

You are going to a dinner party hosted by a gourmet chef who loves to discuss the fine points of food, cooking, dining, and entertaining. How should you prepare? Will you know enough about food and entertainment in American culture? Relax. And on your way to the party, give a quick read of Volume 9 of *The Eagle's Eye*, a cornucopia of information about food, eating, and TV sitcoms.

In "How the Other Half Shops," Jill Novak examines how neighborhood demographics influence a shopper's access to supermarkets. She focuses especially on how much money selected groups of people spend for food and on what types of food such people actually purchase. Jill argues that socioeconomics play a major role in this process. Peter Frein, in "*The Feminine Mystique's* Influence on Sitcoms," looks at American sitcoms that were produced before and then after Betty Friedan published her classic 1963 work on gender. He concludes that earlier shows defy the myth of gender equality through their depictions of coverture, whereas later sitcoms affirm the myth. In "Breast Is Best," Jacqueline Roebuck explores the numerous arguments surrounding breastfeeding. She concludes that a host of cultural factors, including education and socioeconomics, influence a mother's decision to breastfeed her infant. Examining the terms used when referring to selected foods, Lauren Zucatti, in "My Pop and Grinder are in the Garage, Not in the Deli," takes the reader on an anthropological field trip. She unearths reasons for why sugary confectionaries are called "Jimmies" in one part of the country but "sprinkles" in another part, and why "soda" dominates in one region, while "pop" rules in another. In "Rationing: Uniting a Nation One Spoonful at a Time," Emma Brown analyzes not so much the abundance of food in America, but instead she reveals how the Great Depression and World War II influenced the quantity and quality of the American diet. Probing everything from the Office of Price Administration to victory gardens, her argument traces the evolution of social interdependence and the formation of prosocial values. Finally, Diane Hernandez raises the question that everyone ultimately ponders: Why do some people live longer than others? In "Living Healthy and Living Long," she contends that Americans can extend their lives by selecting healthy foods, especially the Mediterranean or the Okinawan diet.

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How the Other Half Shops

Jill Novak

“Long ago it was said that ‘one half of the world does not know how the other half lives.’”¹ This statement introduces Jacob Riis’ *How the Other Half Lives*, a visual account of the plight of many poor Americans who resided in the slums through the early 1900s. Riis, a pioneer in muckraking, revealed to many Americans the horrific conditions of inner city slums, educating the people about the injustices of society. Today, the United States still battles with injustices within many quarters of society. While inequalities exist, many people tend to overlook them in order to maintain the status quo. One such discrepancy is the availability of supermarkets in low-income areas. Research demonstrates the significant disparities between urban and suburban supermarkets.² The focus of this paper centers upon the following questions related to this important, yet often overlooked, inequality with United States society. In the United States, do neighborhood demographic characteristics affect residents’ access to supermarkets? If yes, does this differential access affect how much money people from different areas pay for food? If yes, to what types of food do people from different neighborhoods have access? To answer these questions, one must first analyze the evolution of supermarkets from their infancy to their current position as an international multi-billion dollar industry.

Following European colonization of America in 1492, settlers quickly became aware of the importance of food strategies for survival. Colonists learned from Native Americans how to cultivate their own farmland, hunt game, fish, and gather food and supplies.³ As settlers adjusted to life in the New World, many traveled west in search of land. They established trading posts to provide goods necessary during travel. As settlers migrated west, trading posts, originally present along eastern coasts, opened in the West. Furs, firearms, salt, tea, and spices were among the items available for trade.⁴ As John L. O’Sullivan’s rallying cry of “Manifest Destiny” echoed in the new world, many Americans embraced their moral duty for expansion and “...development of the great experiment of liberty and federative self-government entrusted to us” by traveling west.⁵

The influence of imagery from both literature and art contributed to the perception of the West as a wild and dangerous frontier where people encounter savage Native Americans and vicious animals like bears. For example, Edward Ellis’ book *Seth Jones, or the Captive of the Frontier* and Fredric Remington’s painting *His Last Stand* represent two works supporting the wild and dangerous conception of the American West.⁶ These depictions of the “Wild West” reflected the rugged characteristics many believed were attained from life in the West displayed

¹ Jacob A. Riis, Introduction to *How the Other Half Lives* (New York: Dover, 1971), 1.

² Kimberly Morland, et al., “Neighborhood Characteristics Associated with the Location of Food Stores and Food Service Places,” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 22, no. 1 (2001): 28.

³ Waverley Root and Richard Rochemont, *Eating in America: a History* (New York: Morrow, 1976), 24.

⁴ Hugh S. Peak and Ellen F. Peak, *Supermarket Merchandising and Management* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 4-5.

⁵ John L. O’Sullivan, “Annexation” *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* 17 (July-August 1845): 5-10.

⁶ Gary Colombo, Robert Cullen, and Bonnie Lisle, “The Myth of the West,” In *Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing*, 5th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 708-733.

Frederic Remington, “His Last Stand,” 1890, Sid Richardson Museum Fort Worth, Texas.

through "The Turner Thesis."⁷ Because of beliefs in essential qualities such as strength, coarseness, and practicality required for Western life, many women and children were deterred from moving west.

When women and families began journeying west, domestication of the West occurred. In his short story "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," Stephen Crane described how the arrival of women was crucial to the civilization of the West.⁸ As the population of the West increased as a result of family presence, the number of trading posts grew. Through the development of communities, life in western America stabilized. Because of the continued self-sufficiency of many settlers, trading post selection was limited. As cities developed, consumer demands then began to reflect the changing country through the appearance of general stores.

General stores appeared following expansion due to increased attention towards newly established homes and towns. Unlike trading posts, general stores offered a wide variety of merchandise for the farm and home such as medicines, hardware, household items, and food. Only the storekeeper serviced customers through negotiation of prices or occasional trade. The necessity for general stores then began to dwindle beginning in 1860 due to the onset of specialization of work and the decline of agricultural dominance in the economy.⁹

Following the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869, trade, as well as travel, became easier for many Americans. As a result of this increased accessibility, the notion of saving time and gaining space became imperative for much of America. Through technological advancements such as the railroad, Americans were able to save both time and money while gaining space, resulting in additional profits and dramatic changes in the evolution of marketing. Arguably, the capitalistic obsession with conservation of time and money, as demonstrated in the Myth of Time and Space, greatly influenced food retail.¹⁰ Increased emphasis on time and space resulted in the development of specialty stores such as butcher shops, bakeries, and produce shops. The shift from an agrarian society to industrial society not only affected the presence of food retail, but also the mindset of many Americans. Because of the industrialization of much of America, the production of goods began using less time and increasing profit. The emphasis on time and money increased productivity and consequently resulted in the development of chain-stores and combination stores.

Chain-stores, such as the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, Inc., operated under the control of a manager on a cash-and-carry basis, eliminating the cost of home delivery common amongst many specialty stores. As a result of the previous success of specialty stores, many retailers standardized shops, creating chain-stores, or a chain of eleven or more stores under common ownership.¹¹ Chain-stores continued to transform to mirror the desires of customers by eventually merging into combination stores.

Combination stores, also known as grocery stores, consisted of the unification of two or more specialty stores. With arrival of combination stores paralleled the economic views resulting from the Industrial Revolution. Instead of visiting multiple stores to purchase goods, shoppers saved time because of the amalgamation of grocery stores. Further, operating one grocery store

⁷ Gary Colombo, Robert Cullen, and Bonnie Lisle, "Frederick Jackson Turner, from The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in *Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing*, 5th ed, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 683-690.

⁸ Stephen Crane, "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," McClure's Magazine, Vol. X, (February, 1898), 377-384.

⁹ Peak and Peak, 5.

¹⁰ See Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1889-1918*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

¹¹ Peak and Peak, 7.

was more efficient than the operational demands of multiple specialty stores. Grocery stores also increased efficiency through the practice of volume selling; this involves selling an assortment of items in larger quantities. Therefore, retailers saved money while catering to a more diverse population; this resulted in greater profits and levels of consumer satisfaction.¹² Through the arrival of grocery stores, customers, mainly housewives, no longer had to travel to multiple stores to complete their shopping.

The presence of female consumers, a reflection of the societal norm of the Cult of Domesticity, increased the popularity of shopping. While many early markets and stores served as a social gathering place for communities, the separation of spheres popularized shopping for women. This division of duties in which women focused their energy on household chores such as cooking and cleaning, while men remained in the business sphere, reinforced women's role in daily shopping. The role of women in grocery stores is displayed in the *Progressive Grocer* of 1938 in which the goals of supermarket layout and design "secure a buying routine consistent with the housewife's own thinking, her habits, and her methods of meal planning...."¹³ Furthermore, Waverly Root and Richard De Rochemont's book *Eating in America: A History* reveals that food retail, especially markets, is a worldwide institution that "deserves to be examined more closely, particularly as it affects the housewife."¹⁴ The increase of grocery stores not only affected women, but also newly arrived immigrants.

Following World War I, many immigrants sought to maintain their cultural identity. Two main types of immigrants who strove to maintain their culture were total identifiers, immigrants who chose to remain immersed in their culture, and partial identifiers, immigrants who wanted only limited connection to their culture. The retainment of ethnic identity, conjectured by Horace Kallen, known as cultural pluralism, is defined as "a condition in which minority groups participate fully in the dominant society, yet maintain their cultural differences."¹⁵ Through cultural pluralism, immigrants sustained their ethnic identity in the United States. One technique immigrants used to preserve culture was the establishment of ethnic grocery stores. These unique combination stores offered specific products for the ethnic preferences of the customers. Early European ethnic grocery stores such as Bee Hive Grocery, a Jewish grocery store in Milwaukee, Wisconsin provided specialized food to Jewish immigrants.¹⁶ Ethnic markets such as the Italian Market in South Philadelphia, Pennsylvania also provided availability of Italian foods for total and partial identifiers.¹⁷ Because of the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, which imposed a ban of Asian immigrants, European ethnic grocery stores and markets dominated over other nationalities.¹⁸ Increased industrialization and employment opportunities resulted in a

¹² Peak and Peak, 7.

¹³ Ryan Mathews, "Background of A Revolution and the Birth of an Institution," *Progressive Grocer* 75, (December 1996), 48.

¹⁴ Root and De Rochemont, 444.

¹⁵ Cultural Pluralism, Dictionary.com, *Dictionary.com's 21st Century Lexicon*, accessed December 14, 2011, http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/cultural_pluralism.

¹⁶ See Appendix A.

¹⁷ See Appendix B.

¹⁸ The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, also known as the Hart-Cellar Act, later abolished the original immigration policy of 1924; hence, it was not until the 1960s Asian grocery stores increased. The University of Washington-Bothell Library, "U.S. Immigration Legislation: 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act (Hart-Cellar Act)," Campus Library Homepage, accessed December 14, 2011, http://library.uwb.edu/guides/usimmigration/1965_immigration_and_nationality_act.html.

concentration of ethnic grocery stores in urban areas. Immigration, along with other factors such as technological advancement, increased the popularity of many stores for Americans.

Different types of media, such as radio and magazines, also intensified societal recognition of supermarkets. Additionally, the media nationalized brands such as Kellogg's. Kellogg's advertisement, which displays a woman ordering groceries by phone, appeared as a magazine advertisement in 1927.¹⁹ The advertisement, targeted at women, emphasizes the Cult of Domesticity and the separation of spheres. The quote, "For the kiddies' evening meal," also supports the separation of spheres with its suggestion that preparation of meals is the sole responsibility of the wife. The nationalization of the product is also visible on the advertisement through the words "Sold by all grocers. Served at all hotels and restaurants. On dining- cars." This advertisement not only advertises Kellogg's, but also promotes grocery stores, hotels, restaurants, and dining cars, displaying the positive growth in mobility of Americans.

American constant mobility was also visible through the increased popularity of automobiles. As automobile prices decreased following the development of Henry Ford's Model T, more Americans could afford cars. By 1930 over twenty million cars were in use. Automobiles not only made the commute to grocery stores faster, but also allowed customers to visit supermarkets more frequently. In addition to the popularity of grocery stores, the automobile also influenced the size and location of stores. As a result of the Great Depression in 1929, many high priced combination stores were forced to close. During this time, some retailers realized the potential successful combination of nearly unlimited, low- priced farm products and manufactured goods and readily available manpower to create a "high- volume, large, self- service, departmentalized, cash- and- carry supermarket."²⁰

Despite continued controversy over the first "official" supermarket in the United States, many consider the December 8, 1932 opening of Big Bear in Elizabeth, New Jersey as the first instance of a high volume, self-service supermarket. In addition to high volume and self- service, supermarkets also increased the variety of goods available to the public. By expanding on combination stores, supermarkets sold meats, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, baked goods, candy, cigars, tobacco, drugs, cosmetics, automobile accessories, electrical, radio supplies, paints, and provided a luncheonette for customers and employees. As popularity of supermarkets grew because of their low prices and their accessibility by automobiles, the location of supermarkets began to change.

