



Community, Surveillance, and Distinction:

A Culture of Food at St. Olaf College

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses and analyzes the social norms, eating patterns, and the culture of food at St. Olaf College. Although students may take their food choices and eating patterns for granted, there is a complex set of rules and expectations that each consumer follows (or does not follow) when eating at St. Olaf College. Using seventeen interviews with students and Bon Appetit personnel, this study seeks to discover those rules, expectations, norms, and patterns leading to conclusions about the culture of food at St. Olaf College. Included in this analysis will be perceptions of community, surveillance, and distinction and how these concepts correlate with St. Olaf students' food choices and eating patterns.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This study discusses and analyzes the social norms, eating patterns, and the culture of food at St. Olaf College. Although students may take their food choices and eating patterns for granted, there is a complex set of rules and expectations that each consumer follows (or does not follow) when eating at St. Olaf College. Using seventeen interviews with students and Bon Appetit personnel, this study seeks to discover those rules, expectations, norms, and patterns leading to conclusions about the culture of food at St. Olaf College. Included in this analysis will be perceptions of community, surveillance, and distinction and how these concepts correlate with St. Olaf students' food choices and eating patterns.

SUMMARY

- Although most of our interviewees felt uncomfortable at times due to the surveillance, judgment, and shared knowledge made in part due to the Panopticon-esque nature of The Caf they still feel inextricably bound to the sense of community.
- The College Culture around the nation enforces success on all levels. St. Olaf's College Culture is known to be more severe, stringent, and narrow. This competition carries over to food practices and motivates students to eat *healthy* and *balanced* meals to keep up with the heightened standard.
- The sense of superiority attached with the heightened College Culture of St. Olaf, combined with the upper class concerns of St. Olaf and Bon Appétit creates a habitus of a superior class standing for St. Olaf and its students. These values as demonstrated by this institution reflect larger and more general values of American nation and the upper class in this nation.
- Gender norms and behaviors as demonstrated by male and female students at St. Olaf also enforce a gendered hierarchy similar to that of larger society. Males eat to show their power; while females eat to show control and restraint. The larger, more powerful and free nature of eating appropriated to the male reflects the more powerful and free nature appropriated to them in a more general sense at St. Olaf and society. The constrained eating habits as prescribed to females may proliferate negative and unhealthy eating habits in females.

SETTING

St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota

St. Olaf College is a private, liberal arts college in Northfield, Minnesota. Located approximately 45 minutes south of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, St. Olaf enrolls approximately 3,000 undergraduate students. Although Northfield (population 17,000) has a history of a predominantly agricultural area, Northfield has become increasingly connected to the Twin Cities as suburbs continue to expand and people who work in the Twin Cities are increasingly interested in small town life.

Associated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, St. Olaf strives to be an inclusive and tightly-knit community. St. Olaf prides itself in world-class programs in music, mathematics, and the sciences. The college also holds global education and global citizenship as well as environmental sustainability as core values of the institution. According to the residential life policies at St. Olaf all full-time students must live in college housing: 96% of the student population living on campus. St. Olaf claims to foster the development of community within its residence halls, honor houses and across campus. St. Olaf's mission statement purports that as an institution it "fosters the development of the whole person in mind, body, and spirit."

Bon Appétit: Food Service at St. Olaf

Aligning with the mission statement's goal of development of the person, it appears that St. Olaf seeks to foster this development, in part through the food service. Besides being student-focused and health-focused, St. Olaf and its food service Bon Appétit share a strong belief in sustainability. According to the "black & gold & green website" (black and gold are St. Olaf's school colors while green implies environmentally friendly practices); St. Olaf strives to serve meals that:

- support local agriculture, and reducing transportation costs (financial and environmental)

- support practices that reduce soil erosion, and herbicide and pesticide use
- support re-sourcing of food—like fair-trade coffee—that guarantees the livelihoods of growers

The responsibility St. Olaf takes for the environment has a focus on both the global and the local. These goals relate to yearly themes the college has recently endorsed. The 2005-2006 theme was sustainability while the theme for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 is global citizenship. Through consciously endorsing their goals of sustainability and global citizenship, these terms easily enter into the dialogue at St. Olaf and become a part of the campus culture that permeate aspects of academic coursework, study abroad options, student activities, and food and eating habits.

Inside "The Caf": Food Lines and Preparation

Students enter the cafeteria by swiping their identification cards that monitor their prepaid meal plans. Upon entering, the sights and smells of Stav Hall's cafeteria (affectionately referred to by students as "The Caf") take one's focus. The food lines offered include: the "Home Line" which strives to serve typical home cooked meals, "Tortilla Line" (tacos and tortillas), "Pizza", "Pasta", "Grill" (includes hamburgers, hotdogs, chicken breasts and French fries), "Bowls" (noodles or rice with stir fry), "Grains" (vegan food), pre-made "Composed Salads", "The Salad Bar" (include fruits, vegetables, and condiments), and "Desserts." Other food options are made available including cereal, toast, and soups. Depending on what time one enters The Caf, the individual experience can vary greatly. Many times The Cafeteria can be filled to capacity with every food station having a long line of hungry consumers. Other times the food gathering is easy and effortless.

Where Should We Sit?: Table Arrangements

Stav Hall (which from this point will be referred to by its commonly used name –"The Caf") includes a variety of seating arrangements. The majority of the places to sit are at long tables that seat twelve individuals. In the rear of The Caf, five round tables seat six students each. Smaller tables, which seat only two students, surround the perimeter of the middle section. To one side of The Caf are sixteen booths that seat four people. The Caf also has an upstairs that borders three of the four sides of The Cafeteria. Looking over the ledge of the balcony, one can look down and see the downstairs cafeteria below. The upper level contains a mix of long tables, round tables and numerous two-person tables.

Other Food Options

Flex dollars are also part of the students' meal plan. The less prepaid meals a student chooses, the more flex dollars they are allocated. Flex dollars can be used in The Cage which is a small café style eatery with sandwich, soup, and other entrée-style offerings. In this location students can sit in a smaller space and do homework. Throughout the day the general business of The Cage fluctuates depending on students' schedules. The Pause is another food location for students, and the main offering is pizza and ice-cream shakes. Of course all students have the possibility of ordering in, or eating off campus at Northfield's many food restaurants. The few students who live off-campus often do not have a food plan and instead buy food items from grocery stores to prepare their own meals in their homes.

