# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

# FORAGE

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts, in Art,

Studio Art

Ву

Anna Marie Flavin

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To Suzanne Q, my inspiration for everything,

and

For the guidance generously offered by Professors Lesley Krane, Edward Alfano, and Samantha Fields

Thank you

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#### **ABSTRACT**

**FORAGE** 

By

Anna Marie Flavin

Master of Arts in Art,

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The complex language of food subtly communicates volumes. "Tell me what you eat, and I shall tell you what you are," declared the acclaimed gastronome Jean Antheleme Brillat-Savarin in 1825. Alimentary interaction is not only an indicator of individual behavior, but it is also a cultural phenomenon defined by society's collective acceptance of and participation in a system. History, biology, economy and politics are profoundly embedded in every bite, thereby illustrating a complex system of signification that ultimately describes a culture. Whether consciously or unconsciously expressed, societal beliefs are evident throughout this semiotic relationship.

Leftovers of Modernist thought are consumed daily in the American diet. This pervasive mentality has developed as a result of the evolution of human thought, the formation of a collective culture, and the mechanisms established to entice and satisfy massive consumerism. Modernism remains the pith of the American eating experience. The reductive paradigm of Nutritionism, industrialization, consumerism, and mechanized mass production encourage a diminished connection to the earth in favor of more expedient forms of nutrition. The deconstruction, re-assemblage, and enhancement of natural elements to produce food have become standard procedures that change the definition and constitution of sustenance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Jean Anthelem Brillat-Savarin, <u>The Physiology of Taste</u> 1825. Translation copyright 1949 by The George Macy Companies, Inc., copyright 1986 by M.F.K. Fisher, North Point Press 1986. United States p. 3.

American culture's connection to its edible consumables is disturbingly complex, and natural instincts for survival, specifically nourishment, have become convoluted. The title "Forage" is a distorted acknowledgement of food gathering methods associated with the past. It comments on the significant cultural shift in the perception of food that has occurred. My photographic consideration implements formal approaches in order to explore pedestrian foraging, culturally defined sustenance, and methods of delivery.

#### Introduction

Two significant aspects of my life, photography and physical health, are fused into a personal investigation of American food culture. I developed an attachment to the photographic medium after graduating from California State University, Northridge with a Bachelor's degree in film. The ability to transfer light, time, and multidimensional experiences onto the flat surfaces of paper and celluloid seemed nothing short of extraordinary, and I was determined to unravel the enigma by studying photography. I realized that the consideration of the still image would play a significant role in my future.

Photography became my career until a couple of years ago when I sustained multiple back injuries within a short period of time. Doctors told me in no uncertain terms that I would no longer be able to carry a camera and that my life as a photographer was officially over. After enduring many successive, ineffective medical procedures, and frustrated with endless pharmaceutical experimentations, I finally decided to take matters into my own hands. Much of my process involved reading, researching, and deciphering nutritional literature. Throughout the two year journey I was able to heal, and I acquired a fascination for the subject of food that eventually translated conceptually. Photography has become my vehicle for exploration as I traverse the dining experience in an effort to understand my own reality.

Motivated by photographers with concerns for the human condition, I began my quest to deconstruct American food culture. I have looked to numerous artists for inspiration, but two in particular influence this body of work. Documentary photographer and filmmaker, Lauren Greenfield positions herself as an observer of specific, often destructive subcultures. Her work focuses on youth culture, gender, body image, eating disorders, consumerism, aging, and the media. I admire her ability to hold a mirror up to society in order to isolate and consider specific concerns. Photographer Jill Greenberg's investigation of culture also resonates. The punctuated, hyper-real qualities of her images convey relevant, often sarcastic, sociopolitical commentary. Utilizing contemporary technology, she manipulates the viewer into a specific, uncomfortable position and unapologetically presents her point of view.

