

Thrift and the value of scarce resources: A circuit of culture approach to the production, representation and consumption of the cultural value of thrift through the lens of food magazines.

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

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2015

ABSTRACT

Thrift and the value of scarce resources: A circuit of culture approach to the production, representation and consumption of the cultural value of thrift through the lens of food magazines.

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Food media in the UK has grown in popularity, even during the recent recession; at the same time, the recession made thrift a fashionable topic in the public sphere and popular culture. The thesis investigates how the cultural value of thrift is constructed in the context of food magazines.

The thesis employs a multi-method ‘circuit of culture’ approach in order to more adequately assess the producer-text-consumer relationship than is typical in magazines studies. In doing so, the thesis both generates a case study of how the cultural value of thrift is produced, represented and consumed through food magazines, and examines and contextualises the roles of different market actors within the circuit, including both cultural intermediaries (magazine writers) and readers.

The findings demonstrate that thrift is a relational and negotiated concept. The textual analysis of the magazines demonstrates how both time and money are positioned as valuable resources within the magazines. Magazines act as manuals on resource management by offering thrift related advice on a number of issues including when to invest more or less time/ money in food preparation, and practices to reduce waste, in order to demonstrate how food work can be achieved within the constraints of everyday life. In the case of magazine writers and readers, findings reveal how thrift is defined through resource management: thrift is constructed through notions of scarcity and the associated valuing of time and money as resources. As such, individuals’ understandings of thrift—in relation to necessities, competing demands and shifting proximities to scarcity—are primarily shaped by gender (especially feminine norms around motherhood and domestic labour); and, for cultural intermediaries, genre and professional conventions. Finally, the analysis assesses the usefulness of the circuit of culture approach to studies of cultural values and cultural products.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I must thank the Department of Media and Communication at the University of Leicester for their help and support throughout my higher education experience, but especially in the last four years during my time as a PhD student. The active and engaging research and teaching environment within the department has been a great place to build the foundations of my academic career. I must extend my thanks to all the staff and fellow students with whom I have had the honour to work alongside during this time. Specifically, I owe a great deal of gratitude to my supervisors: Jennifer Smith Maguire and Roger Dickinson. Firstly, Jennifer, your undergraduate lectures (all those many years ago now!) inspired me to want to pursue this research idea and I have been immensely grateful to have had you as my supervisor during this time. Secondly, Roger, also many thanks for your input and I promise never to use the word 'interesting' again...! Well at least I shall try!

I have some wonderful friends who have been there for me throughout this time but a special mention must go to a few of you: Dima, for being the best PhD colleague I could have wished for, always being on hand for coffee, cake and advice (three vital components of any PhD!), and for balancing out my desire to cook and eat all the yummy food I was looking at in the food magazines with your study on obesity on the other side of the office! It has been a pleasure to work with you and I can't wait to get started on one of our many ideas for future collaborations. Charlie, for always being there throughout anything and everything over all the years, for distracting me from the stresses with our crazy '*adventures*', far too many trips to Nando's and providing me with a shoulder to cry on whenever it has been needed - I couldn't ask for a better friend.

There are two people though who I really do owe an awful lot to, without their support, love and patience this quite simply would not have happened. To my parents, I cannot possibly thank you enough for your support and encouragement. I thank you for putting up with all that came along with me doing a PhD, it wasn't an easy time. And a big thank you for buying me a new laptop so that I could write my thesis without my computer crashing every 20 minutes! That was much appreciated!

Mum, I am sure it is your fault that I chose to focus my academic attentions on magazines, food and consumer culture, all things that you and I have spent many an hour enjoying together ever since I can remember. Even the interest in thrift quite possibly subconsciously stems from our love of bargain hunting! – We are definitely hedonistic in our thrift pursuits.

Dad, I am sorry for cluttering up the house with my library of magazines and books, I hope that you see it was worth putting up all those many bookcases in the end! I also apologise for the amount of food media you have been made to endure over the years (I'm sure I have converted you in to an avid fan really!).

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The design of any research project develops often out of a number of factors including a series of causal observations which initiate a further development of ideas from their infancy; this study was no different. This chapter outlines the process of the initial conception of my research study which links together the elements of lifestyle magazines, food and thrift in context. In a discussion of why these three topics are relevant for empirical study, I identify gaps in the existing literature. I then use this to briefly examine the key research problem this thesis sets out to address. I set my preliminary observations within a theoretical framework in order to adequately fulfil the needs of the research problem I identified, before setting out a series of defined research questions. Finally an outline of the structure and contents of this thesis is provided.

1.1 The Conception of the Idea and Identification of Gaps in Existing Literature¹

This research idea was originally conceived out of a number of observations during the time period 2007-2009. In the final year of my undergraduate degree I took a consumer culture module, within this module we discussed lifestyle media and how it related to issues of representation, cultural production and consumption. It was a topic that I found interesting on an academic level, but this stemmed from a personal interest in lifestyle magazines as a media format. It was in this module that I first noted a potential gap in the existing research relating to how lifestyle magazines operate in consumer culture. Much of the literature highlighted the necessity to consider not just the text, the audience or the production process in singularity, but that all of these elements required due attention to gain a full insight into the socio-cultural significance of lifestyle media in general (e.g. Bell and Hollows 2005). Yet few studies attempted to do this. In specific relation to magazine research, the majority focused on one, or maybe two of these elements and where studies had addressed all three elements, there were identifiable issues. These issues included not focusing on a single empirical context (Benwell et al 2003) and where there seemed a break in the relationship between participants and the texts used in the study (Jackson et al 2001). Additionally, within the majority of existing magazine studies it there was an emphasis on researching representations of gender within magazines. These studies highlight magazines as a useful lens not just to research and define potential meanings of gender, but also to

¹ A comprehensive review of existing literature will be discussed in Chapter 2.

exemplify how representations of gender as a cultural value are constructed, consumed, and the wider social implications of this. Yet little research seemed to use this identified strength in magazines as an empirical entry point, to look at non-gender issues.

At a similar time it was observable that food media, as part of the lifestyle genre, was becoming increasingly prominent across media formats. Looking at TV listings, magazine shelves and book charts the dominance of food as a topic was apparent. During this time an emerging body of literature on food media was developing for example: food television programmes (de Sollier 2005); cookbooks (Gallegos 2005); gourmet food writing (Johnston and Bauman 2007) and celebrity chefs (Hollows 2003b). Thinking more generally about the study of food in social science research, there is a theoretical understanding that food is useful to consider in relation to other social phenomena. In this sense, the way that food is bound within both necessity, and socio-cultural relationships makes it useful for exploring how and why we perform food related practices (Becker 1996; Warde 1997). There is a range of existing literature on the way that food practices are conducted in relation to social contexts of identity and class (e.g. Germov 2008) and gender (e.g. Giard 1998) for instance. However, reflecting back on the prevalence of food media in relation to this, there is a recognised need for further study which directly contextualises the relationship between the consumption of food media and everyday domestic food practices (Warde 1997:179; Dickinson 2013:452-453).

The final observation that led to the overall theme and development of the study was, to begin with, largely anecdotal. In 2008 a global recession hit, with the developing economic crisis came an emphasis on a series of economic debates in the public sphere. In addition to this, and distinct from these policy lead fiscal discussions, discussions of thrift appeared in mainstream media, popular culture and even politics. At that stage my personal understanding of thrift was largely framed by historical messages of thrift during World War II and the post-war period in the UK as transmitted via my parents and grandparents generation, and I found it interesting that the term was back in fashion. The timing of the recession in relation to the formulation of my research proposal was coincidental but it triggered an interest in how thrift as a cultural value is used and understood in the contemporary context. In pursuing this idea further I observed a number of trends in the existing thrift literature. Firstly, that my connection between thrift to the wartime period was not unique and that this historical aspect was

significant to its social understanding (Witkowski 2003). Secondly, I observed that overall at that stage in 2008, contemporary literature on thrift was relatively sparse and inconsistent in comparison to a substantial body of literature on luxury as a social, cultural and economic concept. Indeed, thrift was often framed as the binary opposition to luxury or extravagance rather than defined within its own context. As such, common notions of thrift are often situated within a wider theme of economic management linked with restraint. And thirdly, a body of literature which took this discussion of restraint a stage further, and argued thrift was exercised through routines and practices with the specific aim of hedonistic shopping: experiencing saving through spending and consumption (e.g. Bardhi and Arnould 2005). It also became apparent within this, that emerging literature on sustainable consumption and wider practices of consumption in relation to the aforementioned notions of thrift might be a useful way to expand on a contemporary understanding of thrift. Overall, the literature was not cohesive in providing an overview of the role and cultural value of thrift in contemporary society. There was a need to develop a rounded understanding of how thrift is constructed and negotiated in the current social context. There seemed to be a lack of research on how thrift practices were defined, instead focusing on how they operated, e.g. how a particular notion of thrift, hedonism or economic management, was practiced by consumers. A clearer understanding of overarching motivations, contemporary ideas of uses and practices would help to better define the cultural value of thrift.

From these three observations, the beginnings of a research idea were born.

1.2 Defining this Research Study

This thesis therefore centres on the intersections between the topics of magazines, food and thrift. The research draws on the strength of magazines as a useful tool to investigate the production and consumption of values, (as previous research had done): specifically the value of thrift in the contemporary context.

The simultaneous rise of food media popularity with the timing of the recession, in combination with an understanding of food as an entry point to study social phenomenon and additionally, circulation figures published in 2009 showing that food magazines were one of the only genres in magazines to see an increase in overall circulation during this first period in recession (Reynolds 2009), suggested that food magazines would provide a useful empirical entry point to do this through.

By situating my research within this, I aim to contribute to the literature on the cultural value of thrift, whilst also addressing a current weakness in magazine research by looking at the elements of the production-representation-consumption process in context through an assessment of the roles of each of these elements as market actors in the process of value production.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

In order to address these issues effectively, I position this thesis broadly within the discipline of cultural studies and the sociology of consumption. This allows for the notions of cultural value to be discussed through a contextualisation of the production of magazines through occupational practices of food writers, representations of values through magazines, and practices of consumption as part of everyday mundane practices in relation to reading, thrift and food. This situates the social significances of thrift practices, not just as distinct from the contact with food media, but as having relationships to it.

In order to capture this production-representation-consumption process, I needed to employ a theoretical framework which would allow me to use food magazines as the empirical entry point to study the notion of thrift as a cultural value. On this basis, a theoretical perspective that brought together the circuit of culture with the cultural economy was selected.

The circuit of culture (Johnson 1986/7; du Gay et al 1997) offered a useful basis for the development of the theoretical aspects being applied to this study. Its premise is to view each cultural process as a series of linked components; as such it links the production, text and consumer as part of a larger process and highlights the relationship between them. This is a key strength of this theory, as it allows for each element to be considered on its own merit, but refers at each stage back to its inextricable link to the process as a whole. In this sense it can be seen to address the limitations found within much of the existing magazine literature, and is the framework employed by the previously mentioned studies by Jackson et al (2001) and Benwell et al (2003) in their attempts to represent the magazine industry and format in its entirety.

However, this theory is not without its weaknesses and it is for this reason that I have also drawn on the cultural economy approach (du Gay 1997; du Gay and Pryke 2002),

to strengthen and add depth to its empirical and theoretical capacities, particularly in regard to the issues of power and value production (Crewe 2003).

I conceptualise the circuit of culture as a process of production and consumption which forms part of the cultural economy. Where not only are goods exchanged for capital but where abstract concepts and ideas also have a value. The cultural economy approach allows for the concept of knowledge and aesthetics to be recognised as having a value, often through their associations to cultural products, and as such playing a role in the practice of economy (du Gay and Pryke 2002). The circuit of culture could not operate effectively in a culture which did not accept the value of aesthetic goods (Amin and Thrift 2002:xvi; du Gay and Pryke 2002). As such, it provides a useful position to examine the value of thrift through the cultural product of the magazines. The cultural economy framework has also been highlighted as useful in viewing the magazine industry as a discursive site for value formation based not just on organisational practices but on the cultural practices carried out by relevant market actors, as a way of shaping and constructing meaning (Gough-Yates 2003).

1.4 Research Questions

The aim of this research as outlined above is to contribute a comprehensive contemporary definition of thrift, through the lens of food magazines. In doing this, a case study of how magazines contribute to the representation, production and consumption of cultural values would be constructed. Based on the theoretical framework I also wanted to assess the usefulness of the circuit of culture approach, given its perceived importance and yet lack of presence in existing literature. From this number of research questions were developed:

RQ1: How can we define the cultural value of thrift?

RQ1.1: How do food magazines represent messages of thrift?

RQ1.2: What role do the food writers play in producing the magazine and in turn the cultural value of thrift?

RQ1.3: How are messages of thrift viewed by readers of food magazines and how do they negotiate with these messages in everyday life?

RQ2: What are the benefits and limitations to the circuit of culture as a theoretical framework?

1.5 Thesis Outline

The overall structure of this thesis takes the form of eight chapters, including this introduction. The following chapter discusses the key literature that helped to shape and define this study, from the development of the research questions to informing the methodological design and analysis. It starts by outlining relevant literature about the theoretical framework, followed by a discussion of existing studies in relevant areas of interest: Magazines, food and thrift. Within these themes, key concepts will be highlighted to draw attention to the theoretical features which contextualise this study in relation to existing studies and their relationship to the circuit of culture framework where appropriate.

The third chapter outlines the methodological design applied to this research, including the criteria for sampling, methods of data collection for the three elements of representation, production and consumption, and the technique and process of data analysis employed. The following three chapters then discuss the findings from the empirical data analysis.

The first of the empirical chapters, chapter four, focuses on the representations of thrift found within the food magazines *BBC Good Food* and *Delicious*: it also reflects on the overall content of the magazines and the roles and representations of certain key social actors that are depicted within the magazines.

Chapter five discusses the role of the food writers within the context of magazine and value production. It outlines: their occupational roles in relation to the magazine industry and how they can be conceptualised as cultural intermediaries; the tactics and devices they use to legitimise their own expert status and the content that they produce; their understandings of their audiences, how they relate to this group and their role as ‘proxy consumers’ (Ennis 2005); and specifically, how they conceptualise the cultural value of thrift.

Chapter six details the relationship between readers and the food magazines that they read. It discusses: how they use the magazines and define its purposes in relation to their own personal dispositions; the level of trust that they place on the magazines in giving them good advice; their understanding around the value of thrift; and how their everyday food practices form an important connection between the relationships of their

personal situations, gender, their magazine consumption, and their practices and personal notions of thrift.

The seventh chapter provides a discussion that draws together the key findings from the previous three empirical chapters. It directly addresses the research questions posed earlier in this chapter. Discussions of the overarching key themes associated to the value of thrift are used to craft a definition of thrift based upon them. It highlights some of the key findings that the circuit of culture allowed the exploration of including where the elements within the circuit reinforce and contradict their other elements and the significances that this raises. Finally, it assesses the overall of the framework of the circuit of culture.

The final chapter briefly re-asserts the key findings of the study and its contribution to both thrift and magazine research, and offers some reflections and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review brings together a summary of relevant existing literature in a number of key areas as highlighted in Chapter 1. Drawing on the existing body of work allowed me to frame my own research, and by identifying key areas of knowledge and identifying gaps in the work I could start to situate my contribution to the field. In addition, an understanding of what previous studies had contributed to my research design will be discussed in chapter 3, and the analysis of my data in chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Firstly I shall discuss the theoretical framework applied to this study, drawing on cultural studies, the circuit of culture and issues of value production. Through this, and the initial observations outlined in the Chapter 1, I shall move on to outline details of relevant existing studies on lifestyle magazines, food and thrift.

2.1 Situating the Theoretical Framework

This study situates itself broadly within the discipline of cultural studies. In order to contextualise this choice, first a brief account of some of the important theoretical elements of cultural studies in relation to understanding studies of the media is necessary, before looking at how some of the core cultural studies principles of this can help address the aims of the study in studying magazines and cultural value.

Cultural studies as a discipline saw an attempt to study the role of culture and its relationships to, the production and consumption of everyday life, identity, knowledge and power (Hartley 2003: 3-4). This signalled a cultural turn in the 1970s where culture became the dominant focus for studies and distanced research away from understanding economic determinism as underpinning many societal structures, to culture and cultural texts being recognised as key sites of meaning in social processes. This was framed by discussions of socio-political structures, but centred on the role that culture played in creating, disseminating and negotiating these ideas (Bennett 1986). This academic shift was also being echoed in hierarchies of cultural products, with the stronghold of traditional cultural forms weakening and a rise of new and varied ones emerging (Jacobs and Hanrahan 2005:9).

Cultural studies forefronts a discussion of ideology in order to address these issues in theory and practice. In the 1970s this was influenced by notions of ideology as put forward by Althusser. For Althusser (1970), ideology was structured through ideological discourses that reflected the interests of the dominant elite. Althusser

proposed that these discourses were embedded and transmitted through ‘ideological state apparatus’ (ISAs) e.g. the media. In this sense, the media reproduces the interests of the elite and this serves to oppress other conflicting interests, such as those held by the working class. Through this, dominance of the elite and of capitalist systems are legitimised and made natural which in turn maintains social order in favour of the elite class. Ideology within this concept is not just abstract, it manifests itself through the ISAs and material practices that individuals perform to not only ensure one’s position within society is understood, but that it is reproduced and maintained in real life (Althusser 1970; Storey 2006:278). In this perspective, media texts transmit constructed ideological messages to audiences, the power of the media as an ISA meant that these messages are accepted and normalised by audiences. Studies from this time focused on the analysis of media texts to explore the way that ideological structures imposed meanings and organised the practices of consumers, however no account of the role of producers or consumers in these processes was given (Bennett 1986).

By the end of the 1970s there was a shift away from Althusser’s theory of ideology, in part to highlight weaknesses of the model in addressing culture as central to meaning making as seen in the cultural turn, to the Gramscian concept of hegemony. The ruling class work to maintain their dominant position, and for their ideologies to be accepted as the universal interests of society, through the process of achieving hegemony. This involves giving space to what are considered oppositional ideas to sit alongside those traditionally seen as the dominant culture’s ideologies. The struggle between these two groups creates a space for debate, and articulated these oppositional interests to the dominant classes in a way that allowed the dominant ideologies to maintain their social standing but that was not oppressive of the other classes (Bennett 1986). For cultural studies scholars, this allowed for media texts to be seen as an arena for political debate rather than just for the transmission of ideological messages and for the conceptualisation of active audiences in this process (Bennett 1986). As such media texts became sites where dominant messages could sit alongside views which represented oppositional understandings of society and societal roles in a way that Althusserian studies did not conceptualise. This in turn gave agency to consumers to, at least in theory, have a space for their voices to be heard above that of the dominant elite (Gough-Yates 2003:11)². It also accounted for the seeming democratisation of cultural

² Shifts within magazine research specifically are outlined later in this chapter.

forms as recognised alongside the cultural turn, whereby space was given to emerging non-traditional formats. Accompanying these shifts in theoretical position was also a methodological development that saw the increased use of ethnographic methods to allow these concepts to be explored more effectively (Gough-Yates 2003).

This new ethnographic approach for media research is often referred to as new audience research. Focusing on audiences of popular and everyday cultural products, new audience research encapsulates a move away from text based studies, focused on the content of ideological messages, to employing qualitative methods that could generate rich data designed to explain how audiences experience media and cultural texts for themselves. This approach allowed for a better account of how media audiences use and interact with the texts they consume, and how/if meaning is created through these processes, as it was the audience's discursive opinions that were of interest (Hermes 1995; Hartley 2002). Additionally, these studies attempt to situate themselves within wider contexts (Bennett 1986; Hartley 2002). This has been identified within magazine research as useful for considering the complex relationships of magazines as a cultural text to their socio-cultural contexts (e.g. Hermes 1995; Gough-Yates 2003).

It is not just the applicability to magazine research that makes cultural studies appropriate for theoretically grounding this study. Considering the research questions that this study set out to address in exploring how the cultural value of thrift is formed through, and at the intersections of, relationships between everyday practices, wider social contexts and market actors, the discursive nature of cultural studies approaches, in combination with the position that value is not being economically determined are vital (Johnson 1986/7; du Gay et al 1997:12-15; Grossberg 2010:8).

du Gay et al suggest that the circuit of culture, stemming from the cultural studies discipline, provides an appropriate theoretical approach for studying these relationships in relation to cultural artefacts, which magazines can be considered as. There are two key versions of the circuit of culture; the first suggested by Johnson (1986/7), and the second by du Gay et al (1997). I have drawn on the strengths of both versions to apply to the study of food magazines.

Johnson laid out four elements within his version of the circuit of culture, 'production', 'texts', 'readings' and 'lived cultures'. Using a cyclic arrow to demonstrate how cultural production is not a linear process (see diagrammatic representation: Johnson

1986/7:47). In addition he suggests that there are a number of conditions influencing these key elements. For production, these conditions lay out the processes and factors that influence the overall production practice(s) and outcome(s). Although not explicit, Johnson's conception of these conditions links to Bourdieu's (1984) theory of habitus or du Gay and Pryke's (2004) theory of dispositions. It contextualises the producers essentially as cultural intermediaries where their personal and work preferences and knowledge influence their work of cultural production. Likewise, for the reading element, conditions refer to interpretations in relation to concrete and abstract meanings, or as Baudrillard (1988) proposed 'use' and 'cultural' values. Baudrillard acknowledges that background (habitus and dispositions) of readers who are evaluating the meanings of text will affect the interpretations that they make, which could be expanded on by reference to Hall's (1980) process of decoding. Finally, 'lived conditions' are seen within the contexts of wider social relationships connected to the research subject, as any product or idea cannot be understood without consideration of its social relationships to other sites of interest and influence.

du Gay et al's (1997) circuit of culture shares the same principles as Johnson's, but there are some distinctions. Firstly this version of the circuit offers five key elements: 'Representation', 'identity', 'production', 'consumption' and 'regulation'. A key point of difference is that du Gay et al do not make explicit reference to the 'conditions' applied by Johnson. Instead they incorporate regulation (which includes the social context that Johnson refers) and identity (likewise referencing issues of habitus, but moving beyond this, representations of identity and the performance of identity) as individual, and therefore relational, elements within the circuit itself and make it explicit that these are necessary (for diagram see du Gay et al 1997:3).

du Gay et al use multi-directional arrows between and across the elements to demonstrate the multi-influential relationship and transfer of value and negotiation between these elements instead of the one directional cyclic arrow used by Johnson. This highlights their attempt to emphasise the circuit nature of their circuit of culture something which is accentuated in the text accompanying their diagrammatic representation (1997:4) as they see Johnson's circuit as a contradictorily linear process, and attempt to address concerns over the circuit's validity beyond being a conceptual diagram that does not account for power relations (Clarke 1991; Cruz and Lewis, 1994; Ferguson and Golding 1997; Taylor et al 2002).

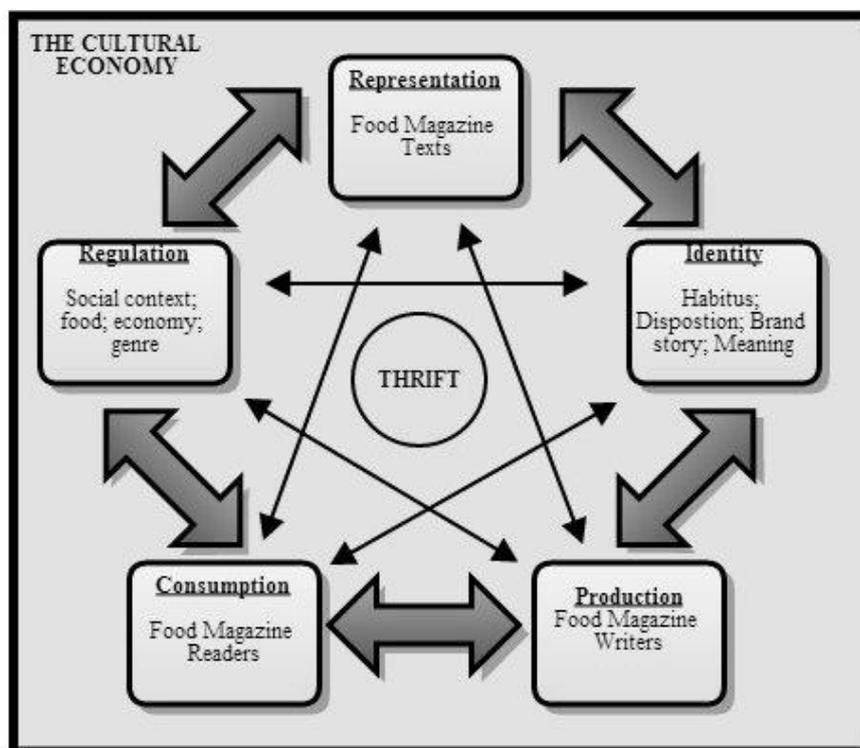
My interpretation is most closely aligned to du Gay et al's circuit with reference to the overlapping and interconnected elements they describe (1997:4). However it is useful to think with Johnson's conditions and his reference to social relationships as they reinforce the need for cultural products, including magazines, to be considered as part of a contextual process that should not be looked at from a single perspective of text or consumption. After considering the nature of magazines and reflecting on previous magazine research, as will be discussed later within this review, I mapped the identified elements to the circuit of culture concept. Within this study the representation, production, and consumption elements within the circuit were investigated through specific empirical research into food magazines, food writers as producers, and food magazine readers as consumers respectively. The elements of regulation and identity are studied throughout these processes as they are embedded into the other three elements. Regulation here is defined by food culture, and the socio-economic climate the study was conducted in. Identity is discussed in a number of ways throughout the analysis whilst looking at the other elements; including the habitus and dispositions held by producers and consumers (much in the way that Johnson uses social conditions); the identity of the magazines titles in terms of their uses, purposes and brand stories; and finally in defining and describing thrift, a sense of identity for the cultural value of thrift is found. I propose that the cultural value of thrift is situated in the centre of the circuit of culture and the multidirectional connections, as this is where the concept of value is negotiated, as value is formed in each of the elements and at the intersections of the discursive relationships between them.

Whilst this gives a clear methodological approach to studying the production-text-consumer relationship as it outlines the empirical focuses to study, and indicates (through the multidirectional arrows within the circuit) intersections and relationships for analysis, it does not seem to provide a clear theoretical position in how to approach the study of value or other cultural concepts, which du Gay et al (1997) note is one of the key purposes of the circuit.

Therefore I position the circuit of culture as contextualised within the cultural economy. The cultural economy allows for a discussion on how cultural value formation takes place. It frames products and services as cultural goods, and as sites and sources of value which transmit and circulate between producers and consumers (du Gay and Pryke 2002; Amin and Thrift 2004). This both matches the requirements of the study, in

terms of addressing the formation of the cultural value of thrift, and fits within the circuit of culture in terms of its understanding of the relationship between market actors. Other contemporary magazine research has also drawn upon the cultural economy to allow for relationships between market-actors in the process of production to be contextualised through mediating between culture and economy (Jackson et al 2001; Gough-Yates 2003).

Figure 1: My conceptualisation and application of the Circuit of Culture



(Based on du Gay et al 1997:3; drawing on Johnson 1986/7; du gay and Pryke 2002; Amin and Thrift 2004; du Gay 2004)

At this stage it is therefore appropriate to give due consideration to this concept of value and its formation. Continuing on from the cultural turn by the cultural studies perspective, value is not just economically determined, but culturally constructed. Baudrillard (1988) signals this shift away from viewing value through the Marxist traditions of ‘use’ and ‘exchange’ value, whereby the qualities (uses) of any given good is assessed and a (usually) monetary exchange takes place that is equivocal with its calculated qualities, to a concept of value that allows for the social and cultural status of

‘signs’ to also have value. This response echoes the understanding that cultural products and artefacts cannot be considered in monetary terms alone, as it is not only money being circulated in the exchange relationship but social and cultural meanings and messages.

However, the definition of value in a cultural sense is often considered in existing literature to be ‘elusive’ because of the ingrained and multifaceted relationships between value in terms of use, exchange, and signs within the economy and more generally within everyday life, therefore value is only implicit within the context of the studies and not explicitly conceptualised (Karababa and Kjeldgaard 2014:119). Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) suggest that this body of literature which connects itself to so many notions of value, (e.g. ‘use value...aesthetic value...identity value...economic value...symbolic value’ etc. p.119) with little conceptualisation of value overall, adds to the problem of defining value.

The term in everyday use is both used to describe financial and moral issues (Bolin 2011:2). Indeed, for these reasons Magendanz (2003) suggests that the concept of value is ‘indefinable’. However, other authors take steps to arrive at useful concepts of value through considerations of these complex relationships to socio-economic discussions, and how value is part of everyday life.

One of the problematic aspects of defining value, is that value is not intrinsically found in objects, it is attributed as part of ‘complex systems’ of attributing and understanding ‘worth’ (Grossberg 2010:104), where ‘a thing is *given* a value, and hence *also becomes* the value it has been given’ (Bolin 2011:16). In this sense value is socially and cultural produced, through interactions with products and ideas, meaning that value is always relational and context dependent (Holbrook 1999). This production of value does not just happen at the point of production in the traditional sense, but happens in the relationship between production and consumption as both add, judge and negotiate with concepts of value (Bolin 2011:25-44). These negotiations or ‘struggles’ are seen as fundamental to the process of creating value (Bourdieu).

This highlights an understanding of the processes in which conceptualisations of value can be found, and gives methodological insights in how to adequately approach the investigation of value formation (i.e. at the both the points of and intersection between

producer-object-consumer). It does not serve to give a working definition of value to which other research can align itself.

Drawing on Miller's (2008) work on 'the uses of value' delivers a more useful proposition. Miller provides a comprehensive discussion on how value can be conceptualised in everyday life, and in turn its use in academic studies. It acknowledges the tensions of multiple applications of the term and although Miller is reluctant to call it a definition offers an empirically based account of value not as implicit in context as other studies but with a particular set of understandings that help to conceptualise value.

Miller's work stemmed from observations about the common usage of the term value in everyday life where it is 'used by more or less everyone at more or less anytime' (p.1123), and contradictorily as both 'value as price' and 'value as priceless' (p.1122). From this he notes the semantic uses of value to both describe 'monetary worth' and things that have worth or 'significance' precisely because they cannot be considered in relation to money. For Miller, this meant that this first use was related to what should be considered value (economic), whilst the latter to values (moral), however he was concerned that 'people seemed blissfully unconcerned with the fact they use a single term *value*' to mean both these things (p.1123). Through consideration of this in theory and in relation to empirical data, Miller suggests that this single term use is done purposefully. Using value to mean both value, and values, combines 'calculations' of value with 'qualitative' values (p.1125) and 'bridges the distance between the economic and the other-than-economic' in experience and practice within everyday life (p.1127). Additionally it facilitates the opportunity for value to impact upon values and values to impact on value (p.1130), demonstrating how bridging the gap in value also serves to demonstrate how value effects both people's perceptions and practices in context.

The use of value, as a term, is given a sense of definition that is applicable for use in research contexts. It also provides scope for concepts that are related within everyday life, but possibly overlooked in some forms of analysis through attempts to disentangle practices and notions from one another (i.e. Marxist understandings of use and exchange value), to be considered in context together. This presents the opportunity for rich, and representative, data to be collected on value.

It is this bridging concept of value that will be employed throughout this study. In this sense the term value, allows for notions of thrift as an inalienable value (i.e. qualitative

moral and abstract values around thrift) to be considered both in relation to and compared with practices of thrift as alienable value (i.e. practices that involve calculations of thrift). It also allows for articulation of thrift as a value across the production-text-consumer relationship, echoing the methodological needs for studying both magazines, and value, as highlighted by Bolin above.

This definition of value as applied to thrift, sits in the centre of the circuit of culture concept applied to this study (fig.1). Giving definition to value, i.e. what is being produced by the circuit, helps to define the purpose of the circuit itself and provides a more tangible way of assessing the abstract and real moments in and between the elements within the circuit. However the process of its formation needs further consideration. The cultural economic approach as suggested above provides a relevant way for this to be discussed. Cultural accounts of economy can be seen as part of the cultural turn taken by the social sciences, whereby economy and cultural become interlinked (Amin and Thrift 2004:x-xii).

As part of this, cultural processes add both value, and value(s), in the sense that Miller described, to cultural products or artefacts. The cultural economy approach also considers that value is not just made in the production process and then consumed. Value is formed through the cultural processes of both production and consumption. This mirrors much of the literature above on the value as a concept, whereby value is articulated so often in terms of this relationship.

What is certain is that this is more than simply analyzing each moment in a production or consumption process, and then seeing how it is culturally inflected and how the cultural inflection affects economic “outcomes”. Rather, it is an attempt to identify the varied impulses and articulations through which value is formed, added and circulated. (Amin and Thrift 2004:xiv-xv)

This overall approach of the cultural economy fits well with the circuit of culture framework and expands upon understandings of each of the elements within the circuit being part of the cultural economy and fundamentally involved in activities of economy through value formation. The cultural economy literature moves forward from the circuit of culture which just offers suggestions on what and where analysis should take place but theorises approaches to this through particular understandings of value, and cultural production and consumption.

The cultural economic approach calls for the elements of production and consumption not to be considered in isolation, as it is within the ‘spaces’ between them, that ‘action is formatted’ and interactions with economic processes become meaningful (du Gay and Pryke 2002:2). It is these interactions that help to shape and form economic identities (du Gay et al 1997:4-5). In this sense, an economic identity is not necessarily monetary, but instead value in the sense that Miller (2008) described above. This can be understood in relation to both abstract understandings of value and through practices of it, by market actors (Amin and Thrift 2004:xxi).

