

AN ANALYSIS OF FOOD WRITING AND FOOD PROGRAMS IN AMERICA

A CREATIVE PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: An Analysis of Food Writing and Food Programs in America

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Food writing requires curiosity and information-gathering skills. Dianne Jacob (2010) said good writing is the main determinant of good food writing and it requires development of a broad vocabulary and creativity. Jacob stated, “It is about clarity of expression, style, voice, accuracy, knowledge of structure and rhythm of language” (Jacob, 2010, P. 3). Kathleen Collins (2009) added, “Cooking shows are a unique social barometer” (p. 5), and “They have taught, changed, and changed with people” (p. 9). Both food writing and food TV shows are associated with culture issues (Collins, 2009). Through an analysis of food writing, this study first introduced the definition, characteristics and types of food writing by sharing ideas from published books, newspapers and magazines about food. It explored (1) Different types of food writing, (2) Ways to provide good content for a TV food program, and (3) How food writing relates to culture. Secondly, the researcher has compared and contrasted two current food TV

programs. This creative project addressed several main points: 1) What are the strengths and weaknesses of these programs? 2) What are the components of a successful TV food program? 3) How are TV food programs produced to attract audiences? 4) How do TV food programs relate to a nation's culture?

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays it's not only scholars who talk and write about food outside the kitchen, people from all walks of life treat food and food writing as an enjoyable pastime. Food television these days enjoys some of the same attention (Collins, 2009, p. 243).

“Cookbooks alone weigh in at 12,400,000 hits on Google; Amazon.com lists 54,088 titles, although some are doubtless repeats” (Bloom, 2008, p. 348).

Publications about food and food TV programs have boomed in the past decade and are winning large audiences. Books about food are popular. *Gourmet*, *Saveur*, *Bon Appetit*, *Food Network*, *Food and Wine* are prominent food publications. *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Southern Living*, and *Sunset* regularly provide food-related articles. Food TV programs are more prevalent than they have ever been, with shows such as *Oliver's Twist* (Food Network), *No Reservations* (Travel Channel), *Top Chef* (Bravo), or *Iron Chef America* (Food Network) prevailing. Brad Hooper (2010) pointed out people love books about food (food literature, not cookbooks) and travel (travel narratives, not travel guides), because they show readers' “the actual experience of consuming good food and of going

to new or familiar places are both reacted to our senses” (p. 123). Moreover, food TV programs “have both reflected and shaped significant changes in American culture” (Collins, 2009, p. 9). Both food TV programs reflect our attitudes and behaviors and who we are as individuals and as a society (Collins, 2009, p. 9). Collins (2009), however, believed there is a need to improve the quality of food TV programs and we could learn from the evolution of cooking programs as a way to make them better. In that regard, this creative project contains three sections.

First, it defines the characteristics and types of food writing by sharing ideas from published books, newspapers and magazines. This creative project identifies the principles of good food writing (i.e., the kinds of techniques that authors use to describe food in their books or magazines). Finally, this project examines the relationship between food writing and culture. For example, gastronomic writings discuss cooking techniques, ingredients and the cultural meaning of the cuisine (Tsu, 2010, p. 63). Tsu referred to “cookbooks, food magazines, restaurant guides, shopping guides, tour guides and food-related stories in mass-circulation weeklies as ‘popular gastronomic writings’” (Tsu, 2010, p. 64).

The second section reviews and critiques current food TV programs. This section discusses the history of cooking programs, using two food TV programs that have included food and culture as focuses, to discuss strengths and weakness of these programs.

The third part of this creative project includes a proposal for a new food TV program that features characteristics of successful food TV programs. The goal of this

creative project is to provide recommendations for producing food TV programs that are informative and entertaining, while providing more culturally relevant material.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most newspapers, magazines and Web sites publish food stories, with and without recipes (Weinberg, 2006).

Elements and Characteristics of Food Writing

Good writing is basic to good food writing (Jacob, 2010). “It is about clarity of expression, style, voice, accuracy, knowledge of structure and rhythm of language” (p. 3), and creativity is important to food writing. It evokes a place or memory, and it should be enjoyable to read (Jacob, 2010). Food writing not only writes about the subject--food, but also vividly describes a scene, a terrain, ambiance, and relationships (Jacob, 2010).

"Food writing is often all about the scenes: touch, smell, sound, appearance, and taste" (Jacob, 2010, p. 8). Among these elements of senses, smell is the most important one, since “most of what you taste comes from smelling it first” (Jacob, 2010, p. 9). Adjectives would be perfect for describing senses, but too many will weaken writing, and make writers sound sentimental (Jacob, 2010, p. 9). Our understanding of food should

come from all our senses: sound, smell, taste, and appearance. As Caruana (2002) described: “the sizzle of the steak on the grill, the intoxicating smell of vanilla, or the joy (or grimace, depending on your taste) of seeing raw oysters on your dish” (para. 6).

Food writing should provide accurate information and enough details and background (Caruana, 2002). A good food story should be informative and vivid (Caruana, 2002). “Language should be bright and vibrant; the writer should create mental images, not just a step-by-step, bland description of a specific recipe or technique” (Caruana, 2002, para. 6).

Weinberg (2006) maintained food writing requires relentless curiosity and general skills of gathering information from online websites or libraries. Food writing also requires a broad range of vocabularies to correctly describe smell, taste and texture (Weinberg, 2006). Some food writers use journals to keep recording their impressions of everything new they consume (Weinberg, 2006).

The passion inside food writing and joy that food writing gives to readers explains why Bill Ott (2010) said “Even in a down publishing economy, cookbooks continue to proliferate while foodie-lit writers just can’t stop themselves from musing about the wonderful meals they’ve enjoyed and the even more wonderful ones they will soon enjoy” (para. 2).

Food writing is not easy. “Food writers make explicit what native eaters know in their hearts, minds, palates” (Bloom, 2008, p. 347). Jacob (2010) added, “the best food

writers capture the authentic emotion of the moment, the tone of what's going on at the time, and what they feel physically” (p. 16). Jacob explained “Food writing wanders over dozens of subjects,” such as “a recipe for fettuccine with prosciutto, cream, and nutmeg. The history of tea. A blog post about eating at Chinatown” (Jacob, 2010, P. 1). Food writing is complex. Food writing is like preparing an excellent and carefully considered meal, which requires discreet amounts of good ingredients (Caruana, 2002). To write a food story, food writers should savor food from touch, smell, sound, appearance, and taste, providing readers accurate, native-like and vivid description of food, and accurate information.

Types of Food Writing

Food writing has a broad range of types. Jacob (2010) mentioned that food writing includes: blogging, essays and memoir, fiction writing, news stories, traveling writing, etc.

Barbara Frey Waxman (2008) mentioned food memoirs are noteworthy, because they are culturally related. There are “many good multicultural texts among food memoirs” (p. 366). Researchers could learn different cultures by learning about food from other regions or counties (Waxman, 2008).

Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann (2007) added, "food writing not only identifies certain foods as worthy, but also extensively contextualizes the meanings and

motivations underlying food fashions” (p. 170). For example, "Gourmet food writing provides useful information on food (recipes, techniques, definitions, etc.) as well as extensive contextualization that describes the people, places, and events surrounding the food itself” (Johnston & Baumann, 2007, p. 178). This contextualization not only conveys “knowledge about specific cooking skills or techniques,” “sensory characteristics of food—regarding taste and texture,” but also explains “food’s social meaning and social uses” (Johnston & Baumann, 2007, p. 178).

Waxman (2008) mentioned that culinary memoirists “try to show the seeds of their ‘foodiness’ and how they blossomed into sophisticated gourmands, food critics, food memoirists, restaurateurs, and, often, public figures” (p. 366). Waxman (2008) believed food memoirists intuitively understand and control the connections among “smells, tastes, strong emotions, and keen memories” (p. 363), and they deserve respect from readers as a response to their descriptions of emotions, food experiences, and insights to cultures (p. 364).

Food writing is worthy of more attention. Even writing the common recipes, which help and inspire readers to plan for their food, might need a writer’s personality to distinguish the work from free online recipes (Jacob, 2010). More than that, there are other food writing categories, such as news articles, personal interviews, technique based how-to articles, and food-based travel pieces, etc. (Jacob, 2010).

Food Writing and Culture

Good food writing is able to convey diverse cultures. Brillat-Savarin, one of the earliest anthologists asserted, “Tell me what you eat: I will tell you what you are” (as cited in Waxman, 2008, p. 366). Bloom (2008) said native eaters have a good command of their language.

Food memoirs link food with “love and emotional nourishment” that come from personal histories, and “cultural identity, ethnic community, family, and cross-cultural experiences” (Waxman, 2008, p. 363). Waxman said “cooking and eating ethnically enact cultural memory, but writing about these activities or experiences further reinforces the links to home” (p. 368).

Food stimulates the sharing of cultures (Waxman, 2008, p. 366). Food writing, which describes food as the main subject, provides access to different foods and helps people learn more about culture.

The History of TV Food Programs

Food TV programs are divided by decades, as marked by changes in American culture. According to Geoffrey Drummond, the producer of *America’s Test Kitchen*, food TV has become as important as sports or anything else (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 194). Since Julia Child’s show *The French Chef*, aired in 1963, TV food programming has grown rapidly. Various kinds of TV food programs, such as *No Reservations*, *Man v.*

Food or *Oliver's Twist* attract great audiences. Hare (2011) mentioned food TV has both entertained and informed people who would like to learn more about cooking and cuisine, and people are turning in for that information.

Cooking programs have undergone changes through the decades. They have delivered information from insights of cooking recipes to eating healthier, but now they are more popular and reflect American life in a different way (Collins, 2009).

Collins (2009) divided the evolution of television cooking up until now into the early, into the early, the middle, and the modern periods, based on three entries (television, Julia Child, and the Food Network) (p. 7). According to Collins (2009), "The early period (1946-1962) begins with the advent of television where cooking instruction showed up in short order. The middle period (1963-1992) begins with the appearance of Julia Child on *The French Chef*" (p. 7). The last period starts from 1993, and now we are in the modern period (Collins, 2009).

Cooking programs were first presented to the public via the radio, instructing women in early part of the 20th century (Collins, 2009, p. 2). Cooking via broadcasting was a staple for American housewives before the emergence of black-and-white TV sets appeared in the late 1940s (Collins, 2009, p. 2). The first period of programs began in the post-World War II years, when cooking shows were instructive (Collins, 2009, p. 2). Cooking shows were mostly hosted by home economists and provided information for housewives to help them perform well in the kitchen (Collins, 2009, p. 2). "The

Kennedy's enviable Camelot made dining fashionable, especially on French food, and a growing middle-class wanderlust created an even more vigorous interest in international culture” (Collins, 2009, p. 3), and “American's growing urge for adventure and creativity found its way into the kitchen” (Collins, 2009, p. 3). Collins (2009) said, “cooking shows began to reflect a broadminded departure from the standard, dry format and attempted to add a spice to a bland culinary landscape" (p. 3).

