>th</sup> April 2005) entitled 'The Catholic Work Ethic'. At the end of the article he asked the question 'Should women stay at home for the good of society?' The ensuing correspondence raised the question 'Instead of talking about women's right to work, why don't we think about why society seems to think that the home is not as important as the workplace?' Stephen Overell made the point that 'There is no reason why women – and I would add men – cannot be fulfilled in the home.'

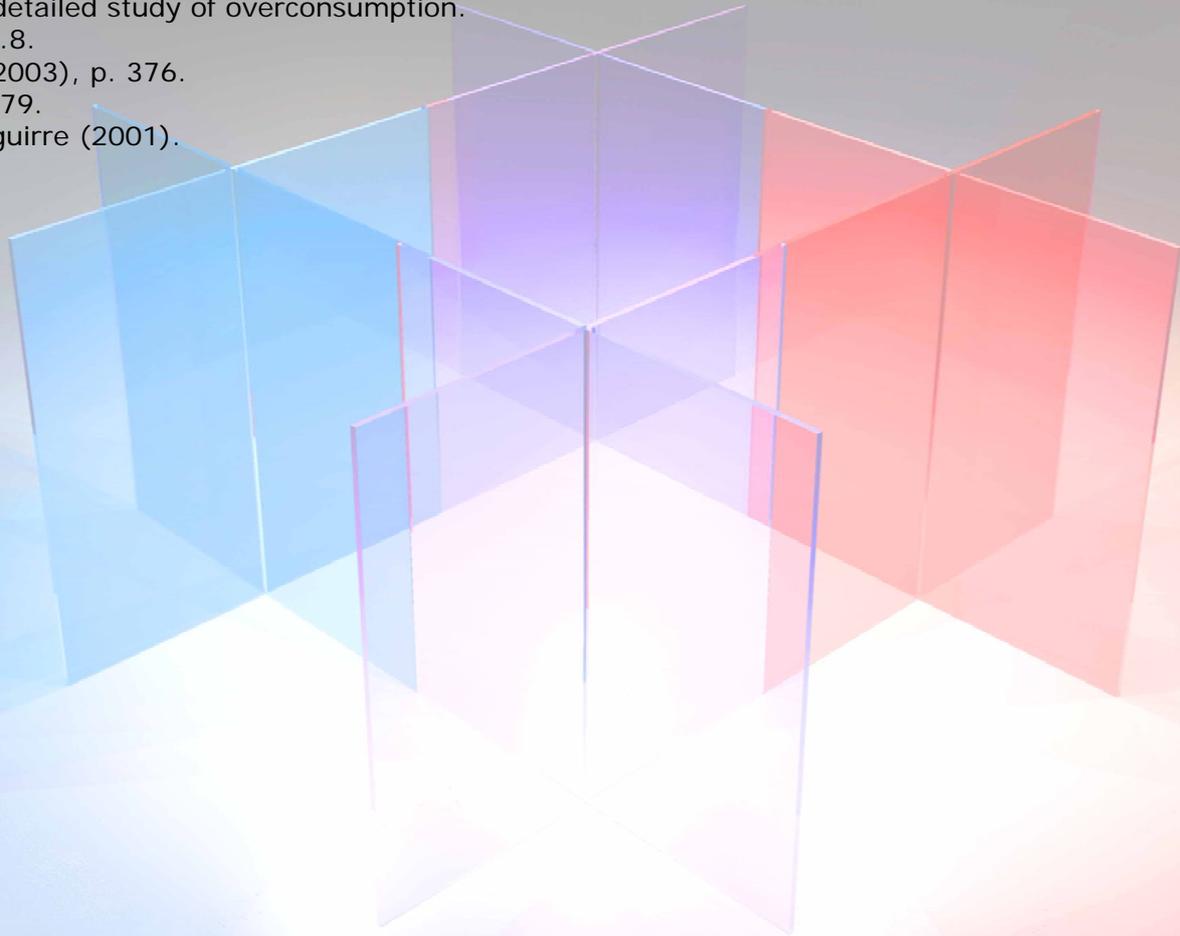
The present book offers reflections and pointers which can show the way to progress in this important field of research and, most of all, practice. What is at stake is the survival of the family as the cell of society and the place where each human being could be empowered to fulfil his or her potential.