For Amin and Thrift, actors involved in the process of value formation could be ‘human’ or indeed ‘non-human’. This provides a useful conceptualisation for the circuit of culture, as it provides a way to understand how all the elements within the circuit are actors with the agency to influence and inform the production of value, including the texts themselves and concepts of regulation and identity; as opposed to only understanding the human producers and consumers in this way.

Regulation and identity can be seen as having become form part of the organisation of culture, it is in this role that they engage with value formation (du Gay and Pryke 2002:6; Amin and Thrift 2004:xv). They also serve as discursive moments that allow for agreement to be made, and negotiations held, over value (Bolin 2011:17).

The texts within the circuit also allow for this moment of discursive value formation. In specific relation to this study, magazines are seen as meaningful goods that are items of value through their place in the market as aesthetic goods (du Gay and Pryke 2002:7), and also play a role in forming values for others through their content and representations (Bolin 2011:16).

The consumer’s role in value formation is often conceptualised in relation to practice. ‘Practices consist of discursive and tacit knowledge sometimes grouped together as competences, materials and affective engagements’ (Arnould 2014:129). Mundane and even abstract acts of consumption form part of culturally constructed economies of value, not in relation to economics in the traditional sense, but in social relationships to other (both human and non-human) and in their experiences of these interactions (Amin and Thrift 2004:xxvi).

Cultural economy in terms of production is also interested in the day-to-day practices of creative workers (du Gay and Pryke 2002:1; Amin and Thrift 2004:xxii), and how their personal identities and occupational roles are integrated into the formation of value. Cultural intermediaries are a useful theoretical perspective to discuss this aspect of production. The cultural intermediary literature also provides insight in to an area of value formation literature that is well defined, and demonstrates why issues of cultural and value production are worthy of study, given the complex relationships between the market actors in the circuit of culture and their potential influences on value.

I propose that the cultural economy approach with conceptualisations of value builds on the circuit of culture by giving the elements a theoretical and contextual significance to the overall purpose of forming value and meaning. The cultural economy literature signposts specific theories which enable the elements of circuit to be fully explored and be analysed in context through the cultural economy itself and the circuit of culture for, in this case food magazines in relation to the formation of value. The following sections in this chapter will serve to consider these and other relevant theories, in specific reference to the empirical focus of this study: Magazines, food and thrift.

2.2 Mapping the Study of Magazines

Existing magazine research highlights a number of debates primarily about magazine ideology, the role of feminism within these studies, and methodological approaches to the study of magazines, with the trajectory of magazine research mirroring that of the discipline of cultural studies as outlined above.

Gough-Yates (2004), and to a lesser extent Hermes (1997), provide a useful history charting the development of women's magazine studies. The study of magazines has primarily been concerned about magazines in terms of their role in issues of gender identity formation. This stems from on the one hand the feminist political perspectives at the time. Whilst on the other, a conceptualisation of magazines as guides that women use to help construct identity in practice through the advice that is offered on how all aspects of women's lifestyles should be performed (Ballaster et al 1991:124; Braithwaite 1995:10).

This was a concern for feminist scholars who considered media representations as 'site[s] through which oppressive feminine identities are constructed and disseminated'

(Gough-Yates 2003:7). This is in part contextualised by the feminist political perspectives of the time, following the first wave of feminism that saw equal voting rights for women pursued, the second wave of feminist politics in the 1960s and 70s turned its attention to addressing 'women's oppression', and the idea that personal identities were also political sites. Issues of sexism were identified as forms of oppression that women were confronted by in everyday life which promoted and reaffirmed notions of gender inequality and emphasised the domestic and sexual identities of women (Krolokke and Sorensen 2006:7-10). Studies from this era therefore framed magazines as ideological tools and problematic vehicles for representations of gender identities, as magazines served to promote gender stereotypes and social inequalities that echoed those found in socio-political spheres at the time (Hermes 1997:223). The multiple representations of gender found within magazines provided an illusion of equality of women, through showing all the things women could be, whilst simultaneously only supporting a limited range of feminine identities. This reinforced patriarchal and capitalist viewpoints (Friedan 1963; McRobbie 1982). In this sense, although magazines provided seemingly varied concepts of gender identity they were actually often distorted images that reinforced women as weaker and subservient to men, and emphasised the relationship between femininity and the domestic sphere, rather than true reflections of potential feminine identities (Friedan 1963; McRobbie 1978, 1991).

The research at this time made little effort to translate this theory to how readers' lives were impacted upon through their exposure to such messages (Friedan 1963; Gough-Yates 2003:8). The methodological approach of these studies focused on the magazines, seeing little need to conduct research with readers because the magazines were ideological texts designed to transmit definitive discourses and messages, therefore the readers were considered irrelevant in the process of creating meaning (e.g. Friedan 1963; McRobbie; 1978). During this time, limited studies on magazine production focused on the organisational structure of the magazine market and industry (Barrell and Braithwaite 1988), or suggested that economic determinism over-ruled the capacity for creative work to be done in magazines (Ferguson 1983). Ferguson here outlined that although editors were key in shaping how femininity was constructed within the magazine, this was done through the frames of dominant, and arguably oppressive, frameworks of ideology (1983:187; Gough-Yates 2003:14-15). These studies therefore

assessed the assumed patriarchal and capitalist tendencies of production, rather than aspects of cultural production.

Following this, research shifted to view the influence of the magazine as more than an abstract ideological text and as being able to impact on women's everyday lives and concepts of the self. Studies drew on concepts of 'ideological state apparatus' (Althusser 1970) to suggest that ideologies in magazines could have 'material form' when enacted through frameworks of practices (Gough-Yates 2003:8). Magazines were seen as a site for subjectification where women recognised and confirmed their own identities through the frameworks of representations found in the magazines (e.g. Winship 1978). This subjectification works to reproduce these subject positions within the magazines and therefore naturalise these identities through practice in everyday life (Hermes 1997; 223). These studies placed magazines within larger social contexts than previous research had done, and allowed attention to be paid to the role of magazines in shaping identities and not just to assessing the stereotyped images and representations within the magazines (Hermes 1997:223). However, both these early approaches ignored the process of cultural production and the potential for readers to negotiate with these subjectifications of women, this could help to contextualise magazines as a potential discursive site for at the very least negotiation with, and at best resistance against, oppressive identity representations. Instead these studies suggest that magazines ensure that only these patriarchal ideas are legitimised (Gough-Yates 2003:7-9).

Throughout this phase of research discussions of subjectivity started to emerge as magazines were seen to offer up a space for the subjectification of readers. Subjectivity is about a sense of, and the formation of, the self. This concept accounts for the investment in both abstract identities as formed in magazines and those formed through practice in the social context that readers are situated (Woodward 1997a:39). Media texts become sites for 'negotiations' around subjectivities and identities of audiences (Gledhill 2006), and a useful tool in the process of understanding subjectivities around gender. The increasing popularity in these titles indicated that readers were seeking out help to guide the process of subjectification through legitimised forms of advice, when self-mastery of the subject had not been achieved (2005:179-184), linking to

understandings of magazines as guides, this also frames identity as a problem that needs to be continually worked upon (Hall 1996).

Throughout their content, magazines offer multiple identities of women, based upon representations of what women should be within society. These ideological representations inform the concept of the subject of women and therefore serve to reinforce ideological positions and conventions (Gledhill 2006; Storey 2006). Through acts of interpellation, readers are 'made subjects of, and subjected to, specific ideological discourses and subject positions' (Storey 2006:276) in a process that allows readers, in the way described above, to align and identify themselves with frameworks of women's identities represented in the magazines (Winship 1978; Blood 2005; Storey 2006 Glapka 2014:11). Thus magazines become sites for the formation and negotiation of the self. Outside of this abstract notion of the subject, readers are not only subjected to the legitimised concepts of the self as presented within magazines, but must decide how/if to incorporate these in to their own sense of identity in practice. This decision is informed and constrained by the context of their personal situation including the roles they play as women generally, workers, mothers, sexual objects etc. (Woodward 1997a). It is at this juncture between ideology and social context that the process of subjectification and identity construction takes place (Glapka 2014:193-198; for a wider discussion see Hall 1996; Woodward 1997a:39). This material form of subjectivity is more adequately addressed in the next phases on magazine research.

The next phase of research still had an over-reliance on the text, but with a greater consideration given to how readers view texts. Taking a Gramscian view and drawing on hegemony theory, magazines were conceptualised as a way of negotiating oppressive views and allowing the transmission of both dominant and more alternative ideas. This offered potential for political debate, not just the dissemination of ideology (Gough-Yates 2003:10). Winship (1987) identified a rise in political discussion in women's magazines in the 1960s on issues which previously would have been considered too 'feminist' to be found within magazines (p.92). Despite this development, Winship, and others including McCracken (1993), acknowledged that these political messages were largely superficial in their approach and that advice given on how to overcome such issues placed responsibility with the individual reader, rather than recognising a need for wider social change, so only offered a limited resistance to ideological messages (Gough-Yates 2003:11).

Another shift within this period of research saw the magazine as a site of pleasure, offering women moments of relaxation and escape, although still mediated and structured by the ideological messages within the magazine (Winship 1987:52). These findings stemmed from theoretical and methodological developments which considered the magazine readers and not just the text. Winship positioned herself not just as the researcher, but as a reader of the magazines. This is problematic in terms of discussing the motivations of magazine readers overall, but drew attention to the process of reading as part of a process that extends beyond the texts themselves. McCracken interviewed readers in conjunction with textual analysis to allow for this wider discussion of readers, however, both these studies still failed to fully explore the direct relationship between the elements of text and reader, as analysis still prioritised the text. This consideration of interactions between text and consumers did begin to introduce a triangulation approach to magazine research which captured both ethnographic and textual data, because of this the next movement in research paid closer attention to the readers of magazines as meaning makers (e.g.; Ballaster et al 1991; Hermes 1995).

Ethnographic approaches began to identify women's magazines as part of discursive processes which placed emphasis on how readers engaged with and read texts in context with their social surroundings. This echoed a shift in the feminist political sphere, a third wave of feminist thinking was giving more agency to individuals and women to create and perform their own identities not through following structured ideologies but through critical engagement and reflection of these ideas (Krolokke and Sorensen 2006:15-21). Ballaster et al (1991) found that readers were skilled in being critical of the content within the magazines (p.126-137), and demonstrated scepticism about the nature of gender messages and ideals promoted within the magazines (p.127). This suggested that readers were to some extent aware of the ideological implications of magazine messages. However, Ballaster et al still placed greater emphasis on the power of magazines as texts and to some extent undermined their findings about reader's abilities to recognise, negotiate with and dismiss ideological messages (p.131).

Hermes (1995) was critical of Ballaster et al's approach in this sense suggesting that the reader's voice needed to be more widely recognised (p.3-5). Inspired by Radway's (1984) approach to the study of women reading romance novels, Hermes conducted 80 in-depth interviews with readers of magazines to assess the discursive processes and

practices of readers and to demonstrate how magazines 'become meaningful exclusively through the perception of their readers' (1995:6) as situated in everyday use. However, Hermes found little connection between the readers and the magazines, readers could not distinguish explanations of reading and their experience of everyday life, instead suggested the uses of and attributed meanings to magazines were often abstracted from the magazine text itself. This study shifted away from the idea of the magazine as an ideologically embedded text, where negotiation of meaning was not possible beyond the representations within the magazines, so concrete connection between reading of these texts and impact on everyday life could be identified. The study paid no attention to the text or production processes within the process of meaning-making, as such although this study marks an important shift in paradigm; it arguably has the same limitations of the previous phases of study. Instead of being over-reliant on text, here the study is over-reliant on the readers as meaning-makers, gave little consideration to the magazine itself. Hermes did not consider this to be problematic, arguing that text analysis overly concerns itself with the academics' own readings of the magazine (much as Winship's study had been criticised for) and suggested that this can 'drown out the account of readers' (p.5).

Up until this point there has been a lack of research on the role of production in magazine research. In the 2000s we see a number of key studies arose that attempted to theorise the links between production, representation and identity.

Gough-Yates (2003) noted that cultural processes in production needed to be adequately studied, as they also impacted on the overall function of the magazine within the market place and that the magazine industry should not be studied purely through organisational or economic terms alone. Gough-Yates and Crewe (2003) both focus on the practitioners involved in magazine production. These studies indicate the role as editors (Crewe 2003; Gough-Yates 2003) and writers more generally, as vital to the overall production of discourses and therefore representations of identity within the magazines, specifically they note the special position that these producers are in. Producers are situated as cultural intermediaries acting as being hired to ensure that the production team of the magazines embodied notions of the ideal reader and could act as proxy consumers through the blurring of professional and personal identities. This positions editors as important in making magazine's successful in a business sense and

specifically binds their roles as cultural producers to the development of a particular gender identity, which are both practiced by the editors and represented within their magazines.

Drawing on cultural production practices and the cultural economy develops feminist understandings of magazines as it allows for greater detail to be paid to the role of day to day practice in the subjectification process (Gough-Yates 2003). Both studies demonstrate how the relationships between economic imperatives, producers and understandings of the audience within the magazine's industry are key to assessing the production process and to understanding the representations found in the magazines (Crewe 2003; Gough-Yates 2003). For Gough-Yates this means that formations of feminine identity in lifestyle magazines can therefore be simultaneously abstracted from (as seen by Hermes 1995), or connected to practices to everyday life for both readers and producers as part of a discursive process (p.154).

In terms of methodology, Gough-Yate's study is weakened by its lack of ethnographical account. The study sets out to be an ethnographic account of editorial producers however due to access issues; it instead draws on industry patterns and trade press in order to assess the role of editors in the production of the magazine. Although this provides insights it does not assess what is actually happening from the point of view of the magazine practitioners themselves. Gough-Yates notes that issues of access may curb the development of cultural production studies (2003:158), however Crewe is able to access and interview editors within his study. Neither study pays empirical attention to the content of texts themselves or to the readership, but they do contribute to a largely missing discussion of cultural production, and the role production plays in identity and value formation.

This later research called for closer attention to be paid to the relationships between texts, readers and producers. McRobbie's (1996) study was one of the first that looked at the moments between production and consumption in magazines through a triangulation of ethnographical and textual methods to see the complex ways that magazines are sites for subjectivity and how readers operate within this discursive process. McRobbie forefronts the discussion of magazine writers as ideal and proxy consumers for the magazines they write for, as such relationships between readers and

producers are implicit (this discussion is later developed by Crewe and Gough-Yates above). Both producers and readers were seen to actively engage in feminist political debates, and were more able to produce critical readings of the texts than previous studies had indicated. In turn this led to a rise in counter hegemonic ideas around women's identities, and in particular sexuality (1996:183-190). Here we start to see the discursive nature of magazines discussed more holistically for the first time.

This key phase of research continued the holistic approach drawing on the circuit of culture approach. These studies look at each element of text, consumption and production not only as individual case studies, but how they work in operation with one another. These drew on the methodological and analytical approaches from previous studies, but added an additional level of consideration upon the relationship between all the elements.

The two key studies which employed this approach Jackson et al (2001) and Benwell et al (2003) applied this to men's magazines, developing a more rounded approach to the study of these texts than had previously been applied to women's magazines. This stemmed from acknowledging the trajectories of women's magazine research, the rise in men's lifestyle magazines as a segment within the market and evolving gender politics. Both studies indicate a democratisation of concerns over aesthetic identities between gender in the rise of the metrosexual identity (which the magazines are both a response to rise in consumer products targeting these groups and a part of that product range). The need for the male identity to be negotiated through ideas and discourses is also noted, performing the function of guides in the same way that women's magazines were seen to do. The studies echoed findings that writers can be defined as cultural intermediaries as outlined by Gough-Yates and Crewe above, however the circuit framework allows them to exemplify this relationship specifically within their data. This allows these studies to move forward with their analysis, to examine how concepts of legitimacy and authority in regard to the development of ideas and how these are established through the production and text, and in turn how this is viewed by the readers. In both cases we see that this relationship is co-dependent on each other and that the moments between each element is where gender identities are formed.

The value in these studies is that attention is given to the relationship and impact of one element in the process to another, this positions magazines within an 'information flow'

whereby meanings and messages are represented, produced and consumed. At each stage a negotiation takes place which can be seen as both complimentary and disjointed simultaneously (Jackson et al 2001:147). Magazines are not just one-directional sources of dissemination for meaning, but are sites around which meaning is created, negotiated and valued through the production-representation-consumption process. Thus, even when ideological frameworks are present, the ability of each element in the circuit to act of a form of resistance to dominant ideas, through the production of competing ideas and messages, can be accounted for.

However, these studies have not generally applied the circuit entirely 'in situ' as Johnson (1986/7) suggests is necessary. Jackson et al (2001) applied the framework to a specific set of men's magazines and editors within the context of an individual study, however their approach to consumers was broad, not specifically talking to readers who necessarily actively read these magazines. Although the study still operates to assess the relationship between all three elements, there is a lack of personal relationship for the readers to the magazines. It is arguable that the study of these readers, who would not necessarily engage with these texts normally, made it difficult to track a specific relationship within the circuit. More problematically, Benwell et al (2003) draws on a number of empirical studies by different scholars and brings them together within one book to show how the circuit of culture is relevant for discussing masculinity as a cultural value. Many of the chapters within the book are single focus studies but collectively they address a broad definition of the circuit of culture. This does not follow the specific lines of production and consumption within a set empirical boundary or replicate the production-representation-consumption practices through one empirical entry point and weakens the approach as a whole, as it becomes impossible to track the intricacies in specific relationships between elements, which is the key theoretical benefit to circuit of culture approaches (du Gay et al 1997:4).

Within each phase of magazine research a level of criticism exists to the stance previous research had taken and a development in the theoretical positioning of the magazine, readers and producers. This in turn drove methodological developments in research leading to a triangulation of ethnographic and text based methods. All of these studies stem from the feminist theoretical stance, and through this historical trajectory develop a focus on gender subjectification and the formation of cultural value around gender.

The studies demonstrate that magazines are useful empirical focal points to move beyond studying and defining representations, to locating how messages are made meaningful and through the processes of production and consumption. Yet little research seems to draw on this use of magazines as a site of study to look at other forms of cultural value beyond gender.

There has been a tendency to focus studies of magazines on generic women's and men's lifestyle titles, which best serve the aims of the studies above, but this means that little attention has been paid to other sub-genres of lifestyle magazines and specialist titles that concentrate on a single lifestyle trait rather than looking at a range of lifestyle elements within the same magazine. Where studies moved away from looking at representations and understandings of gender to other themes, e.g. food (Warde 1997) and health (Madden and Chamberlain 2004), they were still approached through the generic lifestyle titles which also featured a wide range of other themes within them. In the way that Jackson et al (2001) note a lack of attention paid to men's magazines in comparison to the study of women's magazines, I note a comparative under representation of studies on specific and specialist titles, including food.

There are a few contemporary studies which do make shift away from studying gender identity in generic lifestyle magazines to, for example studying legitimacy, authenticity and exoticism in gourmet writing (Johnston and Baumann 2007). However, methodologically it takes a step back from the circuit of culture approach and goes back to a textual analysis which negates consideration of the influences of production and consumers.

It is necessary to note here that this observation about the focus on gender does not mean that gender is unimportant in the study of magazines. As outlined throughout this review the role of gender and feminist approaches underpin the history of magazines. However, the influence of gender as a form of habitus and disposition, and the subjectification of gender can still be addressed, whilst other values disseminated through lifestyle magazines, including thrift, are studied. It is this approach that has not been adequately addressed in previous research.

Thus far the review of existing studies charts the trajectory of approaches to the study of magazines. Through a discussion of several of the studies above, in conjunction with

other relevant sources, the following section highlights themes in key findings relating to the format, purpose and overall political economy of the genre of lifestyle magazines.

2.2.1 Magazine Texts

Both women's and men's magazines as discussed above and the food magazines at the focus of this study can be categorised as lifestyle media products. Hermes has stated that genre is the 'collection of conventions, an agreed code between communicator and audience that shaped both the production process and the expectations of the readers' (1995:7). An understanding of magazines as not just a particular format but within a specific genre allows us to consider the impact of their political economy and place within the market as a form of both representation and regulation within the circuit of culture. The purpose of lifestyle media at its most simplistic is to culturally produce, distribute and promote ideas about lifestyle, taste and value (Bell and Hollows 2005:9; Smith Maguire 2008:106) and the studies on women's magazines demonstrate how they fulfil these criteria in a number of ways.

Magazines as Things to Look at

The aesthetic 'glossy' qualities of lifestyle magazines are designed to convey both pleasure and quality (Winship 1987:52). The visual impact of covers is a 'spectacle' designed to carry messages to ensure their appeal to readers and encourage consumption (Jackson et al 2001:76). Acting as windows to the personality of the magazines (Swann 1991; McLoughlin 2000), covers ensure readers get to know the magazine's style and purpose without having to read them first. The use of a strong primary image on the cover allows for a sense of belonging through identification to be constructed (Bignall 1997:67), whilst paradoxically moves to sell desire and aspiration through beautiful women (Winship 1987:9-11). McRobbie (1982) suggests within magazines 'the dominance of the visual level reinforces the idea of leisure. It is glanced through, looked at and only finally read.' (p.269), suggesting that the aesthetic qualities of the magazines serve as symbolic representations of leisure.

Magazines as Sites of Shopping

Magazines are framed within the marketplace as 'affordable treats', minimising the effect of guilt on purchase decisions for women, who are concerned with their engagement in selfish acts of consumption in case it conflicts with their other priorities.

The magazines are available at a consistent price point and at regular intervals, so they can be purchased with ease and without guilt (Winship 1987:52).

Advertisements are a prominent feature in lifestyle magazines, due to the political economy of the magazine industry advertising is a key revenue stream for publishing houses. Brands hope to attract consumers to purchase by framing even mundane domestic goods as desirable (Winship 1987:64). Magazines through their role as lifestyle guides (McRobbie 1996), work to define what lifestyle traits and products of good taste readers need to consume in order to achieve legitimate, good, and often middle class lifestyles (Winship 1987:60; Carter 2005:174). In addition to paid advertisements, McCracken (1993) argues that most magazine content acts as advertising through the promotion of goods and services in editorial articles, and items such as product tests. Warde debates this understanding of magazines as ‘shopping manuals’ (1997:161-162) in the way that McCracken describes, suggesting that there are differences in the make-up of content and advertising and more credibility needs to be given to the reader to understand these divisions. For Winship, advertising is also a site of pleasure and not just consumption as readers engage with abstract ‘fictions of consumption’ through magazine (Winship 1987:64). In this sense, magazines can be sites of consumption, not just at the moment of purchase, but beyond it.

Making Friends

Devices are employed within magazines to attempt to make friends with their readers. Editorial letters employ strategic techniques to create relationships between the largely invisible production process, the text and readers. The mode of address is one such device. Using friendly tones, the pronoun ‘we’, and addressing the reader as ‘mate’ letters attempt to situate the magazines as a friend, offering good, personal, trusted advice on the same level as the audience instead of using language that ‘preaches’ advice (e.g. Winship 1987:66-67; Jackson et al 2001:76; Stevenson et al 2003:120). This forms another part of the ordinarization of lifestyle media, as it creates the illusion of a break down traditional hierarchies of expertise, whilst re-asserting the legitimacy of informal popular expertise (Bell and Hollows 2005:15-16).

Blurry Lines

Women's magazines can be viewed as a blurred genre which draws together different themes including: fashion, food, careers, family, travel, gossip, and celebrity etc. (Winship 1987:13; Hermes 1995:6). Some themes occur in each issue of a magazine, others fit into certain parts of the cyclic process of magazine content over the year. In this case the magazines follow traditional, predictable trajectories framed by seasons and special occasions, exemplified by the effect of Christmas on magazine content (Winship 1987:68; Warde 1997:138-139). This expectation is built through social constructions of what certain times of the year mean through the identification and acknowledgement of these occasions, existing forms of legitimacy are drawn upon and concepts of good taste and lifestyles are framed. This is distinct from the nature of more specialist titles where the focus is on a more concentrated part of lifestyle, e.g. food magazines do not feature discussions of fashion or careers, and where travel and celebrity are referred to this is done through the context of food and not more generally.

There is also a recognised tension between the blurred lines of work and leisure in magazines (e.g. Winship 1987; Hermes 1995; Warde 1997; Jackson et al 2001). The multiple roles that women are expected to play in society: e.g. mother, wife, worker, and having a sense of individual identity, mean that day to day activities are constrained by time. The representation of these issues within magazines sets the juggling of multiple domestic roles as a problem for the reader to address, and offers solutions in how to do this (Warde 1997:140). Conflicts between domestic duties and personal pleasure based activities are embodied in the magazines, and so the magazines serve to fit within and reinforce socially constructed 'rhythms and routines' of women's lives in which private time and space are precious, and work and leisure merge (Winship 1987:13), and offer advice on addressing these anxieties (Jackson et al 2001).

Editorial content in women's magazines was seen to make a presumption that women are situated in mundane positions centred on domesticity or care roles. Through this magazines play to the 'unfilled desires this generates' by both encouraging and offering advice on how to perform these duties, and framing them as potentially pleasurable, whilst simultaneously enabling readers to avoid doing them through the consumption of the magazines (Winship 1987:56). This negotiates the boundaries between what is work and what is leisure or entertainment. The content of these texts is structured as both 'survival skills and daydreams' (Winship 1987:56), through a fusion of mundane but

none-the-less useful content, and content which embodies selfish indulgence (Winship 1987; Warde 1997; Jackson et al 2001).

Class-less

Despite the concern with multiple-status positions held by women, class differences are noticeably missing from magazine content (Winship 1987; Warde 1997). Instead status is framed in reference to: relationship, family, home and work statuses (Winship 1987:69). This is not to presume that class is unimportant in regard to the magazines, market research and magazine circulation figures generate information on readers in relation to class stratification that informs advertising and content of the magazine (Holmes and Nice 2012:36-44). However within the magazine content, class is assumed. There is a presumption that readers of the same title will have a shared class disposition, however the extent to which this is the case cannot be uncovered through analysis of the text alone (Hermes 1995:144).

Ordinariness?

Considering the points made above, notions of ordinary and extra-ordinary might be useful to consider here. Lifestyle media can be seen to have undergone a process of ‘ordinari-ization’ whereby it blends into everyday life whilst simultaneously discussing and emphasising its features (Taylor 2002; Bell and Hollows 2005:15-16).

Ordinarization allows for authoritative representations of messages, defined tastes, and values, to be circulated within mundane, but nonetheless meaningful practices. This filters into the everyday lives of readers, whilst also emphasising their role in shaping day-to-day activities and identities. In contrast, Winship proposes that magazines present everyday life as extra-ordinary, where real life stories, letters and content in general show the potential for drama and excitement is ever present, as life is never entirely predictable.

2.2.2 Magazine Consumption

This section of the literature review draws upon studies about how magazines are read, used and the meanings derived from this. This is not a discussion of consumption in a general sense, but is specifically concerned with reader’s uses and interpretations of magazines.

As indicated in the mapping of magazines section, there was an initial concern that readers of magazines were not worthy of study and that they played little role in value and taste formation (McCracken 1993). This perspective placed readers as end consumers with limited power to negotiate or influence meaning. More recent studies argue that it is consumer interaction with the texts that make the texts meaningful at all and also hold a role in the production of meaning, taste and value (Hermes 1995). For the purposes of this study, it is this approach that I follow, seeing how consumers use, relate to and define texts and their meanings.

Why Read?

There are a number of identifiable themes in the uses, purposes and meanings of magazines: practical use; convenience; escape; and forming a sense of community. These categories may be drawn on by different readers at different times depending on the context of their reading.

Magazines are generally viewed as holding high practical use value and this is used by readers as a primary justification for their decision to purchase and read. Readers identify content which offers advice and solutions to lifestyle based issues as a way of both learning, and consuming useful solutions. This simultaneously works to legitimise, consumption patterns, but also the magazine's position as an authoritative and legitimate form of expertise (Hermes 1995). This calculated approach to the use value of magazines leads to magazines being understood as good value for money, and frames magazine texts as being affordable, guilt free 'treats' (Winship 1987). Although use is a primary motivator for purchase, paradoxically this does not necessary translate in to actual use, instead uses of magazine content remain abstract or as background knowledge to inform the reader how to cope with a situation if they ever arise (Hermes 1995:48).

The magazine as a convenient media format is an important factor for readers in conceptualising the use value of magazines. Magazines are considered a convenient text because of how they fit in to the lives of readers and can be 'easily put down' (Hermes 1995:34). In this sense, the nature of the magazine's style and format is more important than the topics and editorial content itself, in terms of motivations for reading these texts over others, for example, novels that require longer periods of self-invested time to read.

This comparison to other formats may inform the status of women's magazines as a cultural form, across Hermes' data magazines, are routinely belittled as 'trash', in comparison to higher values associated to high-brow cultural products such as literature. Although this belittlement of magazines is routinely acknowledged by Hermes, the reasons for this and its impact on readers are largely ignored (1995:30;34;36;154; see Bourdieu 1984 for discussion of high and low brow cultural goods).

Regardless of the cultural status of the texts, for women, reading can be used as a networking device to form bonds and relationships with others (Radway 1984; Hermes 1995; Feasey 2008). Texts provide common ground for bonding and being empathetic towards shared experiences. Women find comfort in reading and a safe environment to escape to. Lifestyle products aid in this process by providing content where comfort and escape can be found, and creating a safe environment to broach personal topics, and contextualise personal experiences in relation to others (Hermes 1995:44; Madden and Chamberlain 2004:752; Feasey 2008).

Radway (1987) and Winship (1987) found that reading was done for pleasure. Women were found to reward efforts in domestic labour with the treat of escaping from work into the fantasies provided by reading. Reading provides a real escape for these women as the time set aside for reading is their own, not for others and private, which is often distinct from other practices. This exemplifies a purpose of reading but negates to address the real life constraints readers seek to escape from (Radway 1987; Feasey 2008). Alongside this, concepts of entertainment and relaxation are often grouped together as a motivation for reading. Relaxation seemed problematic to explore, with readers using it as a response which they felt needed no further explanation. The reason why magazines fulfil this purpose of relaxation are therefore not fully addressed although are arguably linked to the idea of escapism (Hermes 1995:36).

Magazines also offer readers the opportunity for 'fantasising of an ideal self', where temporarily at least, readers vicariously consume and understand products, messages and ideas. This is exemplified by readers who identify themselves as 'others' within the stories they read, and become this ideal other self, distinct from real identities and social responsibility. This construction of the self only occurs with reading process and

doesn't translate into material practices. Identity is therefore experienced through reading as both imaginary and temporary, and exemplifies understandings of the subjectification of gender and readers through magazines (Radway 1984:90; Hermes 1995).

Despite a recognition that magazine content can be a site of a tension between this work (both in a domestic and identity sense) and leisure concepts, readers in Hermes' study didn't comment on this in their discussion of reading. This might exemplify how readers select texts to use in ways that they want and need and filter out the unwanted content (Hall 1980), or it could be a discursive issue in how respondents attribute the uses of products in singular discourses at any one time (Hermes 1995:32).

One of the most controversial findings about reading practices comes from Hermes' (1995) study, where it is suggested that reading magazines is a 'banal' activity, where readers do not place cultural value on the texts that they consume (p.143). Instead, readers use magazines in an abstract way without reference to the magazines as meaningful texts. To this effect she notes: 'I wanted to know how women's magazines became meaningful for readers and readers told me that women's magazines have hardly any meaning at all' (p.143). Despite identifying a number of repertoires around readers' uses and interactions with the magazine, she doesn't find that any form of cultural value is attributed to the texts by readers. There are a number of issues here: Firstly, through the repertoires described, the readers do exhibit relationships to the magazines, even if they are only meaningful at the point of contact with the texts. Secondly, Hermes' approach to the nature of convenience, discounts it as a meaningful construct for readers, yet, in other relation to other products, such as food, convenience is shown as valuable to consumers (Warde 1997).

Sites of Consumption

The idea of shopping through magazines as an act of consumption has already been discussed; here we note the readers' relationship to consumption through magazines. In a contemporary society which bombards individuals with images and texts, peoples' consumption on a day by day basis is far greater than they realise. Visual signs need reading, and through the act of reading, an act of consumption also takes place (de Certeau 1984:264). This act of consumption may take an actual form, by purchasing an object so as it can be kept and not lost to memory; such as buying a magazine after

walking past it. It can also be consumed in an abstract manner, for example enjoying looking at the images and advertisements that make up a magazine (de Certeau 1984:264). In contemporary culture this is a constant process of everyday consumption, and requires consumers to have the correct skills to read, dismiss and use messages as necessary and appropriate, and distinguishes how, what and when we consume both commodified and un-commodified objects (de Certeau 1984:264-265; Radway 1984).

This confirms magazines as vehicles for effectively promoting consumption. Readers are willing and skilled participants in this consumption process, which makes further consumption (both abstract and material) more likely (Lury 1996:133-135).

Having addressed a number of discussions about readers of magazines and the process of consumption through magazines, I shall now move forward to discuss magazine production.

2.2.3 Magazine Production

As put forward by Gough-Yates (2003) any study which aims to research magazines, should consider the effects and consequences of cultural production and the wider socio-economical context that the magazines are situated in.

Political Economy of the Magazine

Holmes and Nice (2012) present a useful overview of the political economy of magazines. Magazines operate within the interrelated spheres of politics, commerce and culture, which are influenced by regulatory style, political and legal frameworks. These factors influence 3 key aspects of the magazine industry:

1. The practices of journalists and writers are situated within these frameworks leading to a professionalisation of working practices and training (p.19).
2. The globalisation of the magazine industry led to the publishing houses being distanced from the consumers. Responsibility to maintain a 'pseudo-personal' relationship between magazines and consumers is instead placed with the individual magazine titles (p.21-22).
3. A reassessment of the main revenue streams for magazines led publishing houses constantly reassessing their publications and increasing their market activity through diversification and rethinking distribution models (p.25-34).