The second period started in 1963, when Julia Child on *The French Chef* helped audiences learn cooking when they had time (Collins, 2009). As “the concept of ‘gourmet’ crept into the cultural mindset in the 1960s and 1970s, cooking took on a new role” (Collins, 2009, p. 4). As knowledge of food and cooking became increasingly important in American culture, producers of cooking programs recognized the opportunity to create more interesting programs (Collins, 2009). Collins (2009) pointed out in this decade, “food and cooking became associated with a personal sense of self” (p. 4). For example, in 1969, as opposed to teaching, Graham Kerr’s *The Galloping Gourmet* took entertainment as the fundamental purpose, and Kerr’s personality and humor contributed to this show’s success (Collins, 2009). Meanwhile, food from a variety of foreign cultures became part of American cuisine. The American palate was broadened (Collins, 2009). Asian food, focusing on fresh vegetables and light sauces, made its way into American cultures. Chinese -born American chef Martin Yan was the host of *Yan Can Cook*. This show exemplified “the need for speed combined with an interest in

international trappings” (Collins, 2009. p. 142), and “illustrated the typical ‘foreign’ kind of cooking show” (Collins, 2009. p. 142). Until 1993, when the Food Network came into existence, TV food programs were only dedicated to cooking and food, and then the third decade of cooking shows begun.

In this third period of food TV programming (1993-present), to grab audiences’ attention, “the cable network gradually revamped the traditional instructional cooking program, adding live bands, participatory studio audiences, science, travel, and game shows, making the genre a microcosm of television and entertainment itself” (Collins, 2009, p. 5). Presently, reality and competition shows prevail among the cooking/food show genre.

Food Network’s “new domestic cooking shows” and the production and acquisition of “avant-garde programs” help made it become successful and built new fantasies around food (Ketchum, 2005, p. 223). As part of present food TV programs, Ketchum (2005) named the “avant-garde programs” as “the Food Network’s most innovative shows in their programming through the production and acquisition of new types of television shows that feature food” (p. 229). The ‘avant-garde programs’ demonstrates “how the network has been innovative in the food media genre, employing surreal sets, camera angles, and bizarre costuming” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 223). Christopher Kimball, the host of *America's Test Kitchen*, said that Food Network grabbed audience’s attention by the performance of personality, but did not provide audiences enough

information about how to cook (as cited in Collins, 2009). So there is a need to bring food back to the center of some food TV programs.

“As the role of food changed from the mere necessity to a means of self-expression and a conspicuous lifestyle accessory” (Collins, 2009, p. 5), cooking shows not only teach audiences how to cook, but also how to live.

Elements of a good TV food program

Ketchum (2005) analyzed the “new domestic cooking shows” and the production and acquisition of “avant-garde programs,” which have made Food Network successful (p. 223). Many industry executive interviews add opinions to this topic.

Every TV program has a title. A good title should be easy for people to remember and explains the content of the show, such as “Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire” (“The Title,” n.d., para. 2). More than that, this website also indicates, “a title needs to support the concept of the show” (“The Title,” n.d., para. 3).

William Neal, an executive producer, said a great concept is important for a new show to survive (Neal, personal interview, n.d.). Chris Cowan, an executive producer, thought “anything that has a long arc,” is important to produce reality TV (Cowan, personal interview, n.d., para. 22). It should be “something that allows you to follow a set group of characters over a long period of time. Something that shows growth. Something that shows the evolution of stories” (Cowan, personal interview, n.d., para. 22). When it

comes to food TV programs, Pauline Adema (2000) contended “food television incorporates the vicarious pleasures of watching someone else cook and eat; the emulsion of entertainment and cooking; the jumbling of traditional gender roles; and ambivalence toward cultural standards of body, consumption, and health” (p. 113). Adema said, “Food Network has given new meaning to the concept of TV dinners. No longer pulled from the freezer, these TV dinners are lovingly prepared in the comfort of your home by professional chefs” (Adema, 2000, p. 116). The concept of food TV programs varies, as do the categories.

As the number of food TV programs increases, researchers have analyzed them via different categories. William Grimes divided most cooking programs into three categories: “the how-to show, the travelogue and the host with the most” (Grimes, 1998, para. 7). “The viewer tunes in the first to pick up tips and techniques, the second to fantasize and the third to be entertained by the star” (Grimes, 1998, para. 7).

Grimes introduced one example of the “how-to show”, *The French Chef*. Julia Child, the host of this show, “reduced the mysteries of French cuisine to a series of easy-to-follow steps” (Grimes, 1998, para. 1). And “the show was serious and instructive, a prime example of the American passion for self-improvement” (Grimes, 1998, para. 1). But Collins (2009) believed “The travel/adventure/food sub-genre has been a particularly winning combination,” (p. 195) and “Eating and traveling is something we can now do vicariously with great success” (p. 197).

To Ketchum (2005), “this construction of fantasies of accessible, alluring spaces and food was also the foundation for travel programs” (p. 227). Ketchum (2005) gave an example of the travel show on Food Network, *The Best of*. Silverstein and Cordes, the hosts of this show, are “White, amiable and appear to be (through clothing) and sound (through their tone and language) upper-middle class” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 227). Ketchum (2005) believed typical of the series of *The Best of*, the hosts visited restaurants, met chef, interviewed people, and introduced local culture. In one episode, the host, Cordes described the place in Louisville as “elegant and opulent” (as cited in Ketchum, 2005, p. 227). At the end of the segment, the host tasted the food and said “ooohs” and “aaahs” as always (as cited in Ketchum, 2005, p. 227).

More and more out-of-studio food TV shows appeared in the late 1990s. These shows were “heralding a way to keep viewers interested as well as another step in weaving of food and lifestyle” (Collins, 2009, p. 195). Rachel Ray’s *Tasty Travels* and *\$40 a Day* “take viewers on virtual trips around the U.S. to sample regional restaurants and cultures” (Collins, 2009, p. 195). However, to keep a core audience, it is important to “keep its [the Food Network] eye on that fine line between veering too far away from the kitchen -- or even too far away from food” (Collins, 2009, p. 195).

Grimes believed the categories (the how-to show, the travelogue and the host with the most) overlap (Grimes, 1998, para. 8). For example, Grimes introduced “Mediterranean Mario” as a “how-to with a touch of travel and personality,” and a show

putting travel at the top of the agenda. (Grimes, 1998, para. 10).

As Grimes (1998) described one episode of “Mediterranean Mario”:

On a visit to Milan, Mr. Wolf wanders the city, looking at churches, listening to music played on restored early instruments and finally, almost as an afterthought, dropping by the Four Seasons Hotel to watch Sergio Mei turn out a truly scrumptious-looking Milanese-style minestrone and a dish of chicken in citrus sauce. (Grimes, 1998, para.10)

But the problem of this kind of show is “whether the food will make an appearance at all” (Grimes, 1998, para. 10). Finally, “the rise of the travelogue food show strongly suggests that most television viewers do not really want to duplicate the efforts of the television chefs. They want to take a very inexpensive trip” (Grimes, 1998, para. 12).

Grimes (1998) stated that there are shows that don’t fit into a specific category, such as, *Taste*,’ which was a former food TV program on the Food Network. Grimes (1998) added “David Rosengarten [the host of *Taste*], a cookbook writer and a restaurant critic for *Gourmet* magazine, explores a single culinary topic in a semi-scholarly way, throwing in a fair amount of how-to, but acting primarily as a cultural tour guide” (Grimes, 1998, para. 17).

Grimes (1998) described one episode of the *Taste*:

A show on madeleines began with a reverential reading from Proust. A

show on South American grilling styles raced through Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Argentina, as the prodigiously well-informed Mr. Rosengarten explained local techniques of barbecuing (as well as the origin of the word) and the differences in local ingredients and terms. As a grand finale, he attacked a table laden with South American meats, including sheep testicles. (para. 17)

Similar to Grimes's idea of dividing food TV programs into three genres, Cori Lynn Hemmah (2009) cited Jensen's idea of "instructional programs," Waldman's idea of "nonfiction shows," and *Food Network Review's* idea of "food talk-shows" and thought these three are main types of programming on the Food Network (as cited in Hemmah, 2009, p. 13-14).

1) According to Hemmah (2009), instructional programs are "where the host of the program creates a meal in their home or a set that looks like the kitchen in their home" (p. 13). Such as, *30 Minute Meals* is a show in this category. Generally, one person is in front of the camera, and sometimes friends help hosts cook in the kitchen (Hemmah, 2009). Hosts of this type of "instructional programs" might present cuisines from different countries during the shows, "including Italian, Spanish, Mediterranean, Asian, and cuisine from different locations in America, among others" (Hemmah, 2009, p. 13).

2) The second category is what Waldman called “nonfiction shows” (as cited in Hemmah, 2009, p. 13). Waldman (2008) said the information itself in nonfiction shows is entertaining. Hemmah believed there are two types of shows included in this category. The first type of show of this category “often exhibit chefs traveling around the world, sampling foreign cuisine, and giving tips on how to get the best food deals for your money” (Hemmah, 2009, p. 13-14), such as Anthony Bourdain’s *No Reservations*. The second type of show of this category is based on competitions, such as *The Next Food Network Star* and *Iron Chef America* (Hemmah, 2009, p. 14).

3) The third category is what *Food Network Review* referred as “food talk-shows” (as cited in Hemmah, 2009, p. 14). Food talk-shows have similar structure with talk shows but their shows “are solely based on cooking” (Hemmah, 2009, p. 14).

As Hemmah (2009) described:

A live audience is invited to the studio and food is prepared in front of them while celebrity guests are often invited to help cook. There is often a running dialogue with the audience, and at the end of the show, members of the audience are invited to taste whatever was prepared. (p. 14)

Ketchum (2005) labeled this kind of food TV programs, which is “akin to talk shows in their style” and “feature occasional interviews and frequent interactions with a live audience,” as “domestic cooking shows” (p. 224-225). Ketchum (2005) divided the food programs on the Food Network into four basic categories: “traditional domestic

instructional cooking; personality-driven domestic cooking shows; food travel programs; and the avant-garde” (p. 223). Ketchum (2005) thought the last category is “the Food Network’s most innovative shows in their programming through the production and acquisition of new types of television shows that feature food” (p. 229), and “demonstrates how the network has been innovative in the food media genre” (p. 223). Such as Jamie Oliver’s *Oliver’s Twist*, and Anthony Bourdain’s *A Cook’s Tour* (Ketchum, 2005, p. 229).

Through the introduction of categories of food TV programs, each program can be judged on its own merits and demerits. Instructional programs are informative as audiences could learn how to make a meal, including various type of foreign food, but they are not as interesting as the food TV program that combines food and travel. However, the travel show in which chefs travel, eat and give tips to audiences, might go too far from food, and audiences could only enjoy the trip with the host, but do not know how to make anything. Meanwhile, personality could make a food TV program more attractive. Collins (2009) claimed personality is “the reason why the host-driven show is truly the hallmark of the modern cooking show” (p. 175). “Without a scintillating host, everything else falls flat” (Collins, 2009, p. 175). Erica Gruen said “we are here to put great personalities on the air” (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 175), and Anthony Bourdain said, “Experience has shown [the Food Network] that people don’t really give a shit what’s cooking. They care about *who’s* cooking” (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 175). As

Collins suggests, “it’s not the food or even the theme that quickly comes to mind so much as host” (Collins, 2009, p. 178) when talking about a food TV program.

There is a need to learn from former and existing food TV shows, taking the good and eliminating the bad, to attempt to produce a more entertaining and informative show. As Collins (2009) indicated, the evolution of the genre “shows us that we -- both as individuals and collectively--have a drive to move forward” (p. 252), and “has shown our ingenuity in that as a culture we take something and make it better, adapt it, and make it work for us” (p. 252).