# **Perception and Process**

"Stare. It is the way to educate your eye, and more." The advice of photographer Walker Evans resonates in my paradoxical approach to American food culture. I am drawn to the dichotomy of a slow and methodical confrontation with subjects that are typically encountered at a hurried pace. Staring curiously at the textures and colors of contemporary food, I am in search of the meaning embedded within popularly ingested morsels. As a member of the culture of mass production, I am drawn to investigate everyday products as significant societal indicators. The examination through my lens involves a search for what is subtly communicated and accepted. The deliberate encounter continues as the images are digitally processed with attention to tone and color. Culminating in representations larger than typical, an exaggerated perspective forces the viewer into an alternative point of view. The entire process revolves around the "stare" and what it reveals.

I approach the subject of food armed with current research, a deeply rooted photographic grammar, and a concern for the human condition. A variety of grocery outlets, farmer's markets, and eating establishments offer endless subjects as I search for intriguing elements that describe the perplexing alimentary experience of the American culture. I become fully immersed in the "forage," attempting to understand food and its production from an alternative perspective. French anthropologist and ethnologist, Claude Levi-Strauss took great initiative to investigate culturally encoded aspects within the food preparations of various native peoples. The typical American meal is equally embedded with cultural information but communicates a very different set of beliefs. In my opinion, it represents modernism on a plate. The descriptive ingredients I choose to reveal are comprised of logic, formulas, and scientific fabrication. This particular system of sustenance exists as a result of perpetuated and expanded ideologies amplified in each successive generation. It symbolizes a continued distancing from nature and a perpetually increasing desire to participate in consumerism.

While negotiating the food shopping experience, I began to recognize the bizarre nature of the culture's relationship with its edibles. Upon entering a typical grocery store, one is immediately assaulted by brightly colored packages emphatically vying for a coveted place in the grocery cart. Copious quantities of food-like reconstructions fill the shelves with a variety of ingredients that few lay people can discern. Nutritional claims inevitably follow, "enriched," "fortified," and "vitamins added," placed specifically to assuage consumer's health concerns. Particularly curious is the absurdity of statements like "real fruit added," which ironically promotes the valuable elements of nature in a totally fabricated environment. The complexity of the shopping experience is overwhelming and is deliberately designed to raise anxiety. I translate my perceptions and concerns photographically using the language of tone, motion, perspective, and shadow.

I am interested in the frenzied pace that often accompanies contemporary dining and believe it is worthy of the decelerated consideration that the photographic approach can provide. Eating is something people do repeatedly, out of necessity, often without a great deal of thought or preparation. I investigate culturally accepted methods of acquiring nutrition: the drive-thru, the superstore, the prepackaged meal. All are specifically designed to expend a minimal investment of time. Methods of "preparation" and their temporal considerations reveal thoughtless engagement with the concept of consuming. Ritual and concentration are not required. The speed associated with a microwavable meal, a canned good, or a fast-food snack signify a somewhat uninvolved, disinterested connection to sustenance, and an embedded acceptance of modern sensibilities without conscious consideration.

While photographing food and related situations in an unfamiliar manner, I approach my subjects initially as an observer and deconstruct everyday context by utilizing the language of perspective, shape, and color. I choose aesthetic qualities including beauty and nuance to engage the viewer. Lighting is critical. Deliberately enticing, it is often used to create a sense of conflict between repulsion and attraction, encouraging an immersion in the seductive qualities in which food is often presented contrasted with the underlying destructive influence of unstoppable industrialization. Creating tension and curiosity within the image places the viewer in a position to engage in the questions, "What is food?" "How does society interact with it?" and "What is signified in the daily experience of food consumption?" The queries spur investigations into accepted perceptions about nature, the connection between culture and food, embedded modernist sensibilities, and the formation of collective beliefs.

Food is frequently defined by its method of delivery: the shape, the container, and the processing involved. I focus on the disposable qualities of surrounding materials including cans, plastic, Styrofoam, and paper, and question the cultural signification of their usage. Encoded messages within repeated and perfect forms, along with the colorful nature of many consumables communicate prevalent, yet understated attitudes. The perception and acceptance of mass-produced foods are symptoms of the distraction, sameness, and artificiality that are deeply embedded in and expected by the culture.