Although many of the food writers themselves may have little power over the implementation of these processes, they are largely dictated to by magazines from the publishing houses, everyday occupational practices are shaped by the organisational

and economic imperatives that these conditions lay out. For editors in particular this can be seen as a source of conflict between creative freedom and economic imperatives (Jackson et al 2001:53, 59-66).

Market research also plays a part in magazine production, and can contribute to this conflict between creativity and a reliance on personal knowledge of the magazine, and the economic pressures (McKay 2000:243).

Early forms of market research were largely quantitative in nature, reflecting needs for information for magazines to sell advertising space on the basis of their reach to a wide number of readers (Gough-Yates 2003). The Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) was formed to publish circulation figures for the consumer press, however, in response to a more segmented approach to both magazines and advertising, there was an expansion of market research in to qualitative research to include a more lifestyle approach. The National Readership Survey (NRS) moved beyond the collation of circulation figures to conduct interviews with a sample of 36,000 media users a year and generates rich data on magazine usage and lifestyle information about readers. This offers magazines a more detailed lifestyle analysis of their titles including specific profiling of reader lifestyles, likes and dislikes, profiling the magazines and their readers in the broader context of the consumer magazine market allows for strengths and weaknesses in brands to be identified (NRS 2014; Gough-Yates 2003:80). For this reason, NRS data is widely referenced by the magazine industry. Similar lifestyle research on a number of titles and topics is also published by the Professional Publishers Association (PPA), and the magazines also invest in their own research to establish greater levels of detail about their market (McKay 2000; Gough-Yates 2003).

The economic pressures of the magazine industry contribute to why magazine publishers heavily invest in market research, in part to validate their position within the market, to sell themselves to potential advertisers, and also to confirm what readers like, and how readers use their magazines in order to maximise market potential by both keeping loyal readers and attracting new ones (McKay 2000:24; Gough-Yates 2003).

For journalists this can sometimes lead to the disheartening experience of an editorial meeting where the magazine is looked through page by page with statistics about reader interest and satisfaction attached to each article.
(McKay 2000:243)

Here is a potential site for conflict between economic pressures to conform to ideas put forward by market research and the creative freedoms of writers. The impact of this on the magazine titles and therefore writers is explicit if the need to improve overall levels of reader satisfaction and conform to the needs and desires of their clearly defined target audience is identified in the market research. The conflict therefore sits between the innate sense of knowledge that writers possess for the magazine audiences discussed by Gough-Yates and Crewe, and how in some cases market research has direct impacts on future style of work conducted by the writers.

Cultural Production

The magazine industry should not be understood purely in business or socio-political economic terms, looking at cultural production develops a deeper understanding of magazines and their production and consumption processes. As indicated earlier, much of this discussion is framed by theories of cultural intermediaries and situates writers as involved with the production of cultural texts with high levels of cultural value, legitimacy and embedded good taste. This section of the review looks at the intricacies of this more closely.

Cultural intermediaries as a concept are worthy of consideration in relation to the cultural production of magazines and value. Located in occupations concerned with the provision of ‘symbolic goods and services’ (Bourdieu 1984:359), the work of cultural intermediaries in creating meaning and adding value to cultural goods through the process of ‘making products ‘meaningful’’ (du Gay et al 1997:62) is an essential component of a circuit of culture approach. As cultural intermediaries negotiate the boundaries of their work as producers, the representations they construct, and their own lives as consumers, they mediate between the processes of production and consumption (du Gay et al 1997:62), which starts to mirror the potential relationships laid out by the multidirectional arrows depicted in the circuit of culture.

It is worth noting that this review and indeed study’s approach to cultural intermediaries as a group draws on two complimentary approaches. On the one hand, a Bourdieusian approach concerned with a cultural intermediary’s occupation as a taste maker, the approaches to taste making framed through the creation of legitimacy, and how they mediate between the processes of production and consumption. Whilst on the other, a cultural economy approach which is concerned with the specific devices used in the formation of value.

The cultural economic literature situates cultural intermediaries at the intersections of production and consumption, and economy and culture, where cultural goods are created. It considers how goods and services become 'qualified' as valuable through specific regimes or techniques of qualification by cultural intermediaries (Callon et al 2002). Cultural intermediaries can therefore be seen as market actors who mediate between the goods they work with, consumers and other cultural intermediaries. It is the relational work between these actors that helps to conceptualise value production and qualification of good taste between elements and not just as a linear process that makes this approach relevant (du Gay 2004).

Value is constructed by cultural intermediaries framing how others within the marketplace engage with, and see goods as legitimate through processes and techniques of 'disentangling' and 'singularizing' points of 'attachment' for others as such they qualify the characteristics of goods to the market place (Callon et al. 2002; McFall 2004). This is in part enacted through a range of material practices which not only frame their working practices but contribute to their role in creating value through informing their perception of quality, and ultimately of value itself (du Gay 2004).

du Gay (2004) conceptualises these material practices as 'devices'. Devices can be seen as strategies or tools that contribute to occupational based practices, as such they are contextually dependent upon the field the cultural intermediary operates within, in order to assist in the cultural work they conduct. du Gay also notes alongside this discussion of devices the role that disposition plays in the work of cultural intermediaries. Dispositions in this sense are derived from personal attributes such as educational background, age, sex and class but also, personal motivations and preferences towards tastes.

Occupational credibility is informed by devices and dispositions, whereby the self becomes, both a source for occupational credibility and positions them in the role as an ideal proxy consumer (Featherstone 1991; Ennis 2005). In both du Gay and Pryke, and Bourdieu's discussion, expertise and legitimacy is constructed through this process, whilst this expertise and sense of legitimacy is also translated through cultural products and an application of appropriate devices and techniques used in their promotion.

Whilst for Bourdieu, the notion of cultural intermediary is occupationally driven. Working within a range of cultural industries, including the media, which are concerned

with symbolic value and shaping consumer tastes. This positions cultural intermediaries as responsible for shaping, defining and communicating these tastes to wider audiences, and simultaneously legitimising the tastes that they are promoting (1984:230). The process of legitimisation draws on both established forms of culture and authority drawn upon to frame certain goods, services or lifestyles as good taste, and through their own personal taste dispositions, they employ their own cultural capital to work on the goods which they sell:

[They] sell themselves as models and as guarantors of the value of their products, who sell so well because they believe in what they sell. (Bourdieu 1984:365)

Cultural intermediaries draw on their own personal habitus and dispositions in accomplishing their work of adding value and cultural goods; because they share a common background to both those they sell to and work with. Although driven by the requirements of their occupation, cultural intermediaries move beyond this to incorporate aspects of the personal into their work. Their position as taste makers and legitimate sources of expertise is in part formed through their personal investment in the lifestyles and products that they sell. This becomes embedded as practice within a cultural intermediary's daily work, situated to negotiate the status of legitimacy for themselves, and also to authenticate their work and the goods and services they produce as both valuable and legitimate.

These two concepts are useful to think with, both involve the positioning and framing of goods, products and services as legitimate or valuable, both make claims of expertise, and ultimately both aim to sell successfully to consumers through these two processes.

Whilst these two approaches are similar, they do pose theoretical differences. Nixon (2014) suggests that, in the case of advertising practitioners, neither Bourdieu nor the cultural economy approach fully capture the processes that are taking place in their roles as cultural intermediaries. Whilst Bourdieu's account allows for the social formation of capital and taste to be considered in relation to the cultural intermediaries work, the devices put forward by cultural economy approaches (Callon et al 2002; du Gay 2004) help to encapsulate how goods are qualified as valuable to the market place, as such neither fully encapsulate the entirety of the issue being discussed.

The assemblage of ... a set of technical devices should not blind us to the fact that ...this capacities and social formation – makes a difference. (Nixon 2014:np)

Nixon here suggests that the cultural economy approach provides a clear set of tactical devices, but that it fails to explain fully how the social position of, in the case of Nixon's study, the advertising agent and the subsequent influences of this upon their work. It is therefore the relationship between these two concepts in practice that work to formulate the cultural intermediary's position overall.

My analysis focuses mainly on a Bourdieusian approach, however, like Nixon suggests this does not mean to ignore the useful concept of technical devices in explaining the connection between, in this case the food writers and their strategies employed in their work.

The concept of cultural intermediaries is useful to help conceptualise the occupational role of the food writers. It locates the production away from a purely physical process, towards one where abstract ideas and values are produced and circulated. The production element within the circuit of culture does not end with the design or production of a physical product for a cultural intermediary, (although their occupational work within this does shape the vehicles on which messages are delivered so this process is not unimportant), but it locates their work in the moments between production and consumption of meanings, tastes and values. Previous studies concerned with magazine production, primarily with editors, position them as cultural intermediaries in this context, with the ability of editors to embody their ideal audience and how this serves to work as a key legitimising device (Jackson et al 2001; Gough-Yates 2003). Their ability to construct and define taste and value here is bound within their perceived construction of expertise (Crewe 2003).

Editors and writers draw upon their personal dispositions and knowledge as valuable occupational resources. Through the professionalisation of popular knowledge and style, magazine workers can to be seen as taste leaders with intuitive knowledge and authority on the subject they write on (Mort 1996; McRobbie 1998). Their knowledge, even if originally conceived through informal channels is, via association to the magazine and the process of writers' cultural work, a legitimised form of expertise within the magazines (Mort 1996; McRobbie 1998). Expertise and legitimacy are also formed through the magazine staff's paradoxical position in the market, whereby they

mediate between their roles as the producer of content, and also the ideal consumers for the products they create. This can be seen in both the producer to audience and the producer to text relationships (Jackson et al 2001). Readers are innately understood by producers through ‘self-projections’ (Jackson et al 2001) as shared dispositions frame, a ‘sixth-sense’ of the reader’s wants, needs and desires (Gough-Yates 2003:118). This ability to identify and construct understandings around ideal readers is drawn from personal interests, whereby their own interest and interactions as consumers act as a resource for informing their professional work. As such an editor’s work involves the blurring of the personal interests and the professional work as part of their overall lifestyle (Crewe 2003:193) as divisions between work and leisure are disrupted (Nixon and Crewe 2004:131). This is also seen in the way that editor’s lifestyles closely match the lifestyles being portrayed within the magazine titles they worked for, suggesting that their personal dispositions shape the representations of lifestyle found in the magazine (Jackson et al 2001). Therefore, only individuals with the right ‘fit’ of cultural capital, ability to identify and display good taste, will be employed in to these key roles at the magazines, and writers therefore need to display this embodiment of taste and lifestyle (Wright 2005:112).

The extent to which the food writers fulfil this will be discussed in chapter 5.

2.3 Food Media

The discussions above outlined a number of key developments and trends within lifestyle magazine studies through a discussion of women’s and men’s general lifestyle titles. The focus here shall now shift to the genre of food media as part of the lifestyle genre, starting with a discussion of food magazines.

Food Magazines

Specialist food magazine titles developed from the genre of aforementioned women’s lifestyle magazines. General women’s lifestyle magazines had a longstanding history of having sections of content relating to food within them (Mennell 1985; Warde 1997), these new titles took the style and approach found within these existing popular magazines but expanded the content to be the main topic of the whole magazine. This relationship to the women’s magazine market accounts for the on average 70% female readership of food magazines (*Good Food* 2009a; *Delicious* 2009), and explains why the NRS and PPA position these titles under the category of women’s interest, rather

than specialist titles in their figures on readership. This contrasts with how lifestyle titles on gardening, for example, are categorised as general interest/lifestyle, this in part stems from socio-cultural conventions that situate food as part of the female domain, as will be discussed shortly.

Early issues of *BBC Good Food*, the first longest running food specific magazine in the UK launched in 1989, clearly adopted the style and design of women's lifestyle titles of the era such as *Good Housekeeping*, the difference being that all the content is related to food culture and food lifestyles rather than drawing on a broad range of topics. Even where other topics are brought up, for example in relation to travel, they are done so with reference to the food culture in the destinations being discussed. This made the content more specific in its nature but drew on conventions recognisable to the consumers they were trying to attract as new readers. *Good Food* also integrated the popularity of food television programmes into its content in order to maximise its market appeal. The market for food specific titles has expanded since the launch of *Good Food*, in 2009 there were fourteen food magazines on the market (ABC 2009c) and the style implemented by *Good Food* has been broadly copied by these subsequent titles.³

What follows is a framing of these magazines in existing literature.

Warde's (1997) study examined food content located in generic women's magazines, where food is seen as a 'comparatively unglamorous' (p.44) part of these magazines. The study looked at food columns and recipes, in UK women's magazines across two time periods one in the late 1960s the other in the early 1990s. From this a set of 'principles of recommendation' about how food is positioned in the magazines are developed that included: utilitarian, novelty, tradition, health, economy, extravagance, convenience, and care (Warde 1997:46). It also drew on household expenditure surveys to contextualise the study. This study provided a useful basis for initial development in my study due to its focus on food in magazines and interest in economy in terms of thrift practices.

³ These observations were noted in the infancy of the research project where I viewed archives of early issues of food magazines and other women's magazines of the era held by The British Library as well as a variety of contemporary food specific titles for comparison.

In order to assess more details on this topic, consideration must also be given more broadly to the genre of food media, as a form of lifestyle media. In recent years this genre in the UK has undergone a rapid growth in prevalence across media formats including television, magazines and cookbooks etc. (Dickinson 2013). Within this period of growth for food media there has been a general shift in food media from an instructional style to an entertainment style, which has led to a new ‘foodie audience’ being produced (de Solier 2008). An example of this is seen through the changing emphasis on how recipes are situated in food media.

Recipes are a key element in food media. Acting as an instruction book (Gallegos 2005:99), recipes tell audiences what to cook and how to do it, with the emphasis on how the audience should perform each stage of the instruction (Tomlinson 1986; Warde 1997; Goldstein 2005:59). Warde notes changes in the content of recipes between two samples in the 1960s and 1990s, more detail is given on costs and cooking times as part of the instructional nature of the recipe in the 1990s sample suggesting a heightened sense of awareness of these pressures on food practices (1997:100;134). Whilst recipes featured on television play a different role to print recipes as they are performed without precise instruction, this lowers their use value, but greater emphasis is placed on their cultural value, which is created through their presentation by experts and highly stylized food porn imagery (Goldstein 2005:59). This demonstrates the role of aestheticisation in food culture and there is a shift from cooking as instruction to cooking as entertainment.

In this sense, cooking shows construct taste and value through various processes of legitimisation which are no longer founded on accurate instructions on how to prepare recipes, but on social and cultural contexts, and aesthetic qualities. This is not to say that the use value of recipes is ignored, instead audiences are directed to detailed recipe instructions through official accompanying cookbooks, magazines or online resources to access full details and as such this leads to further interrelated acts of consumption (Gallegos 2005:99).

Complementing this shift in style, a new trend for prime-time television shows designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of people through two differing themes of gastronomy and reality emerged. These shows were not focused on instructional recipe use at all, instead focused on leisure and entertainment values (de Solier 2008:68-69). Within

these new branches of food media there is a divide in styles and associated cultural capital; for example, the difference between *Come Dine With Me* which is a reality based competition, involving members of the public hosting dinner parties for a number of strangers, regardless of their ability to cook, in comparison to *Masterchef* which focuses on the transition of amateur cooks in to chefs through associations to an established legitimate form of gastronomic fine dining. This highlights two key points, firstly, that there is a blurring between entertainment and what was traditionally an educational format, and secondly, that the cultural values and purposes of the shows overall are different and dictated by their styles of presentation. They serve to target and attract new ‘foodies’ from audiences who would previously not have seen themselves in this group but through viewing food media and legitimately educating themselves on aspects of food culture, they begin to attribute themselves within this respected ‘foodie’ group (Warde 1997:44; de Solier 2005; de Solier 2008:75-78; Johnston and Baumann 2010).

This democratisation of food culture can also be seen in food writing. French cookery used to be the only food literature classed as gastronomic, but this definition has broadened and allowed for a wider variety of food writing to be categorised as gastronomic, including: other cuisines; that associated with celebrities; and domestic food practices. For example, food magazine content which aims to show readers how to replicate restaurant style and quality food in their home is part of the gastronomic literature (Ashley et al 2004:163; Johnston and Baumann 2010:43-47). This could be in response to the contemporary economic climate that where during times of recession food writing becomes less focused on gastronomic experience and more on everyday styles of food, i.e. what can be seen as accessible comfort foods, in order to keep loyal audiences with new and relevant content, whilst target new audiences with content which aims to democratise food culture and widen appeal within the current social environment (Johnston and Baumann 2010:xvi-xvii).

Accompanying shifts within food media, and reflecting trends in the lifestyle genre, there has been a celebrification of food experts and a shift from traditional to popular expertise (Bonner 2005; Ashley et al 2004; Lewis 2008; Johnston and Baumann 2010). Within food media an ‘enormous array of advice and claims to expertise’ are made (Lewis 2008:49). Celebrity chefs now front a large amount of cookery programmes,

cookbooks and regularly appear in food magazines. This trend sees celebrity chefs actively providing food and diet advice (Johnston and Baumann 2010:47-48); an area of advice that once belonged to the qualified nutritionist (Lewis 2008:48-49). Chefs draw on their associations to legitimate gastronomic forms of expertise such as their association to *Michelin* or *Cordon-Bleu* training. Others forms of expertise are less formalised, for example presenters, non-food trained celebrities or writers with no apparent formal food qualifications beyond a personal interest or their own self-ascribed status of experts, however are still contextualised as experts through the media (Lewis 2008).

Celebrity chefs and food media stars can also be contextualised as cultural intermediaries in the way that we have described for magazine writers, acting between the legitimate food world and the domestic cook to promote good taste and consumption practices, drawing on their relationship to existing sources of legitimacy or through the legitimacy of the media format itself. Their effectiveness in mediating advice to the consumer can be observed through the consumption patterns which follow after a piece of advice is offered by a food media star. For, the ‘Delia effect’ where ingredients featured on each of Delia Smith’s shows sold out in supermarkets the next day (Bell and Hollows 2005). The cultural emphasis on celebrity status increases the value of the chef or cook, increases their legitimacy within food media, and defines them as experts in the food world and definers of good taste (Hollows 2003a; de Solier 2008; Lewis 2008).

Whilst there has been a body of research focusing on food in the lifestyle media genre, there are some limitations to note. Firstly, there has been a lack of attention to the influence of food media on the everyday practices of their consumers beyond noting trends such as the ‘Delia effect’ (Warde 1997; de Solier 2008:65; Dickinson 2013:452-453). Secondly, much attention has been paid to the celebrity chef in food media and there is an absence of discussion relating to other food media actors. And thirdly, in terms of food magazine research as previously outlined, several key studies associated to food and magazines do not locate their interest in food within a specific food media genre, instead focus on drawing out content on food from within women’s lifestyle magazines (Mennell 1985; Warde 1997).

Arguably, Johnston and Baumann's (2007, 2010) work has moved towards addressing some of these issues. Their 2007 piece looks specifically at gourmet food magazines and is one of the only comprehensive studies with food magazines specifically as an empirical focus. It's focus on the texts themselves and the framing of omnivorousness, authority and exoticism. Although reference is made to food writers as playing a role in embedding these messages within the texts, they do not empirically look at the processes of production or consumption in this work. Their 2010 study moves to look at how 'foodscapes' form a discussion around food preferences and consumption in relation to Bourdieu's theory of distinction. This study conducted both analyses of food media formats and to interviews with 'foodie' consumers, and starts to address food media and practices together. This is not to say this work is without issue, the study pays little attention to the production elements of the text that they analysed. What is made clear through this approach is that social contexts under which these processes take place are worthy of consideration. Therefore a brief overview of the social context of food will help to inform my study of food magazines.

2.4 The Social Context of Food

Within the discussions of food magazines outlined above, an understanding of socio-cultural aspects of food acts as part of contextualising studies on food media and in this sense also fulfils the regulation element within the circuit of culture.

There is a vast body of literature on the subject of food, crossing over into many areas of study much of which falls outside the remit of this study to warrant any detailed consideration. Therefore as this study's focus is not on food culture per-se I narrowed down this range of literature to focus research based on cultural meanings of food and people's relationship to food within domestic settings. This demonstrates how cultural norms and values act as informal regulatory forces around food practices, re-inforcing certain concerns about food, and about who should be cooking what. The literature suggests a number of key themes which all have a role in defining, contextualising and informing my study in relation to class and food, and finally, gender and food.

2.4.1 Using Food as a Lens for Study

The study of food can be seen as being academically significant due to how it acts as a marker for wider social change (Becker 1996; Warde 1997; Mennell 2005; Miller and Deutsch 2009). Food is a necessity for nutrition but despite this the consumption of

food is rarely just a biological function, but is more often cultural (Becker 1996:1; Miller and Deutsch 2009:7-8; Holm 2013:336). Traditional economics, where biological need is seen as playing a vital role in choice is now out-dated, and shifts towards the view cultural value now has a greater level of influence over consumer choice and taste, so even basic needs such as food consumption, are governed by cultural considerations (Becker 1996:1; Holm 2013:326). Food therefore becomes a 'means of cultural expression' and an appropriate mechanism to comment on contemporary culture (Warde 1997:22).

Warde (1997) suggests that sociological literature on the consumption of food in the UK is minimal and that much of the literature stems from historical and anthropological studies. Although this provides a good context, it means that there is a gap in the literature that examines the way that social practices of taste, class, gender and status relate to food and that further studies on these issues would be useful (Warde 1997:22-23).

2.4.2 Food and Class

Food and class relations are inextricably linked and rooted in historical concepts of the stratification of class (Mennell 2005; Germov 2008). Traditionally the upper classes ate a more varied diet with 'exotic' ingredients and an emphasis on meat, which was expensive relative to the average earnings of the time. Meanwhile lower classes were eating stock ingredients like dairy, grains, vegetables and potatoes that they had grown, supplemented occasionally by meat they had reared (Bourdieu 1984:185; Mennell 2005:249-251). Obviously this is a long way from the contemporary food environment of today but demonstrates how diets were stratified by class. In contemporary society people from across different class groups often consume the same foodstuffs leading theorists to argue that food has become less socially stratified because styles of cooking that were traditionally associated with the upper classes trickled down into the working classes and likewise there was a trickle up effect from the working class to the upper classes (Mennell 2005:249-252). There are several reasons for this, including the industrialisation of the food market which increased availability of products and a reduction in price making them more affordable. Whilst this may be true to an extent, there are still distinctions between class food consumption (Germov 2008:267). For example, the difference between consuming a takeaway burger from a fast food outlet and an organic burger in a restaurant specialising in handcrafting gourmet burgers, both

are intrinsically the same product yet the cultural values and class associations of each of these products is different. This situates the gourmet burger, not as a part of a democratisation of food class, but as a distinction within it (Johnston and Baumann 2007:165-166). Bourdieusian theories of habitus can be used to explain these apparent differences between social groups in terms of food consumption (Germov 2008).

For Bourdieu the difference in taste in products and cultural artefacts, including food, is used to produce and reproduce class difference, these differences serve a variety of purposes: nutritional, economic and cultural. The working classes' manual jobs required a diet which allowed them to work in a physical capacity so had a preference for heavy and fatty foods, whereas the upper/middle classes did not require such a heavy diet, and had both the financial and time capability to afford more 'refined and delicate' products (Bourdieu 1984:185-186; Bell and Hollows 2005:6-7). These nutritional and economic needs get overshadowed in the cultural reproduction of class when the reasoning behind preferences get embedded within society and replicated over time until it becomes naturalised. Germov (2008) cites this as the reason as to why 'food habits serve as clear social markers of class identity.' (p. 267; also Trigg 2001; Johnston and Baumann 2010). Johnston and Baumann (2010) contextualise food preference and choice as being part of expressions of identity and distinction, but that traditional class categorisations around food and gastronomy are no longer so apparent in contemporary society as the 'foodie' elites are drawing on new sources of food capital to place new markers of distinction between 'good' and 'bad' foods, but that distinction exists nonetheless.

The juxtaposing of food products also serves to reinforce these differences. Ingredients, products brands, supermarkets and food media are positioned against each other to provide a contrast between high taste luxury goods and low taste budget goods. Bourdieu argues that meanings of goods are legitimised through the relations of different actors to each other and then to the object, thus defining taste. It is these relationships of actors that make up the class system. This hierarchy is also demonstrated in the way food is represented within the media. Quality food is defined through how it should be prepared, look, taste and be eaten. This complements the increased value in aesthetics as noted within the discussion of food media. Therefore food products gain a level of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984; Trigg 2001; Ashley et al 2004; Bell and Hollows 2005:6-9; Johnston and Baumann 2007), and they also become associated with certain classes, this then gets replicated and reinforced as 'good taste' is

displayed and distinction is established (Zukin and Smith 2004:181). As classes redefine themselves in contemporary society they have redefined taste and symbolic meaning.

In addition to class, gender contributes to the wider understanding of regulatory forces on food. As reflected on earlier, the role of gender in magazine studies is fundamental, likewise literature on the practice of food provisioning echoes the need for consideration of gender roles.

2.4.3 Domestic Food Provision

Within contemporary society the idea that women are most likely to take responsibility for the domestic chores, including food shopping and preparation, are still prevalent. Despite changes in social conditions post-World War II (WWII), women still remain the dominant sex in terms of ‘doing cooking’ (Giard 1998:151-152). This focus on women’s relationship to cooking and food is present in existing literature, not because of the belief that women are by nature made to do housework or that they have a monopoly over domestic areas such as the kitchen, but because socially constructed traditions mean women and cooking have become connected (Adler 1981). It is this perceived dominance in the realm of domestic food chores that makes them appropriate participants to focus studies of food and cooking (Giard 1998 151-152; see also Warde 1997; Hollows 2003a; Ashley et al 2004).

In response to the changing roles of women in contemporary society, where women simultaneously take on multiple roles as mothers, wives and career women, the domestic kitchen environment adapted with the introduction of less formal eating patterns and kitchen equipment designed to allow for quicker and more flexible approaches to cooking (Warde 1997; Truninger 2013). This was in order to minimize the effects on a woman’s ability to provide food for their families whilst maintaining their multiple roles (Warde 1997:22-24; Southerton 2003; Truninger 2013:90).

Likewise the rise of convenience foods is seen as both a solution and a problem to be negotiated (Warde 1997; Southerton 2003; Carrigan et al 2006; Botonaki and Mattas 2010). Convenience foods are seen as a method of speeding up preparation and thus reducing the time spent on food work. The use of convenience food is legitimised through a number of channels including food media which feature ideas on how to incorporate these products into home cooked meals, and demonstrate how the use of

such foods can save time (Warde 1997:132-133). Whilst these products help women to perform their food provisioning duties in less time than cooking from scratch, if cooking is about a display of care or love towards family, then this is seen as an improper way for this to be done. Therefore convenience foods work to position themselves as the next best option for those occasions where women cannot afford the time to cook from scratch (Warde 1997; Candel 2001; Carrigan et al 2006). This is a point of negotiation for women as the standard of home cooking is still generally viewed as the best option, using convenience foods might enable more time for other things, but at the cost of a duty of care which should be expressed through food preparation.

Warde noted that recipes in the 1990s moved away from cooking with pre-prepared foods, instead the emphasis was on cooking from scratch quickly. Here we see another aspect of convenience, achievability, where methods of convenience offer ways for women to achieve their daily food work. Whilst quick becomes a catch-all phrase for defining cooking practices that didn't require large amounts of invested time from the cook and 'ease' becomes linked with convenience, not always in relation to skill but as a way of framing the 'amount of energy required' to cook (Warde 1997:135). The cooking workload for women is not lessened, but new techniques and technologies are employed to help manage the work. It is this additional unpaid labour in the home which can contribute to a disproportionately heavy workload for women (Gershuny et al; 1994).

More contemporary studies suggest that men are more involved in cooking practices than in previous generations (Future Foundation 2008) but this doesn't necessarily reflect a change in domestic duties. There has been an emphasis on food as a leisure activity in contemporary Britain, as part of this transformation into the leisure setting, there has been an increase in middle-class men cooking for pleasure and on special occasions, whilst cooking as part of mundane household labour still lies in the woman's domain.

This shift in popular culture to view food as leisure masks the extent to which cooking and preparing food is still seen as labour by many women. Understandings around the responsibility of care are still most commonly associated as a woman's role in the domestic sphere so domestic and mundane food practices fall under the nature of

women's care duties as well (Beagan et al 2008; Cairns et al 2010). This is not to say that women do not participate in the leisure aspects of food, they do, but this is distinct from the daily ritual of food preparation (Warde 1997; Hollows 2003a; Ashley et al 2004:68,130; Bove and Shobal 2006).

Through dimensions of care, extra attention is paid by women to the food needs and tastes of their families, prioritising these needs and desires above their own (DeVault 1991; Warde 1997). Simultaneously, through food provisioning, identities of being a good mother are negotiated (DeVault 1991; Thompson 1996; Moiso et al 2004). This conflict between food as domestic responsibility and food as a personal leisure activity is key to understanding why women find it harder to define cooking as a leisure activity in comparison to men, who do not have the same level of obligation in regard to care for others (Hollows 2003b; Cairns et al 2010). Arguably, the ability for men to perceive cooking as leisure is facilitated by women performing these other domestic tasks. Food shopping, food preparation and clearing up are still most likely be carried out by women, again placing emphasis on the gender division of food labour but moreover illustrates the ways that women can enable food as leisure for their male counterparts (Lupton 2000).

This dichotomy between food as leisure and food as work also exists for men who cook, it is not absent from their experience of cooking, for example through the experience of fatherhood (Cook 2009). Cooking for men is a more neutrally assessed 'context dependent...work-leisure' activity that allows for motivations and uses of time in different ways (Szabo 2012:635). As food work is not as socially embedded to men's social identities, making it easier for men to conceptualise or adapt cooking into a leisure based activity without the feelings of guilt that are found when negotiating with family duties (Warde 1997:172; Cairns et al 2010).

This gender imbalance in cooking roles is not only found in the domestic sphere of food work but also in the professional. The distinction between professional chefs and home cooks is also often framed by gender. Both in food media (Hollows 2003a) and understandings of the cooking profession (Mennell 1985, 2005; Swinbank 2002) men are placed in discourses of professional expertise, meanwhile, women's food practices are confined to the domestic kitchen or bound through discourses of family care and responsibility. Much in the same way that the celebrity chef was seen to disseminate

messages around good taste and food practices, this representation of male and female cooks in professional and domestic settings respectively legitimises this as a way of life which then reinforces stereotypes around gender and food roles.

Having now briefly contextualised magazines and food within existing literature, attention turns to the other key element of this study: Thrift.

2.5 Thrift

The notion of thrift and the ways that its meanings are produced and consumed is the main focus of this study. It is therefore essential to outline existing literature which will provide a context to my research. The search for literature on thrift was not an easy one, in general there seemed a lack of substance to the body of literature found; as such I looked outside of thrift specifically looking at themes that might be related such as topics around convenience and food practices such as using up leftovers. Before looking at this body of literature, I outline the social context of thrift and its relationship to the contemporary economic climate.

2.5.1 The Social Context of Thrift

Thrift is often contextualised first as a consequence and response to WWII. This can be seen in the advertising posters in Britain and America at that time, which asked citizens to be thrifty to aid the war-effort and subsequent recovery; this was also a way of legitimising the need for rationing and dispelled some of the unease around rationing of food, clothing and other goods. The governments addressed their nations and ‘preached’ the merits of frugality as a way for the public to contribute towards the war effort (Witkowski, 2003). Brummel (2011) noted the contemporary fashions for appropriating war-time images and slogans, is a reflection of our understanding of thrift in the war-era context. Austerity as a term is also often used in conjunction with discussions of the rationing policies that were implemented during WWII when non-essential items were restricted as part of controlling and monitoring the war-time economy (OED 2009).

American commentary on the need for thrifty behaviour in contemporary society leads on from this discussion of wartime thrift messages. Tucker (1991) stated that since WWII and the recovery from it, there has been a general decline in thrift values and with the rise in prosperity people forgot the need to be, thrifty. Snyder (2009) echoed

Tucker's view, suggesting that now that contemporary society is experiencing economic difficulties, American consumers will once again have to learn to be thrifty, something that the current generation of consumers has not experienced on mass. Within this discussion Snyder highlighted how government austerity will lead to consumers needing to get to grips with personal thrifty behaviours, to survive in the economic climate and maintain their current lifestyles. This highlights that thrift is taken as a personal responsibility and also has wider consequences on a national and global scale.

Wilcox (2008) argued that the American public will not seek a thrifty lifestyle on their own necessarily despite the apparent overall need to do so. Instead people will need 'incentivizing' into thrifty behaviour traits, arguing that those not immediately or personally affected by the economic climate will need to be explicitly shown the benefits of being thrifty, before they will actively engage in it. This can be illustrated by a wider debate on savings: politicians are promoting the need for individuals to invest in their future and provide safeguards in case of job losses etc., including placing money in savings accounts; however interest rates are at record lows and the banks have been shown to not necessarily be secure, with many collapsing or needing to be 'bailed out' by governments. Therefore, encouraging people to invest their money will require greater incentives than are currently in place. Implicit here is the potential signs of the media in contributing to the emergent, contemporary meanings and practices of thrift.

Although much of this commentary comes from within America, it does apply to Britain. This study is situated against the backdrop of the 2008-2012 recession. This was pertinent to the study as it contextualised the theoretical framework and the socio-cultural background that the data was collected in. It's therefore necessary to understand the impact of this on consumer spending habits and on the magazine industry.