As the extremely important part of a good show, the script needs a strong point-of-view and enough details (Riley, personal interview, n.d., para. 10). The evolution of food TV programs “though the recipes might often be the same then as now, presentation trumps content” (Collins, 2009, p. 189).

The most popular shows on Food Network have fun and entertaining content; they also teach audiences cooking techniques and recipes (Hemmah, 2009). Nowadays, to make more entertaining shows, food TV programs tend to be more diverse in their content. Collins wrote, “Most early period programs died out because their producers were not yet aware of the importance of personality and ‘entertainment values’” (Collins, 2009, p. 243). Hemmah (2009) added, “participants [who were chosen to help determine specific motivations and gratifications obtained from watching the Food Network] often cited ‘entertainment’ when describing the reasons behind why they liked or did not like

something” (p. 46). Cowan said writers of every show should describe an interesting idea (Cowan, personal interview, n.d.).

Diverse content in food TV programs attract larger audiences. Elizabeth Jensen (2007) recognized the Food Network’s programming strategy has changed to not just focus on the food. Taking the travelogue food show as an example, it broadens the emphasis on not just the food itself but adds more variety of content. For example, Collins (2009) thought *The Frugal Gourmet* brought diverse content to audiences by introducing cross-cultural content, such as various kinds of foreign food, including “traditional African stews, Filipino adobo, Italian peasant food.” (p. 146). Fun and variety are key elements to a successful food TV program, meanwhile, “the content of the cooking show is supposed to be about revealing how things are made” (Collins, 2009, p. 188).

Including instructional, practical and useful information during food programs is another selling point to attracting consumer audiences. Although “Entertainment is more powerful a lure than instruction and certainly takes precedence in production. But ostensible presentation of instruction is a selling point” (Collins, 2009, P. 201), Collins argued, “the directors of the modern-day cooking programs are coming back around the basic idea of service and providing useful, practical information” (Collins, 2009, p. 201).

Meanwhile, hosts of TV food programs need to provide one hundred percent accurate information. The Food Network Senior Vice President of Programming, Bob

Tuschman, explained they need “the food chops and personalities” in their hosts, and the network needs to have both “the food experts and the TV experts” to provide unimpeachable information in the show (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 187-188). However, Collins (2009) pointed out commercial TV hosts (i.e. Hosts of TV food programs on Food Network) make precise emulation impossible. Many hosts use unclear measurements, such as “a bunch of this, a dash of that... No chunky measuring spoon in sight” (Collins, 2009, P. 205).

An attractive show nowadays has to be fun and have diverse content, but accurate instructional information is the basis. Moreover, to make an interesting food TV program and attract audiences, the host’s language, humor or persona, or facial expression are noteworthy too.

The selection of a popular host trumps everything else when producing a food TV program. Collins (2009) suggests “the modern day host is a celebrity.... There is so much cultivation of their personalities that they transformed into commodities” (p. 209).

As Mark Meister (2001) said, TV Food Network’s popularity is largely due to its “celebrity chef personalities” (p. 165). “Unpopular chefs or television personalities can harm ratings and turn away advertisers,” and audience might search for alternative interesting media, if they do not like the host of the show (Hemmah, 2009, p. 46).

Hemmah (2009) indicated, “Many participants said that their favorite Food Network chef was entertaining, engaging, or fun to watch, and chefs that were listed as a participant's

least favorite were said to be dull, uninteresting, boring, bad on camera, or annoying” (p. 46). Riley admitted character is important to make great television (Riley, personal interview, n.d.).

Ketchum concluded most Food Network hosts are fun to be around and sound like they are from relatively well-off families (Ketchum, 2005). Ketchum (2005) found out food and travel programs featured “few celebrity chefs and little cooking instruction” (p. 277), and male host, “reinforcing their status as being thought of as more adventurous and interesting” (p. 277) than Traditional Domestic Instructional Programs and New Domestic Cooking Programs. According to Ketchum (2005), “The pleasures Emeril and other male hosts of these new cooking shows involved energetic excitement, whereas the women hosts were unfairly confined to shows that offered more dull instruction in a developed environment” (p. 225).

Ketchum (2005) contended that the Food Network creates a sense of pleasurable intimacy through host performances. In *Oliver’s Twist*, Jamie Oliver “zips around London on his scooter, visiting his regular shopkeepers and, at the end of every episode, has his attractive young mates around to ‘tuck in’” (Collins, 2009, p. 178). Oliver assured audiences that cooking is interesting and easy and presented cooking as “simple, causal, social endeavor” (Collins, 2009, P. 178 - 179). Oliver’s “cockney accent” also made him different (Collins, 2009, P. 178).

To make the show more interesting to watch, the host’s language in a food TV

show plays a fundamental role. As Ketchum mentioned the use of the term “you” in the show helps create intimacy (Ketchum, 2005). The host of a traditional domestic cooking show, *The Essence of Emeril*, Emeril’s “now-parodied language,” spoken words established his “casualness and a possible sense of connection to viewers” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 225). Emeril said “kick it up a notch” while adding spices or garlic to the food, and said “oh yeah baby” or “bam” while adding ingredients (Ketchum, 2005, p. 225).

Anthony Bourdain is an American chef and author. He used his travels to other countries to talk about American food and culture (Ketchum, 2005). Bourdain’s speaking style distinguishes him from other hosts. Stephanie Thompson & David Goetzl (2002) mentioned Bourdain is different from those hosts who “don a chef’s apron and yuck it up with a studio audience” (para. 2). “Bourdain’s frank discussion framed Bourdain as both a ‘regular guy’ who viewers could relate to and an exciting adventurer they could vicariously emulate” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 229). Ketchum thought Bourdain is honest in his description and reaction to the food (p. 229). Tenaglia on the other hand, calls Bourdain candid. Tenaglia said Bourdain described his reaction to an awful meal as “want to dip my head into a bucket of lye and die” (as cited in Ketchum, 2005, P. 229).

Only hosts of food TV shows could transmit the sense experience of taste or smell to audiences, but it is challenging to describe taste and smell without using empty words (Collins, 2005). Words, like “yummy”, “unbelievable” or “delicious”, and facial expression of hosts help explain these senses (Collins, 2009, p. 190). According to

Ketchum (2005), those hosts always went to “great lengths to demonstrate the sensual qualities of consuming the food” (p. 228), and “exaggerated their facial expressions and groaned to try to communicate their reactions” (p. 228).

Host’s humor and persona also help attract audiences. Favorite chefs on food TV program were often described as “having a nice or good personality and a sense of humor; appearing to be genuine, comforting, and welcoming; and acting friendly,” and audiences’ least favorite chefs were “irritating, annoying, loud, mean, obnoxious, over-the-top, fake, or were hard to connect with” (Hemmah, 2009, p. 47). Humor made Emeril’s show more fun to watch. The interaction between Emeril and his audience creates a pleasurable atmosphere in the show (Ketchum, 2005).

It is also important to get people involved. Ketchum said inviting audiences to participate in cooking process can please audiences (Ketchum, 2005). Because of the participants in the room, the show would have a “festive atmosphere” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 226). To this end, Collins indicated the Food Network added “live broadcasts, in-studio bands, viewer call-ins, audience participation, celebrity guests” to their shows (Collins, 2009, p. 187).

Nowadays, food TV programs are not only about cooking food. Storytelling, set design and various production techniques are just as important and are applied to make an attractive show. Production techniques take into account things like camera angles, shots, sound and a variety of digital storytelling techniques.

First, as Julia Girard said, “all television shows have a beginning, middle, and end. They tell a story and they have drama” (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 191). Rachel Ray added storytelling is the most important thing in contemporary cooking shows, while hosts share a story with audiences, audiences learn the recipe at the same time (Collins, 2009, p. 191).

Second, whatever is on TV must have a good appearance, good taste, and good smell (“Cooking with Kerr,” 1975). Collins mentioned aesthetics are important in many food TV shows. “In many network and cable food shows, there is a pretense of producing art. As evidenced by beautiful surroundings, the background music, the flower arrangements and the attention to presentation” (Collins, 2009, p. 205).

The kitchen is an important part of good in-studio food programs. Vibrant colors might be used to inspire one’s desire for food. All kitchens used in the Food Network’s cooking shows are illuminated in “very soft light and painted and decorated in earth tones” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 223). In many domestic cooking shows, “high-key lighting was used to illuminate everything with a warm,” and “food items and processing equipment were prominently displayed” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 225). In traditional domestic instructional programs, such as Rachel Ray’s *30 Minute Meals*, Ketchum (2005) concluded “along with the set design, several production techniques were used to represent hosts and food on these programs” (p. 224), such as camera angles and sounds.

Third, some digital storytelling techniques were used to “create the fantasy of

closeness and the pleasure of audience intimacy” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 224). In *A Cook’s Tour*, “the shaky camera movement attempting to create a sense of immediacy and the audience ‘being there’” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 229). Collins wrote, “the viewer can witness her [Rachel Ray] taking the package of pre-shredded cheddar out of the fridge and dumping it into a bowl” (as cited in Collins, 2009, P. 217).

Ketchum concluded:

During domestic cooking shows, the camera’s angle of view was mostly at chest level. To create intimacy, the director relied heavily on medium shots, intercut with close-ups of the food. The medium shot used was about what one would see if seated on a stool across from the cook, offering the viewer a sense of connection to the host. And, even if the camera or host moved, the host continued to address the camera and viewer. (Ketchum, 2005, p. 224)

a. Camera shots inspire audiences to eat. Ketchum introduced four basic shots used by some food TV programs: “close-up of food action (boiling, frying, and chopping),” “medium long shots,” “crowd reaction shots,” and “extreme long shots that revealed everyone’s presence” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 225).

b. Collins (2009) added those close-up shots attribute to the success of cooking shows in general. “Sensuality is the bailiwick of modern cooking shows” (Collins, 2009, P. 189). Viewers want to learn and “the visual stimuli of preparing and cooking food are

irresistible,” like “the slicing of rare beef, the mashing of potatoes” (Collins, 2009, P. 189).

c. The sounds of cooking are memorable, too. For example, “sputtering oil, whisk hitting side of copper bowl -- are amplified” (Collins, 2009, P. 190).

Except using previous digital techniques, Collins (2009, p. 189) explained that contemporary food TV programs have “the sexy hosts and kitchens, close-ups of food, figures, lips, Emeril’s ‘oh, yeah babe,’ groans of pleasure from the hosts and the aroused audience” (Collins, 2009, p. 189). Learning storytelling techniques or digital storytelling techniques could help outline the principles of producing an entertaining food TV program.

After 16 years, Food Network captures new viewers while maintaining its core audiences (Downey, 2005). The Food Network has broadened its audience group, drawing in both younger viewers and men. It focuses on their core audiences, which are 25-54 years old, and tries to attract the younger 18-49 audience (Downey, 2005).

Waldman stated the core viewership of Food Network is likely to be a middle aged woman, who is “slightly more upscale than average,” “upscale, well educated, in her early 40s, works, has kids and is looking for meal solutions,” and “has the resources to travel and enjoys eating out in restaurants” (Waldman, 2008, para. 20-21). To improve viewership, it is important to target the right audience group. Food Network president Brooke Johnson said, “A number of years ago, the network used to be more high end,

haute cuisine-oriented,” but according to researches, their viewers “were home cooks and they want material they can cook at home” (Collins, 2009, p. 216-217). Nowadays, the network aims to both entertain audiences and provide practical information for anyone who is interested in food (Hemmah, 2009).