My investigation incorporates a resizing of everyday food items to a larger scale in order to remove them from a standard context and to exaggerate their significance. By providing a different perspective, I attempt to infuse a mindful consideration into elements that are often overlooked and encountered at a hurried pace. Emphasizing tactile qualities places the products in an atypical existence and exposes them from an alternative angle, both literally and intellectually. Focusing on the visceral qualities promotes anxiety about the everyday substances that are considered culturally acceptable to eat.

Drawing on my comprehensive background in traditional photographic methods, I have infused similar sensibilities into this digitally executed body of work. Years of training in the darkroom apply directly to the process as I prepare digital files and print images with the same theoretical methodology of film. Large camera raw files require electronic rather than chemical based processing, and the computer screen replaces the enlarger and the easel, but the overall integrity translates throughout. My printing techniques are also based in a more classic methodology, including analysis of tones from light to dark and the consideration of substrates. Working within the largest color space available is critical, as hue, saturation, and luminance require significant management. In addition, I incorporate an added depth of meaning through digital execution. The precision and control available through current photographic technology correlates directly to the modernist desire for precision and control in the food system.

## **An Evolving Perception of Nature**

Human connection to the natural world is most conspicuously expressed through what is eaten and how it is produced. As summarized by culinary historian Massimo Montanari, "The dominant values of the food system in human experience are, to be precise, not defined in terms of 'naturalness', but result from and represent cultural processes dependent upon the taming, transformation, and reinterpretation of Nature." A gradual shift in the perception of nature had to occur in order for the current American food system to exist. Industrialized humans rarely identify as victims of natural circumstances with regard to the food supply, therefore, the goddess of grain and other deities tied to the behavior of nature have lost their relevance. Science, methodology, and industry have become the new divinities responsible for nourishment.

Food consumption and preparation have historically involved a great deal of chance. As the only member of the food chain with the cognitive ability to alter it, humans eventually evolved from hunters/gatherers and established a more agrarian lifestyle. Nature was indeed cruel as pre-Romantic ideology implies, and providing a meal was no small challenge. Constantly at the mercy of the elements while producing sustenance, and battling the subsequent decomposition of natural foods, human populations often suffered from starvation and disease. Throughout history in their quest for survival, humans innately obsessed over ways to alter the temporal and spatial attributes of the natural world. Even Plato chided Mother Nature's design by encasing apples in clay in a futile effort to prevent their decay.

Along with an altered perception regarding the physical world, the Age of Enlightenment, with its growing emphasis on science, was the catalyst for numerous improvements to food production and preservation. In "civilized" countries, the mentality of chance was replaced with methodology as humans began to realize their problem-solving prowess. Eventually the invention of agricultural machinery, pasteurization, canning, freezing and other developments established much needed control over Nature's fickle whims. Ultimately, the discovery of synthetic nitrogen insured not only the survival of the human species, but its profound proliferation.

With survival intact, America in particular was ready for more, and modernism provided. Modern consciousness embraced the ideology that man could improve significantly upon Nature. Technology and futurism were glorified through mass-production, and American ingenuity found novel ways to manipulate natural products. The results of scientific methodology and industry produced far greater quantities of edible substances in much less time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Massimo Montanari, "Food Is Culture," 2004, Guiz, Lateerza,& Figli, Roma-Bari, Translation copyright 2006 Columbia University Press. New York; Chichester, West Sussex. p. xi

The words of John Stuart Mill still resonate: "The ways of Nature are to be conquered, not obeyed." Eurocentric philosophy, from which American ideology was spawned, morally prescribes the conquest of nature and hierarchically classifies human societies according to how effectively they control it. Food science today functions on a somewhat hubristic level in which it has declared a liberation from Nature bordering on Utopian. The temporal concerns of the seasons and decomposition have been significantly minimized, and spatial restrictions are managed in a variety of creative ways.