Following World War II, Dwight D. Eisenhower's National Interstate and Defense Highways Act spurred significant growth of American suburbs resulting in the arrival of supermarkets within these new communities.²¹ One can see the profound relationship between automobiles and supermarkets in the success of Kroger Grocery and Baking Co., which opened a new supermarket in Indianapolis surrounded by a parking lot on all four sides.²² The new store performed forty percent over initial projections, while customer surveys revealed eighty percent of customers arrived by automobile.²³

The baby boom also played a pivotal role in the growth of supermarkets. As families grew, so did the size of supermarkets. Supermarkets such as Big Bear grew from 15,000 square

¹⁹ See Appendix C, <http://www.kellogghistory.com/gallery.html>.

²⁰ Peak and Peak, 14.

²¹ U.S. Department of Transportation, "Interstate System - Design - FHWA" Federal Highway Administration, accessed November 18, 2011, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/interstate.cfm>.

²² Mathews, 42.

²³ Ibid.

feet in the 1930s to 50,000 square feet in the 1940s and 1950s. The introduction of home refrigerators and freezers in the 1950s also allowed many Americans to increase the volume of groceries bought during a single trip.²⁴ Other advancements to increase profit and conserve time and money included automated cash registers, air conditioning, music systems, and automatic doors. Organization of supermarkets reflected “the housewife’s own thinking, her habits, and her methods of meal planning...”²⁵ Because women were thought to think deductively, emphasizing order and logic, the structure of many supermarkets reflected this with symmetrical and balanced layouts arranged classically and neoclassically.²⁶ The layout and technology introduced, which was practical for many shoppers, reinforced the beliefs introduced in early American culture arguably from people such as Benjamin Franklin and events such as The World’s Columbian Exhibition, as both stressed the importance of practical knowledge. Supermarkets also altered their décor to increase cleanliness and attractiveness for customers, but perhaps more importantly “...to make the housewife’s shopping trip a pleasant one- one that satisfies her and impels her to come back.”²⁷ It was not until 1973 that the supermarket industry made a huge change through the introduction of the Universal Product Code and electronic scanner, which not only increased customer satisfaction, but also resulted in additional accuracy when stocking items and counting sales.²⁸

Increased productivity of many supermarkets led to developments of additional types of stores. Convenience stores, small self-service retail outlets, were introduced in the 1960s.²⁹ Convenience stores emphasized fast service and accessibility for customers, along with extended service hours. Other common names for convenience stores consisted of bantams, midget markets, and drive-in markets.³⁰ These stores provided neighborhood customers with many fill-in items between extended shopping trips such as milk, soft drinks, and cigarettes. Early arrivals to the convenience store retail include Short Stop, Quik-Stop, 7-Eleven, and Convenience Mart. In modern America, Quik-Stop and 7-Eleven still exist, but face increased competition from Wawa Food Markets, Sheetz, and Alimentation Couche-Tard in the convenient store sector.³¹ In addition to providing extended hours and accessibility, convenience stores such as Wawa now include delis offering hot ready-to-eat meals such as soup, sandwiches, and side dishes; this innovation further reduces customer reliance on supermarkets. Today supermarkets and convenience stores battle for survival in food retail. Supermarkets, specifically urban supermarkets, however, tend to struggle the most in this fight.

According to “Neighborhood Groceries: New Access to Healthy Food in Low-Income Communities,” poverty is the primary source of food insecurity in the United States. Ed Bolen and Kenneth Hecht define food insecurity as “...a long term condition of poverty and usually

²⁴ Peak and Peak, 26.

²⁵ Mathews, 48.

²⁶ Joan Burstyn, *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1984), 71.

²⁷ Mathews, 48.

²⁸ Edward A. Brand, *Modern Supermarket Operation*. (New York: Book Division, Fairchild Publications, 1963), 170.

²⁹ Peak and Peak, 70.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

takes the form of skipped meals, limited portions or poor quality foods.”³² Many residents of low-income urban areas have limited access to high quality food, enjoy fewer options in the variety of goods available to them, and pay higher prices for available groceries. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, a food desert on the county level is an area “...where at least thirty-three percent of the population, or a minimum of five hundred people live more than a mile from a grocery store or large supermarket in an urban area, or more than ten miles away in a rural area.”³³ Throughout the United States, there are over 6,500 food deserts, affecting 23.5 million people, 6.5 million of whom are children, living in low-income areas with minimal access to adequate food suppliers.³⁴ Lisa M. Powell et al. revealed that low-income areas have fewer chain supermarkets than that available in middle-income neighborhoods, and minority neighborhoods have less of an availability.³⁵ The study reveals high-income zip codes have the greatest accessibility to chain supermarkets, while low-income areas have greater access to grocery stores.³⁶ Though there are over 36,000 supermarkets in the United States today, the presence of food deserts is continually increasing as poverty levels expand and more and more urban supermarkets close down.

The lack of supermarkets in low- income areas has become increasingly common following the exodus of people from urban areas to suburbs in the 1960s and 1970s.³⁷ Following this departure, urban retailing suffered from the closure of many supermarkets even as on the nation level supermarket openings exceeded closings. Cities such as Los Angeles lost over 375 of its supermarkets by 1970, while Chicago, a city that once stood strong with over 1000 supermarkets, had less than 500 remaining in 1990.³⁸ In more recent times, the trend of fewer, larger stores outside cities has dominated the American supermarket landscape. This disinclination of large chains from cities has commonly been referred to as “supermarket redlining.” Redlining, the practice of refusing loans or insurance for homes or businesses based on financial risk, has continually occurred for reasons such as “higher urban land, labor, and utility costs, low profit margins on more perishable food items, and increased theft problems.”³⁹ As sizes of chain supermarkets increase, many ranging from 120,000 to 170,000 square feet, urban areas cannot provide enough space. Many urban sites sought for supermarket building must accommodate the standard big-box stores, most of which are scarce or need significant public intervention for assembly. The task for construction is too big and costly for many reluctant cities. Costs such as demolition of existing structures and environmental cleanup cause additional financial problems for retailers facing high rent, labor, and insurance costs. Further, a difference in common modes of transportation within suburbs and cities influences decisions about constructing supermarkets. Suburban supermarket architecture also revolves around

³² Edward Bolen and Kenneth Hecht, *Neighborhood Groceries: New Access to Healthy Food in Low-Income Communities*, California Food Policy Advocates, (January 2003), accessed on December 14, 2011, www.cfpa.net/Grocery.PDF, 1.

³³ Eddie Gehman Kohan, "Obama Foodorama: Combating Food Deserts, Creating Jobs," Obama Foodorama, accessed December 14, 2011, <http://obamafoodorama.blogspot.com/2011/07/michelle-obama-our-lady-of-food-deserts.html>.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ See Appendix D.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Bolen and Hecht, 4.

³⁸ "Redlining Food: How to Ensure Community Food Security."

³⁹ Elizabeth Eisenhauer, "In poor health: Supermarket redlining and urban nutrition," *GeoJournal* 53 (2001), 128.

automobiles, while urban supermarkets must revolve around people.⁴⁰ Many retailers agree with the general attitude that "...it makes no sense to serve distressed areas when profits in the serene suburbs come so easily."⁴¹ The success of the "serene suburbs" and presence of supermarket redlining is reflected through the poorest twenty percent of urban neighborhoods having forty-four percent less retail supermarket space than the richest twenty percent in 1995.⁴²

Many urban areas are subjected to negative stereotyping of gross income, reputation of neighborhoods and race. Race and ethnic background have continually played an integral role in disparities of supermarkets. Following the Civil Rights Act of 1964, *Progressive Grocer* published an edition reflecting American's concern with civil rights and food retail. "There is a growing interest among food retailers in Negro customers," states editor Robert Mueller, who later discusses the "special needs, habits, preferences, and behaviors" of the Negro population.⁴³ Society today continues to perpetuate this inequality through the absence of supermarkets in predominantly minority neighborhoods. Although the Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibits racial discrimination in housing, it does not govern the placement of food stores or restaurants. However, because of existing prejudices, one can see discrimination in areas populated either completely or almost completely by minority groups. For example, Moreland et al. report five supermarkets located in thirty-five predominantly African American neighborhoods serve 118,000 people, while in contrast there are sixty eight supermarkets to serve 259,500 residents of predominantly Caucasian neighborhoods.⁴⁴ The disparity between these neighborhoods results in the ratio of supermarkets to residents as 1:3816 for Caucasian areas and 1:23,582 for African American areas.⁴⁵ Consequently, "...supermarkets are more prevalent in predominantly white and wealthy neighborhoods, while small corner grocery stores are located in black and poor neighborhoods."⁴⁶ This absence of supermarkets in urban areas has not only affected the economy in urban areas, but also affected the residents.

As a result of the flight of supermarkets from cities to suburbs, transportation has become increasingly difficult for urban dwellers. Because many low-income urban residents do not have access to cars, they must rely on taxicabs or public transportation to reach supermarkets. The lack of transportation for urban residents results in high cost and greater difficulty obtaining groceries. By taking taxicabs, urban dwellers are forced to pay cab fare to and from the supermarket. In addition to cab fare, residents with children incur an additional cost as they must find childcare or allow the children to accompany them, leaving less room for groceries. Public transportation also creates problems for many urban consumers. Public transportation can be costly and time-consuming depending on the distance from one's home to the supermarket. A food desert located on East Haines Street and Ardleigh Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania demonstrates the constraints urban residents face when traveling to a supermarket.⁴⁷ Though the closest supermarket, Acme, is only located 1.9 miles away on Germantown Avenue, public transportation has turned a six-minute car ride into a twenty-one

⁴⁰ Richard Layman, "Urban Supermarkets and Urban Design," *Rebuilding Place in the Urban Space*, accessed December 14, 2011, <http://urbanplacesandspaces.blogspot.com/2009/12/urban-supermarkets-and-urban-design.html>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Mathews, 64.

⁴⁴ Morland, Kimberly et al., "Neighborhood Characteristics Associated with the Location of Food Stores and Food Service Places," 28.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ See Appendix E.

minute bus ride.⁴⁸ Returning with multiple heavy grocery bags can also prove difficult by taking unpredictable public transportation. In addition to unreliable transportation, walking in crime-ridden areas with groceries can be dangerous.

Crime also plays an essential role in the presence of supermarkets in urban society today. Shoplifting and employee pilferage are increasingly common in many urban areas, thus resulting in additional funds focused on security and safety for customers, cost balanced by increasing product prices for the consumer. Upon entering Fresh Grocer on Chew Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, customers do not encounter a smiling greeter, a common practice in many suburban stores. Instead Fresh Grocer customers encounter a room of closed circuit television and security guards. Fresh Grocer's close proximity to La Salle University leads many students to the supermarket for food and supplies. LaSalle junior, Colleen Boyle, frequently visits Fresh Grocer to provide for her off-campus house. Though she is grateful for the presence of the supermarket, she describes her first experience at Fresh Grocer as "unique."⁴⁹ "Security took my schoolbag when I walked in. It was weird, but I understood because of the greater chance of shoplifting."⁵⁰ Upon entry, any customer bag deemed too large is immediately locked in the security office to be retrieved prior to exiting. Before Fresh Grocer's arrival in 2009, La Salle students and residents of the Olney area did not have a local supermarket in the neighborhood for forty years.⁵¹

A Philadelphia native and African American, M. Donna, has lived in the La Salle University area her entire life. "Before Fresh Grocer, the closest supermarkets were the Shoprite on Fifth and Olney, the Shoprite on Cheltenham and Ogontz, and the Pathmark at Cheltenham and Wayne Avenue," Donna stated when discussing local supermarkets.⁵² "You would either walk, take the bus, or catch a ride with a friend if you had to go shopping," Donna reflected.⁵³ She then stated, "When I was a little girl, we did have closer supermarkets like the Acme on Broad Street and Chew Avenue and the Penn Fruit on Broad Street and Stenton Avenue until crimes went up."⁵⁴ Donna recalled as crime rate increased, many people chose to move from the city, thus lowering property values.⁵⁵ Further, as Donna noticed increasing crime in the area, she also noted a growth in the number of low-income residents, many of whom she believes were public welfare recipients. Although crime is present in suburban areas, low-income urban areas are targeted for increased violence and theft, subjecting supermarkets to redlining.