The Relationship between Food TV program and Culture

Food is both people’s history and present (Poniewozik, 2011). Molly O’Neil thought “Food has peaked as a cultural window” (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 226). Kittler, Sucher, and Nelms (2012) said food culture “refers to the ways in which humans use food, including everything from how it is selected, obtained, and distributed to who prepares it, serves it, and eats it” (p. 2). Food represents one’s “cultural identity,” and eating reaffirms one’s cultural identity daily (p. 4). “The food habits of each cultural group are often linked to religious beliefs or ethnic behaviors” (p. 4). For example, “Ravioli served with roast turkey suggest an Italian-American family celebrating Thanksgiving, not a Mexican-American family, who would be more likely to dine on tamales and turkey” (p. 4).

In the twentieth century, both TV and food play central roles in our lives. The combination of food and television transformed the interest in food into a phenomenon (Collins, 2009, p. 6). Audiences find watching someone prepare food on TV a perfect way to pass time (Collins, 2009, p. 6). Cooking shows changed with people’s needs and

desires, and “Americans have in many ways been changed by cooking shows” (Collins, 2009, p. 8). Food shows human’s creativity and cultural capital (Collins, 2009, p. 9). Food TV programs prevail, since they satisfy people’s need for “quality, affordable, environmentally and health-conscious, easy-to-prepare yet sophisticated food” (Collins, 2009, p. 9), and change from “culture of conformity to one of diversity” (p. 9).

As Collins concluded, “Cooking shows have taught us, changed us, and changed with us” (Collins, 2009, p. 9). They show the significant changes in American culture and the values that people share “as individuals and as a society” (Collins, 2009, p. 9)

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

With economic highs and lows, food television must continue to move forward (Collins, 2009, p. 250-251). Cooking and food have become more important in our daily lives, and food media “have taken on new roles” to satisfy audiences’ new demands in recent decades (Collins, 2009, p. 238). Adema (2000) had noted more viewers are tuning in for pleasures by watching host cook, comment on and taste food. Isabelle de Solier added viewers of food TV programs want to learn “culinary cultural capital,” to learn food knowledge (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 238). Food television is good for “the soul,” “the culture and the status of food, and eating and cooking in general” (Collins, 2009, p. 239).

Cooking programs have been providing us useful information for a half-century, and the evolution of this genre explains the need to evolve and make the genre better (Collins, 2009, p. 252). This creative project analyzes Jamie Oliver’s *Oliver’s Twist* and Anthony Bourdain’s *No Reservations* as two subjects and learns from them. There are reasons why this project chooses these two programs:

First, Collins (2009) believed “The travel/adventure/food sub-genre has been a particularly winning combination” (p. 195). Since among different categories of food TV programs, food adventure television programs, which merge travel shows and cooking programs, provide audiences an opportunity to learn about cultures from other groups experiencing their way of life (Kong, 2011, p. 45). Those programs feature cuisine, involve “the crossing of physical, geographical boundaries,” and highlight differences between cultures, such as “the more intimate, personal boundaries built in and around the preparation of food, as well as the consumption of food and its symbolic value intrinsic to particular groups, societies, cultures, and ethnicities” (Kong, 2011, p. 45). *Anthony Bourdain’s No Reservations* is a good example of a travelogue program. *No Reservations* is a 5-time Emmy nominated series and it wins a Creative Arts Emmy Award for Outstanding Cinematography for Nonfiction Programming in 2009 (Emmy Awards, 2012). In the show, Bourdain conveyed intelligence and honesty (Hale, 2012), and his personal characteristics made the show unique and attractive. Bourdain himself is the highlight of the show. Bourdain visits places worldwide, where locals treat him to local food and culture, “offering wry observations about exotic foods and the cultures that produce them” (Goldberg, 2007, p. 8). *No Reservations* premiered in 2005 on the Travel Channel. Bourdain loves culture (Goldberg, 2007). Bourdain said *No Reservations* is “about people, culture and places” (as cited in Poniewozik, 2005, para. 5).

The second show that will be analyzed is *Oliver’s Twist*. *Oliver’s Twist* was

produced by Fresh One Productions and aired on the Food Network from 2002 to 2007 (Ketchum, 2005). The Food Network aimed to use this show to attract younger audiences (Ketchum, 2005). “The show used many of the aesthetics associated with MTV (e.g., canted angles, fast-forward imagery to collapse time, and extremely quick editing)” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 230).

Food Network airs programs 24 hours a day. As of 2008, the Food Network “reaches over 96 million homes, is watched by nearly 900,000 viewers nightly and prime-time viewership has increased every year (Collins, 2009, p. 215). Food Network is America's only network devoted to food, and it redefined “the genre of cooking on television - and recasting its audience” (Smillie, 1997, para. 4). Likewise, Hemmah (2009) confirmed there are no other channels that could compete with Food Network. The Food Network relies on its mission to cultivate and self-improve to capture viewers who want to learn something (Collins, 2009, p. 237).

Both Anthony Bourdain’s *No Reservations* and Jamie Oliver’s *Oliver’s Twist* had prevailed and are still popular in people’s daily life. Therefore, this creative project chooses to learn from those two programs. Anthony Bourdain’s *No Reservations* aired for 9 seasons (137 episodes), and Jamie Oliver’s *Oliver’s Twist* aired for 2 seasons, each with 26 episodes. This project randomly chooses 4 episodes of each program and analyzes the selected episodes based on the literature review, in terms of the elements of making a successful food TV program.

Comparison of *No Reservations* and *Oliver's Twist*

<i>Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations</i> (Travel Channel)	<i>Oliver's Twist</i> (Food Network)
<p>Title/ Concept / Category:</p> <p>Title: Based on my research, a good title is simple and easy for people to remember. It rolls off the tongue easily and tells audiences exactly what the show is about (“The Title,” n.d.).</p> <p>Concept: In a concept, we need to look at the evolution of story (Cowan, personal interview, n.d.), and find out if the show makes watching people eating and cooking on TV pleasurable (Adema, 2000).</p> <p>Category: The travel/adventure/food sub-genre has been a very popular combination (Collins, 2009). As one type of nonfiction shows, the information in food TV programs which feature chefs traveling globally and tasting worldwide cuisine is entertaining (Hemmah, 2009). Instructional programs feature a host cooks at a kitchen and sometimes invites friends to prepare and enjoy global food (Hemmah, 2009). Host-driven food TV programs feature personalities (Collins, 2009). Sometimes,</p>	

those categories overlap (Grimes, 1998).

Title: *No Reservations* tells audiences what the show is about and could inspire audiences' to watching. So this title is one of its advantages.

Concept: *No Reservations* gives audiences a suggestive idea of what the food tastes like and what a place feels like. *No Reservations* is about food and culture. Bourdain explores the globe, where his friends treat him to local food. Bourdain samples foreign cuisine and describes his feelings about those foods and the related cultures. In Bourdain's world, the food provides access to know how people live in other places. To understand and appreciate how others

Title: *Oliver's Twist* doesn't clearly tell audiences what the show is about. This name only reminds audiences of the famous book, instead of a cooking program. So this title is one of its disadvantages.

Concept: *Oliver's Twist* typically opens with explaining why and for whom Jamie Oliver will cook, then he will ride around London on a scooter to pick food for the meal. After that, Oliver prepares various kinds of food, mostly western food, at his flat. Oliver briefly explains every step of the cooking. And he also invites his friends to watch him cook and enjoy food with him. Finally, the show always ends with Oliver and his guests enjoy the meal. Oliver makes cooking an easy and enjoyable thing to do.

eat means to discover “secret societies and cryptic subcultures” (“Anthony Bourdain No Reservations, About the show,” n.d., para. 4).

Category: Bourdain describes the food taste and highlights culture that produces the food. Since Bourdain invites local friends to guide him in foreign cities, and tastes food at local restaurants or families. Bourdain visits the kitchen, watches the chef cook, enjoys and comments on the food. Finally, Bourdain ends the show by concluding his feelings about the food, the place, the local people, and the culture. So it is a nonfiction show that features food, travel, and culture. Of course, Bourdain himself makes the show very entertaining to watch. So

Category: As this show mainly focusing on teaching audiences how to cook, it is an instructional program. In addition, Oliver presents cooking in an interesting way. Oliver always moves around the set and tests food with his finger and reacts with pleasurable expressions. Oliver is “a young, attractive British hipster” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 230), and his “hyperactive cooking performances” excite viewers (Ketchum, 2005, p. 230), so this is also a host-driven program.

this is also a host-driven show.	
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According to my research, to produce attractive content for food TV show, elements like **point of view, detail, accuracy, facial expression, and entertaining content** needed to be considered.

POV, Detail, and Accuracy: Basically, food TV programs are supposed to provide instructional, practical, and useful information, since audiences would like to learn how to cook. To see whether a show is good or not, we look to see if it has a strong point-of-view, and if it provides accurate details. Based on my researches in food writing, when describing food, we need to describe different senses that come from food, like touch, smell, sound, appearance, and taste. Proper amounts of adjectives obviously are perfect for vividly describing those senses.

Facial expression: Hosts could not only use words to describe senses coming from food, but also their facial expressions. Ketchum (2005) said hosts always went to “great lengths to demonstrate the sensual qualities of consuming the food” (p. 228), and “exaggerated their facial expressions and groaned to try to communicate their reactions” (p. 228).

Entertaining: Among all elements contributing to a good show, entertaining comes first, which means the content needs to be fun. Combining food with culture in the show makes the show interesting to watch. Food culture relates to how people make, serve and eat food (Kittler, Sucher & Nelms, 2012).

Point-of-view, Detail, Accuracy,

Informative

In *No Reservations*, Bourdain expresses his honest feelings. “If a country sucked and I was downright miserable, I try to show that. If a city like Hong Kong feels to me like I’m living inside a psychedelic pinball machine, I want the episode to look that way” (Bourdain, 2007, p. 13 - 14). In the four episodes that I randomly chose (Paris, Shanghai, Chicago, Saudi Arabia), Bourdain has a clear point-of-view and provides enough details to describe his feelings. When Bourdain eats camel in

Point-of-view, Detail, Accuracy,

Informative

In the show, Jamie Oliver mainly tells audiences how to cook the meal. Oliver provides audiences enough instructional and practical details. In one episode, he explains that to make good chips, “let the skin on,” and before putting the chips in the oven, “let these chips drain about 7 minutes” (“Jamie and the King,” 2003).