The current American perception of the natural world can be summed up in the well-preserved, perfectly repeated, enriched slices that reside in any one of countless plastic bags. Bread was one of the earliest expressions of knowledge and therefore of civilization. As an exhibition of command over the natural elements, agriculturalized grain combined with controlled fire resulted in one of the first "artificial" foods. It continues to be an accurate metaphor for civilization, albeit a metamorphic one. Today bread is often comprised totally of elements invented by science. Produced in massive factories, every step of the process is calculated and controlled. Genetically modified grain, the seeds of which often contain the ability to manufacture their own pesticides, and a variety of other elements created entirely through the deconstruction and reassemblage of natural elements, create a science-fiction-like product of nutrition that can be transported worldwide.

### Sustenance as a Cultural Indicator

Food is one of the most significant vessels for the conveyance of culture and carries within it the enormous burden of relaying history, customs, and values. Embedded with a complex code that reflects the ideology and behaviors of a particular society, economic and political convictions are demonstrated in every aspect of the process. According to Montanari, "Cuisine is the very symbol of civilization and culture."

The significant relationship between culture and food is inseparable. In his essay "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption," French philosopher and semiotician Roland Barthes encourages a deeper investigation of humans' overall relationship with sustenance. In one particular example, he illustrates the importance of sugar to Americans and wine to the French by revealing that the way these products are utilized implies "a set of images, dreams, tastes, choices, and values." The ingesting of each symbolizes meaning far beyond filling a need for physiological consumption; it conveys a specific social code. "Substances, techniques of preparation, habits, all become part of a system of differences in signification; and as soon as this happens, we have communicated by way of food." 5

Ignoring the embedded ideologies that have been evolving for centuries is impossible. All elements and methods of preparation bring with them preconceived notions and are imbued with a complex and unspoken language. Claude Levi-Strauss, who was among the first to investigate this phenomenon, is considered to be the father of contemporary food studies. Within his well-known structuralist theories, he considered the linguistic relevance of social codes imparted through the eating experience. "The Raw and the Cooked" and "The Origin of Table Manners" are two in a series of books that examine the semantics behind the myths and activities of various native peoples. He describes in detail his attempts to decipher the deeply rooted cultural language within specific food preparations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Massimo Montanari, Food Is Culture, translated by Guiz, Lateerza,& Figli, Roma-Bar (New York; Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2006), p.43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Roland Barthes, "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption," *Annales: Economies, Societes, Civilisations no. 5* (September-October 1961) pp. 977-986.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid.

#### Modernism and the American Diet

By definition, if food and its preparation contain the ingredients of culture, then the typical American meal symbolizes formal logic and dominance, and exists far outside the parameters of Rousseau's naturalistic paradise. By devouring assimilations of methodology, the attributes of modernity are indelibly fused with corporeality. The elevation of scientific manipulation and management, along with unabashed consumerism, have created an intricate and complicated food system. Nowhere on the planet are alimentary needs more engineered, standardized, industrialized, or commodified than in the United States. With the introduction of 17,000 new processed products vying for attention on amply stocked shelves yearly, American ingenuity is hard at work feeding and encouraging modernist sensibilities.

Preserved, pasteurized, synthesized, and genetically manipulated, the foods altered by modernity are often described in terms that sound more scientific than culinary. A preoccupation with reduced essence has food science constantly inventing ways to reconstruct natural elements into novel forms that entice the taste buds and create profits. Formulaic manipulations of appetite and brain chemistry have overridden biological instincts, and scientific innovations have outmaneuvered Mother Nature in the fields. Food, as a product of science and industry, has become an idea.

As a colonial child of Britain, America fed on her questionably healthy and heavily meat-laden culinary influences. Significant adaptations occurred with westward expansion, as a profusion of bourgeoning entrepreneurs took advantage of the vast agricultural land and newly established railroad system. The advent of advertising however was perhaps the greatest influence with regards to creating food that was notably "American." Touting products to improve health and commodifying the notions of purity and sanitization, food became big business by the 1900s with the formation of large companies like Swift, Heinz, Pillsbury, and Campbell's. Historian Harvey Levenstein writes, "...The emergence of the new food habits would have been inconceivable without the post 1870 changes in 'material' areas such as the production, transportation, processing, financing, and marketing of food. Yet non-material...considerations such as conspicuous consumption, class emulation, a love affair with science and technology, health fads, patriotism, and fashion were also of great importance."