PREPARATION AND METHODOLOGY

Thoughts and Ideas on the Topic

We began our research interested in the topic of food. St. Olaf prides itself as having a premier food service. The Princeton Review has consistently ranked St. Olaf's food as among the top five among colleges in the nation. As students at St. Olaf we were interested in exploring the diversity of food that is served on campus. We were interested in thinking about matters of social class and how that may affect an individual's food choice. Our immediate perception was that food items from the Grill Line such as hot dogs, hamburgers, and French fries were perceived as lower class foods because of their association with low priced and unhealthy fast food. On the other extreme, we have observed in our experience as students at St. Olaf, that the Grains line seems to be the antithesis of the Grill Line. Many of the foods served in the Grains line are perceived to be rare or exotic. Through our research, this exploration of food and social class lead to a study that broadened to encompass larger issues including distinction, community, and surveillance on campus.

Methods

To begin to investigate these issues we decided on primarily using interviews to obtain information. Fifteen students were interviewed as well as two administrators of Bon Appétit. We modeled the male to female ratio of our interviewees to roughly reflect the student body of St. Olaf. This came out as a male-to-female ratio of 2:3. In total, six males and nine females were interviewed. All academic years (freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors) were represented in our study. Participants were recruited using personal invitation. Each interview took about one hour. All interviews were recorded by the interviewer on paper and some were additionally recorded. To supplement the information gathered from interviews, we spent three hours observing cafeteria behaviors. Additionally, we referenced theory (most significantly from Habermas, Foucault, and Bourdieu) and additional academic work and ethnographies relating to the topic.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Habermas: Discourse

Habermas worked with ideas about communication, and distinguished between two types of communication: communicative action and discourse. While communicative action occurs in everyday life, Habermas defined discourse as:

that form of communication that is removed from contexts of experience and action and whose structure assures us: that the bracketed validity claims of assertions recommendations, or warnings are the exclusive object discussions; that participants, themes, and contributions are not restricted except with reference to the goal of the testing the validity claims in questions; that no force except that of the better argument is exercised; and that all motives except of the cooperative search for truth are excluded (quoted in Ritzer 2004: 147).

Habermas further refers to a consensus theory of truth that emerges from discourse. This consensus is reached if the utterances of the speaker are understandable, offered as true, and are from a reliable speaker who has the right to offer his/her propositions (Ritzer 2004: 147). Fulfilling the above prerequisites, the arguments that emerge from these discourses are taken as true because of the consensus that is reached. Discourse becomes so prevalent that the truth of it becomes unquestionable.

Foucault: Power, Control, and Discipline

Foucault was particularly interested in examining discourses, especially those that sought to rationalize themselves in relation to saying what is true. The post-structuralist ideas of Foucault focus heavily on the relationship between knowledge and power. His 1979 *Discipline of Power* deals with ideas of how "power and knowledge directly imply one another" (quoted in Ritzer 2004: 461). He focuses on the shift in the prison system between the 1750's and the 1830's from using methods of torture to control prisoners to control through prison rules. Punishment, like other aspects of society, was increasingly becoming more rationalized. A development of rules dominated this new system of punishment.

According to Foucault, this system of rules became a much more effective system of control than did a system of torture. In the case of torture, the link between knowledge and power was clear. A prisoner who was found to be guilty of a crime was tortured, or more likely killed by an executioner. Control over these prisoners was exerted through the power to torture or end their life. The development of control based on rules blurred the link between knowledge and power. This new system governed by rules was "more regular, more effective, more constant, and more detailed in its effects" (quoted in Ritzer 2004: 461). The power an institution had to control an individual was not as explicit; the link between knowledge of how to "be a good citizen" and the power the state had to control individuals who strayed from these rules became blurred.

At the same time, the extent of control while not as explicit became more efficient. According to Foucault the new system of punishment's goal was not to be more humane, but "to punish better... to insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body" (Ritzer 2004: quoting Foucault, 461). This new form of punishment was not concerned with controlling the behavior of criminals but rather, controlling the behavior of all of society. According to Ritzer, this new form of punishment was "more numerous, more bureaucratized, more efficient, more impersonal, more invariable, and more sober; and involved the surveillance not just of criminal but of the entire society" (2004: 461). In this shift from punishment based on torture to punishment based on rules, all of society was either directly or indirectly constrained by rationalized punishment.

Foucault believed this new type of punishment was based on a military model of control. He did not believe that there was a single overarching power system. Rather, he described a system of micro-powers. Foucault identified three instruments of disciplinary power:

1. *Hierarchical observation*. This is the ability to oversee all that is controlled with a single gaze.
2. *Normalizing judgments*. This allows for one to be negatively judged on the dimensions of time, activity, and behavior.
3. *Examination*. This is the ability to observe individuals and make normalizing judgments about them. This element is a combination of the first two.

Using the above instruments of disciplinary power, if an official has the ability to oversee another individual and is also capable of perceiving what is proper behavior, the official will be able to examine the individual and make a judgment based in their behavior.

Foucault noted that this new type of punishment had a great capacity for constraint. This shift in prison methods "constituted a switch from punishment of the body to punishment of the soul or will" (Ritzer 2004: 462). Prison officials and the police were given the authority to judge the "normality and morality" of the prisoner. This ability to judge was extended to other such as psychiatrist and educators.

This idea of the ability to judge being extended to others outside of the police and prison is elaborated by Foucault's ideas about the Panopticon. A Panopticon is a structure that allows officials the complete observation of criminals. It usually takes a circular form. The set up of the Panopticon allows for officials to not always be present (such as in a watch tower), but the mere presence of the watch tower constrains the criminals. There may be an official in the watch tower and that is enough reason from prisoners to stay in line. This power is enhanced because the presence of the Panopticon "because the prisoners come to control themselves; they stop themselves from doing various things because they fear they *might* be seen by the guards" (Ritzer 2004: 462).

The link between knowledge and power is clearly emphasized through the example of the Panopticon. If people know how to act (as demonstrated above through the three elements of disciplinary power) and they also believe they are being watched, individuals will learn to control and constrain their actions. Foucault took this idea beyond the scope of prisons and saw the Panopticon as a base for a whole type of disciplinary society. If an entire society has the knowledge of what is "correct" behavior and has the feeling of being under surveillance, they will likely (and largely unconsciously) be controlled and constrained by their environment.

Bourdieu's Habitus, Field, "Distinction," and Homo Academicus

Habitus

Bourdieu's theory of habitus, field, and distinction all bring into play the larger theory of agency and structure. The questions of how much power does the agent have to control their own destiny and how much control the structure has over the agent come into focus. Bourdieu argues that the agent and structure are related dialectically and uses the terms *habitus*, *field*, *practice*, *strategy*, and *distinction* to describe this relationship.