A report on UK household spending during the recession found that the last quarter of 2008 saw the first drop in the total value spent by households since 1968, and this continued to fall in the first half of 2009, indicating that the recession was impacting on UK spending habits (ONS 2012:1). A reduction across all types of spending was noted, with non-essential items cut the most throughout this time, in part to minimise impacts on spending on essential items, such as food (p.3-4), although this does not mean

spending in these areas were unaffected. On average families were cutting the amount spent on food due to restricted budgets, and changing what foods they bought. Seeing a reduction in the amount of fresh produce, and an increase in processed foods with lower nutritional qualities bought (Griffith et al 2013). The ONS suggest that this could be linked to rising food prices, so in order to keep the volume of food bought the same as pre-recessionary times, a change in products was necessary (2012:5). This demonstrates how recessionary impacts on spending can have wider reaching consequences for consumers.

Overall, the fear caused by the recession and a lack of consumer confidence caused changes in shopping habits for both essential and non-essential purchases, including: an emphasis on getting value for money; less store loyalty; increased shopping around for goods; an increase in the purchase of unbranded or budget goods (Hampson and McGoldrick 2011); the postponing of major purchases, e.g. new cars and travel and a reduction in luxuries, e.g. eating out and theatre tickets (ONS 2012; Strutton and Lewis 2012).

A decline in consumer spending on non-essential goods is obviously a risk factor to the magazine industry itself. Gough-Yates (2003) noted that the 1980s recession had a severe impact on the magazine industry, with a loss of readers, further market segmentation and competition from other markets, leading to a cut in workforce numbers and increasing cover costs (p.42). Similar impacts can be expected in the contemporary context too as recessionary periods draw closer attention to the structure of the industry as efforts are made to ensure financial viability. The PPA offer a less pessimistic view of the recession's impact on magazines, seeing magazines as an 'inexpensive indulgence' in comparison to other forms of entertainment including cinema or theatre (PPA 2009) and that the 'stay at home' attitude of consumers in times of economic difficulty makes magazines an ideal media format to engage with.

Overall, this contributes to the contextual nature of thrift that is discussed throughout the thesis.

2.5.2 Thrifty Vocabulary

Amongst my initial searches for studies which had a focus on thrift, it became apparent that it was necessary to expand the search to include the terms frugal and austerity.

Within the literature the words thrift(iness), frugal(ality) and austerity were used seemingly interchangeably, but there is a sense within this that their meanings have varying connotations.

This correlated with the Oxford English Dictionary's (OED 2009) definitions. It defines thrift as a method of saving and economic management, including the careful use of means available and acts of frugality. Frugality as the sparing use of food or goods in an economical cause; it is the opposite of luxurious and is often associated with food. Austerity is seen as an act of severe self-discipline and restraint, moral strictness and severe simplicity with a lack of luxury. Austerity is often associated with harsher sacrifices and formal regulatory powers, whereas being frugal or thrifty is done on a more personal level, although largely for the same aims of economic management and saving, with an absence of luxury for a perceived length of time. It is because of this similarity and overlap in meaning that the search was expanded to include all three terms.

Evans (2011) sets out define the terms thrift and frugality in relation to sustainable consumption. Suggesting that both terms centre on the application of restraint, he proposes that 'thrift is the art of doing more (consumption) with less (money)' (p.551). Thrift in this sense is about economic management and saving money and not about 'consuming less' (Evans 2011:551), this requires consumers to negotiate what a 'good buy' really is (Capon and Kuhn 1982). Miller (1998) defines practices of thrift as relating to bargain hunting, so thrift is only experienced and achieved through spending, but that spending must be tactical and managed. In contrast, frugality is seen as 'a virtue' (Evans 2011:552). As a lifestyle choice centred on economic restraint often framed through moralist discourses.

To be frugal is to be moderate or sparing in the use of money, goods and resources with a particular emphasis on careful consumption and the avoidance of waste. (Evans 2011:552)

Evans is critical of the term thrift here, seeing it as being too embedded in commercial practices to be useful when considering sustainability. Contrastingly, Yates and Hunter (2011) suggest that thrift is the more useful term to work with, seeing it as a more instrumental term than frugality.

The notion of scarcity, both in terms of time and money play a role in defining thrift albeit not explicitly, the implications to saving scarce resources fits with the economic management ideas discussed above, but broadens the approach out to consider other resources (e.g. Warde 1997; Miller 1998; Jackson et al 2001; Okada and Hoch 2004; Jabs and Devine 2006; Cappellini 2009; Cappellini and Parsons 2012, 2013a; Mullainathan and Sharif 2013; Truninger 2013).

2.5.3 Thrift and Saving or Spending

Whilst for some, thrift and spending was about economic restraint for necessity, much of the existing literature frames thrift in relation to preserving the economic resources of a household, so that they remain available for future acts of consumption (Miller 1998; Berry 1994; Hilton 2004; Ikeda 2006; Goody 2006).

Miller (1998) and Bardhi and Arnould (2005) suggested that there are two kinds of shopping, firstly, ‘provisioning shopping’ where economy is observed and consequently thrift is identified, and the secondly ‘hedonic shopping’ which is extravagant and self-indulgent. Provisioning shopping is linked to sacrifice, where savings lead to the concept of thrift. The two can however be linked together within the idea of shoppers who shop economically and hence save money, but this saving reinvested to buy treats and luxuries thus leading to ‘hedonistic shopping’. Thrifty behaviour here does not just apply to budget shopping and low monetary values, but includes, for example, buying a designer product at half price, despite the fact that it still cost much more than an unbranded version. This reflects Evans (2011) definitions on thrift as embedded in acts of consumption.

2.5.4 Thrift and the Moral Conscience

Thrift appears to be bound in moral dimensions and conscience (Bove et al 2009; Pepper et al 2009). Thrift is still about spending, but with a moral consideration, this fits with the changes in consumer spending habits noted as part of the response to recession.

With this comes a discussion of thrift in terms of lifestyle traits (Bove, et al 2009). It can be argued that thriftiness is seeping back into peoples’ conscious and lifestyle, as people become more aware of the potential benefits of thrifty behaviour and more accepting of it as a legitimate consumer lifestyle trait.

The careful management of economic funds through sacrifice also enables expressions of love and moral duty towards one's family, much in the same way that cooking activities are portrayed. Personal sacrifice is often conducted by mothers as a temporary saving of economic resources to be reinvested in 'treats' and future consumption that will benefit the family, demonstrating the moral dimension in consumption activities (Miller 1998; Cappellini and Parsons 2013a).

Bove et al (2009) acknowledge the role that other conditions beyond motherhood have on thrifty behaviours, such as age and class. Younger people are less likely to be frugal than older members of society, due to the way that frugal behaviours are often results of life experiences and socialised from a young age, thus those who experienced the impact of WWII have stronger affiliations to these practices, exemplifying how consumer relationships to the war-time influence their understanding of thrift. Older shoppers also have 'greater price knowledge, lower time constraints, stronger maven tendencies and greater shopping enjoyment' and these factors are 'conducive' to frugal inclinations (Bove et al 2009:295-296).

2.5.5 Thrift and Convenience?

A larger discussion on the role of convenience in domestic kitchens has already taken place. Although this is not framed directly in relation to thrift, similarities exist between discussions of saving time through convenience, and that of saving money through thrifty practices. This paves the way for convenience to be considered in relation to thrift.

Much of the thrift literature discussed above refers to saving money and possessing skills in economic management as central to definitions of thrift. Here comparisons can be made to the way that the literature on convenience in food work centres on saving time, and possessing time management skills. Time in this sense is seen as a valuable resource which needs to be managed and used appropriately.

This observation indicates potential for a wider definition of thrift as a form of resource management rather than purely economic management. This comparison requires further empirical study to substantiate or dismiss this relationship between time and thrift. However, there are other food practices which add substance to this initial

observation, linking wider definitions of resource management to understandings of thrift, for example through the reduction of waste.

2.5.6 Thrift and Food

There are a number of specific strategies in food provisioning that have been identified in relation to thrift in previous studies. These relate to maximising food as a resource through practices in the reduction of waste, saving money, time and performing family/gender roles.

Leftovers are seen as way of preventing waste and saving money (Cappellini 2009; Cappellini and Parsons 2013b); whilst freezing is also a method for reducing waste, and forms part of convenience discourses (Warde 1997; Shove and Southerton 2000; Hayden 2007).

Throughout this discussion, issues around food waste and food safety underpin thrift related food decisions. Consumers are not always aware of what is and what isn't safe to consume, as such items are defined as good to use, or 'waste' (Evans 2012). The ability to avoid waste and therefore use food up is a negotiation between risk and thrift. For consumers with the right knowledge, risk is reduced and thrift increased, whilst for those lacking this knowledge, the wastage is greater (Fisher and Frewer 2008; Jevsnik et al 2008; Milne 2012; Gille 2012). Food safety messages through the media play, a key role in structuring this knowledge (McCluskey and Swinnen 2011).

These practices also demonstrate how resource management, in this case of food, is conceptualised in relation to thrift.

2.5.7 Thrift in Magazines?

Warde (1997) noted a theme of thrift in relation to food provisioning within his study on food content in women's magazines. He noted a shift in the types of meals that were being situated in relation to budget cooking. In the 1960s 85% of recipes were designed to cater for the family on a tight budget, compared with 50% in the 1990s. Magazines in the 1990s had a focus on entertaining cheaply in the domestic setting, rather than on everyday family foods (p.99). Additionally, there was a certain language base used with women's magazines in relation to food and thrift, terms like 'inexpensive' and 'on a budget' were more widely used than 'cheap', indicating an emphasis on the benefit to readers rather than focussing on skimping (p.98).

When suggesting cooking with cheaper ingredients, the magazines apologised for readers having to change their cooking methods and use additional condiments to increase flavour. This was distinct from recipes that used more expensive ingredients, where no apology was offered as these foods already held legitimate taste values. The costs of recipes becoming a more regular feature within the magazines reflected the need for planning and consideration as part of the cooking process, the price is listed more frequently in the 1990s compared with the 1960s, but is also framed as a technical specification (p.100).

A number of his other observations are cited throughout the literature review relating to convenience and gender roles for example. Warde's study is not on thrift per-se, but it emerges as one of the key themes found within the magazines. The study provides a useful starting point for consideration and is one of the few studies to approach the notion of thrift in this way and contributes to my observations on linking all aspects of resource management with thrift.

2.6 Conclusions from the Literature Review

This review demonstrates the relationship of food magazines in relation to values of thrift is highly complex and that the social actors and sites which interact with one another are multifaceted in their relationships and a number of core observations emerge:

- An appropriate theoretical framework that allows for complex relationships and the formation of value would be necessary to fulfil the aims of this study.
- Magazine research stems from a feminist perspective which has developed over time from seeing magazines as purely ideological texts – to discursive sites where gender subjectification could be debated and identities formed through production-representation-consumer relationships.
- The methodology of magazine studies has undergone a pattern of development which leads to a circuit of culture approach being recommended, although few studies employ this method overall.
- There is an over emphasis on the study of gender representations in magazines in comparison to other cultural values.

- Although this is not to dismiss the importance of gender as a key dimension of studying magazines. Gender is discussed repeatedly throughout the literature reviewed; this reinforces its importance in the context of this study.
- The relation between the producer-text-consumer is both distinct and overlapping, hence the usefulness in exploring this through the circuit of culture.
- Magazines are a contested blurred site for leisure and work both in the text and for the readers.
- Magazine editors have a key role in shaping the magazine's personality and style in relation to their own personal dispositions for taste, and as such become proxy consumers for their readers.
- The wider genre of food media has undergone rapid expansion further research is needed to fully capture the meanings, uses and influences of it to consumers.
- Food is a useful lens for studying other social issues.
- The relationship between class and food, and gender and food, is complex. Traditional class stereotypes seem to be changing in relation to food consumption but gender roles in the provisioning of food are reinforced.
- The literature on thrift is both unsubstantial and diverse. There is little continuity beyond the notion of scarcity and saving, or discussion of what this means overall.
- Economic management is the most prominent thrift discussion had within existing literature.
- Saving time and saving money co-exist, but are competing priorities. Suggesting that it is not just economics that need managing but resources more generally.
- Convenience is linked to saving but not explicitly to thrift.
- Studies on food practices have described leftovers, food convenience and waste management through concepts of thrift, but as practice based rather than value based.
- Further study is needed to expand on a more comprehensive definition of thrift and what it means to individuals.

It was based on these observations within existing studies which formed the basis for my study, informing its purpose and design.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter looks at the research design and specific methodology, in terms of data collection and analysis, employed in the study with the specific aims of addressing the study's core research questions which were outlined in Chapter 1. To recap, these were: firstly, to provide a comprehensive analysis of how thrift as a cultural value is formed through processes of cultural production, representation and consumption within the specific context of food magazines (RQ1-RQ1.3); secondly how and if these processes interact with and/or influence one another in respect of the circuit of culture in order to assess the usefulness of the theoretical framework, the circuit of culture, in researching cultural values and products more broadly (RQ2).

Although, the method of analysis was drawn from the needs and requirements of the circuit of culture and the research questions in order to adequately address these issues, the chapter will also discuss the influence of existing literature on lifestyle magazines, and more broadly consumer culture, on the methods applied to this study.

Firstly I shall outline the methodological needs of the circuit of culture, before discussing how the sample and method of data collection for each element within the circuit was selected and conducted. Based on the overall concept of the research I then outline the need for an interpretative approach, before discussing why a thematic analysis was employed. Each specific stage of data analysis is then examined to show how the methods worked in practice.

3.1 The Circuit of Culture and Methodological Needs

Johnson (1986/7) argued that the circuit of culture can also be used as a methodological framework. This is a useful strength of the circuit of culture, as by its nature any research project to which it is applied will pull together different elements and collect a variety of data which will need to be analysed. The methodological framework created by the circuit of culture allows for methodical and efficient data collection, as it maps out each element of the research. When looking at this framework and the aims of my research it is apparent that the use of one method across all the elements in the circuit would not be appropriate for generating useful data. However, it highlighted that the representation of the text could be explored through a textual analysis, and that gaining insights into the production and consumption process needed to include participants specifically involved in these processes; semi-structured interviews would provide these

sections of the data. The circuit elements of identity and representation would not require specific data collection; instead these elements would run across all the data collected.

Therefore, a multi-method approach was employed in this study. This is not purely a study on individual relationships, but moreover the relationships, possible resonances, similarities and differences between the elements. As these three elements of representation, production and consumption are inextricably linked within this context, studying them together is key and can only be done through this multi-method style of approach (Bergman 2008:3).

In identifying the need for a multi-method approach, a triangulation of methods was also used. By triangulating methods and sources of data, a greater depth of understanding should be achieved. This is important within cultural studies research where traditionally too much emphasis has been placed on the text and not enough consideration given to all the elements in the production-text-consumer relationship (Gauntlett 2002:182).

There are some criticisms of multi-method studies, such as the way the integrity of methods may be compromised, but there are also strengths in terms of providing a more comprehensive view of a field of study (Bryman 2004:456). This approach may be used to corroborate the findings of the other method, but at the same time problems may arise if findings do not overlap. Bryman argues in these cases some researchers face a dilemma over which set of data to believe or to place the most importance on, so the research principles may be compromised. In this study, this was not an issue as it is precisely the differences or similarities within the data sets that will provide opportunities for analysis of the way(s) that messages of thrift are produced, represented and consumed within the circuit of culture. It also allows for the relationships between text and practice to be explored in a way a single method would not. This does however highlight a need for a triangulation approach.

Hammersley (2008) highlights a number of useful definitions of triangulation including 'indefinite triangulation' whereby there is not just 'one truth' but rather that each different data source or individuals may have alternative, but valid, views on the same issue and that this highlights the complexities of everyday life. Overall the definition of triangulation as seeking complementary information is highly relevant to studies of this

nature; suggesting that the information gained from two or more angles may not serve to validate one another, but would allow a fuller picture to be gained (2008:23-27). This triangulation approach was suitable for the kind of research I was conducting due to the nature of the theoretical framework involving multiple data sets.

Once the need for specific data sets had been identified it was necessary to define the samples for this study.

3.2 The Samples

As previously asserted, empirical data needed to be collected in relation to the elements of representation (the texts), production and consumption. Each of these elements is in a sense defined by its own context and position within the circuit of culture and by the research aims of the study. The texts in this study were food magazines, I was interested specifically in the cultural production of the messages and values within the magazines, therefore the producers of content would be considered as the production element of the circuit, and finally readers of the magazines would be viewed as consumers to assess the consumption of the values and messages. These three elements shall now be discussed in more detail.

3.2.1 The Representation Element: Textual Analysis

Food magazines had been selected as the lens through which thrift would be investigated. Food magazines, as opposed to other genres of lifestyle magazines were chosen for three key reasons outlined in more detail in Chapter 2. Firstly, food is a necessity and yet how, what and where we consume food is rarely based purely on its biological function, instead it is bound in socio-cultural norms, conventions and values making it a useful empirical source for investigating other socio-cultural phenomena (Becker 1996; Warde 1997; Miller and Deutsch 2009; Murcott et al 2013). Secondly, there has been a rise in academic interest in food culture and food media in part due to the reason above, and also as it echoes the genre's increasing presence across media formats indicating the genre's popularity in the market place. Thirdly, food magazines were one of the few genres of lifestyle magazines to see a rise in circulation during the 2008-9 period of recession in the UK (Reynolds 2009). Although this study is not looking at the influence of the recession on thrift specifically, it does contextualise the study in a contemporary global financial crisis which some of the economic literature related to thrift highlights as important to consider (e.g. Tucker 1991; Synder 2009).

In order to choose appropriate food lifestyle magazines for the study, the ABC circulation figures published in 2009 provided useful evidence. There were fourteen food titles listed in the ABC section of consumer magazines: seven titles were linked directly to supermarkets. These titles linked to supermarkets were excluded from consideration due their bias for own brand products and that many are subsidised through reward schemes or are free to customers, therefore the level of personal investment (both monetary and socially) is lower for these magazines. The other seven titles had varying circulation figures which were used to judge the most widely read magazines and this was the criteria for inclusion in the study. Texts for previous magazine studies have been selected based on similar criteria and therefore it can be seen as an appropriate and valid way of defining the suitability of texts to include in a study of this nature (Warde 1997:44; Madden and Chamberlain 2004:586-587). The two most popular titles were selected from the ABC food titles rankings (ABC 2009c), to get a more varied view i.e. not from a singular institution and to include a wider section of readers. Due to resources on time including more than two magazines may have led to too superficial a study of the in-depth messages of the magazines.

In this case, *BBC Good Food Magazine*⁴ and *Delicious* had the highest circulation figures at an average circulation per edition of 359,772 and 105,560 per issue respectively, (ABC 2009a; ABC 2009b) and therefore were selected for inclusion in this study.

A time frame of analysis was defined for the study as issues July 2009 – June 2010. There were a number of factors highlighted in the methods literature (Hansen 1998:100-104) and understanding of the magazine format that influenced the selection of a time frame for analysis for the texts.

Firstly, this was a contemporary study on how cultural messages were being represented and therefore required the magazines to be current not historical. This made participants for the next two phases of data collection, writers/readers of these magazines who were actively engaged with the texts during this time period, easier to locate and help to ensure continuity throughout the study. Secondly, the magazines' style and content indicated at first glance there are generic seasonal themes to the magazines: summer, autumn, winter/Christmas, and spring. I observed that Christmas

⁴ From this point, the magazine will be referred to as *Good Food*.

appeared to play a significant role in these magazines and therefore it would be useful to include this in the study. As magazine calendars are skewed in relation to the actual calendar, the January issue of the magazine actually becomes available to purchase in early December, and so on throughout the year. Thirdly, in relation to time management, the sample needed to provide a range of data which deep data could be extracted from, but also be manageable in terms of time.

It was based on these three factors that I decided to include twelve issues of each magazine title in the study. These issues would be the same months for each magazine title so that any contextual social background that could potentially influence the magazine content would be the same for both titles. The twelve issues would allow for a complete calendar year to be analysed the first issue in the sample would be July 2009 and the twelfth issue, June 2010. This date range was selected so that the 2009 Christmas could be fully explored, as this theme starts to appear in the November issues of the magazines but is also still present in the January issues. It would allow for trends on either side to be looked at in relation to thrift values more consistently than if January 2009 issue was looked at in relation to the Christmas 2009 content as the January issue would actually be referring to 2008.

3.2.2 The Production Element - Food Magazine Writers

Due to the nature of this research, the recruitment and sample of participants needed to be purposeful in order to target specific producers relevant to the research. This study was interested in the production of editorial content, and not the physical production processes involved in magazine production (e.g. printing), this approach to production echoed that taken by similar existing studies (Jackson et al 2001; Crewe 2003; Gough-Yates 2003). I was interested to see if those contributing to the magazines content acted as cultural intermediaries in the circuit of culture (as identified by Crewe 2003 and Gough-Yates 2003 both in relation to magazine editors) and if/how they played a role in defining, shaping and producing the cultural value of thrift. Therefore, participants were required to work for, or have worked for, either or both of the magazines *Good Food* or *Delicious* as writers. Many of the previous studies on magazine production focus on the studies of editors, this study focused on writers of the magazines for two reasons. Firstly to assess the role of the editorial team and contributors, beyond the editors, in the construction of meaningful messages, and secondly to see if in comparison to earlier studies their positions could also be defined as cultural intermediary roles.

The criteria for writers to be recruited as participants were that they needed to be either employed directly by the *Good Food* or *Delicious*, the publishing house, or work as freelance journalists/food writers regularly for these titles. Ideally I was looking for food writers who had a professional relationship with the magazines for a period of at least two years prior to interview, in part so that they were involved with the magazine at the time that the textual sample was published, to ensure that their relationship to the magazine wasn't short term, and that they had contemporary knowledge of the publication.

Initially, I aimed to conduct n=10 interviews. This number of interviews is comparable to other studies looking at cultural intermediaries (e.g. Moor 2008). It was also feasible within the time restrictions of the study.

The recruitment process began by contacting the magazines via email and postal contact details as listed on their websites, informing the magazines of the nature of my research and requesting participants. Having not heard anything after two weeks, I rang the magazines to introduce myself and ask if there were any specific people who I may contact. *Delicious* directed me back to the website where the email addresses of key members of staff were listed, whilst *Good Food* took my details and I was told someone would follow up. After making contact with several of the *Delicious* contacts listed on the website, one reply suggested I search for freelance writers who had worked on food magazines or as food writers as they may be best placed to help, they also said they would forward my details to some of their own contacts. Following this advice I ran a series of Google searches for food writers, generating a list of potential participants who I then contacted via email.

A member of staff from the *BBC Magazine Insiders Panel* (a BBC run research panel that asked for consumer opinions on their magazine arm) contacted me about my research. Although not a food writer, this contact acted as a key informant and gave an insight into how consumer feedback is used by BBC magazines. This was a way of gaining an additional level of access to the BBC magazine staff. This contact felt I had been put in touch with the wrong department so offered to forward my details to some of their internal contacts at *Good Food*. They also suggested that I contact the advertising staff at BBC magazines as they may be interested; although this was an avenue to explore, my key aim was to recruit writers as the focus of my study was on

the framing of thrift as a cultural value through the editorial content of the magazine and not through the advertising. Through these various contacts I set up n=7 interviews, all with food writers or editorial contributors to the magazines who had established professional relationships with one or both of the two magazine titles. A further three participants were recruited as a result of a snowball recruitment process from the initial pool of participants (Bryman 2004:100-102).

In total the target of n=10 interviews was met. N=4 interviews with food writers associated with *Good Food*, N=3 interviews where the food writers were associated with *Delicious*, and n=3 where writers had worked for both magazines at some point in the last two years.

3.2.3 The Consumption Element – Magazine Readers

As referred to earlier, all the participants being recruited for this study were based on a purposive sample; I aimed to interview n=30 regular readers of either/both the magazine titles *Good Food* or *Delicious*. Other studies which conducted interviews of this style with consumers used a comparable amount of participants (Johnston and Baumann 2010). For the consideration of consumption within the circuit, I was interested specifically in the readers of the magazines *Good Food* and *Delicious*. As with the food writers, it was important to the integrity of the study that the consumers interviewed were actively engaging with these texts, this differs from studies such as Jackson et al's (2001) study on men's magazines which also employed the circuit of culture approach but the consumers interviewed all had a basic awareness of the magazines but were not necessarily regular readers (p.109).

Feasey (2008) suggests that within research on specific lifestyle media texts, it is important to target those actively involved in the genre and text: a random population sample would not be appropriate or conducive to quality data in this case (p.688). Therefore it is appropriate to use a purposive, non-random snowball sampling method (Bryman 2004:100-102). The purpose of this research is to give a detailed account of the circuit of culture surrounding the production and construction of messages of thrift through food magazines, because of this, the study is looking to generate rich interpretive data and is not looking to generalise to a wider population; therefore snowball sampling allows for participants who have an active interest and who are readers of the magazines to be targeted.

I defined regular readers as those who read at least 50% of the issues published per year (i.e. 6 issues per year) and that ideally had been doing so for approximately two years. These participants would have a level of personal investment in these magazines, be familiar with the content and style and able to track changes in the magazines and in their consumption of the magazines over a period of time. It was important that I defined the term regular readers and not just relied on participants telling me that they were regular readers; Jackson et al (2001) found that readers were reluctant to define themselves as regular readers of certain magazines even if during the course of interview it became apparent that they did regularly read the magazines, likewise it is possible for potential participants to exaggerate the amount that they read these magazines if they think that is what the researcher wants to hear. The notion of regular readers can be ambiguous, the Professional Publishers Association (PPA) define for the purpose of their research with Brand Lab UK, regular readers to read at least 3 in every 6 issues published within a six month period (Brand Lab 2006:4), this is the same measure that I chose to apply, in order to define it more in line with the textual sample (one year's issues =12) I word this as 6 in every 12 issues published.

It was also decided that the study would only recruit female participants; these were still defined as the primary audience (over 70%) for the magazines, both in demographic and advertising sales documents for the magazines (*Good Food* 2009a; *Delicious* 2009) (and this was confirmed by the food writers interviewed). Other studies on food and cookery have also focused purely on women participants as they are still viewed as the gender most associated with this area of domesticity (Warde 1997; Giard 1998; Hollows 2003a; Ashley et al 2004).

I aimed to recruit participants from a spectrum of socio-demographic groups, ideally n=15 from ABC1 categories and n=15 from C2DE categories. This was to engage with people with different social backgrounds and to see if and how class status played a role in how cultural values were culturally consumed and negotiated with. These classifications were based on their occupations (and/or that of their partners), clothes, homes and expressed lifestyle and consumption traits, as used in a similar context by Hermes (1995:179).

The readers could be subscribers, buy the print or digital editions of the magazine, or share copies amongst friends and families, as long as they met the criteria outlined

above. In order to assess these criteria a number of questions would be asked during the initial contact with the potential participants.

The recruitment process used a snowball approach, starting with three initial contacts made in the early planning stages of my PhD; three participants expressed an interest in participating in my research when they discovered that the focus of my research was on food magazines, as they were avid readers of food magazines and had a wider interest in food media and cooking. Once ethical approval for the data collection was granted, contact was made with these interested individuals. Further participants were recruited through other contacts, such as people who worked with or knew friends and family. I had taken the decision not to interview anyone who I was related to, or was close friends with, as I did not want this to skew the interview process, a problem identified by Jackson et al (2001). Jackson et al also noted that drawing on their own social networks may have led to the sample of consumers being biased towards middle-class and/or university educated participants, and that their social relationships with some of the participants may have inhibited the data (p.169). Although I was still relying on friends and family for contacts, these contacts were with people whom I did not have a social relationship with, so acted as useful introductions to different groups of people. For example, a friend attended a night school class where they knew that one of their classmates had a keen interest in food and food media. From these initially recruited participants, further connections and recommendations were made to people who were known to read one or both of the magazine titles in my study. This is drawing on what Hermes (1995) refers to as friendship pyramiding (p.183), which she largely relied on for the recruitment of participants in her study on women's magazine readers.

In total n= 26 interviews were conducted, with n=18 participants from the ABC1 group and n= 8 from C2D. All participants were female, were aged between 25 and 48 and had been reading the magazine(s) for a minimum of two years. A further 2 participants had been interested in being involved in the study, but unfortunately meetings arranged for these interviews were cancelled by the interviewees on more than one occasion and in the end could not be rescheduled at a convenient time.

Before the participants for this study were recruited, attention was paid to potential ethical concerns.

3.2.4 Ethical Considerations

Any study which involves human participants must be aware of potential ethical issues. Participants involved in the interviews were all over the age of 18 and not classed as vulnerable, they were able to choose to participate in the study and give informed consent. Information sheets were provided to all participants via email before the interviews, clearly outlining the purpose of the study and what their involvement would be, they would be then asked to sign an informed consent form before the interview began.

The information sheets also stated who I was looking to collect data from and the purpose of the interviews. The decision to inform participants that I was interested in messages and cultural values within the magazines and not that I was specifically interested in thrift was made so they did not come to the interview with preconceived answers or having done casual research on thrift in advance, but instead relied upon their immediate thoughts. Not disclosing this information prior to interview did not pose a risk to the participants and it had been made clear that I was interested in specific messages within the magazine.

Although participants would be asked personal questions about their lifestyle, perceived identity, and consumption patterns, no questions would be on topics that may cause distress to participants. All participants were made aware of how their data would be used and stored, and ensured confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time. It was made clear to the participants that for the purpose of all writing and publication, real names would be replaced with pseudonyms⁵. And finally that all ethical guidelines set by the University of Leicester would be upheld at all times. (A copy of the consent forms and information sheets can be found in the appendix).

3.2.5 Considering the Identity and Regulation Elements

As briefly identified throughout Chapter 2 and earlier in this chapter, the identity and regulation elements of the circuit would not require a specific sample or data collection method of their own, instead they would be discussed in relation to the cultural context of the study and throughout analysis of the three elements above, this echoes the approach taken by Jackson et al (2001).

⁵ N=4 of the participants asked to choose their own pseudonyms.

3.3 Data Collection

In terms of data collection from the sample groups identified above there were two stages. Stage one, the textual stage used to investigate the representation element, and stage two, the interview stage used to investigate the production and consumption elements.

After each stage of data collection the data was reviewed and used to help format and inform the next stage, and any issues highlighted by the following stage were, where applicable, addressed by revisiting a previous stage.

3.3.1 Textual Analysis

The textual analysis stage of the research was based largely on the idea of a thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Guest 2012). Conducting a traditional content analysis seemed too restrictive when trying to identify the cultural values of thrift within the text, not allowing for themes to be developed and discovered throughout the project. Crabtree and Miller (1992:94) and Bryman (2004) discuss thematic coding in relationship to content analysis, and points out that this is not just a matter of counting what is present, but looking deeper in to the data.

“When the process of coding is thematic, a more interpretative approach is needed to be taken. At this point the researcher is searching not just for manifest content but latent content as well. It becomes necessary to probe deeper beneath the surface in order to ask deeper questions about what is happening.” (Bryman 2004:188)

This was one of the weaknesses of relying purely on traditional content analysis to understand the cultural value of thrift. Just looking for the frequency of occurrences may miss some of the nuances of the data and the way in which thrift was being represented. Spillman (2012) suggested that using quantitative methods (e.g. content analysis) provides a thin descriptive summary of data, whilst qualitative analysis (e.g. thematic analysis) provides a thick description and potential explanations for why themes are present. It is within this context that these two methods were used, and the logic behind conducting the content analysis prior to the qualitative thematic analysis.

A small scale content analysis was used to generate quantitative data on the structure of the magazine titles and numbers of individual components within the magazines. As Hansen (1998) suggests content analysis is well suited for mapping key characteristics of large bodies of text (p.123) and as such was a useful tool. The content analysis acted

as a method to gain background understanding and contextualisation of the magazines. This approach was employed by Jackson et al (2001) with similar motivations.

The content analysis provided an overview of the texts, I was aware that my interaction with the texts throughout this research process made me accustomed to the typical layout and content of the magazines, but for those reading my thesis without that involvement with the text may find it useful to have a wider context to the magazines used in the study, as well as playing a role in deepening my own understanding of the texts. I also wanted to locate specific uses of thrift words towards assessing RQ1.1 about how thrift is represented within the magazines, although this would be expanded upon through the thematic analysis.

In order to do this, four codebooks⁶ were developed designed to address specific areas of interest flagged by the existing literature, and the research questions of this study as highlighted in the tables below.

1. Basic Codes: Included basic information about the number of pages, adverts and recipes in the magazines.
2. Front Covers: Recorded information about what was on the front covers of the magazines.
3. Recipes: Every 10th recipe was analysed to see how many ingredients were included, and if there was any indication of price, time required and skill level.
4. Thrift Vocabulary: This included coding for specific words and phrases

The basic codes were the first to be defined and designed to give a general overview of the magazines (fig.1). Secondly, the front cover codebook was developed (fig.2). The front cover of a magazine can play a role in the decision to purchase a particular publication and the perceived content of the magazine (Swann 1991; McLoughlin 2000; Held 2005). Therefore if the magazine cover directly influences purchase decision then it is of importance in the relationship between the consumer and the product and should be taken into account in regard to the circuit of culture. Additionally, items placed on the front cover are purposefully selected as key representations of the magazine's overall content by the editor and therefore seeing if and when messages of thrift are present on covers would be a useful indicator to a meaningful and/or dominant message (Held 2005). Thirdly, I was specifically interested in the role of recipes within the texts (fig.3). The recipes are a dominant feature of the food magazines and therefore their

⁶ See appendix for full codebooks.

role in contributing to the representation of the cultural value of thrift needed to be assessed.