Oliver’s Twist clearly reveals how food is made. Oliver tells audiences what to prepare in each step. When he cooks pasta for kids during Halloween, he

<p>Saudi Arabia, he says, “It is a party-size gross” (Collin & Tenaglia, 2008), but after he tastes the meat, he says “surprisingly, the camel is tender, relatively lean for the most part and delicious” (Collin & Tenaglia, 2008), and “In fact, it is damn good” (Collin & Tenaglia, 2008).</p> <p>Most of the time, Bourdain has simple but vivid descriptions of different senses coming from the food. Bourdain frequently uses “En,” “I like it,” or “nice,” “it is pretty,” and “it is beautiful” to describe the overall taste or appearance of the food, and sometimes, he uses “shockingly good,” “come to me, my love,” “ridiculously good” to describe his feelings of the food (Collins & Tenaglia, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010). In the episode in Saudi Arabia, before Bourdain</p>	<p>explains that smoked and straight bacon, a pan, olive oil, and rosemary are needed. When frying the bacon in the pan, add some rosemary and stir, until the beautiful smell comes out. Most of the time, Oliver tells audiences how much ingredients they should put in to make a great meal. In the episode of <i>Jamie and the King</i>, when he is making a burger for his friend, he says, “I got about one onion, which is slowly fried in olive oil,” “half a spoon of” Indian spice, which will give you a “savory flavor,” and “a teaspoon of pepper” (“<i>Jamie and the King</i>,” 2003). But he is not using the real teaspoon to measure them. For instance, he does not tell audiences much olive oil to use, he just tells viewers to put some olive oil in the pan to dress the chip.</p> <p>Compared to Bourdain’s vivid</p>
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<p>tries his first breakfast at a large marketplace of Jeddah, he briefly introduces the food that he is going to have. There are “a festive potpourri of offal cooked with ghee, tomatoes, red onions, parsley, and chili sauce” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2008), and “gelatinous and wiggly, hooves lurking just under the surface of a bright-orange broth” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2008). With the help of adjectives, Bourdain makes his own way to describe the food. Bourdain describes the taste of soup dumplings as “dangerous, impossible and unspeakable delicious” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2007), and in the episode of Paris, Bourdain says the kidney is a “perfection” food, which is “the tinniest, palest pink, sweetest little kidneys” he has ever had (Collins & Tenaglia, 2010). So Bourdain has his own</p>	<p>description of food, Oliver describes food in his own casual way. Oliver always uses easy-to-understand spoken words to describe the food. In the episode of <i>Jamie and the King</i>, when he wants to prepare the spice for the meat inside the burger, he says mash, spice up until it is “nice and fine” (“Jamie and the King,” 2003). He also uses “lovely,” “brilliant,” “nice and crispy,” and “crunchy” to describe his materials (“Jamie and the King,” 2003).</p>
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way to vividly describe the food, in terms of taste, appearance, and smell.

No Reservations provides rather accurate information to audiences.

Bourdain is an American chef and author.

His knowledge and attitude assures the accuracy of the content of *No*

Reservations. As Bourdain states, “We try instead to give viewers a brief taste, a sense of what we felt during the relatively short time we were there” (Bourdain,

2007, p. 10). In addition, Bourdain

invites a lot of credible guests (mostly

local people who knows a lot of local

food and culture) to guide him to food

and culture. For example, in the episode

of Paris, Bourdain introduces the city,

and meets with Eric Ripert, a French chef

(Collins & Tenaglia, 2010).

Since this is a travel food

program, Bourdain, however, does not give too many details about how to work the recipe. Instead, Bourdain always has a look at the kitchen or gives audiences simple instructions about how people prepare the food. In the episode of Shanghai, he explains to audiences how to make soup dumplings, “the soup dumpling requires physically unlikely suspension, oily hot broth and savory meat in a nearly paper-thin skin” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2007).

Facial Expression: Most of the time, Bourdain does have a lot of facial expressions especially when he eats the food. In the episode of Paris, when he finishes his dish, he goes to great lengths to demonstrate the sensual pleasures of consuming the French dishes.

Facial Expression: In all the episodes, Oliver uses a lot of facial to express his feelings of the food.

<p style="text-align: center;">Entertaining: Bourdain's <i>No Reservations</i> is entertaining to watch by bringing in a variety of contents. First, it introduces various types of foreign food that have different tastes, textures, appearances and smells. In all episodes that I randomly choose from <i>No Reservations</i>, Bourdain visits different countries (i.e., China, America, France, Saudi Arabia), and eats food that has totally different appearances and flavors. The French cuisines in the episode of Paris are served in tiny portions and are colorful; and the foods in the episode of Saudi Arabia are offered in big plates and are darker. Second, <i>No Reservations</i> is interesting, since it introduces different cultures. Bourdain's friends take him to local stores or families, looks at the</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Entertaining: Since <i>Oliver Twist</i> is an instructional food TV show, which focuses on working a recipe, and provides audiences with instructional methods of cooking, it's content is not as diverse and entertaining as the content of Anthony Bourdain's <i>No Reservations</i>, which also focuses on food, but brings audiences cultural trips to other countries. English chef Oliver ventures through different cuisines to show audiences simple and delicious dishes. The four episodes I randomly choose from <i>Oliver's Twist</i> had interesting content (i.e., cooking some pukka tukka party food for kids at Halloween, a very British BBQ, cooking a meal for his sister's Italian boyfriend, or cooking Elvis' favorite meal for an Elvis impersonator). All the</p>
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different ways of local people preparing, serving or eating food. Most of the time, Bourdain shows audiences where people buy daily produce or vegetables, how they cook the food, and how they eat it.

Bourdain often gives audiences a tour in different markets or stores before he eats the food to show where the chef or local people buy their materials to cook the food. In the episode of Saudi Arabia, he goes to a local marketplace *souk*. It has a lot of stores selling everything from produce to clothing. Moreover, it also shows the differences between different natural elements. (i.e., weather and geographic locations).

In terms of different ways of eating, Bourdain shows audiences the way local people eat the food. Bourdain has breakfast, lunch or dinner with local

episodes involve a different story and a different type of cuisine. However, it does not go into too many details about culture, and how people use, serve and eat food.

people, whether in the restaurant or at home. Bourdain has breakfast in Paris with his French friends. They cheer and have red wines before they eat the dishes. Everyone has their own plate, and they use forks to eat. However, in the episode of Shanghai, Bourdain eats Tangbao as breakfast with a Chinese friend at a restaurant, and they use chopsticks to eat instead of a fork.

So, the content of *No Reservations* is entertaining, since it combines food and cultures that produce the food. But the show might be more attractive if it provided more details about how to cook.

Host: Sex (Male)/ Persona

Sex: Based on my research, male hosts have been thought of as being more adventurous and interesting (Ketchum, 2005).

<p>Persona: Personality is the core of host-driven shows. Audiences' favorite chefs in the food TV program are often described as "having a nice or good personality and a sense of humor; appearing to be genuine, comforting, and welcoming; and acting friendly," and audiences' least favorite chefs are "irritating, annoying, loud, mean, obnoxious, over-the-top, fake, or were hard to connect with" (Hemmah, 2009, p. 47).</p>	
<p>Sex: This show has a male host. So it can be more adventurous and interesting.</p>	<p>Sex: This show has a male host. So it can be more adventurous and interesting.</p>
<p>Persona: In all the episodes I chose from <i>No Reservations</i>, he is always acted in a casual, cool manner. He is someone who tastes food and frankly describes his feelings about food. Hale (2012) agreed that Bourdain was cool and concluded Bourdain made almost anything entertaining, and his knowledge on food made his show interesting to watch.</p>	<p>Persona: Oliver is young and attractive to audiences (Ketchum, 2005). Oliver uses his unique and casual way of presenting food to make younger generations interested in cooking ("Oliver's pukka life as chef," 2003).</p>

Storytelling/ Production Technique

Based on my research, storytelling techniques or digital storytelling techniques, which include camera angles, shot types, sound and other digital storytelling techniques, help outline the principles of producing an entertaining food TV program.

Storytelling: Julia Child said, “all television shows have a beginning, middle, and end” (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 191). Rachel Ray added storytelling is the most important thing in contemporary cooking shows, when hosts share a story with audiences, they also learn the recipe along the way (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 191).

Digital storytelling techniques (Camera angles, four basic shots, sounds, taste and smell): Digital storytelling techniques includes camera shots which inspire audiences to eat. Ketchum introduced four basic shots used by some food TV programs, which are “close-up of food action (boiling, frying, and chopping),” “medium long shots,” “crowd reaction shots,” and “extreme long shots that revealed everyone’s presence” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 225). The preparations of cooking and the sounds of cooking make the show interesting to watch.

Storytelling:

All episodes I chose had a

Storytelling:

All the episodes this project has

<p>beginning, middle, and end. Bourdain visits different countries and cities. In the beginning of the show, he always introduces local cities, streets, and then he eats food there and expresses his opinions. He would conclude with his opinion of the local food, city and people. In the episode of Saudi Arabia, Bourdain begins the show by introducing the local city, “Danya Alhamrani's hometown of Jeddah is a sprawling, modern city, the undisputed commercial capital of Saudi Arabia” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2008). He might raise some unique and interesting characteristics of this country to attract audiences. Bourdain says the local women in Saudi Arabia “are covered pretty much head to toe” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2008). During the show, Bourdain visits a lot of places and tastes various kinds of local food.</p>	<p>chosen tell a full story. In the episode of <i>Jamie and the king</i> (2003), Oliver introduces that he is having an Elvis night as one of his friends comes to visit. Oliver says he would prepare a meal: Oven Baked Fat Chips with Rosemary Salt, Elvis' Burger and American Chopped Salad. And then he shops around to buy meat for burger and spices. Then he comes back to his flat and tells audiences what he will do. He says “we will do some really well-made junk food” (“Jamie and the King,” 2003), and always used words like “first of all,” or “second,” to give audiences a step-by-step introduction (“Jamie and the King,” 2003). During the show, his friend, Elvis, comes to his flat, they have casual conversations and then the show ends with them enjoying</p>
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Finally, Bourdain says local people are friendly and funny, and the local food was so much better than expected (Collins & Tenaglia, 2008). Bourdain shows his thanks to his guest, Danya.

Digital storytelling techniques

Four basic shots: A lot of close-up shots of food actions (boiling, frying, and chopping), medium long shots of chef cooking, and extreme close-ups of all actions (cutting, steaming, boiling, and frying), are used in all episodes. In the episode of Paris, there are extreme close-ups of French chef preparing kidneys, close-up of food actions (i.e., mustard melting in the pan, chopped kidney changed colors after it was seasoned and cooked in the pan), medium long shots of chef cooking. Crowd

home-made burgers and chips together.

So, basically, this show has a beginning, middle, and an end.

Digital storytelling techniques

Four basic shots: Close-up of food actions (boiling, frying, and chopping), medium long shots, crowd reaction shots, and extreme close-ups of all actions (cutting, steaming, boiling, and frying) are common in this show. In the episode of *Jamie and the king* (2003), there are close-up shots of Oliver buying materials (i.e., the meat or spice) in the store, extreme close-up shots of boiling water, boiling potato chips, the unwrapped raw meat, and fried onion.

<p>reaction shots to reveal everyone's presence are frequently used when Bourdain and his friends are eating in a crowded place.</p> <p>Camera angles: The shaky or slightly moving camera is frequently used in <i>No Reservations</i>. When Bourdain eats Kidney and talks with his friend outside a French restaurant, a lot of shaky cameras and slightly moving camera movements are used.</p> <p>Sounds: This is common when chefs are preparing food.</p>	<p>Camera angles: The shaky or slightly moving camera is very common in all episodes. In the episode of <i>First Date</i>, the shaky camera movements are used when Oliver and his sister are buying materials from a store.</p> <p>Sounds: This is common in this show. Such as the sounds of cutting onions, vegetables, meat or the sound of frying meat are memorable.</p>
<p>Audience participation: According to my research, it is important to get people involved. Ketchum said inviting audiences to participate in consumption and watch others cook would make audiences pleased (Ketchum, 2005).</p>	

<p>Bourdain invites local friends, who know a lot about local culture and food, to his show in every episode. Those friends guide him in the city and suggest to him where to eat. Bourdain goes to different places, restaurants, or streets with those friends. Bourdain is like an audience himself, tasting food and giving comments. Those guests not only make the content of the show more accurate, they also make the show more lively.</p>	<p>Oliver always invites guests to his show. Sometimes those friends or guests are invited to cook with him or watch him cook, or enjoy food with him. Those guests help make the show more lively, festive and interesting to watch. In every episode there are some guests invited to the show. In the episodes <i>A very British BBQ</i>, Oliver's friend is invited to help him prepare materials for the BBQ. They chat during the show and Oliver explains to his friend what he is preparing and why he is doing that; in the episode of Halloween, a group of kids are invited to watch Oliver cook for them. All of those guests make the show more lively.</p>
<p>Relation to culture: Food culture “refers to the ways in which humans use food, including everything from how it is selected, obtained, and distributed to who prepares it, serves it, and eats it” (Kittler, Sucher, & Nelms, 2012, p. 2). Food represents one’s “cultural identity,” and eating reaffirms one’s cultural identity daily</p>	

(p. 4). “The food habits of each cultural group are often linked to religious beliefs or ethnic behaviors” (Kittler, Sucher, & Nelms, 2012, p. 4).