Bourdieu's agent is dominated by habitus, the internalized "mental or cognitive structures" through which people deal with the social world" (Ritzer 2004: 390). Habitus is a "structuring structure" (Ritzer 2004: 390) – it generates and structures the practice and "durable preferences" (Ritzer 2004: 404) of the agent and the ways in which she/he perceives, understands, appreciates, and evaluates the social world. Habitus is a source of strategies for the agent, but it is important to note that the agent does not independently generate those strategies. These objective structures are independent of the consciousness and will of agents, but they are capable of guiding and constraining them as agents.

A person's or collective's habitus reflect divisions in class structures, according to "age group, genders, and social classes" (Ritzer 2004: 390). Because there are so many habitus there is not one habitus that is forced upon anyone uniformly. But it is possible for a person to have an "inappropriate habitus" – Bourdieu noted that a person coming from an agrarian background would not do well in a capitalist society.

The relationship of habitus to practice is dialectical. Bourdieu says habitus is the "dialectic of the internalization of externality and the externalization of internality" (Ritzer 2004: 391). As Ritzer 2004: points out habitus is at the same time a "structuring structure" that structures the outside world and the "structured structure" that is structured by the outside world. The relationship between practice and habitus is similar – in one way practice shapes habitus, while habitus in turn "serves both to unify and generate practice" (Ritzer 2004: 391).

This concept of practice generating habitus (while habitus generates practice) serves Bourdieu in the way that it shows that he does not deny the agency of the agent. While habitus constrains thought and choice of action it does not determine them. People still go through a conscious

decision making process – but Bourdieu does point out that the decision making process itself is shaped by habitus. To put it another way, habitus provides the principles by which people make choices and choose strategies. Although it enters into our thought and shapes our actions habitus is below the level of consciousness and language, “beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny and control by the will” (Ritzer 2004: 392). Yet it manifests itself in our everyday actions like “the way we eat, walk, talk, and blow our noses” (Ritzer 2004: 392).

Field

Field is “a network of relations among the objective positions within it” (Ritzer 2004: 392). These relations exist outside of a player’s consciousness and will – they are not everyday interactions or ties between individuals. The connection to fields such as “artistic, religious, high education” is an unconscious one, and those within these fields share and create a uniform logic.

Within the field there are struggles and competition to “safeguard or improve their positions and to impose the principle of hierarchization most favorable to their own products” (Ritzer 2004: 392). These strategies that the field *creates* and that are used *on* the field include using *capital*.

The amount of capital an agent possesses determines the positions of agents in the field. Capital (which includes four kinds; economic, cultural, social, and symbolic) means the ability to control one’s own fate and the fate of others. Other tools of use to the agent within the field are *strategies* – which refer to the “active deployment of objectively oriented ‘lines of action’ that obey regularities and form coherent and socially intelligible patterns” (Ritzer 2004: 393). Strategies vary depending on an agent’s position in the field.

Bourdieu also concentrated on the concept of symbolic violence meaning “violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity” (Ritzer 2004: 393). Symbolic violence is practiced through cultural mechanism and institutions – for example, Bourdieu pointed at the higher educational system at its inherent characteristic of imposing language, meanings, and systems of “those in power” upon people of society. Most frustratingly they do so while obscuring the fact that they are indeed getting “the dominated to accept as legitimate their own condition of domination” (Ritzer 2004: 393). Specifically, Bourdieu said the educational system reproduces existing power and class relations. He was interested in the emancipation of people from class and political domination.

Bourdieu was also concerned with the dialectical relationship between habitus and field. Again we see that the field conditions habitus, while at the same time habitus constitutes the field as something meaningful and worth energy (Ritzer 2004: 394).

Distinction and Taste

Bourdieu broke ground by studying “culture” and tastes in an academic manner. He noted the coherent and consistent nature of cultural preferences within groups within society especially within classes. Bourdieu was interested in variations within social groups concerning aesthetic “taste” and the disposition of varying groups to appreciate various cultural objects differently. In this way taste is a chance to organize a social order for it can unify those with similar preferences and differentiate themselves from others. Through taste and preferences agents (individual and collective) can classify objects, other people, and also themselves

Within the afore-mentioned fields, strategies and “games” are undertaken to achieve a certain social role or position within class relationships. Taste, whose success and use is dictated by the structure of field, is one strategy to use within the game to excel one’s self-positioning. In this way taste can lend itself to creating a hierarchy.

Taste is shaped by “deep-rooted and long-standing dispositions rather than surface opinions and verbalizations” (Ritzer 2004: 394). People’s preferences for clothing, furniture, and food are shaped by habitus which “forge[s] the unconscious unity of a class” (Ritzer 2004: 394).

Habitus and taste forms the capital that an agent uses with in the field and everyday life. Many times this capital is dependent on people’s social class origin and their educational experience. The higher the social class origin and the more education experience you have the more likely you are to try and achieve distinction through your informed everyday choices. Distinction can be reached in a variety of ways – food, beverages, transportation, reading material, and vacations. The decisions that an agent makes for some cultural goods will “yield a profit while others yields no gain or even a ‘loss’” (Ritzer 2004: 395).

The main point is that an agent’s choices (dependent on habitus, field, and taste) give her/him the ability to distinguish herself/himself and to be different. Although there is a hierarchy at play: “The fact that one choice is worthy of distinction while the other is considered vulgar is a result of the dominance of one point of view and the symbolic violence practiced against those who adopt another viewpoint” (Ritzer 2004: 395). In this way it is clear that class can not only be determined from an economic standpoint but also by a gamut of taste and habitus.

Homo Academicus

According to Bourdieu, the college university system is “the locus of a struggle to determine the conditions and the criteria of membership and hierarchy – which properties are pertinent, effective and liable to function as capital so as to generate the specific profits guaranteed by the field” (quoted in Ritzer 2004: 396). Bourdieu says that higher education reproduces a dominant logic and taste and also can foster a damaging hierarchy ripe with symbolic violence. Academia is opening a door to a field of power and so it also educates its students about the specific “academic logic” at play within that field.

Bourdieu criticized the interesting dynamic in relationships between academicians and those who aspire to their positions. In those relationships those in power control the aspirants and the others must conform to a docile and submissive nature. Bourdieu saw this as problematic because it seems that conformity was rewarded instead of innovativeness.

FINDINGS

Community Discourse at St. Olaf

In talking with students, “community” seems to be strongly embedded in the discourse of St. Olaf. Jane (’09) noted that St. Olaf drew a certain type of person: “I don’t think people would really come here who weren’t looking for that sense of community.” When interviewing subjects, we brought up a rumored proposal that when Buntrock Commons (which contains The Caf) was being built in 1998, there was discussion among the administration of building two cafeterias to give students more space and more food options. According to the rumor, the student body voted against this proposal citing that they would not want to be separated or segregated from any of their fellow students.