As consumerism in America exploded after World War II, a confident, imperious nation gorged on the glorification of industry and technology. The exalted qualities of efficiency and standardization were realized by adhering to Frederick Winslow Taylor's "The Principles of Scientific Management." "In the past the man has been first; in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Harvey A. Levenstein, Revolution at the Table, (New York- Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 173.

future the system must be first."<sup>7</sup> A mechanical engineer, Taylor proclaimed the necessity of rigid rules and principles in order to create structure and effectively manage all activities domestic or industrial.

A notable emphasis on structure at the expense of substance began its welcomed journey down the digestive tracts of Americans with the introduction of the Speedy Service System. In 1948, the newly automobile-obsessed country was ripe for easily accessible diversions, and food was not to be excluded. Mechanically produced meals with exact ingredients were fabricated on the premise of the Ford motorcar assembly line. By adopting a rigid methodology and training workers to have clearly defined objectives, each meal was assembled to provide a predictable standardized result, a certainty that could be repeated over and over. With systematic integrity and mathematical precision, the iconic McDonald's hamburger sandwich was born and modernity officially became a regular part of the American appetite.

Taylor's essay from 1911 seems somewhat prophetic with regards to the development and growth of the American food industry. "....Whenever these principles are correctly applied, results must follow which are truly astounding." For example, McDonald's adheres in its entirety to a scientific management model and has exhibited a complete and total command over the natural food chain. It represents the modernist grid in the form of the feedlot, and it embodies the mechanization of the assembly line. Producing sustenance freed from natural constraints, this food system is an incredible feat of standardization that insures the same experience is possible in 126 different countries. Industrialization on this massive scale participates in the commodification of not only the sustenance itself, but also a cultural acceptance of the questionable ethics and procedures necessary for its existence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Frederick Winslow Taylor, M.E., Sc.D, <u>The Principles of Scientific Management</u>. (New York: W.W.. Norton and Company Inc.1911) p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

## The Paradigm of Nutritionism

In the United States, a meal consists of calories, carbohydrates, grams of fat and protein, cholesterol, vitamins, and sugars. Food experts define optimum ratios to maintain good health, and the government, with the approval of food lobbyists, presents its advice to the public in a triangularly shaped recommendation known as the food pyramid. Specific nutrients alternate in their moment of glory or vilification depending on the latest scientific information or marketing scheme. The meal is often accompanied with a side order of anxiety and confusion as the diner attempts to navigate the "good" and "bad" biological components of which it is comprised. "Nutritionism" and its accompanying culinary neurosis is an American phenomenon.

The modernist obsession with deconstructing natural elements is profoundly illustrated in the distinction Americans assign to vitamins and nutrients. The nutrient is scientifically considered to be an irreducible element that can be assessed outside the context of its whole food. Presumably it can be precisely controlled and its particular effects on the body measured in absolutes. Americans are constantly encouraged by the medical community, pharmaceutical companies, and the food industry to fetishize particular nutritional components.

The ideology of "Nutritionism," a term invented by Dr. Gyorgy Scrinis, has influenced dietary behavior on a cultural level, defining modes of eating such as healthy or unhealthy based on the inclusion of specifically isolated and reduced nutritional elements. "Since the late nineteenth century, nutrition science has been characterized by the attempt to understand foods and diets in terms of their nutrient and biochemical composition. It has focused on this nutri-biochemical level of engagement with food and the body, and on identifying relationships between nutrients on the one hand, and particular health conditions, biological makers (i.e., biomarkers), and biochemical processes of the body on the other." Modernity's celebration of pills as representations of the world reduced and purified continues as the consideration of basic elements of food is the prevailing methodology of engagement.