Finally, in specific and direct relation to RQ1.1 I wanted to see how specific thrift vocabulary was used throughout the magazine (fig.4). In part this was about addressing the ways that thrift was framed in the magazines through looking at the linguistics applied by these publications and identifying the general vocabulary used in relation to the term thrift.

A lack of research in this area meant it was not possible to look specifically at what vocabulary had been coded for in previous studies, although Warde's (1997:214) study offered a useful starting point. The codebook therefore drew on the thematic definitions of thrift derived from the literature review identified in chapter 2. It included terms around recession, frugality, economic management words such as cost and saving and also around associated topics such as waste and convenience (e.g. Warde 1997; Evans 2012). Additionally, an initial immersion with texts identified potential thrift words within the magazines that had not been originally identified through the existing literature, thus an inductive approach was used to include these terms that were observed within the magazines. Many of these terms fitted with and drew parallels to the existing literature but had not been specifically accounted for as a term. This identified the vocabulary of thrift, at the level of unit of analysis of the words and short phrases. In order to find these terms, careful searching of all the magazine's editorial (non-advertisement) content was conducted, coding for each occurrence of a thrift term, the word itself, it's situation in the magazine and as it was clear that these words were used in reference to a number of contexts, this was also coded to indicate what the thrift word was in reference too⁷. This also proved useful in identifying themes of thrift at the qualitative thematic stage later in the research process.

⁷ See Appendix for codebook and coding instruction for details on how thrift words were coded.

Figure 2: Basic Codebook

| Code | Reasoning |
|--|--|
| Magazine Title | Codes designed to give an overview of the format and content of the two magazines. NB: All codebooks coded for magazine title and magazine issue to allow for comparison of data between titles and issues. |
| Magazine Issue | |
| Cover Price | |
| Total no. pages | |
| Total no. recipes | Provide a context to one of the key purposes of the magazines and see how many of these recipes are related to celebrity chefs. Celebrity chefs are of interest due to their role in food media (Lewis 2008; Johnston and Baumann 2010; Rousseau 2012) |
| Total no. celebrity recipes | |
| Total no. photos of male celebrity chefs | Based on the existing literature on both magazines (Winship 1987; Hermes 1995; Jackson et al 2001; Gough-Yates 2003) and food/cooking as work and leisure (Giard 1998; Warde 1997; Ashley et al 2004; Hollows 2003b; Beagan 2008), I was interested in the role that gender played within these texts, although not with the aim of discussing femininity or masculinity as a cultural value per-se, but instead as contributing to the understanding of gender's relationship in food culture, food work, magazine consumption/production. The specific categories of codes, e.g. celebrity, writer and other, would also allow me to assess if there was any difference in terms of how gender and status (e.g. professional vs lay person in domestic setting) are represented within the magazines (Swinbank 2002; Hollows 2003a; Bell and Hollows 2005). |
| Total no. photos of female celebrity chefs | |
| Total no. male writer bio-pictures | |
| Total no. female writer bio-pictures | |
| Total no. other males pictured | |
| Total no. other females pictured | |
| Total no. advertisements | The types of adverts in the magazine. This captured the make-up of the adverts within the magazines to see the types of products being promoted and the quantity of them, but this was to provide contextual information and to allow me to understand any comments that might be said about the adverts in the interviews as adverts play a key role in the economic activities of the magazine (Holmes and Nice 2012:36-44), although there was not a detailed analysis of the advertisements themselves as this would not have overly contributed to addressing how the value of thrift was produced. The specific categories were based on the magazine content. |
| Total no. food and drink adverts | |
| Total no. household appliance adverts | |
| Total no. other household product adverts | |
| Total no. other adverts: extra-ordinary and everyday | |

Figure 3: Front Cover Codebook

| Code | Reasoning |
|----------------------------------|---|
| What is the main picture of? | Noting the front cover image as a key design factor (Mckay 2000) and the significance of front cover images on Women’s lifestyle magazines (Bignell 1997:67), I wanted to record the front cover image as it too may be of significance to the food writers, consumers or in relation to other themes on the cover. |
| No. tested recipes stated | To provide back ground information and comparison of style and emphasis on recipes and articles both within and between the magazine titles. |
| No. articles referenced on cover | |
| Presence of celebrity chef | As per the fig.1 basic codebook: (Lewis 2008; Johnston and Baumann 2010; Rousseau 2012) |
| Indication of special issue | To consider how/if special editions and seasonality is referenced throughout the year. Based on issues of special occasions in relation to consumer culture and consumption (e.g. Tynan and McKechnie 2009); Magazine content and seasonality (Moeran 2006) and cultural notions of food seasonality (Johnston and Baumann 2010) It also provides data to compare potential messages of thrift with this, and to see if any relationship between thrift and certain occasions and seasons can be identified. |
| Ref. to special occasion | |
| Ref. to season | |
| Ref. to thrift | Existing literature suggest that front covers provide a window to the content of the magazine, play a role in portraying the identity of the magazine and persuading consumers to purchase and consume (Swann 1991; Held 2005). Therefore I was interested to see if messages of thrift and associated terms were present on the covers as it may indicate the level of relevance of these terms within the magazine content overall. Reference to thrift, cost effectiveness, time effectiveness and ease were chosen due to their relationship to previously defined definitions of thrift/thrift practices in existing literature (e.g. Warde 1997; Miller 1998; Bove et al 2009; Cappellini and Parsons 2012). |
| Ref. to cost effectiveness | |
| Ref. to time effectiveness | |
| Ref. to ease | |
| Ref. to luxury | To offset against notions of thrift and to see if and when there are overlaps between the two ideas due to the contradiction in terms and connection to hedonistic thrift practices (Miller 1998; Bardhi and Arnould 2005). This was not broken down into specific categories due to not directly relating to the research questions. |

Figure 4: Recipe Codebook

| Code | Reasoning |
|--|--|
| Type of dish | Gives an overview of the types of recipes within the magazines, and allows for a comparison of how different dishes relate to notions of thrift. This stems from existing literature on the status of different meal types and food stuffs (Douglas 1972; Shove et al 2012). |
| Cost stated | These practical elements are regularly stated within recipes generally (Tomlinson 1986; Warde 1997) and are usually present in the food magazines. The reasons these details are stated may relate to how readers calculate the time and money involved in making particular dishes; as such there could be a relation to overall values and assessments towards thrift (Callon et al 2002). |
| Time stated | |
| No. Servings | |
| Skill needed | |
| Ref. to Thrift | As per front cover codebook. |
| Ref. to Luxury | |
| Author | To assess who is producing the instructional content for the magazines, and if and how these individuals are qualified; echoing theory related to the popularisation of expertise (Lewis 2008). |
| Codes added after interview data collected from food writers: | |
| Freeze | It became clear after the interviews with the food writers that they had specific devices which they thought were important to consumers in terms thrift and the recipes within the magazines; the most common one which came up in this data was about making batches to freeze and advice regarding leftovers. |
| Batch | |
| Leftovers | |
| Codes added after interview data collected from readers: | |
| No. Ingredients | The readers concerns about the number of ingredients in recipes in relation to thrift and attitudes towards cooking. The coding frame was then expanded to include a count of the number of ingredients. |

Figure 5: Thrift Codebook

| Code | Reasoning |
|--|--|
| <u>Words relating to thrift as a term:</u> Thrift; Frugal; Austerity | Thrift can be seen as having ambiguous meanings and used interchangeably with closely associated terms. |
| <u>Words relating to current economic climate:</u> Recession; Economy | The contemporary context of this study meant that within the news media a discussion about recession and economic impact was a common theme, therefore I wanted to test to see if this was present in the magazines |
| <u>Save</u> | Commonly associated to the definition of thrift. |
| <u>Words relating to economic factors:</u> Cheap; Low-Cost; Cost-effective; Affordable; Special Price; Good-Value Bargain; Offer(s); Half price; Free; Affordable; Budget; Discount(s); Moneywise | Thrift definitions often have economic undertones and related specifically to saving money or conceptualisations of value in relation to this. |
| <u>Words relating to do with reducing:</u> Reduce; Less; Cut | Echoing literature on the reduction of waste, |
| <u>Words to do with time and convenience:</u> Quick; Easy | Practices of convenience and around speed and ease. |
| <u>Phrases included after thematic reading:</u> From(or under) £XX per head/number Dinner in under xx minutes | After conducting the initial analysis of the magazines it was apparent that these two phrases were reoccurring, and dominant within both texts with significant relationships to representing thrift practices and therefore were coded for frequency of appearance. |
| <u>Context:</u> Money; Time; Waste; Space | In order to more adequately capture what the notion of thrift referred to the context that the word appeared in relation to was also coded. Again this related to existing literature on thrift in relation to money (e.g. Miller 1998); time (derived from concepts of convenience e.g. Warde 1997; Candel 2001 - and inductive notes.); waste (e.g. Evans 2012) and an inductive code relating to space. |

In any content analysis study a critical stage is to ensure that coding schedules are pilot tested before they are used to collect data, in order to check that the codes are adequate, workable, reliable and that nothing is ambiguous (Bryman 2004:195). I coded two issues of each of the magazine titles (*Good Food* n=2 and *Delicious* n=2) in full to the four codebooks. At this stage I felt confident that the frames worked, although I did re-write some of the coding instructions to make them clearer. Once this was done, as is good practice, a reliability test was conducted (Neuendorf 2011). I wanted to check that someone else's interpretation of the codebooks and instruction was the same as mine, as I was to be the primary coder with no double coding taking place due to the nature of the PhD project this seemed an appropriate way of taking steps to account for reliability and to ensure that my personal views were not overriding the validity of the coding frames. I gave two (one *Good Food* and one *Delicious*) out of the four magazines used in the pilot and the code books to a colleague who after having been briefed about the purpose of the coding frames although not about the specific research questions (Neuendorf 2011), conducted their coding independently, to check the reliability of the codes.

The reliability coder raised questions during this process, however had no major difficulties; these queries were mainly resolved by reconfirming or rewording instructions. I was then able to statistically measure the level of reliability between myself and the other coder. For the basic codes there was an average of 95% agreement, and for the front cover analysis 100%. For the thrift vocabulary and recipe analysis, due to time constraints it was not feasible for the reliability coder to code the amount of data I had done in the pilot. Therefore from the data I had coded I selected 20 recipes (10 from each magazine) and a range of 20 pages from each magazine for the coder. From the recipe analysis there was a 100% agreement, and on the thrift analysis a 93% level of agreement. The thrift analysis level of agreement was lower than the other aspects however when I compared my coding with that of the other coder it was clear that the majority of the disagreements were caused by an error on the part of a coder rather than any misunderstanding or ambiguity of the variables.

Overall, the agreement rates were highly acceptable and suggested that in general the coding frames worked effectively with variables defined clearly; I therefore decided to continue with the coding at this stage.

Whilst the coding was taking place I was aware that I was also entering phase 1 of the template analysis process; familiarisation with the texts. As I was conducting the content analysis, I made additional notes on the texts especially on things that related to the concept of thrift or latent messages that could be of interest in terms of the next stage in analysis. This thematic stage of analysis shall be discussed later in the chapter in conjunction with the analysis of the interviews, first though a discussion of how the interview data was collected.

3.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

For the purpose of this research a qualitative form of interview was most appropriate and it would allow me to delve deeper in to the cultural values and generate ‘rich, detailed’ data (Bryman 2004:319-320) in a way that a survey or a structured interview would not allow. The semi-structured method also fitted with the overall interpretative and thematic approach that was applied to the research. Allowing the interviewee to express their views on issues or values, and how they frame their opinions is key to this method of interviewing as one of the main aims is to capture the interviewees ‘world view’ (Bryman 2004:125) something which is central to a study concerned with cultural value.

This is echoed by the use of interviews in similar studies looking at aspects of cultural production and potential cultural intermediaries both in lifestyle magazine research (e.g. Jackson et al 2001; Crewe 2003) and across other cultural products and industries (e.g. Cronin 2004; Moor 2008; Smith Maguire 2010; Kuipers 2012). The method is also applied to studies of readers of lifestyle magazines (Hermes 1995; Ytre-Arne 2011) and food culture (Johnston and Baumann 2010).

Before the interviews began, interview guides were constructed based on the knowledge gained from the textual analysis and existing literature.

The interview guides for both the food writer participants and the magazine reader participants followed a similar format. I divided my topics into three main sections:

1. Personal dispositions
2. Material practices
3. Thrift

The interviews were designed this way purposefully. It allowed for the participants to firstly talk about themselves. Asking questions about their role, as opposed to

jumping straight to their opinions and views is likely to stimulate discussion early on in the interview process; allowing for the interviewee to feel comfortable in the interview and enable a detailed opinion based discussion later on. It allowed for wider interactions between them as individuals, and the magazines as cultural texts, to be explored without the emphasis at this stage being on interpretations of cultural value before opening out specifically to notions of thrift. Due to the semi-structured nature of these interviews there would be some digression away from the guides in practice, but they served as a useful prompt within the interviews and for a check-list to ensure certain aspects and topics had been covered. Beyond aiding the flow of the interviews, this structure allowed for the interviews to cover the elements seen in the circuit of culture - the text itself, their role as either producer or consumer and their view on the other, and within in discussions of identity and regulation – this was done to allow for useful cross comparison in the analysis stage as well as providing meaningful standalone case studies. The first few questions of the interview would relate to their personal circumstances, regarding occupation (and that of their partner if relevant), family status and educational backgrounds for all participants. After the first interview, I decided not to record this information with the rest of the interview and to rely on notes; this provided a useful introductory period and allowed for the interviewee to start discussion without the intimidation of a recording device and this allowed discussion to flow in to the formal part of the interview.

Although there is an overlap in construction and format, I shall first outline the food writer interview guide, before moving on to the reader interview guide.

Figure 6: Food Writer Interview Guide: Personal Dispositions

| Question? | Reasoning |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Personal Dispositions:</u> PD.1: How did you get in to food writing? – What’s your background? Were food and magazines something you have always been interested in?</p> | <p>Information about personal dispositions of the food writers in a personal and a professional sense were collected based on situating food writers as cultural intermediaries. As such their background or their habitus (Bourdieu 1984) or dispositions (du Gay and Pryke 2004) may inform their cultural work.</p> |
| <p>PD.2: Who do you think the magazines are aimed at? – how/why do you know this. PD.3: Do you think you are like your target reader?</p> | <p>A key aspect to a cultural intermediary role is to have an innate understanding of the readers, based not just on marketing demographic data but because they are conceptualised as their own ‘ideal consumers’ (Bourdieu 1984; Featherstone 1991) or ‘proxy consumers’ (Ennis 2005) therefore questions were asked to ascertain how as writers they defined their readers and if/how they conceptualised their own identity in relation to their readers.</p> |
| <p>PD.4: Did the recession change the target audience or the content? - how and in what ways?</p> | <p>In addition to this I wanted to ascertain if they felt the current economic climate and current debates about economic issues had affected the magazine readership to provide contextual background.</p> |
| <p><u>Material Practices:</u> MP.1: How does your job on a day-to-day basis work? What’s your writing process? MP.2: What is the selection process for articles, recipes, ingredients and products?</p> | <p>Based on the occupation function of magazine writers (Holmes and Nice 2012) their day-to-day practices were examined, this was done in part to highlight any areas where they indicate food writing as a taste making occupation (Smith Maguire and Matthews 2012). By asking about the selection process for the magazines an insight into how the writers negotiate institutional constraints.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>MP.3: What do you think the purpose of the magazine is?</p> | <p>Discussing their understandings of the purposes of the magazine will give an insight in to how as produced they situate their work in relation to the content, and how the readers may view this. It is something also reflected on within previous magazine studies or studies of reading although often from the point of view of the consumer (Radway 1984; Hermes 1995).</p> |
| <p>MP.4: How are celebrity chefs and other experts/social actors used and represented within the magazines? – Why is that?</p> | <p>The inclusion of a question on how celebrity chefs and other social actors are represented within the magazine stems from existing literature about the popularisation of food expertise (Lewis 2008); issues around food and gender representations (e.g. Swinbank 2002) and to assess if these actors are ever used as tactical devices (du Gay and Pryke 2004).</p> |
| <p><u>Thrift:</u> T.1: What does thrift mean? – To you personally and in the context of the magazines? T.2: How do you determine what is thrifty? – how to you make thrift interesting and relevant?</p> | <p>This section was designed to get an insight into the writers own personal definitions of thrift as well as if and how this impacted on their professional roles. I was aware that this presented an occasion where I may be at risk of inadvertently leading the participant; I therefore was prepared to reword T.1 without myself giving any definitions of thrift. I was looking at both their personal and professional opinion on this and so follow-up questions would depend on their approach to answering this question. Once basic meanings of thrift had been discussed I was interested how they specifically contextualised what counted as thrifty and what did not, this would be useful in assessing what thrift means in practice.</p> |
| <p>T.3: Thrift Vs Luxury – is there a place for both concepts in the same magazine or even article? – Why? How does this work? T.4: Does thrift content flow over the year? T.5: If/how do you think these notions relate to the readers of your magazines?</p> | <p>Lifestyle magazines play a role in promoting consumption (Bell and Hollows 2005) and beyond this, glossy magazines have a relationship to luxury goods (Scholz 2013:69), therefore I was interested in if and how the two ideas of thrift and luxury sat alongside each other and how this was justified and legitimised within the production of editorial content. T.4 related back to initial observation in deductive coding of the text and wanted to understand this from the production element also. Asking the writer’s to explain their understandings of if, and how, these messages of thrift might be seen by readers – drew on aspects covered throughout the interview: and asked them to think about conceptualisations of the audience (PD.2 and PD.4), the purposes of the magazines (MP.3) and notions of thrift.</p> |

Once the interview guides had been completed, the ten interviews were arranged. The interviews ranged in length from 45 minutes (n=1) to 2 hours 17 minutes (n=1) with the other eight lasting between 60 and 90 minutes. Overall the interview guide worked well in the interviews. Initiating the interview by talking about the food writers themselves and their roles was a good way of starting the process, all of the participants seemed open to this discussion immediately.

After the first two interviews I found that I was having to probe deeper about who the food writers felt the audience of the magazine was. The writers had a tendency to rely on press-pack type statistics and I had to ask follow up questions to find out to what extent that was how they viewed the readers and ascertain their own opinions. Therefore for the remaining interviews I added this to the interview guide as a reminder.

The flexibility of this interview structure also allowed for areas of interest to be explored that had not been considered in the guide. In several of the early interviews the writers referred to aspects of authority on the part of the magazine and/or legitimising techniques for the content as part of the thrift section of the interviews. This was explored further before coming back to the interview guide at an appropriate place. Specifically within the context of thrift discussions the natural flow of the different interviews led to the questions in my guide being covered in a range of orders, some through me asking explicit questions others raised within the discussion after other questions.

On completion of the food writer interviews and a basic analysis, attention was turned to constructing the reader interview guide, as previously mentioned, it followed largely the same format to the interviews with writers.

Figure 7: Magazine Reader Interview Guide

| Question? | Reasoning |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Personal Dispositions:</u> PD.1: How long have you been reading these magazines? PD.2: Why do you read these magazines? PD.3: Who do you think the magazines are aimed at? Why do you think that? PD.4: Do you think you fit into that target audience? How/Why?</p> | <p>These questions were asked to situate the readers and their relationship to, and understanding of the magazine(s) they read. It could also show how they align themselves with certain social groups based upon their consumption choices (Bourdieu 1984). It would also be used a useful point of comparison to how the food writers viewed the magazine readers and indeed themselves within this idea of target audience.</p> |
| <p><u>Material Practices:</u> MP.1: How do you read this/these magazines? – Participants given examples of the magazine and allowed to flick through them indicated how they select content of interest to them if desired. MP.2: What is your opinion of the selection of articles, recipes etc. within the magazines? MP.3: How do you use the magazines? – What is/do they fulfil a purpose for you?</p> | <p>Existing studies of readers of both magazines and books, indicated that gaining an understanding of how readers use the texts necessary to fully explore their roles as consumers (Radway 1984; Hermes 1995; Jackson et al 2001). Therefore this section allowed this to be explored. By asking the readers to actively handle the magazines and discuss how they read, as well as what they read, richer insights into how the magazines are used should be gained (Santos 2004:397). Question MP.Q3 was developed to fulfil several criteria, to understand the specific motivations for choosing to consume these magazines; to understand the ways consumers engaged with and incorporate these texts within their everyday lifestyles and practices (Hermes 1995; Jackson et al 2001). And, again it was based on gaining an insight into the reader- text relationship, but also to act as a point of comparison between indicators of purpose from within the texts, to how the writers conceptualised their products use value.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>MP.Q4: What do you think of the celebrity chef? – what, if anything does the use of celebrity chefs add to the magazines? - How does your use of their content differ to the rest of the magazine?</p> | <p>Based on the initial analysis of both the text and consumer interviews and in line with existing literature (e.g. Lewis 2008) the readers would also be asked for their opinion on the role of celebrity chefs within the magazines and if they were significant in how the readers engaged with the magazine content.</p> |
| <p><u>Thrift:</u> T.Q1: What does thrift mean – To you personally and in the context of the magazines? T.Q2: How do you determine what is thrifty? – how do the magazines determine what is thrifty?</p> | <p>Readers were asked as the writers to contextualise and define their own definitions of thrift both personally and within the magazines, providing further data on definitions of thrift but again useful comparisons to the already collected data on how these messages are represented through the magazines.</p> |
| <p>T.Q3: Do you consider thrift to be a lifestyle choice? – e.g. in relation to seasonality? – Personal situation? – Do you think this is reflected in the magazine? T.Q4: Did the recession influence your consumption of these magazines? – Did your wider consumption patterns change? – Do you think the magazine content changed?</p> | <p>These questions were based on and deduced from the previous two elements of data collection. They aimed to assess how readers viewed thrift in relation to lifestyle, consumption activities and wider socio-cultural issues. Within this discussion practices of consumption could also be explored.</p> |
| <p>T.Q5: Thrift Vs Luxury – is there a place for both concepts in the same magazine or even article?</p> | <p>For the same reasons expressed within the food writer interview guide, the readers’ understandings of the relationship between these two binary concepts were explored. In addition to considering how their views of this mapped on to their own consumption practices.</p> |
| <p>T.Q6: Thinking about your own understandings of thrift do you think you practice thrift at all? – Is this influenced by the magazine?</p> | <p>Finally, drawing together the readers’ understandings of thrift and their relationship to the magazine, T.Q6 was designed to identify specific practices of thrift that readers engaged with. And to what if any extent this was influenced by the magazine, or indeed in opposition with.</p> |

Once the interview guides had been finalised the interviews were conducted. All interviews were recorded as previously agreed with participants. Fieldnotes were also taken at the time and as soon as possible after the interviews in order to record other thoughts about the interview or the participant (Bryman 2004:329). The interviews were then transcribed manually. Although many of the interviews had taken place in public places the sound quality was reasonable. I tried to use automated voice to text transcription software however found the accuracy of the transcription to be poor and therefore chose to transcribe manually. Any sections of the interviews which were completely off research topic and did not alter the context of the rest of the interview were not included in the transcriptions (Bryman 2004:332).

Once the data had been collected and organised an interpretative approach for analysis was selected.

3.4 An Interpretative Approach

As highlighted in chapters 1 and 2, this research seeks to understand the social value of thrift, but any study involving food magazines will inevitably draw on the cultural acts of everyday consumption; including the consumption of magazines and of food. Therefore an appropriate process of analysis needed to be selected in order to offer the opportunity to grasp the complexity of socio-cultural value. I needed to examine consumers' understanding of the value of thrift, and in addition, their ordinary and mundane consumption, to identify how through such consumption practices people manifest and communicate their identity. Likewise the professional and personal practices of cultural intermediaries needed to be unpacked, looking for ways in which these practices impact their work and the end content of the magazine. It was important to select an appropriate method that was flexible enough to allow me to find and identify latent values and themes within the magazine content. I also needed a method of analysis that would then allow the three data sets to be efficiently linked together.

In order to do this effectively, an interpretative approach was applied as it helped to address some of the issues faced by a circuit of culture approach and multi-method based research.

Interpretive researchers thus attempt to understand phenomena through accessing the meanings that participants assign to them. In direct contrast to the "descriptive" studies above, interpretive studies reject the possibility of an "objective" or "factual" account of events and situations, seeking instead a relativistic, albeit shared, understanding of phenomena. Generalization from the setting (usually only one or a handful of field sites) to a population is not sought; rather, the intent is to understand the deeper structure of a phenomenon, which it is believed can then be used to inform other settings. (Orlikowski and Baroudi 1991:5)

There is an epistemological assumption that interpretative studies seek to understand 'the particulars of a phenomenon' (Hudson and Ozanne 1988:511) through an understanding of the social interactions and meaningful activities of actors and groups within a specific field (Hudson and Ozanne 1988; Orlikowski and Baroudi 1991; Hesse-Biber and Leavey 2011). In the case of this study, the phenomenon of thrift can be understood through the social interactions and relationships between the text, the producers and the consumers within the context of food magazines. This definition helps to address the difficulties outlined above whereby it is interaction within and between groups that are central to this research design. King (2004:257) also echoes interpretive approaches as effective when a researcher is aiming to compare perspectives of different groups in a specific context. This is highly applicable to my study, where I am interested in groups of people (consumers and cultural intermediaries) and their perspectives on thrift within the specific context of food magazines.

There is also a presumption that the researcher's understanding is related to their interactions with participants (Orlikowski and Baroudi 1991; Walsham 1993) and as part of interacting with other groups and individuals the researcher can never assume a neutral position. Moreover, the participants can play a role in shaping the nature of the analysis and study throughout the fieldwork (Denzin 2000; Silverman 2000, 2006). This means that the initial plan is usually reshaped after new information is gained during the process of data collection, and this was experienced to an extent, within my research, and will be discussed later in the chapter.

One criticism of interpretative research is that it produces an understanding that does not facilitate generalisation outside of the study; however, generalisations within the context of the study are possible. Deep understandings of the context under investigation can produce a basis for illuminating and reformulating existing theories

or starting new theoretical positions (Willis and Trondman 2000). As there is relatively little existing literature on these two issues as suggested in chapter 2, I believe that interpretative studies although not widely generalisable, can be applied within the right context and still be valuable. As such, an interpretive approach allows for the in-depth discussion of thrift through the specific lens of food magazines, and for shared understandings and indeed discrepancies in relation to thrift and other findings to be highlighted in the data. Although these are specific to this particular study, it will enable the research findings to be of use to, and inform future studies on thrift and/or the role of lifestyle media in the production and consumption of cultural value.

A method for applying the interpretative approach needed to be selected for the analysis of the three data sets. I chose to apply a thematic analysis across all three of the data sets to help address some of the limitations of using an interpretative multi-method circuit of culture approach. Although the data sets are different in their nature, the research's aim is to understand them in context together, and therefore applying the same method of analysis across the three sets seemed logical. Criticisms levelled at multi-method research are often concerned with how the analysis will be drawn together across the multiple methods, therefore in a study which already uses multiple methods, data sources, collection techniques and theory, it seemed unnecessary to add another level of multiplicity. In principle, employing the same method of interpretative analysis across the data should help to regulate consistency and style both intra and inter the data sets.

The thematic method of analysis and its application to this study shall now be discussed further.

3.5 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of qualitative research as it works to pinpoint and examine patterns and themes within data sets in a flexible and efficient way allowing for both deductive and inductive coding (Guest 2012). Coding often starts with a priori codes developed out of existing literature and driven by the research questions and then developed and modified as the text is read and interpreted. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to assume that there are always 'multiple interpretations to be made of any phenomenon, which depend on the

position of the researcher and the context of the research' (King 2004:256). This fits with the epistemological assumption of interpretative research described above, allowing for the multiple interpretations of thrift to be discussed and for the interactions between groups to be explored to assess how they contribute to the cultural value of thrift. As the researcher I was open to finding not just one meaning, but a variety of themes surrounding the notion of thrift within the data.

Thematic analysis goes beyond methods such as content analysis; it does not simply count phrases or words in text but moves to identify implicit and explicit themes and concepts. A theme can be defined as a level of patterned response or meaning from the data. Although the frequency at which a theme occurs may be cause for further investigation, it does not necessarily mean that the theme with the highest frequency is therefore the most important, instead it is equally important to look at the location that the themes occurs and the space taken up by it in individual units of analysis, and across data sets (Braun and Clarke 2006:82-83).

It is widely agreed upon that there are six key stages of thematic analysis (Crabtree and Miller 1992; Boyatiz 1998; Braun and Clarke 2006; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Guest 2012).

Figure 8: The Six Phases of Thematic Analysis

| No. | Phase Title: | Brief Description: |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Familiarising yourself with data | Repeated reading of the text; identifying patterns; note taking. |
| 2 | Generating initial codes | Construct list of manifest content from data; Construct list of latent messages related to RQs; begin coding; generate long and complete list of codes. |
| 3 | Searching for themes | Looking at list from Phase 2, identify broad meta-themes; identify relationships or hierarchies between themes; construct thematic map. |
| 4 | Reviewing the themes | Reflect on and review themes identified in Phase 3 in relation to data; Briefly define themes; re-reading of data in respect of themes; check for any oversights. |
| 5 | Defining and naming the themes | Clearly define the themes core meanings and 'story'; attribute appropriate names to each theme. |
| 6 | Producing the report | Write up the findings. |

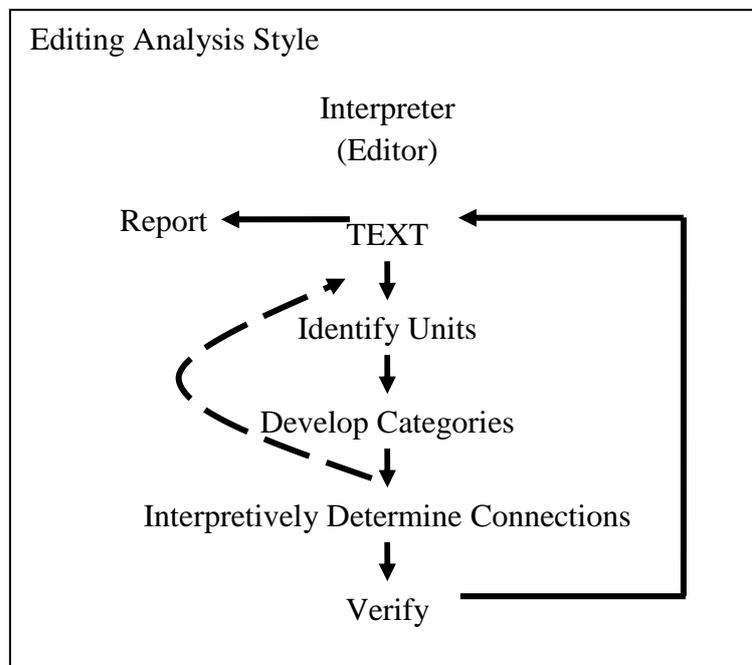
Based on Braun and Clarke (2006:87-93)

Although this clearly outlines the steps which must be taken it does not explicitly suggest how to carry out these processes (although this can be interpreted from the

method). The concept of the editing style of analysis (Crabtree and Miller 1992) fits well with the thematic analysis.

Crabtree and Miller (1992) provide a diagram that outlines how the editing process should look, and is intrinsically similar to the method of analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The diagram used by Crabtree and Miller clearly shows the method is not linear in construction, but instead as suggested by both Braun and Clarke and Crabtree and Miller, an interpretative process that involves rereading and going back to define and redefine themes or categories within the data before a final analysis and report is produced.

Figure 9: Diagrammatic Representation of Editing Analysis



Crabtree and Miller (1992) taken from Figure 1.4. Diagrammatic Representations of Different Analysis Styles (p.18)

The editing approach is an interpretative method allowing the researcher to identify themes or as Crabtree and Miller refer to, categories, and to look for overarching themes. Strengths and limitations of the method of template analysis were considered in relation to the needs of the research and in assessing the approach's suitability to my study. Braun and Clarke (2006) discuss the key advantages and disadvantages of thematic analysis.

Ten key advantages are outlined:

1. Flexibility
2. Relatively easy and quick method to learn, and do
3. Accessible to researchers with little or no experience of qualitative research
4. Results are generally accessible to educated general public
5. Useful method of working within participatory research paradigm, with participants as collaborators
6. Can usefully summarize key features of a large body of data, and/or offer a 'thick description' of the data set
7. Can highlight similarities *and* differences across the data set
8. Can generate unanticipated insights
9. Allows for social as well as psychological interpretations of data
10. Can be useful for producing qualitative analyses suited to informing policy development

These advantages of the method of analysis felt appropriate in relation to my study. I needed a flexible method that would allow for the various themes and values within the three data sets to be explored in a time effective manner and that would allow me to analyse the datasets both as individual elements but also in conjunction with one another. This method allowed for the large bodies of data to still remain rich in description, something I was concerned about keeping. It was useful that this style of analysis would allow me to organise both similarities and differences throughout my data sets as well as allow for themes to be accounted for that I had not necessarily set out with the intention of finding.

Five disadvantages were also identified by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. There is comparatively little literature on the method, compared with the methods wide-spread use – this could lead to a lack of methodological clarity when applying the method. (p.77)
2. Although flexibility is an advantage, it can also be a disadvantage making the research unfocused and too broad. (p.97)
3. This methodology whilst providing rich description, in order to gain greater depth needs to be applied in relation to other theoretical frameworks in order to 'anchor analytical claims'. (p.97)
4. On the surface, a simple thematic analysis may lose the sense of individual accounts and won't allow the researcher to make claims about language use.
5. Thematic analysis is sometimes discredited as not being as worthy as grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) or discourse analysis.