When interviewing students we asked how they would feel about St. Olaf having multiple cafeterias for students. All but one of our interviewees thought that this was a bad idea. Students perceived the possibility of multiple cafeterias to be detrimental to an established sense of "community" that existed among students at St. Olaf. To emphasize the overwhelmingly similar response of students, here is a sampling of what many of them said regarding community.

I like to have one Caf – it is good for the sense of community. It is nice to be able to have the possibility of running into your friends and people you know who you maybe wouldn't see otherwise.
– Jane

I would not like two Cafs. The Caf is where the community gathers. If it didn't exist as it does, it would be difficult to run into people randomly... most people eat there 2-3 times per day. – Brian ('08)

Having two cafeterias would promote segregation. The Caf is a nice common ground, and to take it away would decrease the sense of community. You might not be able to interact with certain people you don't see on a regular basis. – Karen ('09)

I agree with the student's decision to have only one Caf. I mean, that's the point of Buntrock – to foster community. I love when we can all be more together as a campus, but I guess I am a 'community type of person,' it could be more difficult for introverts. – Elise ('10)

Some students expressed that sometimes it felt as if community was something that the administration of the school was active in constructing and interested in promoting. Nonetheless, these students could not deny their own experience of community:

I think two cafeterias would cause disruption to our sense of community. The community is a real shared experience, although it gets in our head because we all hear about it so much, but it is true. It can be hard as a first year because you worry you won't be part of the community, but for the most part it is welcoming. – Valerie ('11)

Having two Cafs would take away from the sense of community St. Olaf *tries to build*. It is really there to a certain degree, though – we are in such close proximity to each other. – Claire ('09)

The Multiple Faces of Community

The sense of "community" combined with an overall "warm feeling of The Caf" created what students described as a very comfortable place. Students noted "the beauty" of The Caf as well as the sunlight from all the windows as factors that made The Caf comfortable. Claire noted that "It is a nice place to relax and people are generally happy when they are eating." Karen described the physical structure of The Caf as "soothing, relaxing, and inviting."

For many respondents, however, what affected their perception of whether or not The Caf was a welcoming environment was based largely on whether they ate with other people. Sarah ('09) noted that "besides breakfast, I never eat a meal alone. I am more comfortable eating if I am in a conversation with someone. It seems like meals should be social." Jane noted that The Caf was comfortable when you are with others and it is uncomfortable when you are by yourself: "When there are people with friends and you are alone you feel naked – you just feel uncool." Some students interviewed reported that they never have eaten alone in The Caf. Valerie, a first year, when asked how many times she has eaten alone in The Caf alone per week, shook her head vigorously and exclaimed "Never!" She reported that eating alone in The Caf was a huge fear of hers, and also said she admired those who could do it and said that she thought she should

sometime. Suzy ('09) stated that in her three years as a student at St. Olaf, she only went to The Caf alone once, but that she "luckily" found someone. She now just avoids the situation because you "look like a loser" when you eat alone. Although, two students noted that they eat alone seven or more times per week, eating alone in The Caf was also not seen as desirable by a majority of the people interviewed.

One of the main reasons students cited for not wanting to eat alone was having other people notice them. The large, open nature of The Caf could be compared to Foucault's Panopticon. Many students commented on how highly visible they felt in The Caf. Many students commented that being alone in The Caf was overwhelming because they felt they did not have a place they could hide. Brian noted, "The Caf is just so open – there is nowhere to hide." When asked when she would sit in booths in The Caf, Sarah noted that they were good place to hide. Additionally, George ('09) took his complaints to Buntrock Commons as a whole: "It is difficult to be alone in Buntrock – it is like a hospital with nowhere to hide."

Many students also said that they noticed the students who ate upstairs and had strong opinions about these people. When asked who is most likely to sit upstairs, most respondents replied that first years were most likely to eat upstairs. There seemed to be a stigma for non-first years to eat on the upper level. Claire responded that she would only eat there if there was no where else downstairs to sit. When asked why, she replied that it reminded her of freshman year. Among the other people cited as frequenting that area of The Caf were "Great Conners" (students who participate in St. Olaf's Great Conversation program which chronicles the history of Western thought), "music people," "Ellingson people" (Ellingson Hall is a first year dorm), "Caf dates," "loners," "awkward people," "people who want to look at other people from above," "creepers" and "nerds." Jane, a student who cited eating meals alone in The Caf about eight times per week also noted that when she eats alone she purposely situates herself downstairs on the sides of The Caf in order to be less visible. She seemed disgusted with the idea of decreasing her visibility by eating upstairs:

I will only eat upstairs if there is no where else upstairs. I will not be one of those people who sits alone by themselves upstairs – that is just sad. You should not do that, you are better than that, you are independent, and you will be okay.

The notion that everyone knows where everyone else is sitting in The Caf is further reflected by notions of where particular groups of students sit. There seems to be a shared knowledge among students of the "geography" of The Caf. In addition to people who ate alone and people who ate upstairs, students noted that they perceived there to be specific places in The Caf for racial minorities and for athletes. Nearly everyone interviewed had an opinion about who sat at the first two tables on the right hand side of The Caf. People used a wide range of terms to describe the inhabitants of these tables. Among the terms: "multicultural students", "people who are in MACO or SSS (Multicultural Affairs and Community Outreach and Student Support Services), "diversity groups", "Asians and African Americans", and "international students." Often when asked about where specific groups of people sat in The Caf, the individuals who sat at these tables were among the first groups that were named. Sarah acknowledged that she has never sat there and that the separation of race she perceives in The Caf bothers her. George, however, pointed out that there are all types of groups that hang out in The Caf; there are football players, artsy kids, and yes, non-white students, but "it makes sense that people relate to those who have similar experiences to them."

Other groups of people who were frequently noted for having a significant presence in The Caf were athletic teams. Football players, baseball players, and "beefy dudes" were frequently cited as sitting in the front center tables of The Caf. The swimmers, according to subjects sat in the center of The Caf and the cross country team sat in the back left. Whereas, some students noted discomfort by tables segregated by race, most students felt ambivalent toward athletes sitting together. If

anything, students noted a "sense of camaraderie" among teammates. While not necessarily being judged for sitting in these groups, the student body seemed to have a shared knowledge of where certain students sat in The Caf.