Bourdain visits worldwide and comments on foreign foods and cultures that produce them. Bourdain “used his experiences in other countries comments on American culture and food” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 229). The trip *No Reservations* shows us is “about seeing the world with open eyes, stepping outside your comfort zone and taking the bitter with the sweet” (Poniewozik, 2011, P. 61).

No Reservations introduces various types of foreign food and different cultures. In the episode of Shanghai, Bourdain visits Dali province and tells the audience about the food culture of Bai people and its related history. Bourdain states “Eating raw

English chef Oliver tries to show audiences how to cook different cuisines. The four episodes this project randomly choose from *Oliver's Twist* indicates this show has diverse contents (i.e., cooking some pukka tukka party food for kid’s at Halloween, a very British BBQ, cook a meal to his sister’s Italian boyfriend, or cooking Elvis’ favorite meal for Elvis impersonator).

However, it has more instructional information about how to cook, instead of enough cultural information about food, i.e., how people eat or serve the food in other countries. For example, when he cooks food for his sister’s Italian boyfriend, he does not introduce enough information about Italians’ habits of eating.

<p>meat actually has a long history in Yunnan province. Marco Polo commented on it when he was here, and people still have it, particularly on special occasions like us” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2007).</p> <p>As part of culture, the lifestyle of local people is also interesting. In the episode of Saudi Arabia, Danya challenges Bourdain to see how ordinary Saudis live their lives, feed themselves and entertain guests.</p> <p>Bourdain finds out people are covered with dark and black clothes (Collins & Tenaglia, 2008).</p> <p>Bourdain also has a look at the culture that produces the food. In the episode of Shanghai, Bourdain says, “Bai culture has existed here in Dali province literally since the stone age.</p>	<p>It is important to bring in more entertaining elements to the show, for example, more information about cultures in other countries, such as the way people eat the food.</p>
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<p>The Bai's Tibetan roots have blended with other Chinese influences for a long time” (Collins & Tenaglia, 2007).</p>	
<p>Weaknesses</p>	
<p>The main weakness of <i>No Reservations</i> is that Bourdain should provide more instructional information or tips on the actual cooking of the food.</p>	<p>The main weakness of <i>Oliver's Twist</i> is it is not entertaining enough. It focuses too much on how to make a dish and not enough on the culture and history of the dish.</p>
<p>Strengths</p>	
<p>The language of the host in the stories in <i>No Reservations</i> is vibrant. Bourdain uses his own way of vividly and accurately describing the food. Moreover, Bourdain adopts a lot of facial expressions to demonstrate his feelings about the food. Bourdain conveys honest feelings to audiences. Shows in <i>No Reservations</i> are “sentimental, snarky, frightened ones;</p>	<p>Oliver has a lot of point - of - views or opinions about how to make the food. His show is very instructional and informative. Oliver prepares the food and at the same time explains why he is cooking it. His show contains step-by-step instructions, which are very helpful to audiences. <i>Oliver's Twist</i> has diverse content in terms of cooking different kinds of food. Oliver has his own casual way to</p>

<p>bitter, reflective, confused, surreal, impressionistic, philosophical, funny, and angry ones” (Bourdain, 2007, P. 12-13). Bourdain writes, “I hope you get the whiff of our travels. The smells of Southeast Africa, for instance: burning joss, jasmine flowers... The sounds of farmers waking in the predawn light in China, coughing and spitting before heading out to their fields...” (Bourdain, 2007, p. 10-11). <i>No Reservations</i> also interacts with local people in each episode. They are familiar with local culture and food, and give Bourdain and audiences a tour of local food and culture. This allows this show to provide accurate and detailed information.</p> <p>According to Hale (2012), Bourdain’s own knowledge on food and</p>	<p>describe food. Oliver’s accent is very attractive.</p> <p><i>Oliver’s Twist</i> invites some guests (Jamie Oliver’s friends) to the show. They chat with each other. This gives <i>Oliver’s Twist</i> a happy atmosphere, which makes the show interesting.</p>
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the emotion he brings to food make the show credible and interesting. Bourdain visits different countries and cities, with local people, and most importantly, he introduces so many types of local food and that shows how people live and eat there. In addition, Anthony Bourdain's persona and gender add more interesting elements to *No Reservations*. According to Hale (2012), this show conveys intelligence and honesty. At its best *No Reservations* makes viewers feel smarter for having watched them.

All episodes of *No Reservations*

I chose tell interesting stories, which have a beginning, middle, and end. Proper digital storytelling techniques are frequently used and successfully establish a tone to attract viewers and

<p>create intimacy in the show.</p> <p><i>No Reservations</i> shows audiences an interesting story about the culture of food, and the food related local people, lifestyles, cities, and history.</p>	
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CHAPTER 4

RESULT: FOOD TV RUNDOWN

EAT WITH FOOD CULTURE RUNDOWN SHEET SHOW # 1 12/02/2012

Clock TIME	RUN TIME	SEGME NT TIME	SEGMENT	SEGMENT DESCRIPTION	HOST/A NCHOR
7:30:00		2:30	SEGMENT 1: WELCOME INTRODUCTION OF CHINA A DISCUSSION OF DIFFERENCES	Host welcome Host introduces his location Host introduces the history of China and history of some Chinese cuisine Host briefly discusses the	HOST ON CAMERA /VOICE OVER

			BETWEEN NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CUISINE	differences between Northern and Southern cuisine	
7:32:30	7:32:30	3:00	SEGMENT 2: INTRODUCTION OF BEIJING AND ITS CUISINE WHAT MAKES BEIJING FAMOUS INTROUDCTION OF CURRENT BEIJING (WEATHER,	Host introduces the history of Beijing and famous food in ancient Beijing Host introduces what makes Beijing famous Host introduces Beijing's districts and rings Host introduces current economy in Beijing Host talks about	HOST ON CAMERA /VOICE OVER

			<p>DISTRICT, ECONOMY, PEOPLE, LIFESTYLE, AND FOOD)</p> <p>INTRODUCING CONGEE</p> <p>INTRODUCTION OF CHANGES IN FOOD CHOICES IN BEIJING</p>	<p>weather in Beijing</p> <p>Host introduces changes in food choices in Beijing</p> <p>Host points out Congee is common and popular in Beijing</p>	
7:35:30	7:35:30	3:00	<p>SEGMENT 3:</p> <p>LIFE IN BEIJING</p> <p>BREAKFAST IN BEIJING</p>	<p>Host introduces colorful life in Beijing</p> <p>Host invites a friend in Beijing to show him this colorful life by</p>	<p>HOST ON CAMERA /VOICE OVER/ FRIEND</p>

			<p>MEETING WITH FRIEND</p> <p>WHERE, WHEN, WHAT PEOPLE EAT FOR BREAKFAST IN BEIJING</p>	<p>introducing various types of breakfasts in Beijing</p> <p>Meeting with a friend</p> <p>Friend tells what, where, when people eat in Beijing in the morning</p>	
7:38:30	7:38:30	5:00	<p>SEGMENT 4:</p> <p>DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES OF FOOD CULTURE BETWEEN</p>	<p>Local friend points out the differences of food culture between Southern and Northern China and reasons for those differences</p> <p>Host and friend discuss the differences in food</p>	<p>HOST ON CAMERA /VOICE OVER/ FRIEND</p>

			NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CHINA	and culture between Southern and Northern China	
7:43:30	7:43:30	2:30	SEGMENT 5: A STORY ABOUT CONGEE CONGEE HISTORY IN CHINA INTRODUCTION S OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONGEE	Friend introduces a short story about Congee Host provides the history of Congee in China Host introduces different types of Congee and their differences	HOST ON CAMERA /VOICE OVER
7:46:00	7:46:00	2:30	SEGMENT 6: SCENES	Friend takes host to a famous Congee restaurant in Beijing	FRIEND/ VOICE OVER/

			<p>OF PEOPLE EATING CONGEE HOST EATS & DESCRIBES CONGEE</p>	<p>Host describes scenes of people consuming Congee Host tastes Congee and describe his feelings</p>	<p>HOST ON CAMERA</p>
7:48:30	7:48:30	7:30	<p>SEGMENT 7: HOST VISITS KITCHEN INTRODUCS INGREDIENTS COOKING DEMONSTRATI ON AND LESSON IN COOKING</p>	<p>Host visits kitchen and meet with chef Host introduces ingredidents of cooking Congee Host learns to cook Congee and explains each step of cooking Host concludes the essence of cooking Congee and</p>	<p>HOST ON CAMERA /VOICE OVER/ FRIEND/ CHEF</p>

			CONGEE	gives some practical tips	
7:56:00	7:56:00	3:00	SEGMENT 8: HOST AND FRIEND AND CHEF TASTE CONGEE SIDE ITEMS ALWAYS COMES WITH CONGEE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONGEE AND CHINESE PEOPLE	Host and friend and chef taste the Congee they made Host introduces different side items that always come with Congee Host mentions the relationship between Congee and Chinese Host concludes Congee is a Chinese breakfast, and a part of Chinese food culture Host thanks audiences for	HOST ON CAMERA /VOICE OVER

			THANKS FOR WATCHING	watching	
7:59:00	7:59:00	1:00	SEGMENT 9: SHOW CREDITS		
8:00	8:00		SHOW ENDED	SHOW ENDED	

TOTAL BLOCK TIME: 30:00

SEGMENT 1:

Host welcomes audiences to this food TV program, where audiences can learn to cook different types of cuisines and learn its related food culture, in terms of how local people cook and eat food.

Host introduces his location. He introduces that he is at one Hutong in Beijing, China, giving a brief explanation of a Hutong. This shows audiences something about the local culture.

Host introduces the history of China and history of some Chinese cuisine, which includes eight famous types of cuisines.

Host briefly discusses the differences between Northern and Southern cuisine:
This is part of Chinese culture.

When host voices over this section, there should be some camera shots of famous food in Beijing in the old times.

Script Example 1:

Host: Welcome to Food Culture You Should Know. I am in Beijing, at a Hutong. Hutongs are the rabbit warrens of narrow alleys where former Beijingers did much of their local business. I have persuaded myself to visit China, because it is so mysterious. China has millions of years of history, so does its cuisine. Food in every province is so diversified, so food in China will leave you a different memory whenever you visit.