As a result of the hardships associated with many urban residents' trips to supermarkets, shoppers have the choice to pay high prices at urban supermarkets or rely on local corner stores for essential items. Out of the few supermarkets that still reside in the city, many have higher prices compared to suburban supermarkets. The Fresh Grocer at La Salle circular, for example, has a sale on two-liter Canada Dry sodas for \$1.25 each or four for \$5.00.⁵⁶ A suburban Acme Markets located in Audubon, Pennsylvania also displays a sale on two-liter Canada Dry sodas

⁴⁸ See Appendix F.

⁴⁹ See Appendix G.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Jennifer Dockery, "NMTCs Create Oases in Food Deserts," *Novogradac Journal of Tax Credits* 1, no. 1 (2010), accessed December 14, 2011, http://www.novoco.com/journal/2010/01/news_aom_nmtc_201001.pdf.

⁵² See Appendix H.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ See Appendix I.

but for \$1.00. Another example of the urban price increase involves a sale on salmon. While Acme Markets has salmon for \$7.99 per pound, Fresh Grocer's sale charges \$8.99. The same disparity occurs with honey crisp apples; Fresh Grocer sells them for \$2.69, while Acme has them for \$2.49.⁵⁷ Though the price differences may not seem extreme, it was estimated that a family of four with an annual income of \$9,999 was likely to pay \$1,500 more for food than a suburban family in the 1980s, increasingly today.⁵⁸ In addition to supermarkets, customers patronizing corner stores often find retail prices as much as forty-nine percent higher for food choices.⁵⁹

As more supermarkets closed due to growing crime rates, high costs for land, labor, and utilities, residents struggle to find adequate food sources. Additionally, urban corner stores often do not sell fresh produce, meats, or other healthy items, but rather stock foods with a long shelf life such as canned food and processed food that lack many vital nutrients for continued health. Because of desire for success, corner storeowners often sell high demand items, including unhealthy items such as soda, alcohol, and cigarettes with minimal emphasis on healthy options.⁶⁰ Due to the restricted shopping options of expensive corner stores and distant supermarkets, many urban residents depend on fast food restaurants. The presence of fast food restaurants continues to increase due to the popularity of quick, inexpensive meals. For example, the Urban and Environmental Policy Institute issued a report that documented fifty-two fast food restaurants but only one sit-down restaurant in a two-mile radius in one South Central Los Angeles neighborhood.⁶¹ While this abundance of fast food restaurants in urban neighborhoods provides convenience, customer nutrition suffers from unhealthy food options, offered at such restaurants.

These unhealthy food choices residents of food deserts face may result in damage to one's body. Poor nutrition has been associated with obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Food insecurity can also result in loss of muscle tissue, short stature, and increased risk of infection and disease due to lack of vitamins A, C, D, and E, iron, zinc, and copper, all of which are essential for healthy immune systems.⁶² Psychological effects such as low self-esteem can also culminate from poor nutrition.⁶³ Another negative side effect of food insecurity relates to poor academic performance.

Children suffering from food insecurity often are unable to concentrate and have unexpected fatigue resulting in an inability for prolonged physical effort. Additionally, undernourished students may experience disruptive behavior, poor mental development, slow cognitive growth, and poor social-emotional growth. As a result of the hunger in low-income areas, many schools have instituted a breakfast program in which students are given a free breakfast each morning. While this enables each student to receive proper morning nutrition, ensuring each student is nourished is extremely time consuming and takes away from instructional time. At Prince Hall Elementary School in Philadelphia, students arrive at school at 8:30 AM and then go to breakfast until 9:30 AM.⁶⁴ One hour of instructional time is dedicated to

⁵⁷ See Appendix I

⁵⁸ "Redlining Food: How to Ensure Community Food Security," 130.

⁵⁹ Bill Turque, Debra Rosenberg, and Todd Barrett, "Where the Food Isn't," *Newsweek*, February 24, 1992, accessed December 14, 2011, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/1992/02/23/where-the-food-isn-t.html>.

⁶⁰ See Appendix J.

⁶¹ Bolen and Hecht, *Neighborhood Groceries: New Access to Healthy Food in Low-Income Communities*, 5.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Jill Novak, observation by the author while at Prince Hall Elementary School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

the morning routine of the breakfast program. As a result of this time loss, students already believed to be at risk for lower achievement have less time to retain the same amount of material as their peers.⁶⁵ This delay in education creates gaps in students' academic development, an occurrence that can arguably be connected to failure later in life; thus continuing the cycle of poverty.

In order to stop the cycle of poverty, actions must be taken to improve the quality of life for low-income urban areas. One such measure is the inclusion of food sources such as supermarkets in urban areas. Not only do supermarkets provide increased availability to food, but they also create jobs, foster community development, and spur economic growth in the area. Because supermarkets tend to hire from the local community, urban supermarkets have immense potential to reduce neighborhood unemployment. According to Elizabeth Eisenhauer, community morale is also associated with success of local businesses.⁶⁶ As urban stores fail and relocate to the suburbs, the cities are left with abandoned buildings and demoralized residents. Supermarkets also symbolize a community's liveability and their closures represent the neighborhood failure.⁶⁷ Closure can also deter other businesses from investing in the area; thus, local small are affected businesses. Though supermarkets can symbolize the failure of communities, they can also represent community growth.

While many chains have abandoned cities, supermarkets such as Pathmark, Shaw's, and Community Pride continue to function and develop relationships with urban communities. By working with community residents and local nonprofit agencies, these supermarkets succeed by often sharing management and infrastructure responsibility with nonprofits. One successful urban supermarket is Pathmark Supermarket in Newark, New Jersey. This Pathmark not only serves as a supermarket for the residents of Newark, but also anchors the New Community Neighborhood Shopping Center created by New Community Corporation, a community development corporation. New Community Corporation and Pathmark opened the shopping center in 1990 after discovering that 93,000 residents in a half-mile radius did not have access to a supermarket. Sixty-six percent of Pathmark profits and one hundred percent of the profits from the remaining shopping center are used for programs sponsored by the New Community Corporation for housing, employment, children, elderly, and homeless people. Due to the presence of the shopping center, residents not only save time when food shopping, but also save as much as thirty-eight percent on their food bills.⁶⁸

Although successful communal relationships can be developed within urbanized areas, many supermarkets in the city still struggle with community development. For example, community bulletin boards have served as a form of community communication at supermarkets by providing information regarding employment, upcoming events, and local businesses. While many bulletin boards in suburban supermarkets overflow with neighborhood interaction such as Whole Foods Market in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, bulletin boards at urban supermarkets such as the Fresh Grocer of La Salle University sit bare.⁶⁹ Because many urban areas lack

⁶⁵ Kevin Carey, "Education Funding And Low-Income Children: A Review of Current Research, 11/7/02," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, accessed December 14, 2011, <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1428>, 1.

⁶⁶ Eisenhauer, 129.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Bolen and Hecht, 13.

⁶⁹ See Appendix K.

supermarkets to develop community relations, other methods for increased neighborhood involvement have been created, such as Rutgers University's community food systems.

Community food systems are food organizations in which "food production, processing, distribution, and consumption are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social, and nutritional health of a particular place."⁷⁰ One major goal of community food systems is food security, especially for low-income households. Through food security, community food systems aim for optimized health, dietary changes complementing the seasonal availability of foods, and improved access for all community members to an adequate, affordable, nutritious diet.⁷¹

Different elements of community food systems include farmers markets, community and school gardens, community-supported agriculture farms, U-Pick operations and roadside farm stands. Farmers market provide the opportunity for consumers and farmers to develop relationships with one another, resulting in comprehension of customer demand so farmers can accommodate that demand in future harvests. Community and school gardens provide residents with access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Through community and school gardens, neighborhood partnerships are formed through community interaction, decision-making, teamwork, problem solving and celebration. Community supported agriculture farms are arrangements in which a group of residents buy shares for a future harvest and then receive fresh fruits and vegetables on a weekly basis throughout the harvest season. U-Pick operations and roadside farm stands provide access to fresh produce directly from the farmer allowing residents to develop relationships with farmers while also supporting local farms. The multiple elements surrounding community food systems also create positive youth development.⁷²

Rutgers University, located in New Jersey, recognizes the possible negative outcomes for the youth in low-income neighborhoods related to food insecurity in food deserts. Consequently, programs such as From Farm to Fork strive to provide youth with environments to build character and teach responsibility. Through involvement in programs such as community and school gardens, young people obtain basic skills to become responsible, working, contributing members of society. These children now have an environment that provides them a sense of belonging and independence that ultimately leads to increased self-esteem and positive decision making among the youth. Rutgers University expected outcomes resulting from their community system programs include the usurpation of leadership roles by affected youth.⁷³ The positive effects resulting from the community food systems would lead to success for the youth resulting in a reduction of poverty in low-income areas. The potential cessation of poverty in low-income areas would therefore boost the economy and increase business opportunities resulting in a higher quality of life.

Supermarkets, a necessity for many Americans today, have become an international phenomenon. While many people in the United States lack supermarkets and long for their accessibility and affordability, many European countries such as the United Kingdom have movements against supermarkets in an attempt to retain the intimate market tradition and cottage industry that have existed in their culture⁷⁴ Because the "anti-supermarket" movement is quite

⁷⁰"From Farm to Fork: Food, Nutrition, & Health," Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, accessed December 14, 2011, <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/health/farmtofork.asp>.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Patrick Barkham, "After 11 years, town faces defeat to Tesco," *The Guardian*, accessed December 14, 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2007/nov/02/supermarkets>.

controversial in both the United States and Europe, further research could be informative. Another option for further research could also be the effects of an absence of supermarkets on the health and education of individuals. While many studies claim food insecurity negatively affects a person, food insecurity is a result of the greater force, of poverty. Further research on the health affects of food deserts such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and malnutrition would also be beneficial. Finally while both schools and the government strive for proper nutrition, are school breakfast programs providing the healthiest options for students, and if so how does this affect their development?

While many questions remain unanswered regarding the presence of supermarkets in society, many Americans are becoming increasingly aware of the plight of the poor patrons of supermarkets today. This paper demonstrates the inequality in access to supermarkets on the basis of neighborhood economic and social characteristics. Though many initiatives have been made to ensure food security for all Americans, capitalist society still reigns supreme. Urban development of supermarkets involves high construction costs, difficult land acquisition, increased costs for labor, property, and insurance resulting in supermarket redlining. As a result of crime and lack of competition, urban supermarkets can inflate prices leaving residents with limited shopping options: distant and expensive supermarkets, unhealthy and expensive corners store, or unhealthy and inexpensive fast food restaurants. With limited options and more constraints related to transportation and funds, many low-income, urban residents choose the latter resulting in health problems such as obesity, malnutrition, and increased risk of disease. In an attempt to rid society of the injustices associated with urban food retail, programs such as From Farm to Fork, and the Obama initiative have sought to provide food security for areas with limited access to food, while building community relations. Raising awareness and sustaining interest is key to affecting change. Echoing Jacob Riis, it is imperative for Americans to learn how the other half lives in order to remedy the injustices of food deserts and their significant negative consequence for those who live within them.

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The Feminine Mystique's Influence on Sitcoms: The Catalyst of the Shift towards the Portrayal of Independent Women

Peter Frein

Since the advent of television, many situation comedies have provided an accurate portrayal of the trends and beliefs of American society. Gaye Tuchman, an analyst of women in mass media, contends, "Though television is a fictionalized drama it remains an important cultural forum where its characters and stories may be representational of those things valued within our society."¹ Many of the earliest sitcoms focused on the humorous events and activities of families, which usually consisted of the interactions between the husband, the wife, and the children. Sitcoms, such as *I Love Lucy*, *Mama*, and *The Donna Reed Show*, illustrated how the women in those sitcoms were restricted to a domestic life, while their husbands entered the workforce and provided money for the family. These programs also portray women attempting to expand their roles beyond their domestic duties, but the women are always relegated back to their role as a housewife.

In 1963, Betty Friedan released *The Feminine Mystique*, which described women's lack of fulfillment in their roles as housewives and encouraged women to dispel the notion that they should be limited to domestic duties. Following the introduction of this book, sitcoms such as *That Girl*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, and *Murphy Brown* offered a representation of women dismissing the concept of relying on a husband and entering the workforce to garner a living for themselves. Sitcoms preceding *The Feminine Mystique* defy the myth of gender equality through their depiction of coverture, whereas programs released after Friedan's book progressed towards affirming that myth. Prior to the *Feminine Mystique*, sitcoms presented an image of how women

were bound to their domestic roles and how they suppressed their desire to increase their roles beyond the domestic sphere; however, after *The Feminine Mystique*, many sitcoms displayed women endeavoring to lead a life as a career woman without the support of a husband.