These criticisms may be valid, but it is important to remember that all methods have their disadvantages. Although only a small body of literature exists on thematic

analysis, there are examples of methodological papers on thematic analysis or where thematic analysis is used in studies (Boyatzis 1998; Braun and Clarke 2006; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Guest 2012). These include detailed steps and processes that should be taken in the method in order to apply it effectively. The criticism of flexibility is arguably true of many methods, coding things just because they can be coded is as easily done in a quantitative method such as content analysis, as it is with thematic analysis. The key point here is to allow the method to help approach the data openly but keeping in mind the specific aims and questions of the research, this helps to focus the research but still allow for unexpected themes to arise, allowing for both rich description and deeper analysis.

Although this method groups the data in to themes, this does not need to mean that the sense of each individual account is lost. Instead when looking at the individual pieces of data, I looked for the distribution of themes, and then within that, the specific examples of their usage, drawing out quotes where appropriate (King 2006:268). This helped to maintain the sense of the personal account whilst allowing other readers of the study to get a sense of the original data.

Several authors acknowledge the widespread use of thematic analysis in research and therefore it should not be discredited as being less effective than other methods, provided it is carried out efficiently and with ‘rigor’ (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006). They also hoped that continuing to use and publish about the method, will help to increase its wider recognition when applied in a way that benefits the research study in question. I believe that my research would be one such study for the reasons highlighted above.

Based on how the method operates its interpretive nature and after consideration of the pre-identified strengths and weaknesses, I concluded that thematic analysis was indeed the most appropriate method of analysis to use within this study. I shall describe how the process of thematic analysis was applied to the data.

3.6 Thematic Analysis: Phase 1 - Familiarisation with the data

This phase required the ‘repeated reading’ of the data to familiarise myself with the content and format. Starting to search for patterns and meanings from within the data, lists of potential codes were developed. (Braun and Clarke 2006:87-88).

Through the content analysis of the magazines, I had already gained a level of familiarity with these texts and had identified notes on potential themes. I then searched the magazines again looking for representations of thrift, and other themes which would provide context and help to address the overall aims of the research with the view of developing a thematic analysis of this content.

Specifically, this second stage of analysis of thrift within the magazines moved up a level in terms of the unit of analysis, from individual words/phrases to whole articles. Guided by the content analysis this second stage involved deductively coding all of the articles that related to thrift. Using this identified sample, the thematic analysis was conducted on these articles. When reading the magazines, again under the process of thematic analysis closer attention was paid not only to the occurrence of themes but also to the way in which each of these were contextualised within broader views on everyday life, gender etc. This approach also allowed for data-driven identification of related thematic ideas that had not been previously captured (e.g. the relationship between thrift and the context of family).

At this stage it also became clear that certain phrases within the magazines were worthy of further investigation, such as the use of: dinner in under a certain number of minutes or cost. These had not originally been coded in the content analysis as it was not a single word but was added and re-coded for at this stage to see the frequency of use, in addition to the discussion of this within the thematic analysis where inferred meanings were more able to be discussed. It is within this process for example that I started to develop notions of thrift representations around money and time as part of a wider theme associated with saving as the representations, context and nature of the discussion. On closer examination these were both notions of saving and resource management not just money and time.

The process of familiarisation for the interviews began with the transcription of the recorded interviews. Through the repeated listening required with transcribing I became familiar with the content. I also referred back to the fieldnotes taken to check for my initial reactions to the interviews as this might highlight some of the key issues noted at the time. I then read through each of the transcripts, making notes, highlighting sections of interest and colour coding key messages that occurred through my reading.

3.7 Thematic Analysis: Phase 2 - Generating initial codes

Using my notes and observations for phase one, an initial list of items to code for, based on what had been identified in the data was drawn up. The codes were both inductive and deductive (Braun and Clarke 2006:89). It was important to use the existing literature and the specific research questions of this study to frame this analysis. However, it must also include codes driven directly by the content of the data - e.g. alternative ideas that had not been considered in existing literature. There were other identifiable features in the data that were for example, data relating to health, although these were present across the data sets, they were not relevant to the research questions and therefore were not coded in this process. Alternatively, other sections of data were coded in relation to multiple codes, such as an article about a celebrity chef talking about family food provision would be coded under both ‘celebrity chef’ and ‘family’ (Braun and Clarke 2006:89).

All three of the data sets were methodically and manually coded, worked through individually; starting with each issue of the magazine sample, then the transcripts of the food writer interviews, and the reader interviews.

For the magazines, coding was collated into a table, which allowed me to fill in details of each code including the page number, position on page, the key words and a description of the content and then within the magazine itself coloured tabs were used to identify where different codes had been identified. For the interview data, the transcripts were annotated, and colour coded directly and a table was produced in order to keep track of where themes occurred and a description of the data.

At this stage it is worth noting that although two different magazine titles were used in the study (and accordingly, two different affiliations of writers and readers) this is not a comparative study of the two magazines. That is not to say however that similarities and differences between the titles in the data were ignored. Consistencies between the two may suggest a level of agreement about the concept of thrift. However it is the distinctions between them that may provide a useful point of study. These instances were looked at in closer detail to assess why this disjuncture existed and, if in turn, this contributed to the understandings of the meaning(s) of thrift as a cultural value.

After the initial coding had taken place it became apparent that my initial code list for the writer reader interviews had missed several messages which needed attention. Therefore additional codes were added to the coding list and a further re-coding took place to ensure these had been captured across the data sets.

Once I was satisfied that all the data had been adequately captured I moved on to searching for broader themes.

3.8 Thematic Analysis: Phase 3 - Searching for themes

Based on the initial coding, I began to look for groups of codes that had emerged from each data set that could support a larger meta-theme. At this stage the data extracts and coding were reorganised into these larger themes and thematic maps of the themes were constructed. This allows for the relationships between codes (in terms of sub-themes), and also the themes themselves to be visualised and explored. However this is not to say that all themes must be identified as having a direct relationship to another (Braun and Clarke 2006:89-90). Relationships between themes were recognised through identifying overlaps in how the data was coded – i.e. where extracts of data were coded under multiple codes and subsequent themes, signified relationships between the two themes⁸.

⁸ The ovals refer to the main themes; sub-themes in rectangles are connected by solid lines; dotted lines represent relationships.

Figure 10: Thematic Map of the Food Magazine Textual Data

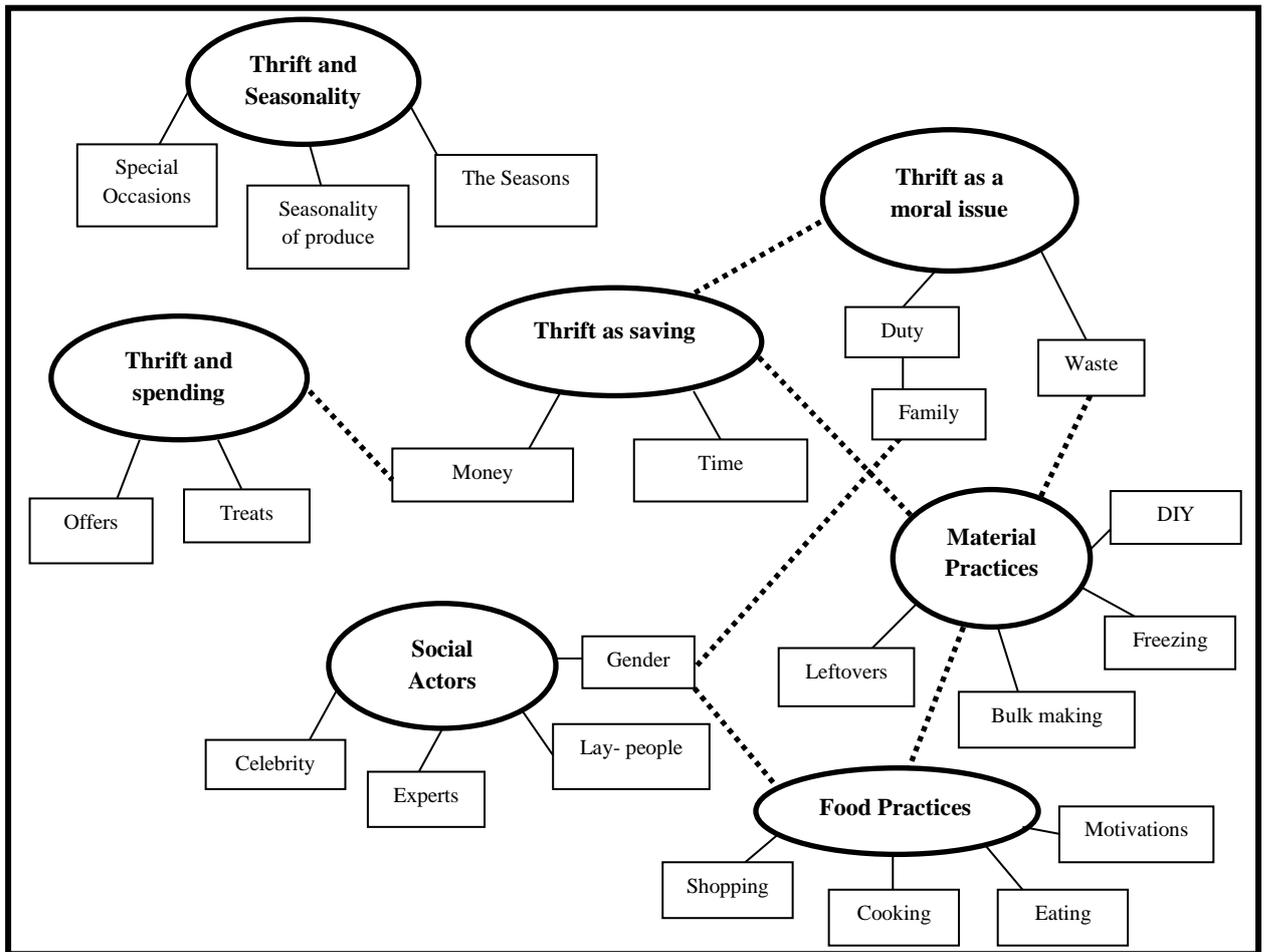


Figure 11: Thematic Map of Food Writer Interview Data

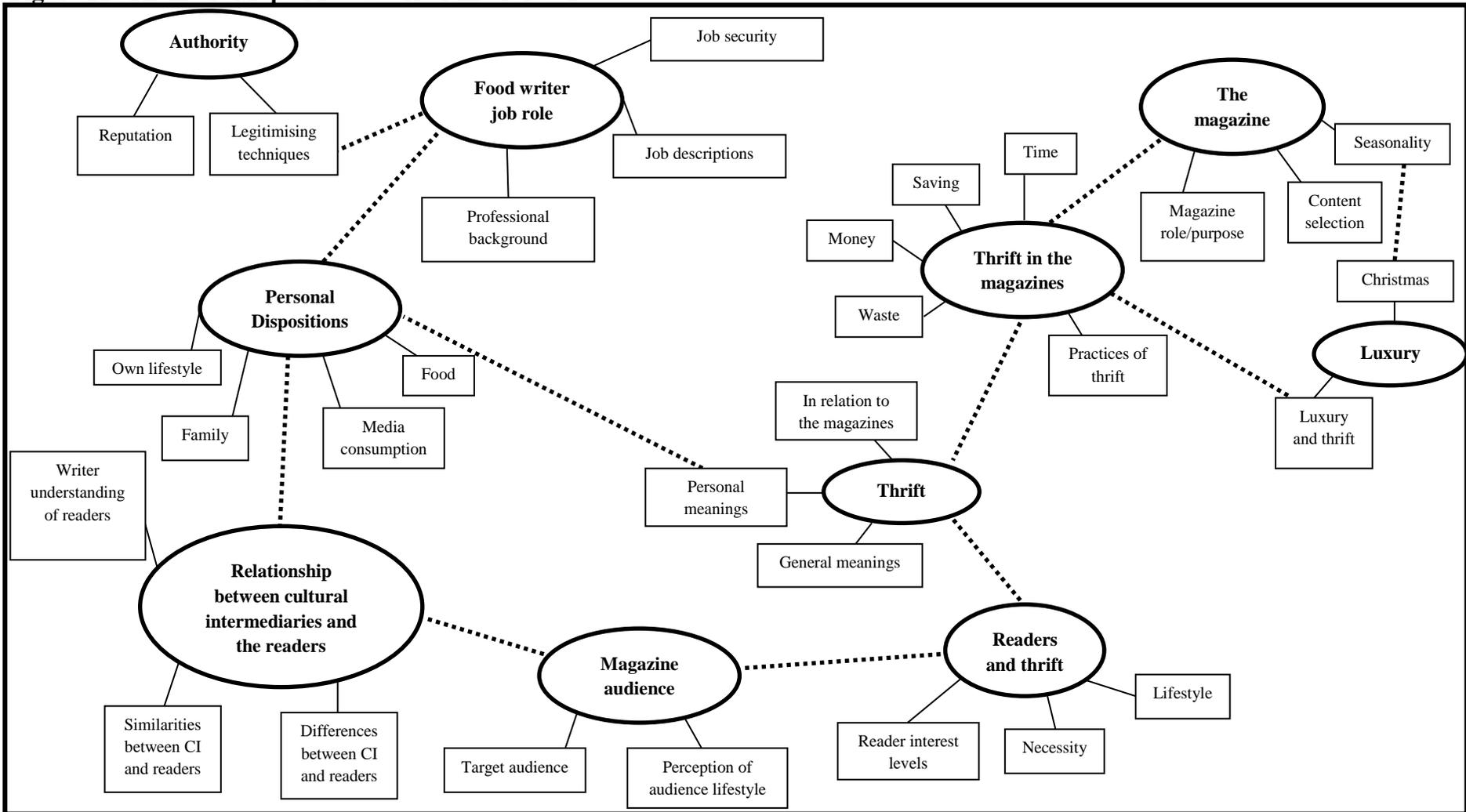
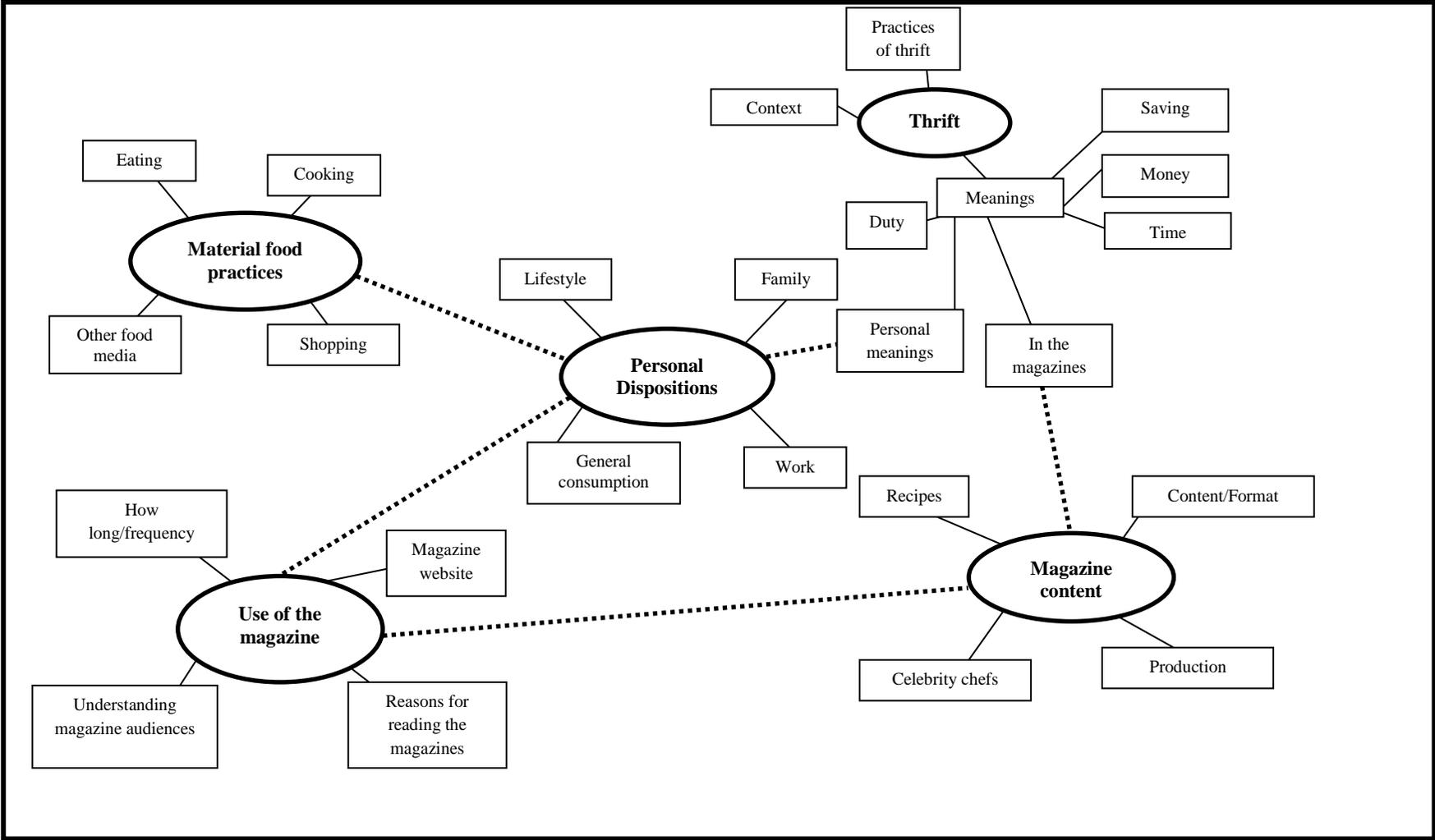


Figure 12: Thematic Map of Food Magazine Reader Interviews



At this stage the themes were reviewed to check that the data sat well within them, that they were adequate in describing the nature of the data (deductive nature), and their overall appropriateness to the study (inductive nature).

3.9 Thematic Analysis: Phase 4 - Reviewing the themes

The thematically grouped data was re-examined at this point in the analysis. As it may become evident that there is not enough data to support themes (although this does not mean that data is not of interest but that instead it needs reclassifying within another theme or redefining to better highlight its usefulness to the study), or that the data is too diverse and one theme does not satisfactorily capture the nuance of the data. At this stage some themes were, discarded and new ones created, others were re-named or redefined for clarity (Braun and Clarke 2006:91-92).

In terms of the textual analysis, on re-evaluating the themes (fig.10) I noted that the variety of themes was not as diverse in comparison to the other two data sets. The study was not about food magazines in general but specifically about the role they play in representing thrift and therefore I concluded that they adequately addressed RQ1.1 and reflected the core purposes of the research. The more varied themes seen across the interview data could be related to the positions that these social actors hold as they operate across multiple sites and roles in understanding their relationship to the food magazines and to cultural values of thrift. In relation to the themes identified, I did make a number of changes (fig.13). Some of the themes seemed too broad and did not accurately encompass the codes within, therefore I re-themed by removing the themes of saving, spending and seasonality and creating two new themes of ‘thrift and money’ and ‘thrift and time’. I then grouped the other codes into renamed sub-themes as appropriate. I also felt that notions of skills were not adequately covered so a new theme was created. I then did another re-read of the texts and the coded data to check for any omissions.

Having constructed the thematic map for the food writer interview data (fig.11), I felt that the map was problematic. There were a large amount of themes and although they captured the data I was not sure if the groupings were all appropriate. In order to address this I reviewed the data now grouped within these themes, to see whether there was enough data to legitimise the themes and where it could be further refined. Referring back to the existing literature I re-themed the data, although still based on the

Figure 14: Reviewed Thematic Map of Food Writer Interview Data

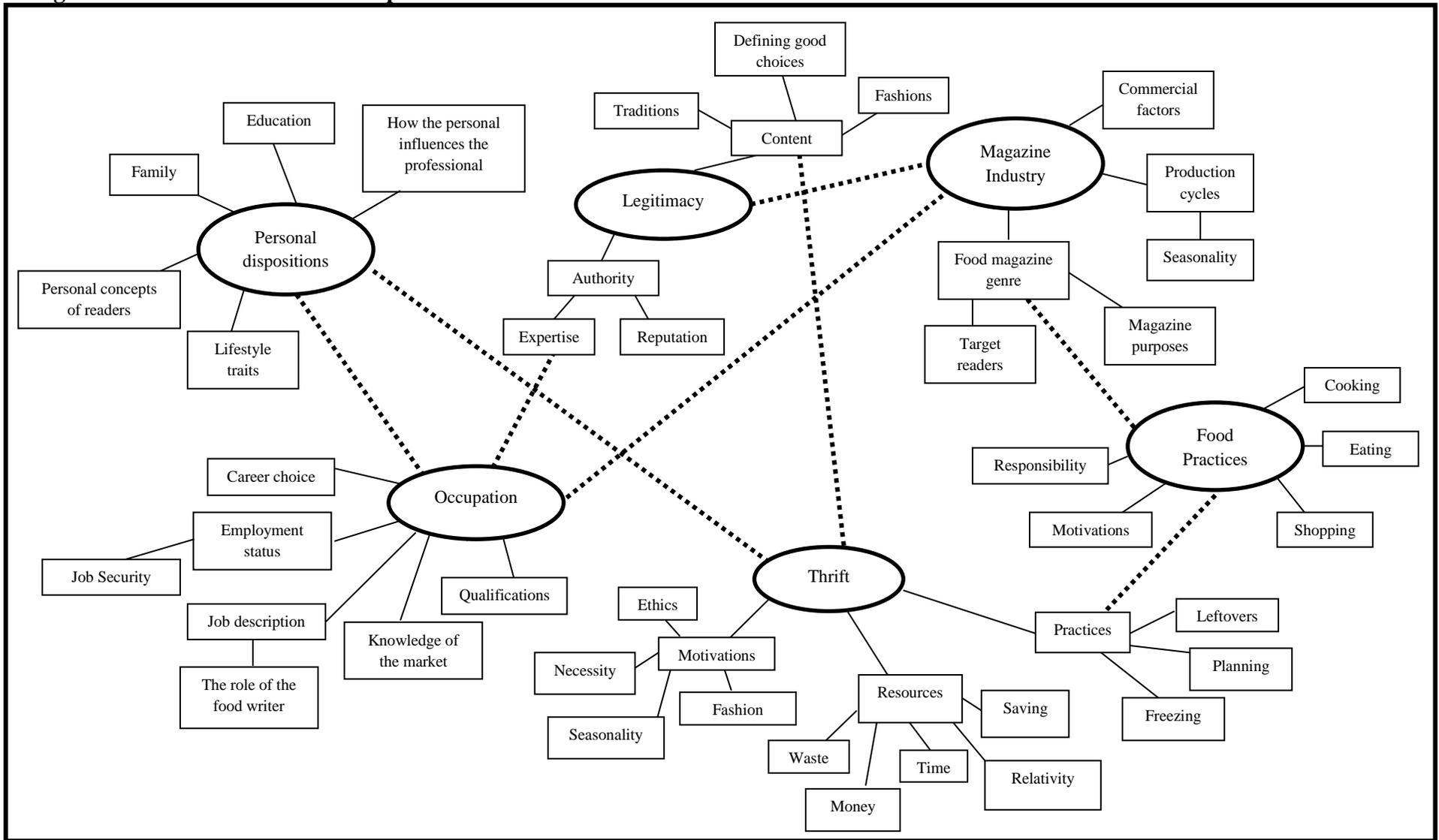
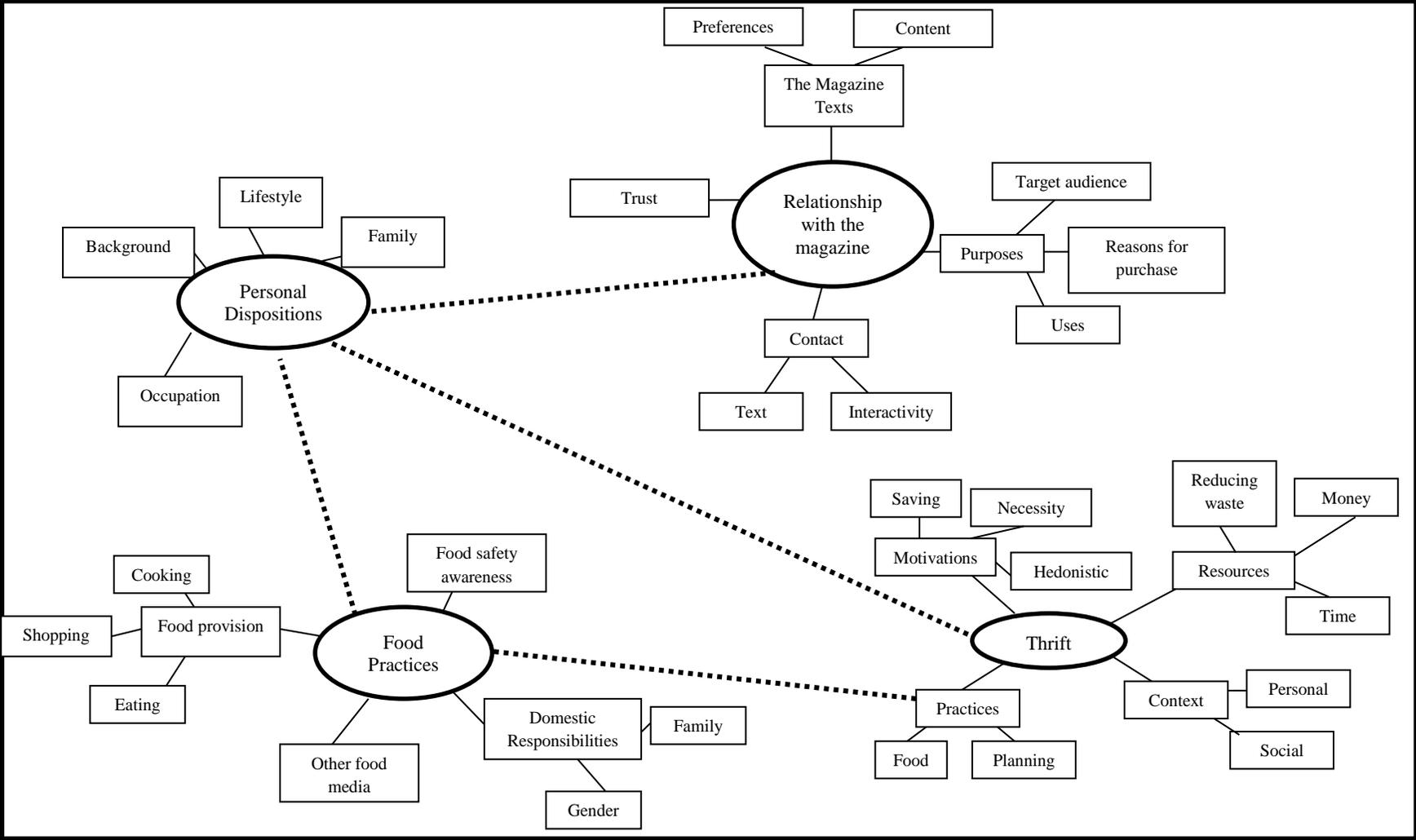


Figure 15: Reviewed Thematic Map of Food Magazine Reader Interview Data



3.10 Thematic Analysis: Phase 5 - Defining and naming the themes

Reflecting on how I had conducted the initial phases, in particular phase 4, it became clear that I had already begun the process of naming the themes; the essences of the themes clearly leant themselves to certain names and the links to existing literature re-asserted this. I did however change one of the theme's name within the textual data analysis, the 'spending to save' theme to 'hedonistic spending' as it helped to conceptualise the theme in relation to existing literature (Miller 1998; Bardhi and Arnould 2005) which reflected the core message within this theme; the experience of spending money in order to save.

For each of the themes identified across the data sets, the essence of each theme was defined, described and explained both at an individual level, in terms of the nature of the codes within the themes, and in relationship to one another, why the codes and themes fitted together, and more broadly how they helped to address the research questions. This provides a final check to ensure that the themes are appropriate and relevant, and that the coding to them is consistent and reliable (Braun and Clarke 2006: 92-93) before moving on to write up the findings.

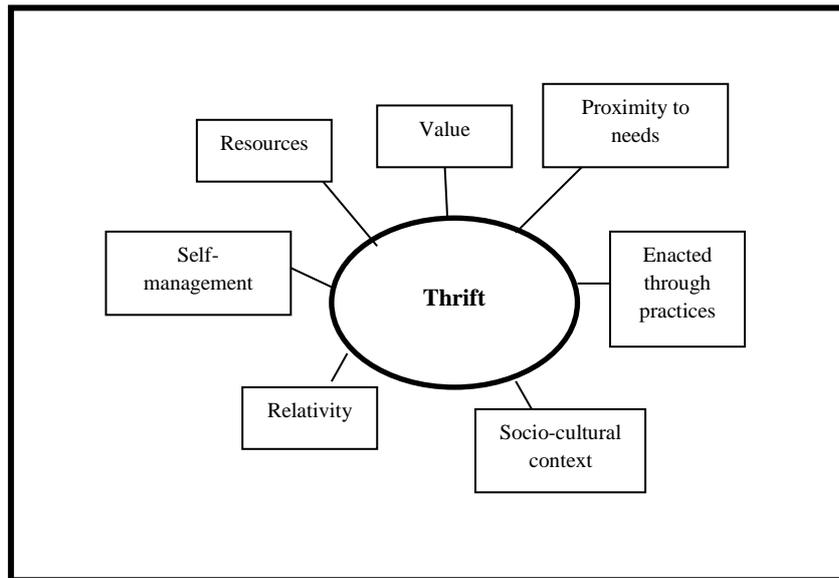
3.11 Thematic Analysis: Phase 6 – Producing the report

Under the context of the PhD project the 'report' aspect of thematic analysis is provided under separate chapters for each of the elements within the circuit: food magazines in chapter 4; food writers in chapter 5; and food magazine readers in chapter 6. These chapters explore the findings using examples from the data in context and in relation to existing literature and address the research questions RQ1.1-1.3, before bringing the three data sets and findings together to provide a more detailed response to RQ1 and RQ2.

3.12 Bringing Together the Three Data Sets

The final stage in my analysis was to bring together the three elements of analysis and findings from all three datasets of my research; looking for commonalities and contradictions between the key themes of the data sets in order to provide a comprehensive assessment of the value of thrift (RQ1). The thematic maps provided a useful entry point to examining this, and because I had found them helpful in the previous stages of analysis after having written chapters 4-6, I used the core findings and themes in relation to thrift to map out potential themes for exploration within this final stage of discussion (fig.16).

Figure 16: Thematic Map of Initial Thrift Ideas



The next three chapters shall, as stated in 3.11, discuss the findings related to the three elements of empirical research: starting with the textual analysis of the food magazines.

Chapter 4: The Food Magazines

This chapter focuses on the representation aspect of the circuit of culture, a vital element in the relationship, which mediates between the elements of production and consumption, both physically, and as a vehicle for cultural and symbolic messages. This interaction with both consumers and producers makes the texts the ideal starting point to enter a study of the circuit of culture, as essentially this is the product of both production and consumption and therefore a key moment where these two ‘articulations’ of value production intersect; without which the circuit would not exist (du Gay et al 1997; Johnson 1986/7).

This chapter discusses the textual analysis of the lifestyle food magazines, *Good Food* and *Delicious* (n=24) and assesses the ways that thrift as a cultural value is represented. In essence, exploring these magazine titles as ‘cultural artefact[s] and medium[s] of modern culture’ (du Gay et al 1997:2) that will allow insight in to the portrayal of and interactions with thrift, and what it means to be thrifty in today’s society.

Within the chapter a number of themes will be addressed, firstly, it is necessary to outline some of the basic information about the magazines including demographic, and circulation information to contextualise their position within the market. Secondly, a discussion of the vocabulary and the sayings used associated with thrift will give insight in to the ways thrift is framed within these magazines at a manifest content level. Thirdly, key themes derived from the thematic analysis surrounding the notion of thrift within the magazines shall be explored; namely the relationship between money and thrift, time and thrift (with both of these often centring on concepts of saving), material practices of thrift and food, and lastly moral aspects of thrift.

4.1 About the Magazines

Chapter 3 outlined the reasoning behind the choice of magazines used in this study: *Good Food* and *Delicious* were at the start of this study in 2009, and remain to be, the highest circulating, paid for, non-supermarket affiliated, food magazine titles in the UK (ABC 2009c). Looking at the background of the magazines through their press packs, and ABC circulation figures gives a brief overview of the demographics of their core readership.

Good Food is the bestselling, longest running, food magazine title in the UK having launched in November 1989. Within the July 2009-June 2010 sample, the cover price

rose from £3.20, to £3.40 from the December 2009 issue. It publishes twelve issues per year, and had an average circulation of 359,772 per issue at the start of this study. According to their press pack, they have an average female readership of ‘over 70%’, an ABC1 readership level of 65%, and the average earnings of their reader was estimated at £34,575 per annum (ABC 2009b; *Good Food* 2009).

Delicious, is the second bestselling food magazine title in the UK behind *Good Food*, and launched in December 2003. It also publishes twelve issues per year, the cover price rose from £3.30 to £3.40 in February 2010, and had a circulation of 105,560 per issue at the start of this study. Their press-pack states that they have a female readership of 73%, an ABC1 readership of 79% and estimate that their readers earn an average salary of £45,000 per year (ABC 2009a; *Delicious* 2009).

From this, a number of things are brought to attention. Firstly, the magazines have a predominately female readership. Given the previous studies which suggest that women still have the predominant role of ‘doing food’ provision, this is seemingly a reflection that women and domestic food practices, even through media consumption, are still highly linked (Warde 1997; Giard 1998; Hollows 2003a; Ashley et al 2004; Beagan et al 2008; Cairns et al 2010).