China is vast, different climates and geography influence the agricultural products, the cooking styles, and the lifestyles in different provinces. There are as many as eight famous cuisines in China. They are Zhejiang cuisine, Shandong cuisine, Anhui cuisine, Hunan cuisine, Sichuan cuisine, Jiangsu cuisine, Guangdong cuisine, and Fujian cuisine. Through years of development, China has become increasingly important in the world economy, and the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 introduced the new China, the new Beijing, and its cuisine to the world.

SEGMENT 2:

Host introduces the history of Beijing and famous foods in ancient Beijing: The history of Beijing helps explain its food culture. The different types of food people eat in Beijing help to showcase the food culture in this global city.

Host introduces what makes Beijing famous by introducing Beijing's cultural

relics, traffic jams, diverse population, and of courses, its food. All of those show audiences what Beijing is really like.

Host introduces Beijing's districts and rings: This shows basic information of Beijing.

Host introduces current economy in Beijing.

Host talks about weather in Beijing and introduces different types of food that are consumed in the different seasons.

Host points out Congee is common and popular in Beijing: This lead to the subject of this episode.

Script Example 2:

Host: Whenever I think of China, the first city that pops up in my mind is its capital Beijing. The cuisine in Beijing is salty, with rich flavors. It has been influenced greatly by culinary traditions from all over China. Historically, Beijing has a climate too cold for rice-growing, so the native cuisine is based on wheat, leaning heavily on dumplings or noodles. Beijing is famous for a lot of things. Its historic relics: The Forbidden City (the Palace Museum), The Temple of Heaven (Tiantan), and the Great Wall. Beijing is a city you can spend years exploring, not only because of its cultural relics, but also because of its food. Peking Duck might be the first food that people think of, but Beijing offers a great variety of cuisines from all the provinces of China. Because it is a global city and it's also easy to find foods from other countries. American food, French food, Mexican

food, Indian food and many more are readily available.

Beijing has become more metropolitan, and its economic development has strengthened its status in the world economy. Beijing has become a business center and a magnet for restaurants from all over the country and the world.

SEGMENT 3:

Camera shots of restaurants and street stalls: This gives audiences a view of local life.

Host introduces colorful life in Beijing. Showing how people live in Beijing helps explain Beijing's diversity.

Host invites a friend in Beijing to show him this colorful city by introducing various types of breakfasts in Beijing. Breakfast is an important meal to the Chinese and people in Beijing always start their day with a delicious breakfast. Different types of breakfast mirror the diversity of Beijing food and Beijing culture.

Inviting a local friend makes the show more interesting, and makes the information in the show more credible.

The friend tells what, where, when people eat in Beijing in the morning: This gives audiences enough detail to know Beijing and the food culture in Beijing.

Script Example 3:

Host: No matter where you live in Beijing, there are always several street stalls along the road where you can enjoy a meal. There are plenty of choices available for breakfast. If you ask Beijingers for recommendations, you'll get a lot of recommendations. To taste an

authentic meal, a local friend is helpful.

At a street stall, Beijingers always have You tiao, deep fried sticks of dough, and Douzhi, a fermented soybean drink with a weird smell. They might also come with pickles.

SEGMENT 4:

Local friend points out the differences of food culture between Southern and Northern China and reasons of those differences.

Host explains more about differences of food culture between Southern and Northern China: Host gives detailed descriptions of different food choices, cooking styles, and ways people serve and eat food.

Host and friend conduct conversation about similarities between food in Southern and Northern China. This chat makes the show more fun and interesting to watch.

Script Example 4:

Host: Differences in climate, geography and culture make food in Northern and Southern China different. While rice is a major staple food for people in Southern China, people in Northern China largely rely on wheat-based food, such as noodles, dumplings or steamed buns. There is one typical food that is famous in both Northern and Southern China. It is Congee.

SEGMENT 5:

Friend offers a short story about Congee. This will make the show more

interesting because it provides a casual introduction to the showcased food.

Host provides information on the history of Congee in China. This history of Congee shows audiences part of Chinese food culture.

Host introduces the varieties of Congee and their differences. This also shows audiences part of Chinese food culture.

Script Example 5:

Host: Throughout history, Chinese Congee was mostly eaten when there was famine and drought. But nowadays, Congee is a popular choice for breakfast or dinner. It was said that the Yellow Emperor, the ancestor to all Huaxia Chinese, made Congee from grains. Congee has a texture similar to western oatmeal porridge. It has always been eaten or served with a side dish. The types of Congee vary because of the different materials, preparation processes and tastes. For example, there is Plain Rice Porridge, Sweet Rice Porridge, and Savory Chinese Porridge. But what does not change is people's love for it.

SEGMENT 6:

Friend takes host to a famous Congee restaurant in Beijing

Host describes scenes of people consuming Congee. This will show audiences what Congee means to the Chinese.

Host tastes Congee and describes his feelings. The host eats Congee with friends and describes the food in terms of its taste, smell, and appearance.

Script Example 6:

Camera shots of street view.

Host: My friend a restaurant to me, HONG ZHUANG YUAN (Beijing Congee restaurant). It is famous for its various types of Congee. Both cooking and eating are always done outside. In winter, you can look for restaurants with doors open and steam coming from the restaurant. You can see stacks of bamboo steamers, which are used to steam buns, dumplings or other dishes. It feels so good.

I'm now arriving at the restaurant, HONG ZHUANG YUAN.

I was told that this restaurant has 29 branches in Beijing Congee at one time was mostly used to feed infants and the sick, since it's nutritious and easy to digest, but now, everyone loves it. You can see there is a long line of people waiting to eat breakfast at Hong Zhuang Yuan. Everyone is waiting for a table. Finally it is our turn.

Friend: "The specialty here is Congee, a thick rice soup. There are many kinds of Congee on the menu."

Host: "I want to try the seafood Congee."

Camera shots of people eating Congee and other types of side items.

Voice over: Local people always order Congee and dumplings, meat buns and fried pancakes. Fried pancakes are simply dough fried in oil and are obviously unhealthy, but everyone loves them. Meat buns and dumplings are popular, but they are usually greasy. There are not that many vegetables served with breakfast, although soy milk, tofu porridge, and Congee can be served as sources of protein. So I think seafood Congee

which has vegetables and seafood inside might be a good try.

Waiter offers them Congee. Host chats with the guest.

Guest A: “Be careful, it is really hot.”

Host: “and, smells really good. It is really pretty. The rice has a really thick and dense consistency. This might take hours.”

Guest A: “normally, the chef needs to cook the Congee for two hours or more.”

Host tastes the Congee.

Host: “You can smell the flavor of fish and rice. It is really an inspiring dish for the morning.”

Host: “wow, slightly salty, this is fantastic, everything melts the moment you put the creamy Congee in your mouth. It is like our oatmeal in the morning, but it is silkier. Unbelievable flavor. By the way, compared to fast food, it is really time-consuming to make, but the flavor is really worth the time. I feel so warm now and my stomach feels so satisfied.”

At the host's request, his friend takes him to the kitchen and find out how they cook the Congee.

SEGMENT 7:

Host visits kitchen and meets the chef. The host learns how to make Congee from the chef, this in turn gives the audience the detailed ingredients and information they need to understand Congee more and to possibly cook it. As they cook, the host provides

the step-by-step information needed to prepare the dish.

Host concludes the essence of cooking congee and gives some practical tips. This gives audiences detailed information to help them prepare and enjoy Congee.

Script Example 7:

Host: “There are different kinds of Congee. The most common one is plain rice Congee. But I think it would be great if we could cook a delicious and nutritious seafood Congee.”

Chef: “These materials are prepared for savory Chinese Congee. You can add any ingredients that sound appetizing to you, such as fish and carrot.”

Host: “It is a colorful mix. So to make a seafood Congee, we need

1 bowl of cooked rice

15 fresh shrimps

3 pieces of sliced fresh ginger

Chopped fresh vegetables for serving: and today we have corn, sliced/chopped

carrots and green beans

Some chopped green onions (optional)

Salt, white pepper, and sesame oil for serving

With all these ingredients being washed and vegetables being chopped into bite-sized pieces, now, we are ready to go.”

Chef: “Add 1.5L water to the saucepan and cook on HIGH. Then dump in a bowl

of steamed rice and bring it to boil. We use steamed rice here because it saves you almost an hour. It takes about 5 to 10 minutes to see the soup has a creamy consistency. When you can see the rice has broken down and is soupy, especially when you can see the Congee has a layer on the top, then dump vegetables in the saucepan and mix everything together. Always remember making a satisfying Congee, we have to make sure its nutritious and has an appealing taste and color.

When the vegetables become soft, add shrimp and the sliced yellow ginger.

You need to stir the Congee until the shrimp becomes red, and then turn off the heat. Keep stirring the Congee to make sure it does not scorch on the bottom. If the congee becomes too thick, do not forget to add a bit of water.

Then finally you ladle the Congee into a bowl and garnish it with chopped green onions, Chinese wolfberry, drops of sesame oil, and season the Congee with salt, if desired.”

Host: “You can see all the vegetables completely melted into the soup; they color and flavor the soup. The strong flavor coming from the shrimp and ginger makes you feel so hungry.”

Host: You can see all the vegetables completely melted into the soup, they color and flavor the soup. The strong flavor coming from the shrimp and ginger makes you feel so hungry.

SEGMENT 8:

Host and friend and chef taste the Congee they made. They can enjoy the final Congee together and comment on the flavor.

Host introduces different side items that always come with Congee: How people eat food is also part of food culture.

Host mentions the relationship between Congee and Chinese: This is part of culture, too.

Host concludes Congee is a Chinese breakfast, and a part of the Chinese food culture: This part concludes the show.

Host thanks audiences for watching

Script Example 8:

Host voice-over: The Chinese enjoy savory rice Congee any time of the day, so feel free to enjoy it whenever you want. But as I said earlier, China has eight famous cuisines. Congee is only part of it. Thank you for watching. See you next time.

SEGMENT 9:

Camera shots of host walking on the street and visiting different places in Beijing.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSIONS:

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Based on my research and analysis of *No Reservations* and *Oliver's Twist*, both shows try to produce entertaining content of a successful food TV program.

First, my research indicates a good food TV program needs the following elements: A good title, which “rolls off the tongue easily, provokes the imagination, and simply tells you exactly what you’re going to be watching” (“The Title,” n.d., para. 2). A good concept “shows growth” and “the evolution of stories” (Cowan, personal interview, n.d.). A show that has “a beginning, middle, and end” (as cited in Collins, 2009, p. 191). A show that applies digital storytelling techniques to “create the fantasy of closeness and the pleasure of audience intimacy” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 224). Basically, a show that provides accurate, instructional, practical and useful information (i.e. teaching viewers how to cook step to step) delivered by a host that can transmit the sensory experiences to the audience by using vivid and accurate descriptions (i.e., the touch, smell, appearance, and taste of the food). More than that, descriptive adjectives and appropriate facial expressions can be helpful when the host wants to demonstrate the taste, smell,

appearance, or texture of the food. The host's humor or persona, or facial expression makes the show more interesting. However, among all these elements, interesting content comes first when producing a successful food TV program.

In addition to interesting content, having fun and exploring diverse cultures of food and create a valuable program. Exploring the culture of food helps to identify the relationship between food and people. Food culture shows how individuals select, obtain, prepare, serve, and eat food (Kittler, Sucher, & Nelms, 2012). "Different food habits of each cultural group" or their "religious beliefs or ethnic behaviors" show one's "cultural identity" (Kittler, Sucher, & Nelms, 2012, p. 4). This kind of cultural information adds variety to the food TV program and makes it more entertaining to watch.