Removing the context of the whole body or the whole food has creates capitalistic opportunities on many levels. Because food is regarded as the sum of its parts, specific nutrients and their associated health effects are easily commodified. Foods can be engineered, labeled, and then marketed with the components of the latest fetishization. French philosopher and cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard states, "In the consumer package, there is one object finer, more precious and more dazzling than any other - and even more laden with connotations than the automobile, in spite of the fact that that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Gyorgy Scrinis, "On the Ideology of Nutritionism," *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture*, vol. 8, (2006) p.40.

encapsulates them all. That object is the BODY."<sup>10</sup> He refers to "the representation of the body as *capital* and as *fetish* (or consumer object)." "...One manages one's body; one handles it as one might handle an inheritance; one manipulates it as one of the many *signifiers of social status*."<sup>11</sup> The bodily condition, or the idea of a specific bodily condition is the commodifiable notion on which the ideology of Nutritionism feeds.

 <sup>10</sup> Jean Baudrillard, <u>The Consumer Society</u>, <u>Myths and Structures</u> (London: English translation Sage Publications 1998)
 p. 129, originally published as <u>La societe de consommation Editions Denoel</u> 1970

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

## The Perpetuation of Cultural Beliefs

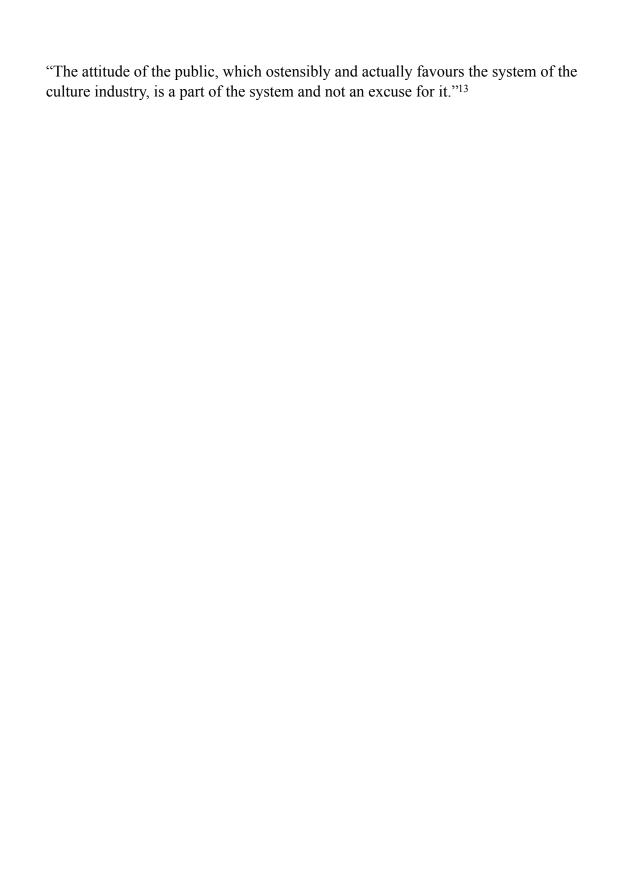
The billboard directs, "Open Happiness," suggesting that indulging in a specific, sweet, brown beverage will provide complete contentment. It insists that the vessel contains much more that the engineered ingredients of high fructose corn syrup, caramel color, and phosphoric acid; it contains a feeling, an attitude, a way of life. Coca Cola is the embodiment of capitalism and American consumer culture in liquid form.

The formation of a collective mindset is an essential element to the success of the American food industry. In order for the current system to exist, societal agreement regarding the ethics of production and delivery had to be established. Both apparent and subliminal codification is transmitted through various social engagements, thereby reinforcing a particular system and its beliefs. Admonished by German sociologists Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer, "the Culture Industry" demands participation. Advertising is its most evident and unapologetic agent, but the far more subtle elements in a meal are no less effective in their ability to communicate. Everyone must eat, therefore, on some level, everyone must participate.