Students were not only judged for with whom or where they sat in The Caf, students also noted that in The Caf, people noticed and could be judgmental about people's food choices. Valerie noted apprehensions about The Caf: "There is judging going on. Everyone is watching." Some respondents were fairly upfront about judging other people's food choices. For example, Claire stated, "Sometimes I ask myself, 'Do you really want to eat that? Or are you just lazy?'" Kevin ('08) said, "I notice when large women have a lot of fatty foods. Then I'm like, 'Oh, that's why you are that way.'" George noted that he made judgments about people who were wasteful with their food describing them as "not thinking or not conscious people."

Interestingly, many students noted that they thought they were their own harshest critics of their food choices. Jane asserted, "I pay attention to other people's food to gauge it against my own. I view other people's food as normal and my food as abnormal. I don't judge other people's food, but I am always passing judgment on myself." Claire also noted that from time to time she craves the "enormous" burritos from the taco line, but that "I am embarrassed at myself for wanting them. I would never actually let myself get them." Mikayla ('08) watches what she eats because she "doesn't want people to say, 'Look at that pig walking through The Caf.'"

Whether feeling internal or external pressure, the setup of The Caf reflects Foucault's Panopticon and follows his ideas about a "disciplinary society." Following Foucault's ideas about instruments of disciplinary power, the openness of The Caf and Buntrock Commons (and overall campus) allow for individual students to be able to see the actions of their peers. With the cultural knowledge necessary for distinguishing oneself at St. Olaf, students are familiar with ideas about what community is and what proper eating habits are. With this cultural knowledge, students are able to *examine* their peers and make *normalizing judgments* based on their visible behavior. While there is no hierarchy in place enforcing these "rules" and norms at St. Olaf, students "stop themselves from doing various things because they fear they *might* be seen" (Ritzer 2004: 462). In this sense, St. Olaf becomes a disciplinary society in which surveillance occurs on a peer-to-peer level based on a hierarchy of information about "community" and "proper" ways to eat.

Kory ('09) acknowledged what she perceived as surveillance at St. Olaf. She said that although it was nice to have one cafeteria for everyone to gather, it could foster "competitive patterns" of surveillance and pressure. Kory tied these feelings of surveillance to a group of people she referred to as "Tostrud people." Tostrud is the name of the athletic complex at St. Olaf and Kory referred to a culture of people who work out in Tostrud. These people, according to Kory are aware of one another and notice the food choices they make in The Cafeteria. According to Kory, it is the openness and transparency of eating and exercising patterns that breed a competitive cycle among these "Tostrud people." Mikayla also noted the behavior and patterns of "Tostrud people" who are into their weight and obsessed with "eating tricks." As someone who has gone through major problems associated with an eating disorder, Kory and Mikayla point to a culture of competition at St. Olaf: "The type of people who go here have a strong work ethic and are competitive perfectionists." This culture of competition combined with the openness of community; however, prove to be dangerous combination for people like Kory.

George noted his own frustrations with the surveillance he associated with the St. Olaf community:

At St. Olaf there is a feeling of constructed community. Buntrock forces all of us to be close to one another all the time... it's like social engineering. Multiple cafeterias would be ideal. It is just difficult to be alone in Buntrock; you can't have any peace or solitude and I feel like everyone is people watching - I do it, too! All of this is made even creepier by the "Hi Mom" camera. Not only are we all watching ourselves here at St. Olaf, but the outside world can watch into our lives, too.

While students were not shy about voicing concerns or frustrations with the setup of a single cafeteria at St. Olaf, most still supported the idea of having a single cafeteria and reaffirmed the overall setup of St. Olaf's campus. According to Sarah, "Because there is only one Caf, the same 3,000 people are going to be there and the focus and surveillance is greater. If it wasn't like that, it wouldn't matter as much what you were eating and how much." Nonetheless, she goes on to state that she would have voted to have one cafeteria: "It's cool to eat with everyone. It is unusual to have just one cafeteria and it is a plus to the college." Claire also suggested, "College is four years where you can avoid real world situations. I like that there are lots of things to do and people to meet. At other schools, it is harder to meet people."

Whether or not community affected students in a positive or negative way, students generally were willing to accept any drawbacks from community in return for the academic and social experience that St. Olaf provides to its students. A world of rigorous academics and highly motivated peers is seen by most students as a desirable trait St. Olaf has to offer them. In this next section we will examine how St. Olaf's "culture of success" affects that eating patterns and food choices of students.

College Culture and Success

As students of St. Olaf we have both experienced the intensive and demanding college culture and heard about its manifestations at this institution in particular. There is a necessity and expectation of success and achievement on all levels of the student's existence. Papers, exams, and presentations require time-consuming preparation and thought. Personal relationships demand time and attention. Beyond the academic and social realm, living in a body-conscious nation and peer-group fosters an obsession with working out and eating right.

Living amongst 3,000 individuals who all have the same goals can foster serious competition in the way of "who is the busiest" or "who is the most stressed" that all culminates in the question "who has the most control over themselves. These factors which can be used to compete with others for certain positions are the defined social capital according to the field. The more one controls (and denies) their desire for pleasure and replaces it with less gratifying activities the more social capital one has and consequently the higher the position in the hierarchy of that field.

This need for control and success carries over into other areas of a student's life. For instance, the success standard according to their field includes body image and upkeep, so food becomes an obvious part of a student's success and competitive existence: "Through capitalist [food] exchange [...] individuals are separated from and placed in antagonistic positions towards each other" (Counihan 1992: 55). Food becomes a way to express the ability of self-control and power. Success as defined by the individuals interviewed included weight, health, and environmental consciousness. Many times these things were tied up in control: success means denying themselves the food they *want* to eat, eating *balanced* and *proportional* meals, and not *wasting* a lot of food. Counihan also noted that the ability to be autonomous and independent plays a part in control and success. These two values of control and independence are a part of the larger "Euro-American ideal" and health field (Counihan 1992: 55).

It is important to note that the competition and measurement of control is perhaps different at St. Olaf. Often times, professors and students note that the student standard at St. Olaf is especially stringent. "It's not like that at the 'U'" (referring to the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities), "When I studied abroad the work load was so much easier", and "Why is St. Olaf so *hard*!?" are just some of the common complaints heard around campus.

When interviewed St. Olaf students said that like the severe success standard at St. Olaf the bodily and health standard is also seen as more severe. Noting the widespread health culture of St. Olaf, Claire said "everyone at St. Olaf is into working out and eating well". Mikayla told a story about a friend from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota who visited St. Olaf and later said about St. Olaf women, "I've never seen so many *Barbies* in my life!" Elise also noted the "St. Olaf Standard" as "wearing Northface fleece, blond, beautiful, and *perfect*" and Jane who has developed an eating disorder partly because of the "perfect population" here said "this is a school of beautiful people who are tall, skinny, and blonde – and that creates pressure." Folklore or fact, talk around campus often cites a recent survey that appeared in *Playboy* that honored St. Olaf saying it has the most beautiful college students in the nation. Although we found no evidence of this survey while researching, it seems to be accepted as fact among St. Olaf students.