The Representation of Gender

Within the magazines, the representation of gender and more specifically gender roles raises a point in connection to this. In looking at the images of people portrayed within the magazines (n=1414), although overall the split between male and female images is relatively even, the difference in the roles that these males and female are depicted in differs significantly.

The table below highlights that the professionalised side of food work is predominantly displayed in the magazines as a male role, whilst the pictures of non-professional roles are predominantly female. This reflected Swinbank’s (2006) study looking at the professionalized nature of cooking, whereby ‘a higher status is accorded public professional cooking done usually by male chefs than that accorded to private domestic cooking done by women’ (p.465). Thus the magazines are reinforcing the stereotypical social norm that women are responsible for domestic food work (e.g. Giard 1998; Warde 1997; Hollows 2003b; Ashley et al 2004).

Figure 17: Photographs by Gender and Role Portrayed

| | All Images | | Celebrity Chef | | Lay-People | |
|------------------|------------|--------|----------------|--------|------------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Both Titles | 46% | 54% | 79% | 21% | 36% | 64% |
| <i>Good Food</i> | 45% | 55% | 80% | 20% | 32% | 68% |
| <i>Delicious</i> | 49% | 51% | 76% | 24% | 40% | 60% |

Looking at the pictorial gender representations of the food writers for the magazines, demonstrated a tendency for these roles to be occupied by females. In total, 83% of the writers who were pictured were female, and only 17% male. There were stylistic differences between the two in the terms of how many writers' photographs were present in the magazines. In *Delicious* the production staff are largely invisible from the magazines with only a small number of exceptions, the male editor's photograph is usually present on editor's letter pages, and two of the regular female writers are also pictured within their articles, across the sample of the magazines only 52 images of food writers were found, in comparison to *Good Food* which uses photographic by-lines far more regularly throughout the magazines n=169.

Figure 18: Photographs of Food Writers

| | Food Writers | |
|------------------|--------------|--------|
| | Male | Female |
| Both Titles | 17% | 83% |
| <i>Good Food</i> | 10% | 90% |
| <i>Delicious</i> | 38% | 62% |

Whilst these statistics cannot serve to represent the whole workforces of the magazines, as not all the staff are photographed. It does demonstrate the visual impression that there are predominately more female writers. Gough-Yates (2003) found that magazine staff are said to be 'in tune' with their audience and that they fulfil a role of the ideal reader (p.118-120). If the average reader of the food magazines is taken to be female,

based on the socio-norms around food preparation, then a display of female writers reflects this.

Middle Class Tastes

Secondly in relation to the press pack information, the high percentage of ABC1 readers suggests are largely middle-class audience base, with significantly above average incomes. In 2009 *Good Food* readers earned 25% and *Delicious* readers 43%, more than average annual income in the UK, which was £25,800 (ONS 2009). These demographic statistics are averages and do not necessarily reflect a full picture of the readership, as Hermes (1995) notes different class groups and individuals read magazines which they seemingly don't fit the market research for, however it gives an indication as they are standard market measurements used within the industry to aid magazines, target a specific section of the population.

For Johnston and Baumann (2010) food magazines play a dual purpose in asserting themselves as 'culinary authorities...purveyor(s) of good taste and high-status lifestyle' whilst also providing a 'more populist approach to food culture that resonates with a broad readership', in essence, they must constantly balance the 'competing ideologies of democracy and distinction' (Johnston and Baumann 2010:46). Lifestyle media act as an exemplar of middle class tastes and disposition (Bell and Hollow 2005; Lewis 2008), so given Johnston and Baumann's view that these magazines balance both processes of distinction and democratisation, it is worth noting that this is always done through a reflection of middle class taste. Simultaneously, in regard to food practice, Warde (1997) notes that middle class tastes are often used as the benchmark for defining proper food practice, and therefore when food is discussed through the lens of food magazines this is reflected. Warde also suggest that there are differences within middle class and working class food consumption habits and practices but that these are blurred within magazines, instead illustrating a single cohesive representation of food practices more aligned to the middle class tastes and practices, pluralism still occurs but only within the boundaries imposed by class (Warde 1997:122-125).

There is, unlike with gender, no overt discussion of class found within the food magazines in this study. However, notions of middle class lifestyle permeate the food magazine texts in ways suggested by the studies above. Whilst this aspect was not specifically studied, through the familiarisation with the texts, a number of observations

were made regarding the sorts of products (and the range of brands/prices), portrayal of the writer's and celebrity chef's domestic kitchens and homes, restaurants referred to, and holiday destinations advised, that fit within middle class lifestyles.

For example, features that appear in both magazine titles, where the kitchen of someone in the food world is shown, demonstrate how middle class lifestyles are incorporated within the magazines. Holliday suggests that the 'home became an essential site of identity – a place where status and 'good character' could be displayed to the (limited) outside world' (2005:69), which describes the essence of these articles. The editorial navigates through design and consumption choices, framing each as special, high-end and desirable.

It's an *Alno* kitchen, with toughened glass doors in black and white and walnut-effect doors on the units around the ovens to give warmth and contrast. The worktops are polished black granite and matt white concrete, again lovely contrasts and wonderful textures, set off by good lighting... The *AlnoArt Pro* kitchen... (for) a medium kitchen costs £15,000- £20,000, excluding fittings, worktops and appliances. (*Good Food* – July 2009:128-130)

The *Corian* work surfaces and stone splashbacks were both very expensive but worth it because they make the kitchen feel extra-special. (*Good Food* – May 2010:134)

We both knew that we wanted clean sleek lines and none of the usual muddle of machines, ingredients and equipment that we'd had in previous kitchens. It needed to be sleek. (*Delicious* – February 2010:113)

There is also an assertion made that when installing a new kitchen there will be an element of bespoke design that will require expertise, and not just choosing kitchen items from a store.

Insist your builder, architect and kitchen designer are together at meetings so everyone knows exactly who is responsible for what. (*Good Food* – September 2009:119)

This serves, alongside the images, to assert middle class lifestyle and tastes as good, in a glossy and aesthetically attractive way. In doing this, it also legitimises these tastes and the position of the magazine for their role in delivering them, and also associates the magazines with good taste.

At the end of the piece there is always a section on how to 'recreate the look', where similar products used in the design of the kitchen pictured are suggested as appropriate

alternatives, also occasionally highlighting where cheaper options are available in order to allow for the recreation of expensive designs through the substitution of products.

A cheaper alternative to the *Kenwood Cooking Chef* is the smaller *Kenwood Prospero*. It still offers plenty of functions, including a 4.3-litre stainless-steel bowl with splash guard and 3 mixer attachment for only £189.99 (*Good Food* – February 2010:118)

Get the look – Love the new *Bertinet* kitchen? These price-savvy products will help create the look for less. (*Delicious* – November 2009:142)

In showing readers how they can recreate these ideas in their own homes, on a lesser budget than the products used in the kitchen they depict demonstrates that the understanding of budget and cheapness is a matter of relativity, a food mixer that cost £189.99 might be cheaper than the one shown in the kitchen of the food writer, but that doesn't by definition make it cheap. To reconsider Johnston and Baumann's point once more, the magazines both seek to frame this as a matter of distinction, whilst also democratising the process of consumption through vicarious consumption of the magazines (Winship 1987:56).

The Format of the Magazines

To turn attention to the format of the magazines, a number of lines of discussion are worthy: Firstly, the generic makeup of the magazines, secondly the influence of Christmas on the magazines, and thirdly the recipes.

The format of the magazines overall is relatively consistent across the sample, with the magazine having regular features, and sections with a mix of editorial, recipes, and advertisements within them.

Figure 19: Average number of pages, recipes and advertisements

| Average No of: | Pages | Recipes | Adverts |
|----------------------|-------|---------|---------|
| Both Titles | 155 | 98 | 36 |
| <i>Good Food</i> | 163 | 114 | 48 |
| <i>Delicious</i> | 147 | 82 | 25 |

In general *Good Food* has more pages, recipes and double the number of advertisements than *Delicious*. Overall however, the magazines are similar in their

design and layout, suggesting that the format of food lifestyle magazines is, at least to some extent formulaic in style. Both titles are printed in a glossy format, featuring stylized image of food and visually engaging layouts. For Winship (1987) this is one way in which a magazine's physical qualities are designed to attract readers, and reflect the quality of the content based on the look and feel of the magazines. Hence, why these magazines are in a glossy format, to mirror and attract a high ABC1 readership. The front covers act as windows to the content of the magazine displaying its identity on the shelf (e.g. Held 2005), the front covers use prominent and artistic photographs of one of the dishes from within the magazine to act as a source of desire, much in the way that Winship saw attractive and seductive women featured on women's magazine front covers. If the women on the front covers of magazines are there in order to give readers something to aspire too and persuade women that they can achieve this appearance, then the images of food on the front covers of food magazines are designed to do the same thing in regard to creating the desire and aspiration to recreate the dish. The only way to satisfy this desire is through buying the magazine for the recipe and learning how to present the food in this way, thus the front covers are powerful selling devices for the magazines. A useful example of this may come from looking at Christmas within the magazines.

There is a break in the normal format of the magazines in their December issues. The December, or Christmas issues for each magazine have the largest number of pages, recipes and advertisements. Brewis and Warren (2011) suggest that Christmas within women's magazines emphasises the need for women to work towards creating the perfect family Christmas through careful planning and techniques to help them achieve all that they need to.

Figure 20: December Issues: average number of pages, recipes and advertisements

| Average No of: | Pages | Recipes | Adverts |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Both Titles | 216 | 217 | 53 |
| <i>Good Food</i> | 228 | 129 | 72 |
| <i>Delicious</i> | 204 | 142 | 34 |

These food magazines situate Christmas as a consumption and food centred event. Within the content of these December issues, no reference to the religious nature of the festival is made. Instead, tradition, family time, celebrating and preparing and serving special food are the main focus. Echoing Brewis and Warren's findings, the magazines also offer strategic advice on how to 'manage' Christmas related duties accordingly. This includes detailed plans on time management, guides on what to make, what to buy, and where from (2011:756-758).

To help, our 24 page guide (p99) has a crafty Christmas plan, complete with downloadable shopping lists and lots of tips. The trick is to treat all the preparation for Christmas as an absolute joy, whether it is an afternoon in November making Christmas puddings and mincemeat with the kids (p58) or a day spent in the warmth of a mid-December kitchen, cooking up a storm for the freezer (p40). Or perhaps it will be a lazy Saturday making gifts (p78) – we even have special *Delicious* gift tags for you to download for free. (*Delicious*- December 2009:7)

Through offering these solutions on managing a perfect Christmas, the magazines legitimise certain practices, and suggest that not performing Christmas in this way is not an option. As *Good Food* states, you can do 'The BIG DAY your way' (December 2009:1) but it actually only proposes a limited number of options to choose from in order to do 'the BIG DAY' and not really a free choice as the semantics suggest. They provide 33 recipes, a mixture of starters, mains, side dishes, and puddings, and suggest that you can 'mix and match all our festive recipes or, to make things easy, we've created these four stunning menus' (December p.82), acting as a manual for good taste readers are navigated through a series of selections and choices (Gallegos 2005). This also reinforces obligations of domestic duty, whereby it places responsibility for a perfect Christmas with the reader of the magazine.

Indeed, for these reasons, Christmas becomes a contested site of consumption and the need for thrift. Christmas is both considered a time of luxury and of increased pressure on women to perform their domestic duties. The magazines openly and actively encourage consumption of a wide ranging number of goods and products in their Christmas issues, whilst here notions of saving money are largely absent, the emphasis on saving time, and on the concept of ease are amplified in their manuals on how to perform Christmas within these constraints. Where saving money is portrayed, it is often offset by a larger investment in time. The magazines also seek to off-set this indulgent behaviour through making Spring a thrifty time of year. Coinciding with

‘traditional spring cleans makes March the perfect time of year to be thrifty’ (*Good Food* March 2010), whilst *Delicious* suggests ‘We’ve only just got over Christmas, so maybe now is a good time for us all to think about saving.’ (March 2010). This suggests that not only does Christmas alter the physical format of the magazine, but it also plays a role in structuring thrift practices and values both at the time, but also later in the year to counteract less thrifty behaviour at Christmas, echoing notions of sacrifice found within existing literature (e.g. Miller 1998).

The content sections within the magazines follow similar trends across both titles. This includes the organisation of the magazine, the use of celebrity chefs as markers of legitimacy, as well the recipes within the magazines. There is a particular structure to the content within the magazines that can be across 6 sections:

Figure 21: Outline of the content sections in *Good Food* and *Delicious*

| Description of content in each section:- | |
|--|--|
| 1 | The editor’s letter, contents pages, and contact details. Additionally, <i>Good Food</i> has a recipe index and generic advice on cooking the recipes in the magazine. |
| 2 | Reader’s letters, food news, product and media recommendations, product tests, and advice pages. |
| 3 | ‘Everyday’: the content within this section refers to mid-week or weekday cooking and recipes. |
| 4 | ‘Seasonal’: recipes and editorial discussion on what is in season, and how to use these ingredients. |
| 5 | ‘Weekend’ or ‘Special’: where the emphasis is on leisurely cooking and entertaining. |
| 6 | A wine and drink page, a selection of recipes focusing on one key ingredient articles on health or current food debates and articles on kitchens (including looking inside people’s kitchens as described above, and a look at kitchen gadgets and products.). The last pages in both magazines, before the back covers have a celebrity interview. <i>Good Food</i> has a selection of recipes from BBC food programmes that will be shown that month. <i>Delicious</i> place their recipe index in this section. |

This gives an overview of the magazines and how they are structured. The sections also highlight a blurring of cooking as work and leisure. As observed by Winship (1987) the balance between work and pleasure in magazines is significant, it replicates and addresses the roles that women play in society (p.13), this is mirrored in the way that cooking can also be a form of both domestic work and leisure activity (e.g. Hollows 2003b; Cairns et al 2010). The magazine’s everyday and weekend/special sections reflect the need for different styles of food provisioning to fulfil both these roles. Not

only this but these sections are also important in the representation of thrift as will be discussed later within the chapter, and ultimately a useful guide for readers.

Celebrity Chefs

The role of the celebrity chef within the magazines is necessary to flag. Their presence within the magazines represents professional food expertise. In the sample used for this study over double the number of celebrity chef images are shown in *Good Food* (n=321) as opposed to *Delicious* (n=121). Whilst, 34% of all recipes in *Good Food* were celebrity chef recipes compared with 8% in *Delicious*. This is likely to do with The BBC connection. *Good Food* magazine promotes food television programming throughout their magazine, showing celebrity chefs that are featured in current television series and towards the back of the magazine in each issue there is a section which specifically contains recipes that will feature in key food programmes across the BBC network that month. *Delicious* does not have the same affiliations to television shows and this could contribute to the lower amount of celebrity chefs seen in the magazines. Where celebrity chefs do appear in *Delicious* they often form part of the editorial or expert advice sections including product recommendations. Celebrity chefs in both magazines play a role in legitimising certain products by discussing not just any products, but products that they use themselves. For example, Heston Blumenthal in *Delicious* discusses six key food gadgets that everyone should have. He frames his selection on the products that he personally uses, and gives specific brand details through these articles. Value is added to products for readers of the magazine through the personal recommendation of a ‘three-*Michelin*-starred’ chef. The celebrity chefs come to the magazine with a certain level of cultural value attached, this is through other media formats, primarily TV shows and restaurant reviews, but also through the established food world outside the lifestyle media genre such as the *Michelin Guide* (Johnston and Baumann 2010; Rousseau 2012). Therefore the celebrity chefs are used to transfer high levels of cultural value to the magazines, and are drawn upon as markers of legitimacy in the food world, and presented as a symbol of taste and legitimacy to the readers.

Recipes

As stated in Fig.19, within the sample of magazines used in this study, in each issue of *Good Food* there are an average number of 114 recipes, and in *Delicious*, an average of

82. In the content analysis of the recipes a total of n=164 recipes were coded across all the magazines: n=81 from *Good Food* and n=83 from *Delicious*.

As discussed in chapter 2, the primary function of a recipe is to tell a reader (or viewer) how to cook through a series of step-by-step instructions which emphasise any necessary methods and measurements (Tomlinson 1986; Warde 1997; Goldstein 2005:59). The ‘calculation’ of cooking is assessed through ‘precise quantities and ingredients and cooking times, but also about preparation time, nutrient contents and sometimes shopping instructions too.’ (1997:157), was found by Warde to be a more prominent feature in recipes from the 1990s than then 1960s. This trend continues in the 2009-2010 recipes within this study, all of the recipes stated the number of servings, the preparation time and the cooking time, a precise measured ingredient lists, nutritional information and detailed cooking instructions on what to do at each stage. In this sense the role of the recipe is pedagogical.

The variety of food stuffs that recipes cover is vast, firstly in terms of type: starters; mains; sides; lunches; snacks; desserts etc. Secondly, in terms of cuisine: British; French; Spanish; Italian; Indian; Chinese; Middle Eastern; American; African etc. Therefore the magazines offer a wide repertoire of recipes to suit a variety of tastes and needs, and as a way of introducing readers to cuisines they may not have tried before, or at least not know how to cook from scratch at home. The recipes are accompanied by stylised images of the food presented on plates or in cooking pots. The images are vibrant and show how the food should ideally look. This is also part of the pedagogical nature of food magazines, it is not just about how to cook, but what it should look like on the plate and how to add value to dishes through their aesthetic qualities (Johnston and Baumann 2007). Through drawing on trends in fine-dining, and television cookery programmes with celebrity chefs, as sources of legitimate and expert value, trends in presentation are replicated, or portrayed as being part of home cooking too.

In this section a number of the key components that make up the magazines have been covered. The remainder of this chapter will focus on how thrift as a cultural value is represented. This is not removed from the context of the discussions above and indeed much relates back to the style, format and content of the magazine as a whole to frame and contextualise this discussion.

4.2 Thrift Vocabulary

The content analysis recorded all instances of thrift words found within the sample of magazines. In total n=1212 unique instances of thrift words were found across the magazines, n=677 found within *Good Food* and n=535 within *Delicious*. The tables on pages below show the top 15 most commonly found thrift words in the magazines, for this purpose the word ‘easy’ was removed, and will be discussed as a special case⁹.

‘Easy’ as a thrift word was recorded a total of 419 times across all the magazines (n=245 in *Good Food* and n=174 in *Delicious*). This number is significantly higher than any other term. In total, 63 of the ‘easy’ words related to skill level explicitly, for example ‘Easy for the kids to make’. The other 356 ‘easy’ words seemed to be used alongside the word ‘quick’ in phrases ‘quick and easy’ or even interchangeably with the idea of quick. It is a catch-all word within the magazines as a way of ascertaining that something is not easy to do per-se, but achievable and convenient. As Warde (1997) also noted:

‘Recipes...are easy not with respect to technical difficulty, but because of the limited amount of energy required. Another exceptional situation was where advantage might be gained by advance preparation... It is not that they require less work, rather than they save time at a critical juncture.’
(p.135)

It is precisely in this way that the term ‘easy’ is used within both *Good Food* and *Delicious*. As such, it is the context of thrift words that raise a number of other factors which need due consideration. This shall be done after a closer look at the individual thrift words.

⁹ Additionally, those coded under ‘other’ were also removed as they were a collection of unique words, the top 15 were only selected as some words only appeared once or twice, over the whole sample.

Figure 22: Thrift Words – Both Magazines

| Thrift Word | | Total | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------|
| | | Count total | % total |
| 1 | Quick | 159 | 21% |
| 2 | Save | 121 | 16% |
| 3 | Offer | 59 | 8% |
| 4 | Dinner in under XX mins | 52 | 7% |
| 5 | Value | 51 | 7% |
| 6 | Cheap | 48 | 6% |
| 7 | Moneywise | 40 | 5% |
| 8 | Budget | 39 | 5% |
| 9 | Free | 29 | 4% |
| 10 | Economy | 27 | 4% |
| 11= | From Under £XX | 21 | 3% |
| 11= | Thrift | 21 | 3% |
| 12 | Low-Cost | 17 | 2% |
| 13= | Less | 15 | 2% |
| 13= | Bargain | 15 | 2% |
| 14 | Cut | 11 | 1% |
| 14= | Half-Price | 11 | 1% |
| 15 | Recession | 10 | 1% |
| Total: | | 746 | 100% |

Firstly, it is worth noting the relative spread of words used within the magazines. With the top word ‘quick’ having a count of 159 and number 15 on the list having only 11. As such, the most commonly used words at the top end of the scale are repeated frequently. Secondly, in looking across these words, they are all relative terms – not fixed to any specific meaning but as a relative concept within the magazines. A closer look at this shall be paid through the discussion of the thematic analysis that follows in the chapter. The exceptions to being completely reliant on relativity for understanding are the phrases ‘Dinner under XX minutes’ and ‘From Under £XX’ as constraints are placed around the word, however, this does not mean they are free from relativity, it is implied through these phrases that they are ‘quick’ and ‘cheap’, however, how this itself is defined is still bound by relativity.

Fig.22 outlines thrift words as found across both the magazines as an overview, however there are a number of differences within each of the magazines.

Figure 23: Thrift Words in *Good Food*

| Thrift Word | | Total | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------|
| | | Count total | % total |
| 1 | Quick | 99 | 24% |
| 2 | Value | 44 | 11% |
| 3 | Save | 43 | 10% |
| 4 | Moneywise | 32 | 8% |
| 5 | Cheap | 31 | 8% |
| 6 | Dinner in under XX mins | 29 | 7% |
| 7 | Offer | 27 | 7% |
| 8 | Budget | 23 | 6% |
| 9 | From Under £XX | 14 | 3% |
| 10 | Economy | 13 | 3% |
| 11 | Less | 12 | 3% |
| 12= | Free | 11 | 3% |
| 12= | Bargain | 11 | 3% |
| 13 | Thrift | 10 | 2% |
| 14 | Cut | 6 | 1% |
| 15 | Reduce | 5 | 1% |
| Total: | | 410 | 100% |

Compared with the overall averages, ‘quick’ within *Good Food* is still the most commonly used thrift word, however, value moves to number 2, half-price is not listed in the top 15, and instead the term reduce is on the list.

Meanwhile, the *Delicious* coding (fig.24) lists ‘save’ as the most commonly occurring thrift word, followed by ‘Quick’. ‘Value’ is noticeably lower, only number 12 on the list. Whilst ‘recession’, ‘half-price’ and ‘affordable’ are present on the *Delicious* list but absent from the *Good Food*’s.

This study was situated against the back drop of a global recession. The use of the word ‘recession’ with *Delicious* magazine (n=10) compared with no coded instances for this with *Good Food* needed further investigation. Whilst the occurrence of the word recession might appear predictable in terms of the context of the study, to be missing in one data sample and to occur within the other was what drew attention to this finding. In looking at the texts again, the word ‘recession’ was framed or situated in a number of key ways within *Delicious*. There a number of instances whereby recession is incorporated in to a phrase such as ‘Recession busting tips’ or in relation to tackling the

‘Credit Crunch Recession’ and there was also an article in November 2009 talking to industry experts who all use the word recession. However, the use of this term is not representative of a debate or discussion of the effects of the recession in the UK, even the industry experts do not refer to the recession as a way of entering a financial based discussion, but instead are just acknowledging their business’ approach to this time period and making passing reference to the social context. Therefore these discussions are unlikely to play a fundamental role in informing readers about the financial situation.

Figure 24: Thrift words in *Delicious*

| Thrift Word | | Total | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------|
| | | Count total | % total |
| 1 | Save | 78 | 23% |
| 2 | Quick | 60 | 18% |
| 3 | Offer | 32 | 9% |
| 4 | Dinner in under XX mins | 23 | 7% |
| 5 | Free | 18 | 5% |
| 6 | Cheap | 17 | 5% |
| 7= | Budget | 16 | 5% |
| 7= | Low-cost | 16 | 5% |
| 8 | Economy | 13 | 4% |
| 9= | Thrift | 11 | 3% |
| 10= | Recession | 10 | 3% |
| 10= | Half-Price | 10 | 3% |
| 11 | Frugal | 8 | 2% |
| 12= | From Under £XX | 7 | 2% |
| 12= | Value | 7 | 2% |
| 13 | Cut | 5 | 1% |
| 14= | Affordable | 4 | 1% |
| 14= | Bargain | 4 | 1% |
| 15 | Less | 3 | 1% |
| Total: | | 342 | 100% |

Overall, this gives an insight in to the vocabulary used, and whilst some words have their context embedded in their meaning, such as quick in relation time. Other words, as with easy needed contextualising through their use and positioning within the magazine in order to assess how the notion of thrift is applied within the magazines overall.

Figure 25: Context of Thrift Words

| Context: | Time | Money | Skill | Waste | Space | Other¹⁰ | Total: |
|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Both Titles | 46.3% | 45.4% | 5.2% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 2.5% | n=1212 |
| <i>Good Food</i> | 45.7% | 44.7% | 6.9% | 0.4% | 0.1% | 2.2% | n=677 |
| <i>Delicious</i> | 47.3% | 46.3% | 3.0% | 0.6% | -- | 2.8% | n=535 |

The context to thrift related words is primarily concerned with time and money. These form the basis for the next few part of the chapter as the thematic analysis also unsurprisingly highlights these as key issues.

Most coded words were only found in relation to one context at any given time. However, as with ease, save is multi-variant in its contextual use within the magazines, and was found n=94 in relation to money, n=23 in relation to time, and also in relation to waste n=1, space=1, and other=2.

Before moving on to discuss these themes more specifically, the contexts need some reflection. The context of thrift and skill is based purely on concepts of ease, this relates to the pedagogical role of the food magazines, and often found in children’s cooking segments, or recipes that appear complicated and the magazines want to frame as simple to make. Whilst, waste was primarily the context in relation to the word ‘reduce’, reflecting the social issue of waste this concept was found within the thematic analysis in relation to material practices around leftovers, it is still an important theme within the magazine, even if not dominant within the vocabulary use. The single coded word used in relation to space was ‘save’, specifically this instance was about a space saving colander that lies flat for storage. This does not appear to be a dominant theme concerned on thrift, although thematically within the magazines it does appear in relation to the efficiency of home storage.

The use of thrift words in context, are largely grouped together within the magazines. Thinking back to the sections of the magazine’s content mapped out earlier in the chapter, this relates to these different sections. Thrift words are clustered within the

¹⁰ Other refers to either a context not listed, or where context is not made clear.

everyday section and then also in the back miscellaneous section, but generally absent from the weekend/special section of the magazines. This is making a potential claim about the type of cooking that should be practiced on a weekday, and that of a weekend, thrifty cooking is permitted midweek but not so much at the weekend. This could be seen as a device to help readers navigate the magazines.

The frequencies of thrift terms, and the context to which most of the terms are situated, has started to contextualize the way that thrift is spoken about within the magazines, although it does not serve to tell the intricacies or the details of their use overall. The rest of this chapter looks at a number of key themes in relation to the cultural value of thrift found within the magazines drawing on the in depth thematic analysis.

4.3 Thrift and Money

The relationship between thrift and money is found throughout the magazines in a number of ways including: outlining the costs of cooking recipes from the magazines; abstract and relative notions of saving and good value; the concept of hedonistic spending to save, and linked to this practices of off-setting.

Firstly in relation to thrift and money, it seems logical to start with the costs involved in the food provisioning as represented through the magazines. Unlike the calculations of time, ingredients and nutrition (Warde 1997:157), the calculation of cost is not so widespread within the magazines. Costings only appear in some of the recipes within the magazines, and generally only those that are situated within the everyday section of the magazines. This suggests a difference between imperatives placed on resource management with the magazine. As a reader needs to know about time no matter if it is a short or long time, whereas price is only drawn to the attention if it is considered inexpensive.

Within the sample of recipes analysed, only 16% had prices attached to them. Warde found that in his 1992 sample of magazine recipes 23% had costs stated and that this had risen from 14% in 1968. It does not appear that this increase in recipe costs being listed has continued.

All the prices stated against the recipes coded in this study, were all £2.50 per serving, with an average price of £1.56 across the magazines, (and an average price of £1.44 in *Good Food*, and of £2.17 in *Delicious*).

Good Food's often used the phrase 'Family meals for £5' whilst *Delicious*' promote 'Family meals from £1.25 a head' demonstrates that both magazines defined reasonable costs and affordability in terms of family meals in similar ways. The belief of the family meal as a time for proper home cooked food is central to the reasoning behind this. In order to make home cooking achievable on a day-to-day basis, the magazines frame the two concepts of thrift and cooking as acceptably linked under the circumstances of family meal provision. The use of language around how much 'kids will love these cheap and tasty meals' and 'feeding a growing family well needn't cost the Earth if you follow our recipes', serves to show an understanding between the magazine and this perceived reader need. However, a presumption is then made that this same need is not necessary on weekends, or special occasions where the legitimising of thrifty saving is no longer present, instead legitimacy asserts the need to spend time in the kitchen and be less concerned with costs. Again, this reflects issues surrounding work-leisure boundaries both seen in women's lives, but also in their magazines (Beagan et al 2008; Cairns et al 2010; Winship 1987; Warde 1997).

Additionally none of the celebrity recipes coded, feature any details of price, nor were any prices more generally observed in relation to these recipe sections. Over 90% of the recipes where costings were listed were either found within the 'everyday' section of the magazines, or in the last miscellaneous section. Whilst the 10% found within the 'weekend' sections often referred to how to entertain on a budget, or 'recreate gastro-pub meals' at home. This theme may be seen to emerge from the impact of the recession on people's wider consumption habits (ONS 2012).

This suggests several things in relation to thrift. Firstly, only recipes deemed thrifty or cheap in some sense are attributed a price, these recipes have been designated as 'cheap' 'budget' 'good value' or 'moneywise', and so this serves to normalise what is defined as cheap. Secondly, that *Good Food* and *Delicious* have different standards for what is considered cheap with *Delicious* having a higher average price listed in relation to the costed recipes, although prices are more similar in relation to feeding the family. This highlights how these notions of thrift are relative and may reflect the demographic of the magazine's different target audiences, with the average *Delicious* reader earning £10,000 more per year than the average *Good Food* reader but having an understanding that familial pressures will impact on readers in similar ways. And thirdly, that although there is an understanding that cost is an important part of family meal planning this gets

overshadowed at the weekend or on special occasions when leisure, pleasure and enjoyment take over the priorities for this sort of cooking.

This is also demonstrated through *Good Food* magazine's use of a specific signposting logo and phrase within its magazines to show when a recipe or selection of recipes is 'thrifty'. The term 'moneywise' is used in conjunction with a specific logo depicting a small pile of Pound coins, this is to specifically show readers that these recipes are low-cost, good value or thrifty. The symbol is clear, often in a contrasting colour to both the background and surrounding text making it eye-catching for the reader. This is found throughout the magazine although most commonly towards the front, in the 'everyday' section, where prices are already more likely to be listed. As such, it serves to reinforce and draw attention to these recipes as affordable.

Essentially, these recipe items are being framed as affordable options for family food provision. With more or less concrete attributes that define them in this way through the magazines' own prescribed understanding of what affordable means.

However, the thrift words indicated and the thematic coding illustrated that many of the notions of thrift enacted through the magazine are abstract due to not having a cost attributed to them. Short phrases which explain the concepts of thrift are regularly also used within both the magazines, for example these straplines featured on the front covers of the magazines generally right above the masthead:

Money-saving meals – *Delicious* October 2009; February 2010; March 2010
Eat better for less – *Good Food* March 2010
Eat well, Spend less – *Good Food* August 2009
Great value cooking – *Good Food* September 2009

These examples show how the essence of thrift is being described in a short phrase relating thrift to the monetary value of cooking and eating. However, what is interminable from this is how 'saving', or 'less', or 'great value' is defined or determined. Even through close inspection of the texts these notions remain abstract, and only to be interpreted by the reader in their relative context and situation. This demonstrates why the reader's role in 'making texts meaningful' must be given full consideration (Hermes 1995). The representation of thrift in this case, is not clearly defined. Instead, it asserts two notions which serve if not to define thrift, to underpin it. That money is a valuable resource, not just economically in terms of its exchange value,

but the cultural associations that surround it about maximising its potential use. In this sense, thrift reflects Evan's (2011) understanding of thrift not being about consuming less, but about getting more.

Throughout this notion of thrift therefore, there is always something paradoxical running at its core. In most cases, there must be an outlay of money or expense to begin with in order for a saving to be made. It is the extent to, and the conditions within which this takes place that are worthy of note. Miller's (1998) two variants on shopping provide a useful way this can be explained. 'Provisioning' which is done for necessity and where thrift is most likely to be actively employed is reflected in the recipes which state how cheap they are. 'Hedonic' consumption, where consumption is about pleasure, can arguably be connected to the weekend leisure cooking within the magazines where the range and cost of ingredients, together with the time that would be necessary to make these meals, are less important factors.

The magazines contain a number of themes where these key notions intersect, including the promotion of offers within the magazines that highlight a number of ways in which this occurs, for example the heading of 'readers offers' in *Good Food* encourage readers to spend money on an item but promote this under the guise that this product is reduced in price especially for you, by framing this offer as special and limited in availability it creates feelings of value and immediacy around the product in order to encourage consumption. As such, an act of thrift is promoted, but only through the need to spend and usually removed from necessity, into the realm of treat.