With an undergraduate degree from Smith College and a graduate degree from the University of California, both in psychology, Betty Friedan married her husband in 1947 and moved to the suburbs of New York City.² While remaining at home to care for her children and the home, she worked as a freelance writer, but she felt unfulfilled because she believed she was not using her education properly. After speaking about this feeling with female college graduates, she sent a questionnaire to all of the married women who graduated in her class at Smith College. She discovered that many women possessed similar impressions of feeling unfulfilled and frustrated in their domestic roles. A second batch of questionnaires sent to other schools confirmed the results of her first findings: women were unsatisfied that their whole self-concept and identity stemmed from their husbands, children, and homes. In 1963, she introduced her study to the world in *The Feminine Mystique*, which explained the depressed symptoms of domestic women and urged women to pursue opportunities beyond homemaker roles.

¹ Gaye Tuchman, "Introduction: The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Mass Media," *Hearth and Home: Images of Women in Mass Media*, ed. Gaye Tuchman, Arlene Kaplan Daniels, and James Benet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 3-38

² Michael J. O'Neal, "Betty Friedan: The Feminine Mystique," *Milestone Documents*, last modified 2012, <http://www.milestonedocuments.com/documents/view/betty-friedan-the-feminine-mystique-/text>.

Friedan began her work by describing “the problem that has no name” as “a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States.”³ Suburban housewives of the 1950s felt this anguish because the societal norms limited them to roles as wives and mothers; moreover, they internalized these anguished feelings because they felt ashamed in disclosing this discontent and believed no other women suffered from these symptoms.⁴ Friedan contended that columns, books, and articles instructed women that fulfillment could be achieved through toiling as a housewife and a mother.⁵ Also, the 1950s culture indoctrinated women to admonish any woman who strove to attain an occupation beyond a housewife, such as a poet, a scientist, or a lawmaker; moreover, women understood that “truly feminine women do not want careers, high education, political rights—the independence and the opportunities that the old fashioned feminists fought for.” Their supposed role entailed aspiring to dedicate their lives, while sacrificing any occupational desires, to serving their husband and children.⁶

While Friedan examined the causes of this dissatisfaction of among 1950s women, her chief goal encompassed influencing all Americans to reevaluate the traditional idea that women achieved ultimate fulfillment as housewives.⁷ She criticized the full-time domesticity work because it halted women’s urges to grow and develop. She also noted that both women and men established their identity through accomplishments in particularly careers. Her writings received credit for igniting the feminist movement that influences women to broaden their duties beyond domestic tasks. Joanne Meyerowitz claims that “hundreds of women have testified that this book changed their lives.” The book identified the source of discontent among women and allowed many women to realize that they experienced similar sentiments in their narrow homemaking duties.⁸ In Friedan’s obituary, Margalit Fox wrote, “a great many aspects of modern life that seem routine today-- from unisex Help Wanted ads to women in politics, medicine, the clergy and the military -- are the direct result of the hard-won advances she helped women attain.”⁹ This book motivated women to refuse to settle as housewives and to aspire to seek further fulfillment and individual achievement through attaining a career.

The Feminine Mystique drew powerful praise for diagnosing and elaborating on a problem that was embedded in the 1950s American society. In a *New York Times* book review, Lucy Freedman states, “This is the damning indictment leveled by Betty Friedan in her highly readable, provocative book.” Freedman acknowledges that Friedan pinpointed the problem as a lack of identity among middle-class housewives; however, she disagrees with Friedan’s belief that popular culture, such as women’s magazines that depicted women as housewives, elicited lack of fulfillment amid suburban housewives. She contends, “It is superficial to blame the ‘culture’ and its handmaidens, the women's magazines, as she does. What is to stop a woman who is interested in national and international affairs from reading magazines that deal with

³ Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1963), 15.

⁴ Friedan, 19

⁵ Friedan, 15.

⁶ Friedan, 16.

⁷ Betty Friedan, “Excerpts from *The Feminine Mystique*,” ed. Ann Charters, *The Portable Sixties Reader*, (New York, Penguin Group Inc., 2003), 493

⁸ Joanne Meyerowitz, “Beyond *The Feminine Mystique*: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946-1958,” *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 4 (1993): 1.

⁹ Margalit Fox, “Betty Friedan, Feminist, Dies at 85,” *San Francisco Chronicle* (San Francisco, CA), Feb. 5, 2006.

those subjects?"¹⁰ In other words, she assigns blame to women in accusing them of not acting on their desires to escape from the restraints of existing as a housewife. Her views are synonymous with the context of *That Girl*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, and *Murphy Brown*, sitcoms that portray women making the proactive decision to live as single, independent women.

Sitcoms before *The Feminine Mystique* portrayed women as incompetent members of society that should be confined to domestic duties. Cultural critic Hal Himmelstein describes the woman of these 1950s and 1960s sitcoms as one who "does think in this milieu, and is not part of the events that frame the world outside the house; in other words, in a world in which the woman's place is in the kitchen or at the beauty parlor, the woman is not a socially relevant being."¹¹ In other words, he articulates that these programs represented the ideology that a woman's role involved tasks in her house, for that society believed women did not possess the mental capacity to expand her obligations beyond the home. Friedan herself exclaimed that television portrayed the American woman as an unintelligent, timid homemaker who devotes her life to mindless labor.¹² Although these sitcoms illustrate how women are bound to their role of maintaining their family's home, they display the suppression of those women's aspirations to heighten their responsibilities past those of a housewife. *I Love Lucy*, *Mama*, and *The Donna Reed Show* not only depict women being restricted to domestic occupations, but they also indicate how either the women themselves or their husbands curb their desires to undertake jobs outside of their duties as homemakers.

I Love Lucy aired from 1951 to 1957, and it featured the interactions between the Ricardos, Ricky and Lucy, and the Mertzes, Fred and Ethel. Spangler notes, "The basic premise of *I Love Lucy* involves a battle of the sexes, usually with Ricky forbidding Lucy to do something and Lucy defying his wishes." Lucy's struggles "to become more than house wife" offered a source of humor to American viewers in the 1950s.¹³ One of the show's writers, Jess Oppenheimer, claimed that the writers never attempted to produce a hilarious program, for they strove to create "a situation where Lucy and Ricky's problems and differences of opinion were the same ones that most of our audience encountered."¹⁴ Hence, the writers generated the popularity of this sitcom by holding up a "mirror" to society that reflected a humorous view of the common disagreements between a husband and a wife. These battles between a husband and a wife on *I Love Lucy* stemmed from the 1950s American woman's ambition to attain an occupation besides that of a housewife. Although Lucy rebels against her husband, either Ricky forces her to return to her domestic role, or she voluntarily retreats from another job because she cannot juggle both as a homemaker and an employee of another profession. This program bears the facets of the period before *The Feminine Mystique*, for it depicts a woman unsatisfied with her homemaking role; however, she cannot escape from those boundaries because the societal norms and her husband restrict her.

¹⁰ Lucy Freedman, "The Feminine Mystique," *New York Times* (New York, NY), Apr. 7, 1963.

¹¹ Hal Himmelstein, *Television Myth and the American Mind* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 96.

¹² Mary Desjardins, "Gender and Television," *The Museum of Broadcast Communications*, last modified 2012, <http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=genderandte>.

¹³ Lynn Spangler, *Television Women from Lucy to Friends: Fifty Years of Sitcoms and Feminism* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 25-32.

¹⁴ Jess Oppenheimer with Gregg Oppenheimer, *Laughs, Luck...and Lucy: How I Came to Write the Most Popular Sitcom of All Time* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 180.

Several episodes relate to this pre-*Feminine Mystique* notion. "Job Switching" begins with Ricky and Fred criticizing Lucy and Ethel for wasting their time around the house, while they work arduously to earn money for them. The wives respond to their husbands by proposing that they should exchange their duties for a week. This proposal elicits disastrous results because the women perform poorly at their new job, and the men prove to be inept in completing the most basic tasks around the house. Lucy and Ethel display incompetence in failing to accomplish the simple task of wrapping candy on a conveyor belt in a chocolate factory. Moreover, the men flounder in basic household tasks, such as cooking and cleaning. At the conclusion of the episode, the men and the women convene at the end of the day and decide to revert back to their original roles. Ricky says to the women, "We'll make the money, and you spend it." Spangler contends that this statement implies that "the men come across as providers and the women as dependents, not competent managers of the household."¹⁵

In "Equal Rights," Lucy and Ethel implore their husbands to treat them equally; therefore, while the couples eat at a restaurant, Ricky and Fred acquiesce to their demands and insist that their wives pay their own dinner checks. The two women realize that they do not possess enough money, and a subsequent scene displays the women washing the restaurant's dishes in order to pay their checks. This episode offers the notion that women remain entirely dependent on their husbands, for Lucy and Ethel could not afford one simple dinner at a restaurant. It also imposes the separation of spheres concept in depicting the women's reliance on their husbands to foot a singular bill. "Equal Rights" invokes two central messages. First, women must depend on their husbands to provide finances for them. Second, women prove to be incapable of acquiring enough money to treat themselves to one dinner. Despite the women's attempt to escape from their unequal roles as reliant housewives, the husbands restore their hegemony over their spouses by exposing their extreme dependence in their inability to meet the expense of a dinner bill.

While Ricky's action persuades Lucy to remain as a housewife in both "Job Switching" and "Equal Rights," Lucy, herself, decides to continue toiling as a homemaker in "Lucy Wants a Career." When Lucy acquires a job on an early morning television show, she discovers her hours spent working deprive her of quality time with her husband and child; thus, she resigns from her job to stay home and tend to the needs of her family. About this particular episode, Spangler writes, "the recurring lesson is that, ultimately, that is what makes her most happy and she cannot successfully have both a career and family life."¹⁶ "Lucy Wants a Career" contains different facets from those of the previous two episodes because she returns herself back to the role of a housewife, instead of Ricky imposing his influence on her. The paralleling characteristic of all three of these episodes encompasses the message that women should not expand their duties beyond their domestic tasks. Lucy does endeavor to attain a more dynamic career beyond a homemaker, but she either recognizes that she cannot balance a career with caring for her family and the home, or her husband inhibits her from exercising independence.

The overarching theme throughout the *I Love Lucy* series involves Lucy exhibiting feelings similar to the "the problem that has no name," in attempting to become more than a housewife because she expresses boredom and dissatisfaction. Lori Landay claims, "[Lucy] presents a model of female ambition that is relentless in its craving for freedom, participation, and equality. This is the kind of prefeminist scrutiny of the sex-gender system that resulted in the

¹⁵ Spangler, 33.

¹⁶ Spangler, 34.

second wave of feminism in America.”¹⁷ Lucy symbolizes women beginning to revolt against the established male hegemony, but in the 1950s, male authority possessed too much power for women to succeed in providing for themselves. The second wave of feminism did not gain serious momentum until the early sixties, when the likes of Friedan and other women's rights activists altered the landscape of American society with works such as *The Feminine Mystique*. The conclusion to every one of Lucy's unsuccessful efforts results in her realizing that she must continue serving her family as a housewife; however, her drive to rebel against her supposed gender role represents the first step towards removing the separation of spheres and achieving the myth of gender equality.

Whereas Lucy expresses overt discontent in her duty as a homemaker, Marta Hansen on *Mama* presents more subtle references about her dissatisfaction with her role. *Mama* debuted on CBS in 1949 and lasted until 1956. Spangler writes, “In this series *Mama*, Marta Hansen, was the nucleus of the family, a housewife who centered her world around her husband, Lars, a carpenter, and their three children, Nels, Katrin, and Dagmar.”¹⁸ *Mama*'s writers depicted her as generally content with isolating her entire focus on her family and the home; however, a few instances surface when she displays her dissatisfaction in how her family offers little appreciation for her onerous labor. The symptoms of “the problem” relate to her lack of fulfillment, for Marta, in a similar fashion to the women in *The Feminine Mystique*, occasionally despairs that her family does not acknowledge her work around the house. Also, *Mama* illustrates the stereotypical gender roles of the 1950s and the absence of leisure time among women of the fifties. Numerous episodes of *Mama* contain aspects of the period before *The Feminine Mystique*, when women's expected role required the constant servitude of her family and house.

