

Amy Bhagaloo

Professor Jesse E. Miller

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Picture a quarter pound flatten piece of beef, lined with juicy tomatoes, fresh lettuce, and a perfectly toasted bun. Remember how your stomach growled and mouth watered as you brought the delectable meal closer to your taste buds. You don't recall? Maybe it is because you viewed it on a screen, never able to get a bite of the heavenly burger. This is a situation is all too familiar to Americans as we consume media more than our actual meals. In Michael Pollan's article "Out of the Kitchen, Onto the Couch," published in the New York Times magazine, he discusses people's satisfaction with watching others prepare food on television, rather than reaping the benefits of cooking on their own. He reasons with this phenomenon by comparing America's past motivators of cooking such as Julia Child, to our current influences of Food Network shows such as Rachael Ray and Chopped. I view the process of cooking as previously being used to advance civilization. However, modern media has resulted in the collapse of our civilization with the loss of knowledge and social interaction. |

From the beginning of human existence, one aspect that united us with the rest of the animal kingdom was our need for food. As hunters and gatherers, humans were capable of consuming there daily nutrient intake through similar means as other predators. We began to differ with the preparation of these foods, using fire to cook our meats and knives to dice our vegetables. Pollan's considers French gastronome Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin claim that "cooking made us who we are; by teaching a man to use fire, it had done the most to advance the cause of civilization" (16), as a defining characteristic of humanity. While our species is known

Commented [1]: I really like this opening. I think it is not only a great hook to engage your readers but it sets you up for a perfect transition into introducing your sources and your other ideas.

Commented [2]: I like your opening because it really allows the reader to understand what will be talked about through out the paper.

Commented [3]: If this is your thesis try to make it more defined on what you think.

Commented [4]: I was wondering if this was your thesis or if it is located in the second paragraph? If this is your thesis I would try to be sure that you plan out your body paragraphs carefully as this could prove to be a bold statement that is difficult to support within the guidelines of this paper.

Commented [5]: This is a strong argument, but maybe be a little more specific. You could add "because" or "due to" at the end of your last sentence to make it more specific and have the body paragraphs connect.

Commented [6]: Make sure to put that inside the quotations!

for the ability to cook, I do not see the mere act of cooking physically making us human. I believe it is the process of cooking which is physical, mental, and emotional as defining our existence. Cooking as a process puts more emphasis on the social interaction of teaching, critical thinking with combining ingredients, and emotions involved in every step towards the final product on the plate. It is the hard work put into each step that makes cooking evoke immediate satisfaction.

With the previous generation of cooking, people viewed the preparation of food as pleasing themselves before pleasing others with the meal. Pollan describes this concept with Julia Child's outlook on cooking as "It was gratifying, even ennobling sort of work, engaging both the mind and the muscles" (6). Our brain stores the information of endless possible food combinations, while our muscles put the ideas into action. The physical labor and mental engagement put into cooking is rewarded with viewing the process of turning raw materials into something greater. In Kristen Lebel's favorite meal essay, she recalls the effort she put into collecting the ingredients for her smooth tomato sauce. Specifically with the mint leaves, her family would "...sometimes take the fresh mint and dry it out so that we can crush it between our palms for fresh seasoning." Similar to our gatherer ancestors, Kristen would pick mint leaves from her grandmother's yard, then use her muscles to crush it into a usable form and her brain thinks to use it in combination with tomatoes, onion, and garlic paste to create the final product of tomato sauce. It is then the emotions within cooking that differentiates it from the linear path from pot to plate.

As an avid cooker, I had my fair share of both positive and negative experiences in the kitchen. No matter what the final product is, there are a whirlwind of emotions involved in using my head, hand, and heart to create. I am not alone with translating my heart through meals, as

Commented [7]: Or is this your thesis? I think that if this is the thesis, it is going to be an easier statement to support and expand on using the sources that we have been provided.

Commented [8]: These are all good facts about cooking, however, you might want to try and support your argument with emotional context. How does it make you feel? What memorized does it.... Ect.

Commented [9]: I like how you incorporated a quote from another source to back up the one from the Pollan essay, it makes the argument stronger.

Commented [10]: I really like this paragraph and the text on text moment that you were able to include. I think it created for an effective paragraph.

Jacob Hickey describes his rush of feelings in his piece “Love is Simply Turkey Soup.” Jacob uses his time in the kitchen as time for self reflection of his past struggles with the college transition. One day as he prepared turkey soup, he “... looked into the kettle, the multitude of color from the vegetables reminded me of my college days to date: dozens of vivid pieces swirling in as many different directions without any pattern or order.” The vegetables to him are more than ingredients for his creation of soup; it was a symbol of his current state of mind. Food preparation tells us more about the individuals we are, if we allow ourselves to be vulnerable by not being afraid to put our hearts into the process or making mistakes along the way.

“Aside from the methane gases... this meal causes an inconvenience to the people I love in nearly every way you can image. First off, the fish itself isn't in the market during winter. Next, the salty and savory taste of the sauce takes hours to time commitment.”

All of these inconveniences are not portrayed on modern day cooking shows. They only convey perfect preparation and results, with no mistakes along the way.

Commented [11]: Great hook for this paragraph, but consider adding in a quote from your life (favorite food essay)!

Commented [12]: Amy, your essay is very good so far. It is very engaging and well-organized. I thought that so far, all of the quotes that you have taken from your sources have worked perfectly in supporting your arguments. I was a little confused as to what your thesis was because I think you made two very strong claims in both the first and second paragraphs. However, overall I really liked what you have said.

Commented [13]: Amy, I think your essay is on a great track so far. Make sure to put the citations for the quotes inside the quotations! Also, if your thesis is stated at the end of the first paragraph, I would add more to it. I feel as though adding "because" or "due to" would be more helpful in being able to connect your thesis to more specific examples in the body paragraphs. I also like the way you used another source to back up what Pollan was saying in the food essay. Great job!

Commented [14]: You did a great job in this essay, i really liked your ideas and set up of your paper. Try to add more emotion to it and tie in some stories from other papers to help create this. It was very well written.