The way this translates to food means there is a serious conscientiousness of what kinds of food and how much a person takes from The Cafeteria. Many respondents noted gender differences in the appropriate food and standards but many pointed out *salad* as the preferred food *to be seen getting*. Salad because it is "healthy", "balanced", "something everyone gets" – it is a huge part of the competition within the "higher education food field." Salad becomes that symbol of *control*, one may not like the taste and would prefer something else but exercises their refined independence and allows the "*shoulds*" to win out – and they are a better student and person because of it. Sarah noted that she sees prospective students going there because they think everyone has it, and that it's a "prerequisite dish". Interestingly she said that she does not like salads but still gets them because it gives her a sense of control of herself and her social position. When describing the "appropriate" meal for males and females many respondents listed salad. Salad really becomes a phenomenon of identity making, a choice to express control and therefore claim value for the self.

When a student does not get a *salad* or a *balanced* meal they feel guilty and socially ostracized. Most of the interviewed students all noted guilt or awareness of judgment of their eating habits. This awareness motivates them to eat in this *balanced* manner. Again control seeps into the decisions of our respondents: Kory noted that "tator tots and french fries are hard to eat" and Brian said he "doesn't eat fries or chips." Suzy said that when she does get tator tots she qualifies it by saying "screw it, I don't care what you people think" which acknowledges the fact that people will notice and judge food choices. Clearly, when a person does not get a salad or a balanced meal they are failing at the competition within their field. Most poignantly, Mikayla related that if she had the opportunity to make her college choice again she would not chosen St. Olaf because she did not care as much about "this kind of stuff before I came here". Internalizing the focus on control and appearance, Mikayla has battled an eating disorder at St. Olaf. A deeper analysis into food disorders is forthcoming.

Beyond the appropriate foods and amounts to eat, sustainability and being green is forced into the food choices students make at St. Olaf. As noted previously sustainability plays a large part in decisions St. Olaf makes in terms of funding, development (see new "green" Science Center), and food service. Joy, a member of the management and administrative aspects of Bon Appetit noted the way that St. Olaf and Bon Appetit's philosophies "align". Since the birth of Bon Appetit supporting local farmers and being "low carbon" and sustainable was a priority. According to Joy, it's "a philosophy for all the right reasons." The food service repeatedly reminds students of this focus in this food-related field by mounting informational signs called "Circles of Responsibility" in The Cafeteria stating how far the food had to travel to get to your plate; sponsoring events like "Low Carbon Day" in which the goal was to teach campus community members and visitors how to make food choices that reduce the "carbon footprint" of various food items and slow climate change; and posting a graph of food wasted in the past few weeks at the exit of The Cafeteria.

Following St. Olaf and Bon Appetit's food philosophies becomes another source of stress towards conformity and control. Elise noted one of her major concerns being not to waste a lot of food when eating in The Cafeteria. On "Low Carbon Day", Bon Appetit endorsed a cloth bag to be used in place

of the paper bags that many students use to carry their portable, bag lunch around when unable to eat in The Cafeteria. The proliferation of those bags has been fairly overwhelming, and now some students feel pressure to use those more sustainable, "tree-friendly" bags to the point where they feel they are being "watched" if they do not have those cloth bags.

It is clear there are pressures from being a college student beyond academics. Students are held up to a specific kind set of rules as defined by the field. The rules require the student to be a person who is health and environmentally conscious which can be reached through a devotion to control. It is clear that these food rules that students adhere to are as Counihan put it, "an allegory of social concerns, [and] a way in which people give order to the physical, social, and symbolic world around them" (Counihan 1992: 55). The strict rules of consumption at St. Olaf can leave students feeling inadequate, "fat", and less of a person.

Counihan also postulates that the discourse of the American Dream enters into the conversation in the way that "each person can and should carve his or her own path to success. Eating should be as individualized as other pursuits" (Counihan 1992: 58). Counihan explains that college students value "the exercise of restraint in eating because it is a path to personal attractiveness, moral superiority, high status, and dominance" (Counihan 1992: 60). Using Bourdieu's concept of "field" and the competition inherent in that concept – it is clear that the field and competition at St. Olaf is concerned with health, sustainability, and overall success which reflects the qualities of a larger culture.

It is important to note that "food insecurities" as discussed by Mintz and DuBois in "The Anthropology of Food and Eating" are much different in college situations than the food insecurities experienced by those in other cultures. Instead of wondering where the meal will come from the concern is, "How do I stop myself from eating all of this food?" This concern is quite obviously an upper class, and privileged concern which is something to keep in mind coming into the next section.

Sustainability and Food Knowledge: A Luxury

In the former argument, the "college student" standard was differentiated from the "St. Olaf standard" which was described as severe, stringent, or even unrealistic. Along with this pervasive view of a "more intense" college experience comes a seeming sense of superiority. This superiority complex is highlighted by an upper class habitus which brings into the collective's practice health foods, environment, and sustainability. Respondents noticed that sustainability is and perhaps only can be a concern of "private" and "wealthier" institutions. Even lower income food services themselves cannot always afford to "buy locally" or make food from scratch as the Bon Appétit food plan purports. This preference for sustainable and health foods is related to the institution's habitus which puts St. Olaf in a privileged and high brow position.

The differences inherent in the food choices of class allows the upper class, and upper class food services like Bon Appétit to claim a kind of moral superiority. In a general sense, U.S. society associates poor eating habits with the lower class. As cited by Counihan the USDA "thrifty food plan" is based on the expectation that those of the lower class eat differently – less meat and high protein food and more breads, cereals and beans. Along with this, the widespread perception is that at large public universities food choices are limited to "junk" foods, like pizza, corn dogs, and chicken strips. At the mention of those foods Joy identifies them as "not what [Bon Appétit] does" defining a "different kind" of food program that does not fit into their practice.

In the conversation with Joy, the concept of St. Olaf as an *educational* institution came up. Accordingly, she mentioned that Bon Appétit had the role of *educating* students. This parallels

Bourdieu's theory of Homo Academicus. Besides "training the palates of students" to make sustainable choices, Joy says the Home Line sometimes has more ethnic foods; where the homes of the diverse population come into play. The claim of Bon Appétit (as an upper class food service) to "determine the diet of the poor, their ability to be choosy about food, and their superior diet, define them as both more powerful and as behaviorally and morally superior to the poor" (Counihan 1992: 61). Beyond the identification of Bon Appétit and their foods as superior, the educational claim adds another level of teaching the students a hierarchy of foods and classes which has the danger of creating symbolic violence against those with "poor" eating habits.