Episodes of *Mama* streamed live on television in the middle of the twentieth century; therefore, a small amount of episodes remained, and sitcom analysts documented the few that survived. In one episode, Marta's household chores and her cognizance of her children engulf her. She describes how she feels unacknowledged in exclaiming, “Everyone wants something for nothing in this house,” and “Why do I have to make everyone do everything.” Later in the episode, she confides in her sister, “What does a family mean? Work. And no one appreciates it.” At the culmination of the episode, she explodes when no one in her family commends her cooking a meatloaf based on a new recipe. The children focus their dinner conversation on Lars and his day at work, while failing to acknowledge the cook delectable food; thus, Marta exits the dinner table in an emphatic manner and unwinds by playing cards with her friends. In regards to this scene, Spangler states, “The lesson for 1950s housewives, of course, is that their role is important, even though it is hard and often unappreciated.”¹⁹

Another episode of *Mama* alludes to gender stereotypes that invoke sentiments that conflict with Friedan's desire for women to break out of the domestic roles. When her daughter, Katrin, asks Marta what she wants for her children, she says, “You and Dagmar to marry nice young men and have a lot of wonderful children—just like I have. And Nels, well, Nels to become president of the United States.” In evaluating this comment, Spangler adds, “Her wishes

¹⁷ Lori Landay, *Madcappp, Screwballs, & Con Women: The Female Trickster in American Culture* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 193.

¹⁸ Spangler, 37.

¹⁹ Spangler, 38.

made a clear perpetuation of stereotyped gender roles.”²⁰ This particular episode summons the complete converse to the goals of *The Feminine Mystique*, for Marta instills the expectation into her daughters that they should strive to bear children and work as a housewife. She creates inadvertent restrictions that stifle her daughters’ potential career prospects, which may have included attaining an occupation beyond that of a homemaker; yet, by mentioning her wish for her son to become president, she implies that he possesses the opportunity to acquire any profession he wishes. Friedan endeavored to eliminate the presupposed gender roles in society, whereas Marta sought to maintain them in her 1950s household.

“Mama’s Birthday” not only illuminates gender stereotypes, but it also indicates that a housewife enjoys no leisure time. On Marta’s birthday, her sister, Jenny, invites her to a fashion show; however, Marta cannot attend because she needs to cook dinner for her husband’s guest. In musing that she “can’t call her soul her own,” Jenny believes it is a travesty that Marta cannot spend any free time.²¹ For her birthday, her husband builds her a new stove, and her children give a new set of dishes. Spangler contends, “Once again Marta is the selfless mother rewarded on her special day by more household items that will benefit her entire family.”²² The items that Marta received represent a significant message that *Mama* presents to its views. The dishes and the stove all serve a domestic purpose, and none of her presents involved absolute leisure; thus, they signify that her entire purpose revolves around caring for her family and the home. This episode contains slight references to “the problem that has no name” because Marta’s duties at home disallow her to exercise any individuality.

Throughout *Mama*’s run on television, Marta did not openly revolt against the established male hegemony, for she either complained or displayed reluctant acceptance towards the reality that her domestic role restrains her from advancing in society. Whether it involved the family’s lack of appreciation towards her arduous housework, her stereotypical messages to children about the gender roles, or the deprivation of free time on account of her never-ending tasks at home, the series symbolized the pre-*Feminine Mystique* era. Although Marta expressed displeasure with her mindless household chores, her wishes for her daughters to end up with similar futures indicates that she saw no other alternative to the domestic roles of women. *Mama* aired in the early fifties; therefore, another ten years would pass before Friedan clarified and criticize these discriminatory limitations placed on women. Had *Mama* appeared on television in the early seventies, the series may have conveyed a different message about a woman’s opportunity to expand her obligations beyond the home.

The Donna Reed Show features similar appearances of the specified gender roles in a 1950s family to that of *Mama*. In regards to *The Donna Reed Show*, Spangler notes, “the 1950s invokes television images of the happy, white, middle class family in suburbia as depicted in several sitcoms of the time.” Spangler also mentions that this sitcom’s focus remains “ostensibly on the female star of the show and her character a housewife and mother,” which diverges from male-focused suburban comedies, such as *Leave It to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best*.²³ This series appeared on television from 1958 to 1966; thus, it aired during the primal stages of the second wave of the women’s movement and in the midst of the release of *The Feminine Mystique*. However, this program contains minimal allusions towards any aspect of a woman’s

²⁰ Spangler 38.

²¹ Gerald Jones, *Honey I’m Home! Sitcoms: Selling the American Dream* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), 43.

²² Spangler, 39.

²³ Spangler, 49.

individual and illustrates the stereotypical boundary lines between males and females. Nina Liebman transcribes, "Speeches in every episode underscore one or more of the following points: ...the required subjugation of housewives, the omnipotence of fathers and father-love...and the necessity of gender-bound roles and attributes. At the same time, characters actively suppress any interests which might interfere with the successful functioning of these value systems."²⁴ Many episodes throughout the tenure of this sitcom echo themes pertaining to *The Feminine Mystique*: a woman's waste of her college education, the expansion of responsibilities beyond those of a homemaker, and a husband's animosity towards his wife's social mobility.

The mere fact that Donna Stone graduated from college and decides to forego utilizing her education to work as a housewife provides a connection to *The Feminine Mystique*. The life progression of Donna parallels to Friedan's life development because both women received a college degree and proceeded to retreat into domesticity. Where their paths separate involves Friedan's realization that she did not use her education in the proper manner; therefore, she sought to gauge how her feelings of regret resonated in other women. Donna does not reverberate any of those thoughts, for she endures in her domestic role throughout the series. When she delves in becoming more than a housewife, she returns to her previous duties and reassures herself that running the household suits her more than any other occupation. Though ABC broadcasted *The Donna Reed Show* during the period of Friedan's incitement of women's individualism and independence, Donna symbolizes elements of a woman who harnesses all her energy towards her family and the home and of someone not motivated by *The Feminine Mystique*.

A few episodes exist where Donna does attempt to be more than just a housewife; however, she always learns that she cannot balance her duties at home and responsibilities in another sphere. In "A Woman's Place," Donna aspires to evolve from her domestic obligations and runs for the town council. Initially, her husband supports her ambition to contribute to the community, but after he dreams about her as mayor or governor, he decides that he wants her to focus on running the household. Donna gives up on her town council bid and returns to care for the family's home. Mary Ann Watson, a cultural analyst writes that "women's aspirations were something to be stifled in television." In another episode, Donna displays immense ability in managing Alex's home pediatric office. When Alex noticed that she excels as his assistant, he feels threatened that her proficiency will overshadow his expertise as a pediatrician.²⁵ Watson concludes, "the moral of the story is that a woman has no business trying to make a difference in the world and that a man is justified in feeling diminished by the success of his spouse."²⁶ Though Donna Stone does strive to establish herself as more than a housewife, her husband wields the ultimate power in the Stone family structure, for he possesses the final decision on whether she can expand her role.

While Donna did not utilize the full potential of her college education by becoming a homemaker, she encourages her daughter to go to college. If Donna realized that her education proved to be unnecessary, then why would she persuade her daughter to go to college? Her pressure on her daughter may originate from her regret of receiving her diploma and retreating

²⁴ Nina Liebman, *Living Room Lectures: The Fifties Family in Film and Television* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press 1995), 34.

²⁵ Spangler, 50.

²⁶ Mary Ann Watson, *Defining Visions: Television and the American Experience Since 1945* (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace, 1998), 61.

into the cult of domesticity, the same situation that influenced Friedan to write *The Feminine Mystique*. Her exploits to become more than a housewife depict her dissatisfaction with her current occupation; thus, they reinforce the proposal that she second-guesses her chosen life path. Although Donna displays her efficacy in functioning outside the home, she either chooses to reduce her duties, or Alex influences her decision; therefore, *The Donna Reed Show* represents aspects that contradict Friedan's goals. At the culmination of this series in 1966, this sitcom had yet to portray a character that embodies the realization of second wave of the women's movement. Donna's ambition to increase her responsibilities existed, but something needed to expel the pressure applied by Alex and societal norms before the sitcom could illustrate her escaping from the throngs of domesticity. Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, but sitcoms would not reflect her influential piece until later in 1966.

I Love Lucy, *Mama*, and *The Donna Reed Show* possess commonalities in their portrayal of women's roles in the American society. Each sitcom presents a view of how a force, their husbands or the woman themselves, curbs the women's ambitions to extend their duties past working as a housewife. Also, these programs depict the notion of male hegemony, for the husbands of Lucy, Marta, and Donna exert their authority over their spouses by devaluing the women's homemaking tasks and actively restricting them from acquiring an occupation out of the home. Another similarity involves the women's reliance on their husbands to provide financial stability for the family because their domestic responsibilities block their opportunities to garner any monetary resources. The primary theme intertwined in all these paralleling aspects encompasses dependence; furthermore, since *The Feminine Mystique* champions women's individuality and independence, these sitcoms oppose those attributes. Because of this program's representation of the restraint on women's autonomy, they do not reflect many aspects of *The Feminine Mystique*.

Despite the fact that Friedan released her book in 1963, the aspects of the book did not begin to manifest in sitcoms until 1966, but once shows started to reflect those facets, many programs of the sixties, seventies, and later decades featured single, independent women living on their own and gaining enough money to support themselves. *That Girl*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, and *Murphy Brown* portray the main characters as attempting to "make it on their own." Whereas the previous three sitcoms (*I Love Lucy*, *Mama*, and *The Donna Reed Show*) featured the suppression of women's desires to evolve from their domestic roles, these single women series illustrate the relinquishment of the force that suppressed the ambition of those housewives. *The Feminine Mystique* can claim some responsibility for the banishment of that inhibition of women because it offered one of the initial illuminations of the how women languished in the confinement of domesticity. Before 1963 women could not pinpoint the source of their feelings of unhappiness and lack of fulfillment, but when Friedan published her discovery, sitcoms began to show women embodying individualism by subsisting on their own in order to live a more fulfilling life.

The Donna Reed Show ended live broadcasts in the spring of 1966, and *That Girl* debuted in the fall of 1966; thus, the summer of 1966 acts as a dividing line between sitcoms featuring domestic women and ones that display women endeavoring to live independently and earn their own money. Spangler writes that *That Girl* was "hailed as the prototype series about independent career women...and its star, Marlo Thomas, was clearly in control from the beginning."²⁷ After

²⁷ Spangler, 87.

graduating from a teacher's college and working for some time as a grade-school teacher, while living at home, Marlo decides to move to an apartment in New York City to pursue her aspirations of becoming an actress. In order to support her potential acting career, she works a slew of odd jobs, which include working as a salesperson, a waitress, and a mascot wearing a chicken costume. All of these secondary jobs not only signify Marlo's struggles to survive as an independent woman, but they also denote her willingness to succeed and prove her individuality to the world. The illustration of Marlo Thomas attempting to thrive in society as a single woman separates *That Girl* from any other previous sitcom.

The Feminine Mystique played a major role in initiating the transition of sitcoms towards depicting independent working women. In Thomas' persuasion of Edgar Scherick, the head of ABC, to introduce a series involving "a young struggling actress yearning for independence," she had a difficult time convincing him to create the sitcom based on a completely independent woman without a steady boss or a husband. She coaxed him into reading Friedan's book and told him that the experience that Friedan described was happening to many young women of that time. She then advised him that if he wanted to come across to the audience of young women, then this program needed to tell the story of an autonomous woman.²⁸ Based on this information, Friedan incited television's introduction of sitcoms that involved single, working women through her work compelling the leaders of ABC to air this new type of sitcom. The contents of *That Girl* evolved in subsequent sitcoms that portrayed women with more responsibilities and freedom; thus, Friedan's efforts provoked a revolution among sitcoms.

Instead of settling with a husband and a life full of financial stability, Ann Marie elects to exercise her independence in toiling in an array of jobs to support her acting career and maintain her individuality. She upholds a steady relationship with her boyfriend, Donald, throughout the majority of the series, but they live in different apartments. The couple's living situation suggests that Ann Marie refuses to commit to the eventual path that leads to eloping and a life of child-bearing and domestic obligations. In the sitcom's fifth season, Donald proposes to Ann Marie, and she displays extreme jubilation; however, at the end of the program's tenure, the couple remains unmarried. Marlo Thomas influenced the show's writers to keep Ann Marie as a single woman. She stated, "I really felt that *That Girl* getting married sent a wrong message to the girls of America. They had really counted on her to make a certain stand. If her story ended with marriage they might think that it meant that that was the only way to have a happy ending."²⁹ Thomas' beliefs represent the ideas of *The Feminine Mystique* because her convictions encompass the impression that a women getting married restricts them from living as free women.