- (1) The Body and the Earth, in *The Art of the Commonplace*, p. 115.
- (2) *ST*, I, 91, 3.
- (3) *solus homo delectatur in ipsa pulchritudine sensibilium secundum seipsam*, *ST*, I, 91, 3, ad 3.
- (4) *ST*, I, 76, 5.
- (5) See Stanley Rosen, "Thought and Touch: A Note on Aristotle's *De Anima*," *Phronesis* 6 (1961), 127-137.
- (6) *ST*, I-II, 24, 1, ad 2. It is striking that McDowell has nothing to say about the intermediate status of passions between the purely rational and the purely sub-rational.
- (7) *ST*, I-II, 23, 1.
- (8) *ST*, I-II, 25, 2.
- (9) Chenu, *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century*, translated by Jerome Taylor and Lester Little (Chicago University Press, 1968), p. 138.
- (10) Exposition of Boethius's *De Trinitate*, VI, 3.
- (11) *ST*, I-II, 33, 1.
- (12) *ST*, I-II, 33, 1.
- (13) I have addressed this point elsewhere. See Aguirre (2001 and 2006).
- (14) Social capital has been defined in several ways. One definition that encompasses most of them is "an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals. These norms can range from a norm of reciprocity between two friends, all the way to complex and elaborately articulated doctrines like Christianity and Confucianism." (Fukuyama (2000, p.3.) Human capital is generally understood as the physical and technical efficiency of the population. For a clear presentation of social capital see Fukuyama (2000) and for human capital and the family see Becker (1991.) Already Coleman (1999) in his seminal paper on social capital had emphasized both the interrelation that exists between social and human capital as well as the fundamental role that the family plays on their development. Specifically, Coleman states: "But there is one effect of social capital that is especially important: its effect on the creation of human capital in the next generation. Both social capital in the family and social capital in the community play roles in the creation of human capital in the rising generation. (p. 109)" For an economic analysis of the connection of these forms of capital with growth see Alesina and Rodrick (1994), Knack and Keefer (1997), Kalemli-Ozcan *et al* (2000), Mauro (1995), and Whiteley (2000).
- (15) See Juster and Stafford (1991) for a more detailed analysis on the literature's treatment of the allocation of time.
- (16) Becker (1965), p. 496.
- (17) See Hofferth *et al* (2001). The literature indicates that the number of families dining together in the U.S. has increased between 1998 and 2005 from 47% to 58%. The quality of these dinners, however, has not necessarily accompanied this increase. CASA (2005).
- (18) Kinney *et al* (2000) and Certain *et al* (2002).
- (19) Ogdon (2002).
- (20) Bowman (1999).
- (21) Grissmer (1994).
- (22) CASA (1995).
- (23) Polegato and Zaichkowsky (1994).
- (24) Growing within a context of a healthy marriage decreases the risk that children will suffer from emotional or behavioral problems, be victims of abuse or neglect, and struggle in school. Adults also benefit from healthy and stable marriages. Married mothers suffer from a lower rate of depression, enjoy higher income and lower living costs, and have higher savings and wealth. Healthy families are good for children, adults, and the states. For a Review of the literature, among others, see Amato and Keith (1991), Nock *et al* (2002), Grissmer *et al* (1994), Sun (2001), Fagan (1999 and 2002), and Rector *et al* (2004).
- (25) Akerlof (1998), Aquilino (1996), Fagan and Rector (2000), and Rector *et al* (2003).
- (26) For a Review of the literature see Larson (1995), Nock (2002), Fukuyama (1999), Schramm (2003), and Aguirre (2001).
- (27) Akerlof *et al* (1996), APA (1996), Bisnaire (1990), Dube (2003), Hetherington (1989), Hofferth *et al* (2000), Jeynes (2001), and Zwaanswijk (2003).
- (28) *ibid.* and CASA (1995), p. 3.
- (29) Knack and Keefer (1997).
- (30) Kalemli-Ozcan *et al* (2000) and Mauro (1995).

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- (31) Griffen (2000).
- (32) Bowman and Harris (2003).
- (33) Aguirre (2006) and Fagan (1999 and 2002).
- (34) Zick and Allen (1996).
- (35) There are three ways for this transfer to take place: voluntary payments, theft, taxes, and government benefits.
- (36) Concerning the issue of luck, history and growth see Easterly, *et al* (1993). For how choices affect economic growth see Becker (1993).
- (37) For a survey of this literature see Deaton and Muellbauer (1980).
- (38) Ashton *et al* (1984).
- (39) For a review of these findings see Walker (1984).
- (40) For a review of this literature see Chang and Wen (1997), p. 2
- (41) The communes collectivized all means of production, including not only land and draft animals, but also those retained by individual members under the preceding cooperative system, such as small private plots of land and orchards. Many communes also collectivized members' personal property such as kitchenware and furniture.
- (42) Chang and Wen (1997), p. 5.
- (43) In some rural areas the grain in three months amounted to what usually sufficed for six months. In some other areas, three months' supply of grain was consumed in two weeks. See Yang (1996) for a more detailed study of overconsumption.
- (44) *Ibid*, p.8.
- (45) Ying (2003), p. 376.
- (46) *Ibid*, 379.
- (47) See Aguirre (2001).



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