The concern with health, sustainability and having a global-reach are of an upper class habitus which define the nature of Bon Appétit's service. Food here "serves both to solidify group membership and to set groups apart" (Mintz and DuBois 2002: 109) and as Bourdieu suggested, an agent (individual or collective) can differentiate and distinguish themselves through the use of choice and taste. In this case, whether intentional or not, it seems St. Olaf is setting the institution apart as part of an upper class. Interestingly, when asked about Bon Appétit's comparison to the past food service of Carleton Joy said she could not speak to what pressure they felt to be sustainable or similar to St. Olaf, but she did say that, "if they wanted the *status quo* we [Bon Appétit] would not be going over there." According to Harold, an administrator for Bon Appétit, the company is choosy about what schools they work with and which ones they do not: "We Work to partner with great institutions." He noted that most of the time those schools are private institutions like St. Olaf.

Most interviewed students noted that the habitus and practices of Bon Appétit may be of a specific kind of taste that differed from their pre-St. Olaf food-related habitus and practices. Referencing the Home Line, Mikayla noted that many times she avoids it in favor for choices that were more "home-y" because of the "weird sauces and spices" they put on the vegetables there. Neillio ('10) said that foods like "duck and lamb" would never be foods he has at home because they are too expensive. Elise said that sometimes being able to identify the food from the Home Line takes a specific type of knowledge; and when she does not know the food she thinks she looks "crazy, dumb, and poor." Close to all of the respondents when asked what their favorite food is in The Cafeteria said when the Home Line has grilled cheese or tator tot hot dish which are clearly not of the "unknowable" and "exotic" persuasion sometimes purported by the Home Line. It is clear from these descriptions that the student's habitus pre-St. Olaf differed from the habitus being put into practice at this institution. I would be naught to say that it is akin to the "inappropriate habitus" that Bourdieu described using the characters of an agrarian individual living in an industrial culture, but it is a definite change of pace for most students.

In regards to the function of the Home Line for Joy, she says it is also a part of the educational approach to the food service. She did note that the line for grilled cheese is always very long and a busy day for Bon Appétit but rationalized saying "that's when we can tell when students want that *comfort food*." It is interesting to note that according to Bon Appétit standards any pseudo-unhealthy, traditional foods, become comfort foods, but to others it may be a legitimate part of their habitus at home. Elise said specifically, "when they have grilled cheese, chips, celery, and carrots that is what a meal at home would be for me, that is when it is 'my Home Line'." One has to wonder, what habitus are students learning from trying these different foods and where would they apply that knowledge? Even further, in the "real world" what kinds of people have that kind of food-related habitus?

Of even more focus is the Grains line in The Cafeteria. Respondents had a very strong and specific reaction to the Grains line. Many times the connections made were along the lines of noting that many people that eat there are vegetarians, vegans, "granolas" (according to Karen) and/or environmentalists. But most interestingly the connection was made directly to "high status" "high brow" "high class" individuals. When asked to describe what "high class individual" might eat when they come into The Cafeteria almost every respondent said the Grains line. What entered into this

distinction was the fact that it was healthy, environmental, and ethnically diverse in its inspiration but also that many times the respondents did not know what the food was in that line. They noted that a certain kind of knowledge was necessary to eat there comfortably.

These "non-Grains liners" seem to be "solidifying, and setting apart their group" (Mintz and Dubois 2002: 109) like St. Olaf does but on a micro level. As Bourdieu suggested, an agent (individual or collective) can differentiate and distinguish themselves through the use of choice and taste. Interestingly, Harold noted that on a micro-level Bon Appetit was to provide for students not necessarily high-class food but flavorful food and he emphasized that students *have a choice* to eat the "flavorful" food or not. The choice not to eat that kind of food sets those students apart as not interested in the flavorful food and possibly of a lower class. But most important, "non-Grains line" students other and distinguish themselves from "those kind of people." This is an uncomfortable distinction because talking about class is uncomfortable so sometimes the responses to Grains line questions were close to defensive; Sarah noted that a person seems pretentious if they get the Grains line food because they know what "dahl" and "tempeh" are; Suzy said that she never liked it, never will, and she thinks that the people who do get it *do not know what it is* either and do not even like the food; Elise noted that the food from that line is trendy and hip, very "right now" unlike her more normal and traditional food habitus. Noting that they did not in the Grains line was placing themselves in a different class with a different habitus than themselves.

The impact of these four years at St. Olaf though will have an inevitable impact on their food-related habitus after college. Because of the transformative and liminal nature of college this change may be even more obvious. Most of those people interviewed noted that they will be more sophisticated and knowledgeable about food after college. Mikayla said she tried "risotto" for the first time here and enjoyed it; Kory excitedly mentioned hummus as a new food she tried and enjoyed; Elise said she tried the "crazy" pizzas (pizzas with nontraditional toppings) here and tries to recreate them at home. It seems their habitus and food-practices have changed in their time at St. Olaf which will manifest itself in the form of preferences that will set them apart in a higher class that is not necessarily decided by fiscal factors but by habitus. In this way, Joy will achieve the goal that Bon Appetit sets out for students: "We like to train their palate."

Gender

As noted before there is an overarching St. Olaf student standard that seems more intense than a student standard at other universities, but it is important to note that especially in terms of *appearance* wise females have a different and stricter experience with food. As noted by Counihan in *Food Rules in the United States: Individualism, control, and Heirarchy*: "Men and women are defined as different and ranked hierarchically in many cultures including our own by rules about their food consumption" (Counihan 1992: 61).

Unfortunately, the college standard discussed previously is focused and forced upon women more than men. In this vein, food is used as a tool to succeed and express good personality traits – but men use food to obtain size and power whereas women use food as a path to thinness and control (Counihan 1992: 62). Females are judged and evaluated more on their appearance than success in academics, sports, and college participation as men are evaluated. This means that *control* must win out more for women, because if they do not have their appearance they can fail as a person and a student. Jane noted this gender difference saying, "Females are healthier and are more conscious of what they eat – it is a cultural thing." The need for control enters in their food choices but apparently it also enters into the judgment of others. When talking about judgment the respondents often times pointed the finger at women for being the most judgmental, and especially judgmental towards their fellow women friends.