Though Ann Marie never married throughout the sitcom's life, her constant involvement with the same boyfriend indicates that she did not demonstrate complete independence. Thomas' character, however, transcended the standard example of a female television character in becoming the model for all future television women to build upon. Additionally Ann Marie motivated many American women to live as autonomous individuals. Women's rights activist, Gloria Steinem, said the series inspired many women "because young women wrote her [Marlo Thomas] with enormous gratitude. They saw possibilities for themselves, besides immediate marriage or staying home with their parents, which had not been on television before."³⁰ Also,

²⁸ Stephen Cole, *That Book about That Girl* (Los Angeles, CA: Renaissance, 1999), 34.

²⁹ Cole, 142.

³⁰ Cole, 129.

That Girl influenced other television programs to evolve from the premise of single-women sitcoms. In *That Girl*'s final year of broadcast, the first season of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* aired on television, featuring Mary Richards as a more liberated version of Ann Marie. Mary Tyler Moore claimed, "Ann Marie opened the door and Mary Richards walked through."³¹ *That Girl* ignited the shift in sitcoms beginning to personify the values in *The Feminine Mystique*.

The Mary Tyler Moore Show debuted in 1970 with its first episode, "Love is All Around," which consists of Mary Richards moving to Minneapolis after ending a four year relationship with her boyfriend. She seeks to attain a job; therefore, she interviews at a local news station and acquires a position as an associate producer. That evening, after the news station hired her, Mary's boyfriend enters her apartment and offers a last-ditch plea to persuade her to settle down with him as his wife. She declines his tender and ends the relationship because she aspires to begin a new life and hopes to provide a living for herself. The article, "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" comments on the conclusion to this episode, "A bittersweet ending for a sitcom. And different from anything anyone had seen on TV: a single woman, frankly-thirty, who wanted her independence, and in fact, 'took care of herself' by eliminating her boyfriend from her life."³² In her refusal of her boyfriend's advances, Mary sets the stage for the rest of the series, which involves her functioning in society as an independent career woman without the influence of a man in her life. Through her singleness and her stature in the workplace, Mary Richards evolves from Marlo Thomas in *That Girl* and characterizes many principles of *The Feminine Mystique*.

The fact that Mary strove to remain single, unless marrying would not have conflict with her career objectives, connects to Friedan's writings in *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan felt that by marrying, familial and household duties inhibited her and many women from achieving their goals beyond the domestic sphere. Mary displays similar sentiments, for she repudiates marrying and bearing children, if it compromises her status in the workplace. In "Remembrance of Things Past," Mary dates another old boyfriend, and they both acknowledge their love for each other; however, Mary realizes that this man will not consider her needs as a career woman. Spangler writes about this episode, "Mary is heterosexual with an active sex life, and she would like to marry and have children, but she is not willing to settle."³³ Spangler implies that Mary hopes to marry one day, but she has not discovered the right man, who will allow her to continue her job at the news station. In *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan describes the regret of many women who refrained from working in a career outside of domestic duties. By portraying Mary as a woman who rejects marriage for her career, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* illustrates the solution to "the problem that has no name."

Mary also displays her independence through her improved proficiency and initiative in the workplace. Although the station hires her as an associate producer, which basically entailed secretarial duties, she progresses to become an effective producer at the news station, contriving her own ideas and constantly attempting to further her skills by attending professional seminars.³⁴ In "Mary Richards: Producer," she urges her boss, Lou, to allow her to produce that day's news, a promotion from working as associate producer. Despite an abhorrent performance by the news anchor, Lou praises Mary for her performance and takes her out for a celebrator

³¹ Cole, 137.

³² Rick Mintz, *The Great TV Sitcom Book* (New York: Richard Marek Publishers, 1980), 263.

³³ Spangler, 113.

³⁴ Spangler, 111.

drink. Also, Mary stands up for receiving unfair wages, when she understands that Lou pays her less for the same job that another man held. Lou acquiesces to her complaints; thus, Mary's successful pursuit of equal treatment depicts women beginning to speak up for themselves. Whereas sitcoms before *The Feminine Mystique* portrayed women confined to a housewife role and *That Girl* illustrated a woman struggling to function on her own in society, Mary Richards symbolizes women achieving success in their career roles.

Another relationship in *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* encompasses the effects of *The Feminine Mystique*: the marriage of Lou and his wife, Edie. In "The Lou and Edie Story," Mary discovers that Lou and Edie decide to divorce, and the reasons for the failed marriage pertain to Friedan's writings. Alley and Brown state, "Edie explains to Lou that she wants to learn more about the rest of her, not just the part that is his wife."³⁵ Spangler then writes, "Like thousands of middle-aged women in real life in the 1970s, Edie had gotten married very young (at nineteen) and, after twenty-six years of nurturing others, she feels it time to live for herself."³⁶ These comments allude to *The Feminine Mystique*, for Edie expresses dissatisfaction in devoting her entire life to her husband and her family, while not addressing her own desires. Instead of languishing in unhappiness with her life path, Edie chooses to live for herself and rejects the presupposition of her complete domesticity throughout the remainder of her life; hence, this episode invokes a solution to the lack of fulfillment in women. Also, it implies that many married women in American society in the 1970s felt similar feelings to those of Edie.

While *That Girl* does illustrate the manifestation of *The Feminine Mystique* into society, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* elevates the book's influence to new levels and amplifies the contrast from the sitcoms of the 1950s and 1960s. Desjardins writes, "Mary Richards of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* was a refreshing relief from the frustrated women in sitcoms of the 1950s and 1960s."³⁷ The sitcom portrayed a woman acting on the desire to defy the suppression of women to assumed gender roles. Ann Marie remains in a steady relationship with the same man throughout the majority of the program's tenure, but Mary cycles through many men during the series. This difference represents how Ann Marie relied on the constant presence of a man in her life, whereas Mary expresses freedom and individuality in staying single and refusing to allow a man to stifle her career prospects. Also, Mary displays more aptitude in the workplace than Ann Marie because Mary holds a stable job and advances her responsibilities within that job. Marlo, on the other hand, works many odd jobs to support her sometimes unsuccessful dream of becoming an actor. By exercising her independence in succeeding to provide for herself without relying on a husband or a boyfriend, Mary Richards exemplifies Friedan's influence on the illustration of the self-sufficient woman in sitcoms.

While *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* portrays an independent woman beginning to achieve a sufficient career and a comfortable lifestyle, *Murphy Brown* illustrates an enhanced version of a woman providing for herself. It debuted in 1988 and introduced a powerful career woman into sitcoms. After returning from a stint in rehab for alcohol abuse, Murphy works on the staff of a fictional network television news magazine, *F.Y.I.* While the previous two sitcoms, *That Girl* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, displayed the awkwardness and trials of women attempting to establish themselves as contributing career-women, *Murphy Brown* presents a woman with a

³⁵ Robert S. Alley and Irby B. Brown, *Love is All Around: The Making of The Mary Tyler Moore Show* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1989), 3.

³⁶ Spangler, 112.

³⁷ Desjardins.

commanding presence in the workplace, who does not concede to male hegemony. Also, Murphy bears a child at one point during this series' term, which displayed one of the first single, working mothers on television. Through Murphy's effectiveness in her job and her independence as a single mother, the ideals of *The Feminine Mystique* permeate throughout this program.

In paralleling *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *Murphy Brown*, Kay Gardella states, "[Murphy Brown] isn't playing Mary Richards, but Lou Grant," a tough, blunt professional.³⁸ Characters acknowledge her for her persistent interviews, and at one point, the White House banned her from the press room because of her incessant questions. In "Nowhere to Run," Murphy exudes fortitude and grit in investigating a federal prosecutor linked to mob-run prostitution ring. In "Buddies Schmuddies," she displays her determination when she and another co-worker feud in order to discover a new lead for a news story. Both of them lose the story because of their efforts to deceive each other. She not only attains a job beyond the domestic sphere, but she also proves to be an integral member of *F.Y.I.*'s news team, who possesses unremitting motivation to complete her job successfully. In illustrating Murphy as an autonomous, satisfactory career-woman, who does not rely on a husband, *Murphy Brown* invokes many of Friedan's principles and symbolizes *The Feminine Mystique*'s profound influence the appearance of women in sitcoms.

In the fourth season, Murphy gives birth to a child, which adds a unique dynamic compared to other single-women sitcoms. Whereas *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *That Girl* portrayed women working without raising a child, *Murphy Brown* involves a successful career-woman balancing her obligations at work and caring for her newborn child, after the child's father refuses to sacrifice his own lifestyle to function as a parent for the child. The premiere episode of season five, "You Say Potatoe, I Say Potato," depicts Murphy's struggles in transitioning to toiling as a single mother with her sleepless nights and troubles hiring a nanny. Despite her somewhat problematic adjustment as an independent mother, she prevails in managing to juggle both tasks in a successful manner by the end of season five. In sitcoms of the 1950s and early 1960s, motherhood signified that women should remain at home to care for their children, but the image of Murphy Brown working as a mother and as a career-woman opposes those traditional gender roles of those sitcoms. *The Feminine Mystique* criticized the idea that societal traditions predestined women to household duties, once they married and produced children; thus, *Murphy Brown* offers a solution to Friedan's arguments in proving that she possesses the capability to work outside the home and nurture her child.

The depiction of Murphy Brown as strong, flourishing woman with a steady career and a child evolves from Mary Richards and Ann Marie, but all three contain similar characteristics. They rejected the ideals of traditional womanhood by refusing to be restrained in a home as in a domestic role. In working in jobs outside of the household, they provided a living for themselves and refused to depend on a husband for financial stability. These actions correlate to *The Feminine Mystique* because Friedan pinpointed the lack of fulfillment of women, who functioned as strictly housewives; furthermore, Friedan motivated women to escape for the limitations of domesticity and male hegemony. The fact that these women did not conform to the cult of domesticity alludes to Friedan's profound influence on these sitcoms, for they aired after the release of Friedan's monumental book and symbolized many of the goals included in her work.

³⁸ Kay Gardella, "'Murphy': Making It after All," *Daily News*, 14 November 1988: 70.

Sitcoms before *The Feminine Mystique* depicted the repression of women's desires to expand their roles beyond domestic obligations, but after Friedan's book, sitcoms began to display women attempting to live without a husband and earn a living on their own. Betty Friedan deserves an enormous amount of credit for relinquishing the inhibition of many housewives, who yearned to gain more satisfaction in their lives after languishing as homemakers. Sitcoms reflect Friedan's influence on the development of opportunities for women because her book directly motivated the introduction of the first single-woman sitcom, *That Girl*. Following *That Girl*, the status of women on sitcoms started to develop with programs, such as *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *Murphy Brown*, portraying women possessing increasing amounts of freedom and independence. She ignited this transition towards the appearance of a self-sufficient woman in sitcoms, and many series added to the foundation of her writings in later programs by illustrating women with more freedom and equality. If Friedan did not publish her discoveries in *The Feminine Mystique*, then the emergence of the single, independent woman in sitcoms would have been hindered until someone else authored similar findings.

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Breast is Best

Jacquelyn Roebuck

“Every mother ought to nurse her own child, if she is fit to do it,’ counseled the author of a nineteenth-century home medical manual.”¹ How to feed newborns is an incredibly personal decision mothers make. Breastfeeding had always been the norm until the invention of a marketed infant formula product by Justus von Liebig in 1867.² Although they did not always, contemporary doctors advocate breastfeeding. However, is breastfeeding really the better option? This paper will explore the pros and cons of breastfeeding and artificial feeding, as well as the real reasons mothers choose one option over the other.

Formula and breast milk are very similar. Using human breast milk as a guideline, formula manufacturers follow a recipe that includes proteins, lipids, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and water.³ They strive to obtain the same proportions as those found in breast milk. The most common base for infant formula is cow’s milk. Soybeans may also be used as a base as they serve as another source of nutrients necessary for human development.⁴ Formula manufacturers start with a base of either cow’s milk or soybeans, and then add ingredients until the solution is as close to mother’s breast milk as possible.⁵

Formula has come a long way since the first version produced by Justus von Liebig in 1867. However, formula will never precisely match the consistency of a mother’s breast milk. Breast milk is a live substance which contains antibodies to fight off diseases. It is also dynamic because it changes to meet the needs of the child as she/he grows.⁶ Formula, on the other hand, serves as the same, consistent meal for babies on a daily basis. Both styles of feeding described have many advantages and disadvantages in comparison to the one another.

Researchers suggest that breastfeeding is advantageous because it helps lower the risk of infections such as ear infections, diarrhea, respiratory infections, gastrointestinal infections, and meningitis.⁷ It also may protect children against allergies, asthma, diabetes, obesity, and sudden infant death syndrome.⁸ Deborah Gallen, a mother of three, did not breastfeed her first child, Alyssa. Alyssa, now a twenty-one year old college student, has Type Two diabetes.⁹ Although this could simply be a coincidence, perhaps there is a correlation between Deborah’s choice to formula feed and Alyssa’s recently acquired disease.