Second, after watching episodes from both programs, I have come to the following conclusions:

No Reservations explains cultural information, brings diverse content and makes the food TV program more entertaining watch. The program does this by introducing a variety of foreign foods which have different tastes, textures, appearances and smells and at the same time introducing the culture that surrounds the food. The culture of the food includes identifying the different people who consume the food, the different ways the food is served and eaten as well as the lifestyles of the people who consume those dishes. Bourdain's honest and intelligent language used in describing different senses that he gets from food, city, people, and the way people live, made the show entertaining. Bourdain

also invites local guests to suggest where to go, and meets with local chefs making the information provided in the show more credible. *Oliver's Twist* does a good job of teaching audiences how to cook. Oliver provides enough instructional, practical and useful details to teach audiences how to prepare food. Oliver also invites friends to cook or eat, and this helps create a festive and lively atmosphere. Both programs invited guests to the show, whether those guests were there to eat with the host or serve as a guide to the host in an unfamiliar city, those guests made the show more interesting to watch. Moreover, both Bourdain and Oliver have a good knowledge of food themselves, so it is better that the host is a chef.

A show that meets the standards that this project identifies based on research and analysis of both *No Reservations* and *Oliver's Twist*, would be an ideal food TV program. A show like this could teach audiences how to cook, entertain audiences, teach audiences more about food cultures and in general teach audiences more about other cultures around the globe.

The main limitation of this creative project is limited number of previous researches. Few researchers had covered this topic. It is challenging to find a lot of credible researches to support the idea of elements that producing a successful food TV program. So the final TV rundown might be lack of adequate scientific support.

Another limitation is time. With the limitation of time and energy, this creative project could only randomly choose 4 episodes from each program. This might also make

the final TV rundown lack adequate scientific support.

Food TV programs and American culture influence each other. Food TV programs have become an important part of American culture. The number of food TV programs is increasing rapidly. Food TV programs have become an important phenomenon in America and that is worth more attention from researchers. It is recommended that further researchers could analyze more programs and episodes and then get more credible results.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION

Two evaluators reviewed the project: Dr. Joe Misiewicz, president of Indiana Broadcasters Association (IBA) and Jim Needham, Emeritus Professor of TCOM Department at Ball State University. The full evaluations are located in the appendix of the project.

Misiewicz thought the sample script for a TV food program is creative but he did indicate that if this project were to continue into development, the actual script would need some attention in terms of putting it into broadcast style. He pointed out that both the comparison between two programs and the sample script of the TV rundown is interesting.

Both Misiewicz and Needham enjoyed the historical information offered about TV food programs in the project. They feel as though it provides a detailed look at the changes in the way food TV programs have been presented. Needham also believed the approach used in this project is appropriate. But he recommended this project should consider “the audience numbers” (viewership) that would validate the importance of TV

food program. He concluded this study add to the knowledge of the field. Needham mentioned audiences could learn from a successful TV food program.

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APPENDIX

EVALUATIONS

EVALUATORS NAME: Jim Needham

1. Brief discussion of the evaluator's credentials (e.g., knowledge and experience of the subject area)

Jim Needham is a former TCOM Assistant Professor who taught Media Criticism, Media Writing, Media Law, and Social Responsibility (Ethics) for 17 years, retiring in 2010. Prior to his teaching, he successfully managed WIPB-TV for 17 years, and helped develop the “Joy of Painting” television program, now seen in 27 countries and throughout the United States. While Mr. Needham has no experience evaluating cooking programs, he has evaluated dozens of program and project ideas for television and successfully promoted and produced those programs over the many years he was a TV General Manager, and prior to that, as a TV Producer and Administrative Assistant to the General Manager of WISH-TV.

2. Relationship to the student and subject matter

Mr. Needham has no relationship with the student, and has never met Jingxia Wei.

3. Evaluation of the topic as appropriate for the creative endeavor

Having reviewed the Project paper, it is Mr. Needham's opinion that this is reasonable material for a creative project of this kind. It is surprising that there is a dearth of research on the topic as there seems to be great popular interest in cooking shows on TV and they are frequently preferred over more focused fare such as the political programming, and endless recapitulations of news events on the 24 hour cable news channels.

4. Evaluation of the student's approach

Mr. Needham is amused at the approach to this project, but feels it is a reasonable way to approach this topic of interest.

5. Evaluation of the body of the project:

A. Quality

Jingxia Wei's research omits the audience numbers that would substantiate the growing interest in this type of program. Since ours is a mass media audience, it would behoove Jingxia Wei to reference the actual audience numbers that are attracted to the

subject being studied. I love the way the author breaks down the eras of “food program culture” and the evolution of the food cooking show. Well done! The language is broad, but the examples and quotes are explicit and engage the reader and cause him to drift occasionally to other memories.... (of food of course). I like the approach. The author weaves in a bias that cooking and food are cultural, and I become a believer as I read on...

B. Depth of treatment

Jingxia Wei’s research includes ample citations to make the points addressed, and makes a believer of me. A wide variety of examples from various shows demonstrates the author’s awareness and familiarity with the genre being discussed and with individual programs, on camera talent, and producers, that engages the reader of the project. I believe there is ample depth to make the case that this phenomena of the television age (the food program & subsequent networks) is worthy of study and in fact, very interesting to look into. It is positively engaging for me, to my surprise. To be credible, evidence of popularity that is asserted by the author needs to be documented by Nielsen ratings or some other objective source. The author suggests that “hosts of TV programs need to provide one hundred percent accurate information.” In fact, much of what the host presents is opinion and taste or style, and is presented in that way. That is a different message. But the body language of the hosts, informal talk (patter), dress, and set design

all play a persuasive role, and contribute to the show in major ways. The writer details this in various ways, and while not complete in the survey, it is compelling and motivates one to “read on”.

C. Coverage

The writer intelligently selects two shows that are admired by the creator of this project and limits analysis to them, going in depth and giving copious examples of what is being examined. Bourdain’s comments and anecdotes are compelling and “off-the-wall”. His personality obviously drives his show and attracts an audience... something this writer should seek to emulate in some sensible, sane way. Storytelling, camera angles, food transformations, and sound all add immeasurably to this study and its depth. However, the proposed program on Congee begins with an inordinate focus on history in too great a depth, and needs to focus more on the food first, then the history. Nonetheless, the show has merit, and the creator of this project should be congratulated but warned that he/she should consider the target audience and the producer’s ability to repeatedly bring the audience back, looking for the next great dish. In all of that, the food, not the history, must be the hook that compels viewers to join in the fun and the cooking.

6. Evaluation of the student's work as contributing to the field (e.g., body of knowledge)

In my opinion, this study does add to the knowledge of the field by giving a significant survey of an area of study that compels an audience of a million households to assemble each evening to watch flamboyant persons do what they must do in their own pedestrian kitchens. If the audience picks up tips and enthusiasm for the mundane tasks they must otherwise perform, then the programs succeed. The writer of this research study succeeds because the reader who happens on this research will be compelled to consider the ideas expressed and collected and take them into account, the next time, he enters the “cooking fields” where he labors to please his wife and himself. Or, if the reader is a practitioner of the business of video cooking shows, then this study is an excellent place from which to launch his or her own ideas about what the next latest, greatest cooking or food show will be.

EVALUATORS NAME: Joe Misiewicz

1. Brief discussion of the evaluator's credentials (e.g., knowledge and experience of the subject area)

I am an experienced broadcaster and teacher. With more than 40 years of experience in both industry and teaching, I have a vast knowledge of all types of programming.

2. Relationship to the student and subject matter

I have no relationship with the student, and have never met Jingxia Wei.

3. Evaluation of the topic as appropriate for the creative endeavor

As I read the Abstract I must admit there was something about 'food writing' that made me feel this was not a topic conducive to a master's level project. Being somewhat of a TV Food program viewer I read on. The Introduction convinced me it is appropriate.

4. Evaluation of the student's approach

The Introduction convinced me it is appropriate, I welcome the approach outlined as Jingxia decided to look first at food and culture based on writing styles, then a review of TV food programs which attract significant audiences and finally she details via TV

script format her idea for a new TV food program (which I take is the focus of the actually 'creative' aspect for this Creative Project).

5. Evaluation of the body of the project:

She does a solid job in Chapter 2 of covering the landscape of food writing. I am intrigued by the link to “show me what you eat and I will show you who you are” as she ties in culture to types of foods and food habits. I will add that there are some 'grammar' issues throughout the paper and was assured by Professor Suzy Smith that those matters would be cleared up so I devote little to no time pointing those out.

She also did a decent job of indicating the different writings styles needed to convey recipes. Her treatment of “The History of Food Programs” is well done. By pointing out that interest in these shows seemed to start with a focus on healthy eating and first occurred on radio, Jingxia does a nice job of providing solid historical information that puts a different spin on what I think many would feel are light-hearted and often trivial productions around food. Moving from radio to the “Kennedy” days and then the Julia Child era provides a good sense of the development of such TV programs. From Julia she rolls into “The Galloping Gourmet” and then makes it clear that TV producers started seeking cultural diversity in the programs. Adding live audiences was a major departure from the 'old' formats and clearly took these shows to the next

level. The quality of this historical section is excellent and in my mind puts a different spin on TV food programs.

Her section on “Elements of a good TV food program” removed some of my guilt for watching these shows. She does a solid job of presenting information on the importance of titles followed by moving to ‘on-location’ programs. Eventually as she mentions we start seeing travelogues where the ‘star’ of the show ventures across America and/or the world highlighting various restaurants and foods. Digging out material about the three genres of food TV programs was an interesting fact to use. I think mention of this added to the depth of her coverage for these various shows and how they developed.

Jingxia brings it all back to basics by citing Julia Girard saying that “all television shows have a beginning, middle, and end”. They tell a story she goes on and this information also puts a different spin on one’s view of food TV programs. The use of specific camera shots was also intriguing because I don’t think many folks view having to have “camera shots” when focusing on food like they would for a dramatic or comedy TV shows involving humans. Are there really multiple ways to ‘shoot’ for TV eggs being beaten? Meat being fried? Salads being tossed? Clearly there are specific camera techniques than enhance food TV programs.

Regarding her methodology I am fine with what she has presented. Her efforts to present some historical information regarding the development of food programs on TV is good reading. She documents it well and based on my meager knowledge related to food programs I find her sources to be diverse, interesting and a nice mix for getting at the various sides to both food writing and food TV programs.

Her sample script is an interesting read and I find her “Comparison of No Reservations and Oliver’s Twist” to be an interesting approach to setting the stage for her show. I do think some of the host’s dialogue is ‘wordy’ and lengthy for TV and would suggest a few of the longer talking segments would be broken down with some form of action related to what is being cooked. This is a minor issue but one that would need some work if the script were developed into a pilot TV show.

6. Evaluation of the student's work as contributing to the field (e.g., body of knowledge)

In conclusion I feel Jingxia Wei’s Creative Project is worthy of earning her Master’s degree in Journalism. I think it is a unique topic and that she spent time really doing some fascinating research into ‘food’ writing and TV production. It clearly suggests that planning is essential and that to secure audience involvement and/or attract

an audience there are methods that seem to have been tested and found to be worthy of repetition.

In my judgment I would support the awarding of a Master's degree to Ms. Wei (provided the grammar and sentence structures receive some careful review and re-writing) based on this Creative Project.