The objective of the culture industry is to serve capitalistic motives. Ultimately freedom and individuality are compromised in a society in which behavior is influenced if not determined by various structures that perpetuate sameness and complacency. Fueled by the desire to create demand, large food companies have pushed their agenda in many avenues of mass media. In the 1920s the explosion of women's magazines was an excellent vehicle to market standardization. "The millions of free recipe pamphlets emitted by the giant food processors were distributed nationally, encouraging the housewife in Arkansas to cook her Armour ham or use her Del Monte canned pineapple in the same way as her counterpart in Vermont. Betty Crocker did not teach shortcuts in making hominy grits and Kraft did not encourage the use of New Mexico chiles with its cheese dishes. The result was the further nationalizing of American eating habits and the strengthening of the food tastes of British origin which has always rested at the core of middle-class food habits." 12

Claude Levi-Strauss proposed that a "deep grammar" of society operates in each individual on an unconscious level. He suggested the pre-existing structures minimize choices and freedoms and therefore describe people as products of society. Individual choice with regards to food options is primarily at the mercy of industry. However, I believe that assuming the consumer is completely malleable is flawed. In an almost perpetual state of complacency, the average American consumer willingly and perhaps mindlessly engages in this systematic behavior. Adorno and Horkheimer contend that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Harvey A. Levenstein, Revolution at the Table (New York- Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) p. 170.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as mass deception," in *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Simon During (London; Routledge. 2007) p. 407.

#### Conclusion

My journey has placed me in a unique position to experience food as a researcher, an artist, and a consumer. Utilizing the language of photography, I attempt to decipher the modernist code in order to understand the cultural values embedded within the American food system. The images particularly focus on the severely altered relationship with nature and the diminished connection to the earth as the primary source for sustenance. I investigate and question the mastery of temporal control without regard for human or environmental health through packaging, processing, and chemical manipulation. Products of scientific methodology, deconstruction and reconstruction are included in order to describe a system that creates many products that are no longer recognizable as elements of nature. The prevalent cultural indicators of speed at the expense of substance and the attractiveness of artificiality are emphasized throughout the body of work and reveal that modernist sensibilities, many of which are destructive, are deeply rooted.

Struggles against large food producers and society's complacency are not new. Upton Sinclair's exposé "The Jungle" spawned public outcry in 1900 with fears about the unsanitary procedures of the meat packing industry. A current wave of concern represents an almost romantic movement to return food in general to an allencompassing, naturalistic state. Local, sustainable, and organic are descriptions that although not immune to commercial manipulation, typically describe a more conscious interaction with the food system as a whole. Many eaters share the concerns promulgated by HG Wells that mortal hubris has gone too far, and what humans have created through modernism will ultimately result in their demise. Rebelling against the methods of mechanization and scientific manipulation, a growing number of consumers reject standardization by foraging for considerably "healthier" options in alternative venues.

Despite a wealth of information, the insatiable appetite of modernism overwhelmingly prevail, as people define sustenance and themselves through science, industry, and commodification. The meal continues to signify on a corporeal and cultural level that mass production, standardization, and scientific manipulation are revered. We are what we eat after all.

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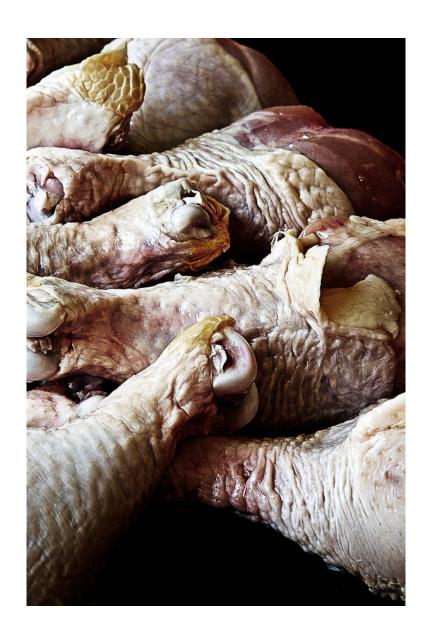
# Appendix



Consume
Archival Pigment Print
13" X 17" 2012



Hermetic Expedience Archival Pigment Print 17" X 13" 2012



Made With Real Chicken Archival Pigment Print 13" X 17" 2011



*Gel*Archival Pigment Print
17" X 13" 2011



Systematic Photosynthesis Archival Pigment Print 13" X 17" 2012



Encased Element
Archival Pigment Print
17" X 13" 2012



Metamorphic
Archival Pigment Print
13" X 17" 2011