Another advantage of breastfeeding is that breast milk is free, whereas formula can be extremely expensive. At least \$1,000 to \$2,300 is saved per baby during the first year.¹⁰

¹ Rima D. Apple, *Mothers and Medicine: A Social History of Infant Feeding, 1890-1950* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 3.

² Harvey Levenstein, “‘Best for Babies’ or ‘Preventable Infanticide’?: The Controversy Over Artificial Feeding of Infants, 1800-1930,” AMST 400 Reading Packet. 246.

³ “So What’s Wrong with Formula Anyway?,” *AskDr.Sears.com*, <http://www.breastfeedingsandiego.com/ask_dr_sears.html> (10 December 2011).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Dr. Patrick Pasquariello, *Caring for Your Newborn*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1999), 7.

⁷ Dr. Larissa Hirsch, “Breastfeeding vs. Formula Feeding,” *KidsHealth.org*, November 2008, <http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/breast_bottle_feeding.html#> (20 October 2011).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Deborah Gallen, in discussion with the author, 26 November 2011. See Appendix A.

¹⁰ Debby Amis and Jeanne Green, *Prepared Childbirth: The Family Way*, (Plano: The Family Way Publications, Inc., 2010), 61.

Mothers who breastfeed often make fewer trips to the doctor's office because their children are less likely to become ill; this saves money as well.¹¹ One study estimates that Americans spend an extra \$1.1 to \$1.32 billion of health-care costs each year as a result of choosing not to breastfeed.¹² It is evident that breastfeeding is economically advantageous. Another benefit of breastfeeding is that breast milk is always fresh and available.

Not only is breastfeeding valuable for infants, but it is also valuable for mothers. The skin-to-skin contact breastfeeding employs can create a worthwhile bonding experience between mothers and their babies.¹³ Mothers become confident in their ability to care for their children while also burning calories.¹⁴ Breastfeeding has been shown to lower the risk of breast cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, uterine cancer, and ovarian cancer in women.¹⁵ Research also suggests that mothers return to their pre-pregnant weight earlier if they chose to breastfeed.¹⁶

Another reason some mothers may view breastfeeding as advantageous is because it prevents pregnancy. "While a woman is continuously breastfeeding, her body does not make a hormone that is necessary for ovulation..."¹⁷ This can be beneficial for women who are not attempting to have another child right away. Breastfeeding serves as a form of birth control for up to six months after delivery. This form of birth control requires no prescription and no medical supervision. Research conducted by Planned Parenthood also illustrates that less than one in every one hundred women who breastfeed perfectly and continuously become pregnant.¹⁸

Although there have been many studies that suggest the positive effects of breastfeeding, there are also some negative aspects associated with doing so. Breastfeeding calls for a substantial time commitment on behalf of the mother. This time commitment makes it difficult for women to return to work, run errands, or travel.¹⁹ Furthermore, mothers must be careful about what they eat and drink as their diet affects the consistency of their breast milk.²⁰ These are all components mothers who choose artificial feeding do not have to worry about.

Artificial feeding is very convenient because it "...allows the mother to share the feeding duties and helps her partner to feel more involved in the crucial feeding process and the bonding that often comes with it."²¹ This is one of the reasons shared by Carolyn Roebuck as to why she chose artificial feeding over breastfeeding for her three daughters.²² She wanted her husband to feel as immersed in the process as she did.

Artificial feeding, however, does have its disadvantages. For instance, the preparation of bottles can be time-consuming and tedious. Caregivers must make bottles and nipples sterile so

¹¹ Hirsch.

¹² Jon Weimer, "The Economic Benefits of Breastfeeding: A Review and Analysis," March 2001, <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/fanrr13/fanrr13.pdf>> (20 October 2011).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Amis and Green, 61.

¹⁷ Dr. Vanessa Cullins, "Breastfeeding as Birth Control," *PlannedParenthood.com*, <<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-topics/birth-control/breastfeeding-4219.htm>> (21 November 2011).

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Hirsch.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Carolyn Roebuck, in discussion with the author, 10 November 2011. See Appendix A.

that they do not transmit harmful bacteria to their children.²³ The disposal of these bottles and formula cans is detrimental to the environment because they produce more waste than necessary.²⁴ Moreover, formula can become costly. During the first year of a child's life, the price of basic formula, as stated earlier, can add up to \$2,300 which places an economic burden on some families, particularly those in the lower socioeconomic groups.

Although women in lower socioeconomic groups would save money by breastfeeding, research shows that "... [they] are less likely to breastfeed and to breastfeed for a shorter time than women in higher socioeconomic groups."²⁵ A national survey conducted in 1996, for example, indicates that only forty-two percent of women from households with incomes less than ten thousand dollars breastfeed, and only twelve percent breastfeed for the recommended six months.

Not only does the socioeconomic status of the family seem to make a difference in the method mothers choose for feeding, but the mother's educational background seems to as well. "...More mothers with a higher level of education started breastfeeding and more continued for the first two months after birth."²⁶ Education serves as another factor which influences a mother's decision about infant feeding.

From interviews conducted with various mothers, it can be concluded that women with a bachelor's degree or higher chose to breastfeed over formula feeding. Many of them noted that the reason for this decision was based on the anticipated health benefits for their children. For instance, one mother who was interviewed, Elizabeth Callaghan, advocates breastfeeding so forcefully because she is a certified nurse as well as a certified lactation specialist.²⁷ Through her schooling to achieve these certifications, she gained an extensive background about the benefits of breastfeeding. Elizabeth breastfed her first son until he was two-and-a-half years old.²⁸ She chose to breastfeed beyond the recommended six months because she feels so strongly about the advantages of breastfeeding. She even uses left over breast milk for cooking deserts such as brownies.²⁹ Some of the other mothers who were interviewed learned about the health benefits of breastfeeding during their education throughout college as well.

Another way women are educated about breastfeeding, if they do not learn about it in school, is through the hospital when they delivered their children. Following the delivery of a baby, doctors typically distribute information regarding how to breastfeed and the benefits of doing so. For example, Tiffany Storti, a recently new mother, received two pamphlets of information promoting breastfeeding.³⁰ Also, at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, doctors give mothers a book titled, *Caring for Your Newborn*. In the neonatal intensive care unit of this hospital, doctors distribute a specific breastfeeding booklet for mothers called *Breastfeeding Your Premature Baby*.

Although hospitals such as the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia now promote breastfeeding, they did not always do so. One mother who was interviewed, Patricia Guerin, has six children. Two of her children were born in the 1970s, three in the 1980s, and one in the

²³ Hirsch.

²⁴ Amis and Green, 61.

²⁵ Weimer.

²⁶ Lenie van Rossem, "Are Starting and Continuing Breastfeeding Related to Educational Background? The Generation R Study," *Pediatrics*, 17 February 2009, Proquest. (20 October 2011).

²⁷ Elizabeth Callaghan, in discussion with the author, 4 December 2011. See Appendix A.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Tiffany Storti, in discussion with the author, 6 December 2011. See Appendix A.

1990s.³¹ Arguably she has considerable insight regarding the degree to which doctors promoted, or did not promote, breastfeeding in each decade. When her first child was born in 1975, Patricia wanted nothing more than to breastfeed. However, she began to run a fever, so she was told to pump her milk.³² “The machine they gave me was awful and actually caused me a lot of pain and discomfort,” explained Patricia.³³ No one offered Patricia any support or alternative methods of expressing her milk. In fact, the doctors actually encouraged her to bottle feed. “At twenty-three, I took the doctors’ advice feeling that they knew better than I did.”³⁴ Patricia formula fed her first daughter and let the doctors give her an injection to dry up her breast milk.³⁵

Patricia continued to formula feed her next three children as well. It was not until her fifth child’s birth in 1989 that she had witnessed women her age successfully breastfeed their infants.³⁶ The hospital wherein she delivered her fifth child made her more aware of the health benefits of breastfeeding. Patricia breastfed her youngest two children, and recalls that it was a most rewarding experience.³⁷

Although she was not discouraged about breastfeeding, Carolyn Roebuck, as stated earlier, formula fed her three children. She chose artificial feeding for her daughters because that is what her mother chose for her.³⁸ This reflects another influence, a familial influence, involved in choosing one style of feeding over the other. Elizabeth Hutchison, another mother of three, also formula fed her children because her mother did. Elizabeth’s family had always done it, so she “...never thought twice about it.”³⁹ Elizabeth Callaghan also clarified that she breastfed her children at first simply because her mother did, so that was the way she thought children were supposed to be fed. A reoccurring theme appears that mothers often take into consideration methods older generations of their families used in regards to feeding their children.

Not only is artificial feeding evidently still popular today, but it was also popular during the prewar era. During that time, more and more women, such as those in the lower socioeconomic groups, began to utilize formula feeding as a way of getting back to work sooner. They believed that formula feeding was a safe alternative for their children. However, the malnutrition scare and infant mortality rates that emerged in the nineteenth century were traced back to artificial feeding. Thus, this scare began to greatly affect the way women chose to feed their babies. Europeans tried boiling cow’s milk, the most common substitute for breast milk at the time, in order to make it safer for children. Americans rarely even tried that.⁴⁰ Boiling the milk did little to reduce the dreadful infant mortality rates.⁴¹

Due to the need for some sort of change, doctors, scientists, and entrepreneurs capitalized on the opportunity to market brand-name infant food. Scientist Baron Justus von Liebig, for instance, introduced Liebig’s Soluble Food for Babies into the European market in 1867.⁴² Liebig claimed that the chemical makeup of his formula was “...virtually identical to that of

³¹ Patricia Guerin, in discussion with the author, 20 November 2011. See Appendix A.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Interview with Carolyn Roebuck.

³⁹ Elizabeth Hutchison, in discussion with the author, 4 December 2011. See Appendix A.

⁴⁰ Levenstein, 246.

⁴¹ Ibid, 246.

⁴² Ibid, 246.

mother's milk."⁴³ He was soon followed by a group of imitators such as Mellin's Food and Nestle's Milk Food. These imitators were eager to become involved in the newly formed formula industry.⁴⁴

The development of brand-name infant formula has significantly progressed and improved since its arrival on the American market. Formula manufacturers are constantly updating their recipes in order to keep up with new research pertaining to infant nutrition.⁴⁵ There are now even "ready to feed" formulas on the market for which all mothers have to do is shake the bottle, remove the cap, attach a clean nipple, and begin feeding.

One reason for this significant improvement in formula production is due to the 1906 Food and Drug Act, signed by President Roosevelt as part of his New Deal. This act paved the way for the development of the Food and Drug Administration.⁴⁶ The Food and Drug Administration mandated the Infant Formula Act, passed by Congress in 1980, to insure infant formulas contain all the necessary nutrients for babies.⁴⁷ The Infant Formula Act also establishes quality control procedures, prescribes proper recall procedures, and specifies minimum inspection requirements.⁴⁸

Child welfare improvements began long before the emergence of the Food and Drug Administration and the Infant Formula Act of 1980. Settlement houses, which were part of the Progressive movement in America, were inspired by those created during the settlement movement in England in 1884. The goal of settlement houses was to close the gap between the rich and poor, educated and uneducated. Hopefully, settlement houses would lead to a more democratic and Christian society. "Settlement houses drew young college-educated women workers who aspired to improve the living conditions of poor people."⁴⁹ Settlement house employees believed that, with proper assistance, these impoverished, working-class Americans could help themselves.⁵⁰

Hull House, established in Chicago by Jane Addams, was the most famous settlement house in America. In 1895, Addams and a group of her fellow Hull House companions wrote the *Hull House Maps and Papers*. This document consists of a study of the social conditions of sweatshops and child labor. Alarmed by her findings, Addams pursued the creation of a Children's Bureau to protect and care for mothers and children.⁵¹ Eventually established under President Taft in 1912, the Children's Bureau deeply advocates breastfeeding as the most beneficial method of feeding for both the mother and baby.

The Children's Bureau has remained dedicated to spreading information on breastfeeding since the time of its creation. Soon after its establishment, the Bureau began producing

⁴³ Levenstein, 246.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 246.

⁴⁵ "So What's Wrong with Formula Anyway?"

⁴⁶ "Significant Dates in U.S. Food and Drug Law History," *fda.gov*, 14 October 2010, <<http://www.fda.gov/aboutfda/whatwedo/history/milestones/ucm128305.htm>> (8 December 2011).

⁴⁷ "So What's Wrong with Formula Anyway?"