There are stereotypical gender divisions within the concepts of portion size, gendered foods, and the methods of eating. The emphasis on control and portion control for women was shown by the fact that when many respondents designed an appropriate meal for a St. Olaf female student as compared to a St. Olaf male student the female meal was smaller in portions and caloric content. Many times the reason for this decision was not based on the basic caloric needs according to weight or muscle but because culturally and traditionally women *should* eat less. This was reflected in our observation: in one lunch period we noted the average number of plates was 1.4 plates for women and 1.95 for men. Cup numbers were similar: women on average had 1.66 cups while men had 2.13 cups. Also, men are associated with those foods that are "pleasurable and heavier" – red meat and potatoes; and women are associated with "lighter" foods that purport control – chicken and salad (Counihan 1992: 61). This was similar in our observation – men had taken the Home Line or Grill Line food more often while women many times had a salad and a fruit (most commonly a grapefruit).

On a date and in front of male friends many women respondents chose to eat something "easy" and "not messy" so that their male counterparts would not judge them as "pigs" or unnecessarily masculine according to their methods of eating (Counihan 1992: 61). Neillio thought that what distinguished women's eating habits were their "pretty" and "dainty" foods. Important to notice here that these food associations are similar to the patriarchal patterns of our society – men are to be powerful, free, and dominant in their eating patterns whereas women are to be dainty, submissive, small, and constrained. Again it is seen that our food rules reflect larger and more general values in our society.

To draw a direct correlation between the experience at St. Olaf and eating disorders would be too reductive and would fail to account for the complexity of the issue. Interestingly, four of the fifteen students interviewed claimed to have an eating disorder or to have sought help for one in the past. All four of these were women. Some noted that their problems with food precluded their experience at St. Olaf while others have developed their eating disorder while a student here. The experiences of these women widely differ.

Karen claimed that her eating disorder was something she was over and that she is perfectly comfortable in The Caf whether alone or with others. Other women were very careful about their food choices and felt that the way that the food lines were set up were helpful to keep a hold on their issues. As noted before, Kory had struggled with eating problems and mentioned the concept of "safe" and "unsafe" foods and chose the Tortilla Line because she could know the portion size and food well enough. Jane further elaborated on the concept of "safe" and "unsafe" foods but notes "I love the [Tortilla Line] but never eat there because I am unsure exactly what ingredients are in the food. I have foods I consider 'safe' and 'unsafe.' I strive to eat safe foods – foods in which I know exactly what I will be eating."

Surveillance and community play a part in the control and proliferation of unhealthy eating habits. Several girls noted there was a lot of "tricks" that could be played to avoid calories and to discover if a person had an eating disorder and was on track or not. Grapefruits were noted as a clue to determine who had an eating disorder. Kory noted that because they "take a long time to eat and only have forty calories" she becomes worried when she sees an individual with this fruit and a salad. Mikayla noted that ketchup and jam were desirable sauces because they did not have calories, and drinking a lot of liquid (especially hot tea and diet coke) was a way to fill the body without calories. Kory mentioned that when females see other "healthy-looking females" (which would be thin, according to the St. Olaf/U.S. society standard) eating that kind of food they may pick up similar food habits in order to compete and demonstrate their control. Kory and Mikayla regretted this unhealthy inheritance of eating habits. But Kory also mentioned that the community and surveillance aspect helps her stay on track at the same time. Like Sarah, she engages in helpful conversation about the food her friends have taken to ensure they are being healthy. Here we see where community or surveillance can help or hinder the individual.

As said before, it certainly would be too reductive to claim these eating disorders were *caused* by social phenomena at St. Olaf; however, it may be safe to say that there is a correlation. The aspects of community, surveillance, and discipline undoubtedly play some sort of role in the lives of individuals. Each individual reacts to and experiences these phenomena in a different and unique way. For some, the aura of a competitive community helps them to thrive and grow; however, the examples noted above remind us that everyone is not so lucky.

CONCLUSIONS

From our findings it is apparent that the college culture both benefits and hinders a student's livelihood. Community can have benefits and they are evident in the rich community that is evident on campus. Respondents enjoyed the experiences they had in The Caf mainly because they saw so many people they knew who they could converse with. Some individuals with eating disorders felt they were able to have more control with the way The Caf was set up and felt supported by their social experiences with their friends. At the same time, community can constrain, hinder, and even hurt individuals. Foucault's idea of Panopticon seems to reflect itself in the surveillance that occurs in The Caf. Additionally, the concentration of students in one place can alienate some and force others to the margin (or upstairs). Other individuals with eating disorders reacted to the community as another chance to compete and show their control. But as much as we have discussed the potentially destructive aspects of The Caf, our respondents still wanted one cafeteria for the express purpose of experiencing community. In the face of adversity, the discourse of community, whether real or imagined, flourishes.

The standard of success at St. Olaf is yet another place where students can be both challenged to grow as well as suffer under enormous pressure. The student competition keeps participants on their toes and invested in their education and experience; this year St. Olaf was recognized as producing its eighth and ninth Rhodes Scholars. With the knowledge gained from living within this "food competition" within the St. Olaf field students may keep up a healthy physique and diet while being conscientious of the environment. But some students may react adversely to the competition and deal with significant amounts of stress in an unhealthy manner. Some individuals seem to find the institution is simply not right for them. If Mikayla had her way, she would tell prospective students to stay away from this institution because of the success standard of food at St. Olaf. Her concern with success led to a painful downfall that continues to haunt her to this day.

Sustainability and "enjoying" food are practices that lead to a better environment and a healthier relationship to food. These lessons learned at St. Olaf will possibly translate to a way of life for each student. Ideally, these lessons would teach students to be conscientious and informed eaters. These experiences could also teach them to be able to distinguish themselves from other social classes by showcasing their unique tastes and preferences. But as Bourdieu mentioned, teaching the "appropriate" habitus and practices means also teaching "inappropriate" habitus and practices which can create the structural violence against those of the later persuasion.

From this information we have found it is necessary to be aware and keep in mind these conditions (beyond the food culture) when thinking about what the mission and offerings of St. Olaf College. Does promoting community also mean promoting surveillance and judgment? How can students find a healthy balance of challenge and competition without letting it be destructive to their own health? How can St. Olaf promote concepts and practices that are associated with an upper class and still teach students a tolerant humility when encountering others post-graduation?

Further research is necessary to answer these questions about the detailed reality of community, surveillance, and discipline. However, as this study highlights, there are many sides to the commonly promoted ideologies of St. Olaf College, specifically as they relate to food and eating.

Beyond the commonly spouted discourse, there is a vastly complex array of emotions, hopes, fears, and anticipations that guide, shape, and control student behavior. By examining food and eating practices among students, this study hopes to illuminate the immense complexity behind commonly held beliefs and assumptions about inhabiting the social space of a student at St. Olaf College.

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