⁴⁸ "The Infant Formula Act of 1980," *PubMed.gov*, November 1982, <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/7174587>> (8 December 2011).

⁴⁹ Nancy F. Cott, *No Small Courage* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2000), 346.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 346.

⁵¹ Janet Goldman, "Michelle Obama's Support of Breastfeeding is no Slippery Slope to a 'Nanny State'," *momobile.org*, 7 March 2011, <<http://www.momobile.org/MichelleObamasSupportofBreastfeedingisNoSlipperySlopetoaNannyState.html>> (11 December 2011).

inexpensive, easy-to-read pamphlets for mothers concerning breastfeeding. For example, in 1940, the Bureau published a pamphlet titled "Mother! Nurse Your Baby!" which offered detailed advice on the process and advantages of breastfeeding.⁵² By 1955, the Bureau had distributed over thirty-four million copies of "Infant Care," another advice pamphlet.⁵³ Many American mothers apparently had no objections to accepting promotions of breastfeeding in order to ensure the health of their newborns.

Even some mothers in the nineteenth century did whatever it took to breastfeed their babies. One widespread alternative for mothers who were either unable or unwilling to breastfeed their children was wet nursing.⁵⁴ Although she lived during the twentieth century, Regina Novak's grandmother, another woman interviewed about infant feeding, served as a wet nurse. She breastfed her eight children as well as the infant of a neighbor who was not physically well enough to breastfeed herself.⁵⁵ However, unless one had such a caring neighbor, wet nursing in the nineteenth century was generally only preferred among the wealthier classes. Working-class women had to resort to weaning their children soon after birth so that they could return to work earlier and provide for their families.⁵⁶ Women of this socioeconomic status could not afford to have only one parent working.

The increased participation of women in the American labor force is often cited as a cause for the low rates of breastfeeding.⁵⁷ The percentage of women working began to skyrocket especially during and after World War II due to the labor crisis. "More than six million women took jobs during the labor crisis created by the war—an increase in the female labor force of more than fifty percent."⁵⁸ Seventy-five percent of the women who took these jobs were married and presumably had children.⁵⁹

These statistics correlate with why many American infants were breastfed only until around the 1950s. After World War II, infant formula was manufactured on a large-scale and formula feeding became the standard.⁶⁰ Breastfeeding trends fell by fifty percent between 1946 and 1956.⁶¹ Perhaps women longing to stay in the work force after World War II also contributed to the popularity of formula feeding at this time. Breastfeeding and working outside of the home are commonly believed to be incompatible.⁶²

Another reason why some women, particularly in the twenty-first century, may be deterred from breastfeeding is due to a newly conceived argument. This newly founded argument is the realization that dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, also known as DDT, is found in large amounts in some women's breast milk. Studies show that human breast milk frequently contains four times the amount of DDT as the legal amount permitted in cows.⁶³ David Brower,

⁵² Janet Goldman, "Michelle Obama's Support of Breastfeeding is no Slippery Slope to a 'Nanny State'."

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Levenstein, 245.

⁵⁵ Regina Novak, in discussion with the author, 8 December 2011. See Appendix A.

⁵⁶ Levenstein, 246.

⁵⁷ Weimer.

⁵⁸ Cott, 534.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 534.

⁶⁰ Weimer.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ "Healthy Milk, Healthy Baby: Chemical Pollution and Mother's Milk," *nrdc.org*, 22 May 2001, <<http://www.nrdc.org/breastmilk/chem2.asp>> (4 December 2011).

an environmentalist, remarked to a House of Representatives committee that "if it were packaged in any other container, we wouldn't [sic] allow it across state lines."⁶⁴

DDT is an insecticide that is used around the world, mostly on agricultural crops, in order to maintain control over insects that carry diseases. It was not until the 1960s when a group of scientists began to notice that DDT could harm human health. "...Once DDT enters the environment, it can remain for many years."⁶⁵ The main way in which humans come in contact with the chemical is through the consumption of foods. DDT is attracted to fat, which means the levels in a woman's breast milk are often six to seven times higher in her milk than in her blood.⁶⁶

The controversy over choices involving the feeding of infants directly correlates with the myth of gender in American culture. Since the nineteenth century, the cult of domesticity, or the cult of true womanhood, has shaped the lives of many American women. The cult of domesticity refers to the belief that women are expected to stay at home to cook, clean, and care for the children while men are at work outside the home.⁶⁷ By accepting this role as a mother, women are accepting the separation of spheres. A woman's sphere is in the home cooking and cleaning whereas her husband's sphere is outside the boundaries of the home at work and in the community.

Among the countless duties of a housewife is the demanding job of taking care of the children. This job includes nursing infants by either breast or artificial feeding. Those acceptant of the cult of true womanhood would likely choose to breastfeed their children because they consider doing so their responsibility. Experts in the post-World War II era told women that their role as housewives was to catch a man and keep him, bake and cook, make their marriages more exciting, and breastfeed their children.⁶⁸ Mothers who choose to reject the cult of true womanhood, on the other hand, would most likely artificially feed their babies so that they could return to work and other obligations away from the home.

Not only does a mother's choice regarding the way she feeds her children relate to the myth of gender, but it also relates to the myth of time and space in American culture. Some mothers do not have enough time to spare in the day to sit down and breastfeed their child every few hours. Tiffany Storti, for example, chose to formula feed because she was still in school when her baby was born. "Time was an issue," she declared.⁶⁹ Mothers are also incredibly influenced by space, particularly public space. Deborah Gallen, for instance, did not breastfeed her first child because she felt "...breastfeeding would be uncomfortable in front of other people."⁷⁰ Mothers are often insecure about breastfeeding in public and feel others will criticize them for it.

When making the choice whether to breastfeed or formula feed babies, women from the 1860s through today have been bombarded with media influences. In an advertisement for Mellin's Food in 1907, for example, the company portrays twins sitting side by side.⁷¹ One twin, the smaller, less detailed twin, is said to have been nursed at the breast. The other, larger twin is

⁶⁴ "Healthy Milk, Healthy Baby: Chemical Pollution and Mother's Milk."

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Francis Ryan, Class Lecture, 26 October 2009.

⁶⁸ Betty Friedan, "The problem that has no name... I understood first as a woman...," HIS329 Reading Packet. 92.

⁶⁹ Interview with Tiffany Storti.

⁷⁰ Interview with Deborah Gallen.

⁷¹ Apple, 112. See Appendix B.

said to have been raised on Mellin's Food.⁷² Since the Mellin's Food fed twin is depicted as larger and healthier, women viewing this advertisement would feel pressured to buy Mellin's Food so that their baby could grow to be healthy and strong too.

Although this advertisement advocated formula feeding, more contemporary advertisements often oppose formula feeding. In an attempt to counter the United States' low rate of breastfeeding, the Health and Human Services Department commissioned attention-grabbing advertisements attempting in 2007 to convince mothers that their children faced risks of health problems if they did not choose to breastfeed them.⁷³ These advertisements strive to make mothers feel guilty about not breastfeeding if they do not choose to do so. Two of the most straightforward advertisements consist of insulin syringes and asthma inhalers topped with rubber nipples insinuating a baby bottle. Through the subliminal messages integrated throughout these advertisements, federal health officials are suggesting that formula feeding leads to health problems such as diabetes and asthma.

Artwork has also been created over the centuries depicting women actually in the process of feeding their children. Mary Cassatt, for instance, was an impressionist who often illustrated women and children in her paintings.⁷⁴ In Cassatt's 1898 *Louise Breastfeeding Her Child*, a mother is shown breastfeeding her daughter.⁷⁵ The setting is an entirely female space as no males are present. It is the mother's duty, according to the cult of domesticity, to care for her children. It appears that the mother and daughter shown have an intimate, loving relationship. The baby girl is gazing up at her mother admiringly, as the mother simultaneously gazes down at her daughter caringly. Cassatt enables viewers to share this intimate bonding experience between the mother and daughter illustrated, while also enabling viewers to imagine having the same type of experience someday.

Another strategy companies use to sell products is by integrating celebrities into their advertisements. Celebrities often affect the way Americans consume, or do not consume, products on the market. Michelle Obama, for instance, breastfed both of her daughters and is now promoting breastfeeding as a strategy to improve the country's health. There appears to be a positive correlation between breastfeeding and the reduced risk of obesity in infants and mothers.⁷⁶ She is particularly advocating breastfeeding among African Americans because, amongst this group, obesity rates are the highest in the country and breastfeeding rates are the lowest.⁷⁷ Forty percent of Hispanic mothers and thirty-five percent of white mothers breastfeed for the government-recommended six months compared to the minute twenty percent of African American women who breastfeed.⁷⁸

Michelle Obama was not the only first lady to endorse breastfeeding. Laura Bush and her husband, President George Bush, implemented a book series titled *Healthy Start, Grow Smart* which offered advice for the care of newborns up to twelve months old.⁷⁹ The Bush's adopted

⁷² Apple, 112.

⁷³ Madonna Lebling, "HHS Toned Down Breastfeeding Ads," 5 September 2007, <<http://breastfeedingpromotion.blogspot.com/2007/09/hhs-toned-down-breast-feeding-ads.html>> (20 November 2011). See Appendix C.

⁷⁴ Rosina Ryan, Class Lecture, 24 October 2011.

⁷⁵ See Appendix D.

⁷⁶ Malena Amusa, "Michelle Obama Urged to Speak Out for Breastfeeding," *Womensenews.org*, 10 October 2011, <<http://womensenews.org/story/100205/michelle-obama-urged-speak-out-breastfeeding>> (20 October 2011).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Goldman.

this book into the United States' federal government in 2002. The booklet for one-month old babies affirms, "...your breast milk is the perfect food for your baby."⁸⁰ This booklet also discusses the possibility of mothers being able to breastfeed their babies even after they return to work or school.⁸¹

One company, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), went as far as using an image of the infant Jesus to influence the way people view breastfeeding. A controversy emerged on November 8, 2011 in the Van Buren District Court in Paw Paw, Michigan between a mother and the judge of the court.⁸² The mother, while waiting to resolve an issue regarding a speeding ticket she had been given, breastfed her hungry son in the back of the courtroom. Upon seeing this, Judge Robert Hentchel called the mother out on the inappropriateness of her actions. He declared, "It's my courtroom, I decide what's [sic] appropriate in here. The laws don't [sic] apply in a courtroom. The judge's laws apply."⁸³

In reaction to the injustices of this situation, PETA created a billboard promoting breastfeeding. The billboard portrays the Virgin Mary breastfeeding Jesus with the words, "If it was good enough for baby Jesus..." and "The breast is best. Dump dairy."⁸⁴ Driving past a billboard of this stature, Americans, particularly religious Americans, may be influenced to believe that they should breastfeed their children as well. If they have had children that they chose not to breastfeed, mothers may also feel guilty about their decision after seeing this billboard of the Virgin Mary breastfeeding Jesus.

It is difficult to offer a firm conclusion based on this research due to the relatively small sample size. However, it appears that breastfeeding is more beneficial for both the mother and the baby. Factors that affect mothers' choices relating to which method they choose include socioeconomic, educational, familial, and racial influences. Mothers of lower socioeconomic classes tend to formula feed over breastfeeding because they wish to go back to work. Mothers who are well educated with at least a bachelor's degree tend to choose breastfeeding over artificial feeding. Family influences greatly affect the way mothers feed their children because, if they grew up experiencing a certain method of feeding, it may be all they know. Finally, although it is not clear why, African Americans are fifteen percent less likely to breastfeed compared to their Caucasian counterparts.

If further research were to be conducted on this topic, researchers could expand on many of the justifications and claims made in this discussion. For instance, those who are interested in topics such as dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane and breastfeeding in the media could find additional sources and content in order to add to the information provided here. One could also investigate the driving reasons as to why African Americans are less likely to breastfeed than Caucasians. Since a relatively small sample size (n=10) was used in this paper, researchers could interview more mothers on their experiences regarding infant feeding.

Another area of further research that would be the correlation between autism and infant feeding. Research suggests that breastfeeding may prevent autism. This topic could insinuate a whole research project in itself. Researchers could also investigate the relationship between

⁸⁰ Goldman.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Marc Thompson, "PETA Sides With Breastfeeding Mother," *WoodTV.com*, 28 November 2011, <http://www.woodtv.com/dpp/news/local/sw_mich/PETA-sides-with-breastfeeding-mother> (24 November 2011).

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

infant feeding and Intelligence Quotients (IQs). Does breastfeeding really lead to higher IQs like research suggests? If mothers knew more about the benefits of breastfeeding, perhaps more of them would choose breastfeeding over artificial feeding.