Hedonic consumption need not always be so tenuously linked to thrift. The magazines, through their content and layout, suggest where savings can be made, and where treats can then be afforded. Reflecting Bardhi and Arnould's (2005) findings where thrift shopping in the US (charity store or second hand shopping would be the equivalent in the UK) is a pleasurable experience precisely because a saving is being made, and it allows for other purchases to be made elsewhere as the savings being made make money available for future purposes. For example, 'Spend more on your olive oil for salads, but don't buy the expensive stuff for frying there's no need, you might as well save on that as it makes no difference to the cooking, put the extra towards the one you'll use in dressings you'll really notice a difference' (*Delicious* November 2009). Here certain products are being willingly sacrificed, or saved upon, in order to afford

the better product they recommend elsewhere. This idea is seen across a range of food products, utensils and appliances with the magazines. In a sense it is a about off-setting thrift practices of saving, with hedonic practices of spending, and is an example of resource management that must be carried out by the consumer in everyday life. Once again, this concept remains relative, values around hedonism are not calculated on the page, but are presented to the reader as a choice for them to make as appropriate to both their needs and circumstance: saving money on one type of oil to spend on another, is very different to saving on one aspect of your bespoke kitchen so you can afford the upgraded food mixer, both of which are examples that use largely the same phrasing and conceptualisation of saving, value and good-buys.

Whilst this does not offer a strict understanding of what thrift and money mean as a definition, it does offer an understanding of their relationship. Underpinned through the relative understandings of saving, the magazines present a number of points, showing readers how and where money can be ‘saved’ or where ‘great-value’ can be found, although ultimately, this is never clearly calculated. Instead it is legitimised as good and valid consumption practices, through the positioning within the magazine which suggests where thrift can takes place. It is also legitimised through the use of experts placed throughout the texts including both writers and celebrity chefs. Through the empathetic language, the magazines seek to show readers they understand the demands that food provisioning places on them, and therefore the need to, for example feed a family for under £5 a head, is not only acceptable, but achievable.

4.4 Thrift and Time

The role of women in the working world, and the ways in which the boundaries between leisure and work are blurred, as discussed earlier in chapter 2, place new and shifting demands on the time of women, the target readers of these magazines. Therefore the dominance of discussions in relation to time and domestic duties within the magazines is unexpected. However, within these magazines, and this study moreover, the consideration of time in relation to thrift practices provides a different way to look at thrift practices in contemporary society.

The thrift words used throughout the magazines set up a number of avenues for discussion. Firstly, an understanding about what thrift means in relation to time can be examined through how notions of quick are conceptualised.

Unlike costs, timings are included throughout the magazines and across all of the sections as part of the cooking instructions. This makes a comparison between what is deemed 'quick' and what is not to be more easily assessed, both for the purposes of research, but by the same definition, also for readers.

Warde (1997) suggests that 'quick was used as a matter-of-fact and descriptive' term (p.135), not bound by a time-stamped definition but instead an overall cultural assumption over what quick might mean. Within the contexts of the food magazines it was possible to calculate a more meaningful consideration of what quick might mean as there are dedicated recipe sections in both magazines for 'fast' or 'quick' menus; the general rule seeming to be that if the meal takes in total, less than 30 or ideally 20 minutes to prepare and cook, then this is deemed a quick meal. The concept seems to run alongside the message that if it is this quick to do, there is no excuse or barrier not to do it. Article titles such as 'No reason not to cook tonight: Meals in under 20 minutes' or 'No time? There's always time to rustle up these quick treats' portray the ways to overcome any disjuncture between time available and the time needed to cook, it is through this understanding that thrift and time become useful to consider together. Much in the way that the barrier to cost is removed through cheap meals, the magazines emphasise that these recipes are achievable within set time frames and this makes them realistic to cook in an evening after work and in time for feeding families, removing potential excuses about cooking taking too much time.

From the recipes that were analysed, the average preparation and cooking time was 45 minutes, and the average time to cook a celebrity recipe was 73 minutes. As such, the difference between quick cooking and leisure cooking can more easily be measured. Based on definition of 'quick' as discussed above as 20-30 minutes, this is between 20 and 50 minutes shorter in time than the average recipes.

Once again the notion of thrift and time seems relative, dependent upon the reader own personal situation, what they want to achieve and what 'quick' is measured in relation to.

The same mode-of-address for the concept of saving is applied to the idea of time as it is to money, although not as regularly within the sample. Again, the understanding of how much time is saved, in comparison to what, is not made clear. In framing the saving of time and money in the same way, as 'precious' (*Good Food*) and therefore

valuable, whilst simultaneously discussing how the magazine's understand the need to save time in modern life, situates times in a comparable format to money.

As discussed earlier, the concept of 'ease' is in the main part also connected to saving time. In this sense, ease is defined in the way highlighted by Warde (1997), as part of a wider understanding of 'convenience', which is concerned with 'speed', 'ease of preparation' and 'storage' in the effectively delivery of domestic food provision. The term can also be understood through the use of pre-prepared convenience foods, which also aim to reduce the time spent preparing or cooking food. The themes around ease in the magazines are hard to define. On the surface a presumption of skill is assumed, yet as this context is missing from the majority of the ease related words it becomes much harder to address. In the same way that Warde suggested that quick became a 'matter-of-fact' description, the same appears to be true of ease in the context of food magazines. The theme of ease is used throughout the magazines and is linked consistently and interchangeably with concepts of time, as well as more traditional associations to skill. Ease is enacted through the material practices that shall shortly be discussed, but also relies on a skills base for these practices to be achieved. Ease can also be seen as abstracted from the process of cooking entirely, and as a linguistic device applied to recipes and cooking as a way lifting the barriers to readers achieving home cooked meals on a regular basis.

In either case, I suggest that it might be more useful to consider the role of ease in relation to notions of achievability, rather than as a method of saving. In this sense ease allows for thrift practices to be carried out; food duties and hobbies to exist simultaneously; for savings to be made; for home cooked meals; and for busy working women to contextualise their roles in relation to all these activities through the consumption of the magazines. This echoes a number of interrelated issues, including, the emphasis on women's food provisioning in the domestic sphere (e.g. Warde 1997); the crafting of mothering identities through good food practices (DeVault 1991); the escapism in to magazines (Winship 1987) and also finding leisure and pleasure through cooking (e.g. Ashley et al 2004). The notion of achievability allows for all these roles to be, if not practiced, at least considered, simultaneously. Achievability therefore is enabled, not by ease as a vague concept, but through the practices of convenience that Warde first identified (1997:126-156). Convenience and achievability therefore allow everyday life to be more manageable.

4.5 Material Practices of Food and Thrift

Within the context of this study, food and thrift practices are looked at together as one. There are numerous food practices portrayed in the magazines however not all of these fit under the theme of thrift. There are several very specific material practices which both magazine titles use as techniques for encouraging acts of thrifty behaviour. These techniques are always spoken about in relation to an aspect of thrift in terms of saving a resource, be that money or time, and rely on engaging with practices of convenience and food management in order to achieve these aims. These practices include: food shopping; using leftovers; freezing practices; and DIY cuisine.

Shopping is seen as the first stage in the resource management of food. A number of strategies are encouraged through planning. This includes doing a weekly shop governed by a shopping list that itemises required items. This is designed to act as a self-regulatory tool when shopping and encourages readers not to stray from the list. If this is done, time is saved through a single shopping trip, money is only spent on necessary items and food isn't wasted as surplus is not bought. A number of regular features including *Delicious*' 'Assembly cook' feature demonstrate these methods, framing them as legitimate shopping techniques through explanations of why it should be done in this way, and making explicit the benefits of the method. As well as influencing shopping habits, it also forms part of routine time planning, as knowing which meal will be cooked on each day, allows the reader to know how much time needs to be allotted to each act of cooking, making sure it is appropriate to their needs on any given day. Likewise, the use of certain convenience products are permitted, e.g. readymade sauces, these items are shown within the magazines as being acceptable to use in certain circumstances, including when saving time.

Advice on leftovers mainly takes two forms within the magazines.

Firstly as specific articles or selections of recipes dedicated to the subject of leftovers, where the magazines are acting to inform and facilitate the understandings of leftovers within the domestic waste sphere (Evans 2012). The redefining of 'old' food for reuse, in transforming it in to the next meal, as opposed to waste moves leftover food through the domestic kitchen in a productive manner (Gregson et al 2007). The magazines serve to legitimise what is seen as good food practice and what is bad food practice through suggesting ways leftovers should be used, whilst commenting on foods that should not

be reused on the grounds of food safety. Generally speaking these recipes reflect other elements of the core content of the magazine. For example, in *Delicious*, the regular article 'loose ends' takes some of the common ingredients found in that issue and suggest ways to use them up, 'if this month's recipes leave you with odd bits and bobs, they need not go to waste' it goes on to demonstrate ways to incorporate these items into other dishes in order to use them up before they go off. These leftover dishes tend to be defined as 'exciting' as a way to move away from the understanding of leftovers as 'old' food to something that can be seen as having new value in its own right (Cappellini and Parsons 2013a).

Secondly, leftover advice is dotted throughout the magazines. Many of the costed budget recipes divide up the price of all the ingredients for the purpose of giving a meal or per head price. This is problematic as you cannot buy just one tablespoon of peanut butter or half a can of tomatoes, so if these items are not used elsewhere they become waste but also push up the price of each recipe. Therefore, next to recipes that only require half a can or packet of something to be used, tips are offered on what to do with the surplus. For example, a standard sized tin of coconut milk is 400ml but many recipes do not use this full amount, so next to one of the recipes which uses half a can of coconut milk, they not only offer several suggestions on how to use up the remaining 200ml of milk, but also quite importantly how to store it safely until it is used (*Good Food* January 2010). This concept is seen repeatedly throughout the magazines.

Leftovers become a site for the renegotiation of 'old' cooked food in to new food, and to prevent other foods becoming leftover in the first place. This in itself is a conversation about wasting less, issues of waste dominate many public sphere discussions of food issues (Evans 2012) often in regard to environmental issues, but in this case it is concerned with the personal act of not wanting to throw things away and about not wasting money when ingredients can still be used to create other meals. The notion of saving is largely implicit in this theme, through the process of not wasting, something is simultaneously being saved. Whilst this may reduce waste and stop readers 'throwing food shaped money away' (*Good Food* 2010), it does generally require time to be invested as part of the transformation of leftovers to new food. Through framing the use of leftovers as a good moral act, the magazines make these types of food credible by reframing waste as 'good' food, and highlighting thrift

practices that are acceptable to use as part of food provisioning for families and loved ones (Cappellini 2009; Cappellini and Parsons 2013a).

The magazines also frame freezing as an acceptable thrift practice. Freezing is shown as an act of convenience, food storage and a time management device, therefore is one of the few practices that can help facilitate saving both time and money. Even so, within the content of the magazines, only one of these savings is generally proposed as the primary purpose at any one time, however the multiple reasons for engaging in freezing practices are still found within the same issues of each magazine title.

In order to flag readers attention to where freezing practices can be used, recipes are signposted by a snowflake symbol next to the recipe (in both magazines) both magazines use this symbol across all freezable recipes in the magazines. In addition, specific articles and columns give detailed information about what can be frozen, advice on the safety implications of this, and the personal benefits in terms of time management of freezing food. The freezer also works to stop food becoming waste, through using it as a food preserving device, tactically; the magazines show how bread and milk can be prevented from becoming waste in the first place. As such the magazines embrace all the convenient aspects that freezers provide to readers.

For a number of authors (e.g. Warde 1997; Shove and Southerton 2000; Shove 2003) the freezer transforms the domestic kitchen space, and the time management of consumers, as it simultaneously provides a method for managing food provisioning, and personal time, with a device to allow work to be done in advance (an investment in time when available) and then cooked on demand (when time is short).

Moving on from practices of reducing or managing waste, a novel practice which is promoted through the magazines is 'DIY catering'. This refers to making something at home that you would normally purchase from a restaurant or retail outlet. This practice is encouraged throughout the magazines. One example that clearly links the DIY practice to thrift, can be found in *Delicious* October 2009. The editor refers to the UK economy, takeaway culture and how in times of economic hardship, making your own food at home can minimise the sacrifice of going without (Miller 1998; Cappellini and Parsons 2013a).

As if we need any more reminders about how 2009 is panning out on the economic-belt-tightening front, new research has shown that calls to takeaways across the UK have fallen, giving further evidence that we are all cutting back, even on the humble Friday night curry. So, we've created a feature with 10 favourite takeaway dishes for you to make at home (p60). I promise that in the time it takes to decide what you want, order a takeaway and wait for it to arrive, you can rustle up Chicken tikka masala, Sweet-and-sour pork or Southern fried popcorn chicken, and for a lot less money. Needless to say, it will also taste a whole lot better.

(Matthew Drennan, Editor *Delicious* October 2009)

This highlights a number of key points; firstly that the magazines are aware of the contextual economic climate and that this has led to a cutting back of certain luxuries. They identify that it costs less, and takes no more time in total than getting a takeaway; justifying their point and the legitimacy of home cooked takeaway style food, reinforcing this through the statement 'it will taste better'. However, they ignore that although the total time from decision to plate may not vary, that the input of effort and time required by the reader as an individual is greater, and that the time usually spent waiting for a takeaways to be delivered that could be used to do other things is no longer available for other potential tasks. These frames of legitimacy build on the understanding of value in terms of time and money, reinforcing the view that home cooking is both thrifty, and also a valid alternative to the takeaway option.

Moreover, this serves to popularise the expertise needed in creating this style of food. The popularising of expertise is part of the genre of lifestyle media more broadly, and this example demonstrates how expert knowledge, in this case the professional skills of chefs are mediated through the magazine and democratised for the readers (Lewis 2008).

There practices are constantly being promoted throughout the magazines across both titles and all issues, and can be seen as being embedded to the texts, this serves to reinforce their legitimate place in contemporary food and thrift practices.

4.5 Moral Issues and Thrift

Throughout the magazines, and this analysis, moral issues around waste and family underpin several of the definitions of thrift. Whilst these moral issues are situated at the everyday level, and as a perceived benefit to the readers as individuals when practiced properly, they are positioned within larger frameworks of discussion, whereby the

problem of waste and the relationship of this to family care as part of a social duty is conceptualised.

This might be a useful point in which to consider perceived issues of guilt in relation to food consumption. Warde (1997) suggests that the nature of food consumption means that it intersects with numerous sites for possible anxieties over which choices to make, and the repercussions of this. Therefore when deciding when to be thrifty and when not to be; or when to waste and when not to; or when family care must be the priority and when other demands are competing for this position, thrift becomes an active and skilled process of management which is a site of potential tension and a source of guilt (p.172-175) for the readers to negotiate, as the moral undertones of waste and family responsibility in contemporary society are likely to be sources of such guilt. The magazine here situates itself as a 'manual' (Gallegos 2005) for advice on how to deal with these issues.

There has been a growing concern over food waste in recent years (Evans et al 2012). Evans (2012) notes that consumers are becoming more aware of their own food waste, and the impact that this has on the wider waste debates, which blame consumers for the problem. These public debates generally focus on environmental issues and consequences of over consumption and an outrage of what we as a nation waste in a year, this is reflected in some of the features in the magazines. Whilst much of the discussion of waste within the magazines is done through the concepts of 'use up leftovers – waste less – save more' where the personal benefit to the reader is highlighted in terms of saving time and/or money, this can be seen as part of an effort to motivate a change in reader behaviour. In addition to the personal waste discussion as is seen throughout the magazines, comes a more moral debate featured as separate pieces of editorial comment (n=8), with a slant towards socio-environmental issues drawing awareness to statistics around how much food is thrown away, what the impact of this is on the environment and what the industry could or should do to address this.

The reality is that UK households currently throw away 18% of the food they buy, leading to 6.7 million tonnes of household waste every year.
(*Good Food* – April 2010)

These types of editorial articles, unlike the tips throughout the magazines don't focus so much on how individuals can reduce food waste, but instead highlight to readers the wider implications of their actions, and of the food industry as a whole.

If being aware of food waste issues has been a growing moral concern in regard to food waste (Evans et al 2012), then the moral concerns around food preparation for the family have been ever present.

References to family are found throughout the magazines, and are particularly dominant within *Good Food*. By providing readers, with advice on what and how to cook (not how in terms of learning to cook for the first time, but specific techniques) and suggesting shopping and general consumption habits that they can provide their readers with the tools necessary to provide good quality home-cooked meals for their families every day of the week regardless of time or money constraints. Home cooking is seen as the best option for 'you and your family' (*Good Food* August 2009) and therefore non-home cooked ready meals are in opposition to this – bad for you and your family. This is not say that convenience products do not feature in the magazines, indeed they do, but they never suggest the use of complete ready meals and legitimacy is only extended to specific products that are suggested for use within recipes and product reviews, for example, microwavable rice often features in the *Delicious Assembly Cook* feature. The use of these convenience products is framed by a perceived a lack of time, and an understanding that in order for this to be addressed, the reader must sacrifice one aspect of home cooking.

Throughout the magazine's various messages around ease or convenience and the nature of family food provision, gender stereotypes are reinforced as they centre on the what it means to be a good (and bad) mother. Whilst the magazine's content and advice works to remove the barriers which can be excuses as to why home cooked meals are not provided. DeVault (1991) suggests that it is the mother's duty to not just give food, but to give the right sort of food, and to negotiate how this can be achieved. The magazines can be seen to respond to this need.

There is also a message within these magazines that being thrifty is not about doing without and certainly not where family is concerned. Mid-week meals no longer need to be a sacrificed as the recipes provided in the magazines provide techniques to make them achievable and 'exciting' for 'both cook and hungry mouths'. However, this relies on readers being thrifty with their food – money - time budgeting in order not to have to resort to sacrificing the family meal in some way (Miller 1998; Cappellini and Parsons

2013a). In a sense the magazines don't authoritatively tell readers what to do, but the messages clearly indicate what they should be doing, cooking in a particular way, serving certain kind of food and so on. By offering advice and tips on practices for the readers to engage with, demonstrates how these roles can be fulfilled effectively.

It is through these messages that mothering and thrift become intertwined roles that need to be performed. The March 2010 Budget special issue of *Good Food* explicitly makes the connection between the role of 'mother' and the role of 'managing the family food budget' in the editors letter.

This month's issue focuses on money and mothers – a perfect pairing when you think about it, as it's usually mum who manages the family food budget week in, week out. And, as the post-Christmas bills come in, a lot of us want to keep costs down while also keeping spirits up when the days are dark and chilly. So we've packed the magazine with practical ideas to help you spend less on food, but eat really well. From easy, purse-friendly recipes to our inspiring 50 thrifty tips (p.129), we show that good home-cooking doesn't mean sacrificing great taste, or those favourite dishes that your family loves.

(Gillian Carter, Editor, *Good Food* March 2010)

This editor's letter relates to a number of core issues; firstly it highlights the presumption that the magazine's target audience is women, and more specifically mothers. The editor, draws on her own identity, and aligns herself with the readers, creating a bond between herself and the readers through using collective pronouns to indicate a shared sense of collective understanding on key points of interest. This works to position the magazine in the role of 'friend', rather than instructional text (Winship 1987; Jackson et al 2001; Stevenson et al 2003). She ends this section of the letter by discussing how home-cooked food needn't be expensive or tasteless and that cheap doesn't mean you can't satisfy your families desires. Again, home-cooked food is framed as the best option. The letter ends on a discussion of Mother's Day, tying the two concepts of food work and mothering together, and again highlighting traditional norms that suggest it is mothers who do the cooking on a regular or daily basis:

Don't forget that it's Mother's Day on 14 March... If you'd love to have lunch cooked for you by your family, leave the issue open at p110 for a super-easy roast you'll all enjoy.

(Gillian Carter, Editor, *Good Food* March 2010)

This makes the assumption that the readers have families and that it would be a treat if the family cooked for them instead, it is also worth noting that the recipe they suggest the family cook for you is super-easy, suggesting that the magazine expects the skill level of these individuals is not as developed as those of the mother figure.

The family also appear in other ways, contributing to this dominant theme are sections on how to get children cooking, with age appropriate recipes and hints on how to get them started (*Good Food*), and working with groups of children to develop their skills (*Delicious*). There are also lunch box ideas for children's packed lunches. These articles highlight the relationship between food and family, and between care and duty (Cairns et al 2010). The magazines' provide advice, hints and tips on how best to approach these child-related food tasks and within that, health is an important factor. Many of these articles are not accredited in terms of who wrote them, nor where the nutritional information comes from. The magazines rely on its own reputation and authority to ensure that parents will trust the information despite the lack of qualified nutritional advice. This also reflects this wider shift from expecting professional expertise, to accepting popular expertise (Lewis 2008:48-66).

A number of previous studies (e.g. Beagan et al 2008; Wallop 2009; Cairns et al 2010) have suggested that whilst women are generally seen as the main provider of family foods in everyday mundane food provision and that men's increased presence in the kitchen is not a move towards domestic equality as their cooking tends to be for leisure and not for duty. In *Delicious* November 2009, a number of male food industry business men are asked about their cooking habits at home reflect this idea shown in existing studies.

My wife Judith is a wonderful cook, but I do still dabble at weekends.

My wife does most of the cooking, but I'm a bit of an exhibitionist cook – I cook when people come round and then take all the credit.

I'm not a good a cook as my partner but I do enjoy cooking occasionally
(*Good Food*-November 2009:49-52)

The professional men here situate their wives as the main domestic cooks within their households, and acknowledge how their own food work is predominantly leisure based. In doing this, they enter in to the same conventions that were found in the studies

above. Within the context of the magazines in this study through emphasising the differences between food for leisure and entertaining, and food as domestic duty they essentially work to reinforce stereotypical roles around gender in food work.

These magazines are not just about food. They make a number of social statements and play a role in circulating common shared values centred on domestic food provision.

4.6 Thrift within the Magazines

Thrift is represented in a number of ways throughout the magazines, heavily relying on demonstrating methods and practices in order to achieve thriftiness. The magazines centre on traditional values of both thrift and gender roles to assert the responsibility of food provisioning as the women's or mother's role within the domestic sphere, regardless of their working situations, mirroring findings from previous studies (e.g. DeVault 1991; Beagan 2008, Cairns et al 2010). Connected to this is the role that thrift plays in making this work achievable for the readers.

The magazines primarily focused on economic and time management, through the use of specific thrift practices of convenience to help readers operationalise these savings and make it possible to achieve good quality home cooked meals on a daily basis.

On the front covers of the magazines saving is expressed in relation to both money and time, often simultaneously. 'Brilliant recipes to save you time and money' – for example features as the tagline on the front of *Delicious* September 2009. This 'save you time and money' phrase appears in total on 6 covers. Yet within the magazine's content, the representation appears to suggest that saving can be done only in terms of time or money and that both cannot be achieved simultaneously. There is also an indication of when it is acceptable to save, and when it is necessary to invest (be that time or money). The everyday sections of the magazines actively encourage the awareness and reduction of cost and time spent on food preparation, whereas the weekend and special occasion sections are more about leisurely cooking where food is more time consuming to prepare and price is not mentioned. In this sense, the magazine's content is un-blurring the boundaries between work and leisure activities, allowing each to have their own characteristics as defined by their relationship to, and distance from thrift practices.

Many of the ways that thrift and saving are portrayed in the magazines are abstract, centred on whatever the reader's interpretation of a saving or good value is. This always allows for thrift to remain a relative concept, as what is saving to one reader, may not be saving to another, here the magazines are able to appeal to a wide a range of readers, in a varying number of circumstances.

Overall thrift in this sense can be seen as a form of resource management, whereby the value or importance of time and money is highlighted throughout the texts, showing that the magazines think that this is an issue for their readers to actively engage with. Time and money are therefore framed as scarce resources which require the reader's attention within everyday life: 'we know that your time and money are precious' state *Good Food* at the start of all their magazines in their general cooking instructions, whilst similar statements are also found in *Delicious* e.g. 'we understand time is valuable'. It is through following the practices and ideas laid out by the magazines that resource management can be conducted to meet whatever saving of money and time resources the reader is striving for.

The magazines reflects the importance of reader responsibility, whilst simultaneously situating the magazines as useful manuals and expert sources of help to guide in order to help readers best accomplish their conflicting daily roles -of mother, busy working woman, food provisioner, and the tasks of preparing quality home cooked meals etc.

These definitions and representations of thrift are motifs of thrift that are developed and maintained throughout the magazines. The next two chapters shall move on to assess the role of the food writers in producing these texts and contributing to encoding the values and messages within them and assessing how their personal and professional practices determine messages of thrift. This is followed by a discussion of how these magazine texts are used and read by readers, and their understanding, both through the magazine and independently, of thrift as a cultural value. This will allow examination of the motifs of thrift identified here to see if they are consistently followed through the production to consumption process, or if not, where they may differ, and offer an overall account of how thrift is practiced.

Chapter 5: Food Magazine Writers

Within the circuit of culture approach, as previously discussed in chapter 2 and 3, it is necessary to consider the production of cultural products and values, in addition to the elements of the text and consumption. In chapter 2, I outlined that previous studies looking at lifestyle magazines have also asserted that there has been a lack of focus on production in comparison to the role of the text in creating meaning. This tendency to focus on the text as a predefined lifestyle media product does not give credit to the role of the writers in shaping these messages. The magazine content does not create itself; it is part of a process of cultural production, through which magazines become encoded as meaningful and valuable texts (Hall 1980). It is within this discussion that the necessity of investigating the cultural production of texts becomes apparent in order to fully assess how defined cultural values of thrift come to exist.

Chapter 4 identified a number of key messages associated with thrift that are found within the food magazines. These messages however are not organic they are culturally produced by writers. It is therefore vital, in order to fully understand these messages, to look at the context in which they were produced.

Through an analysis of interviews with food magazine writers (n=10), I assess the roles that these food writers play as producers of cultural value. Editors of magazines have previously been situated as cultural intermediaries as their occupation was concerned with the ‘symbolic work of making products ‘meaningful’’ (du Gay et al 1997:62). This suggests that the work of cultural intermediaries in creating meaning and adding value to cultural goods is an essential component of a circuit of culture approach as cultural intermediaries mediate between production and consumption within the context of the circuit (du Gay et al 1997:62). This chapter shall look to determine if, and to what extent, the food writers act as cultural intermediaries within this process. Exploring how they understand and practice their roles within the process of cultural production, and specifically how they shape the cultural value of thrift within these texts.

5.1 Situating Food Magazine Writers as Taste Making Cultural Intermediaries

According to Bourdieu, cultural intermediaries are involved in occupations concerned with ‘presentation and representation... and in all the institutions providing symbolic goods and services’ (Bourdieu 1984:359). Especially relevant to this study, he included within that ‘all the writer-journalists and journalist-writers’ (Bourdieu 1984:325). As such, the concept of the cultural intermediary is occupationally-driven. Therefore, let’s

begin this discussion by considering the food writers in terms of their self-described occupational identities.

As described in chapter 3, these food writers had all worked for one, or both of the magazine titles *Good Food* or *Delicious* for a period of two years or more prior to the interviews. Four of the interviewees were associated with *Good Food*, three with *Delicious*, and the remaining three had worked with both magazines at some point within their careers.

Figure 26: Food Writer Participants

| Pseudonym | Magazine | Employed/Freelance |
|-----------|------------------|--------------------|
| Emily | <i>Good Food</i> | Both |
| Rachel | <i>Good Food</i> | Employed |
| Victoria | <i>Good Food</i> | Employed |
| Jessica | <i>Good Food</i> | Both |
| Helen | <i>Delicious</i> | Both |
| Laura | <i>Delicious</i> | Freelance |
| Natasha | <i>Delicious</i> | Employed |
| Charlotte | Both Titles | Freelance |
| Joanna | Both Titles | Freelance |
| Katie | Both Titles | Freelance |

The food writers in this study all refer to themselves ‘food writers’ and one a ‘food editor’. The ‘food editor’ felt her position as an ‘editor not just writer’ was an important distinction to make: a matter of defining a higher status position within the production process¹¹. The writers acknowledged a hierarchy to magazine staff, suggesting that being a salaried member of staff was a position of greater security in an insecure industry and therefore holds more power than ‘just a freelancer’, and that an editor title was of greater significance still, nodding to the conventions laid out by the political economy of the magazine industry. I.e. the more power a role holds within the final edit of the magazine, the greater the attributed status to the person who fulfils that role (Holmes and Nice 2012).

The writers employed directly by the magazine titles describe their positions within the magazines as vital to the production of consistently high quality content that is at all

¹¹ They were not the magazine editor, but held the position of editor over specific sections of the magazine, whilst still reporting to the editor-in-chief.

times ‘pitched at the right angle for our readers’ and ‘relevant to us as a brand’. The use of ‘our’ and ‘us’ indicate both a sense of possession and belonging towards the magazines that they work for, suggesting that by being part of the magazine title and publishing house’s community they gain a sense of security from this, but also have a duty to ensure the continued success of the magazine. Drawing distinction from their position to that of a freelance writer through this attachment of belonging allows them to justify their importance to the success of the magazines they work for, and use this to anchor security in their jobs.

The role of the freelance writer within this hierarchy is necessary to consider, as salaried writers make jibes about being ‘just a freelancer’, those who hold these freelance positions also negotiate with their status. Feeling less secure financially than those directly employed by the magazine, they draw on other sources in order to confirm their position within the editorial process. They emphasise the creative freedom that they benefit from by freelancing, in choosing what they write about, and draw on their previous accomplishments in getting published as a way to justify why they do not need to be employed directly by the magazines to be seen as successful.

Essentially, all the writers, regardless of their self-described position within this hierarchy and in relation to others, are bound by a need to negotiate personal creativity in their work with risks around job security. This is seen in Jackson et al’s (2001) study which found that editors of men’s magazines balance these issues of tension within their work in order to maintain their positions. It is clear from the interviews with the writers in this study, that this concern is not only felt by those at the top of the magazine hierarchy. The writers note that the magazine industry is insecure, and that they have become increasingly aware of the economic pressures placed on the publishing houses. These interviews took place against the backdrop of a global recession and at a time where cultural industries, including magazine publishing, were making significant restructuring changes to their businesses (Deuze et al 2010 see also Gough Yates 2003:42 for discussion on effects of the recession in magazine industry during the 1980s). Salaried staff expressed security in getting a regular monthly salary, although concern was raised about potential job cuts. The freelancer writers expressed concern over how articles would be commissioned in the future and feared that they would have to change their working practices to be ‘even more targeted’ in order to guarantee their

level of income over the year, this tactical positioning shall be further expanded in relation to the political economy of taste making later within the chapter.

For Bourdieu (1993) hierarchy between producers of symbolic goods was significant:

The relationship maintained by producers of symbolic goods with other producers, with the significances available within the cultural field at a given moment and, consequently, with their own work, depends very directly on the position they occupy within the field of production and circulation of symbolic goods. This, in turn, is related to the specifically cultural hierarchy of degrees of consecration. (Bourdieu 1993:131)

The food writers draw on characteristics around their occupational identity that allow them to define their differing positions within the production of the magazine. Yet, despite drawing distinctions between themselves based on the nature of their employment with the magazines, the writers openly acknowledge that they ‘essentially do the same job’ as each other. Recognising, that the occupational role of the writer is defined in the same way, irrespective of employment status and it is at this point that the writers also start to draw upon the importance of their own work to distinguish themselves.

Beyond locating cultural intermediaries in specific occupations, Bourdieu (1984) maintains that there is a connection between the production of cultural goods and the production of taste (p.230). That is to say that cultural intermediaries act as taste makers (Bourdieu 1984, 1996; Featherstone 1991) which hold a significant role in constructing legitimacy for cultural goods as definitive. The food writers’ narratives about their work identifies with this definition of cultural intermediaries. For example, Katie explains:

In helping to create a food magazine, I’d like to think that even if only on a small scale I have shaped someone’s ideas, or maybe pushed them to try something new that although they really enjoy, like now, they wouldn’t have thought it before, until they read about it. It’s important to get the tone right of the article, as, like, it helps the reader to understand why they need to try this. (Katie – Both Titles)

Like Katie, all of the writers make reference to their attempts or ability to shape tastes and define what should be considered good taste. The writers acknowledge that their position as writers allows them to direct readers to particular products or tastes by framing them as good products ultimately by distinguishing them from the bad. Further into the interviews when thrift was discussed, many of the writers recognised how their

more abstract and cultural messages have the same impact as product endorsement messages do.

I've heard of things that we've featured in magazines becoming hot topics on internet forums and stuff... Like ideas on how to cook more efficiently, not about specific brands but about how you do it, you know? Ideas can make people respond too not just adverts. It's like endorsing a way of life not just a product! [Laughs]. (Joanna – both titles)

This echoes previous findings, such as those of Crewe's (2003) study which suggests that the men's magazine editors knew that through the creation of their magazines they were shaping a cultural understanding of what masculinity was or should be. Like Crewe's editors, the food writers are aware of the power they hold to communicate ideas and trends. This also translates well to concepts of symbolic production. They actively acknowledge that they are not just producing a physical lifestyle media product, but that the ideas they create within those products are culturally constructed with specific symbolic meanings, goals and motivations for shaping taste and best practice. The writers here emphasising not only the role that they play, but also a wider function of lifestyle media centred on shaping narratives around best practice (Bell and Hollows 2005; Lewis 2008). The writers work to reinforce canons of good taste and legitimise certain items and practices as part of good lifestyles. It is within this process that the food writers act as cultural experts within the food magazines, employing symbolic ideological messages to legitimise their authority in defining lifestyles through content in the magazines to assist in this process of identity formation.

5.2 The Political Economy of Taste Making

Bourdieu's cultural intermediaries are not however simply 'free agents' who create meaning, values and tastes as they please. They are market actors situated within a defined cultural field (Smith Maguire and Matthews 2012), constrained and informed by their locations within particular industries and commodity chains, and as canons of good taste. For the food writers, the political economy of lifestyle media is a key source of constraints and conventions in shaping their work.

Lifestyle media holds significant relationships to wider socio-cultural practices, and therefore its role in the cultural formation of taste and value needs to be adequately assessed (Bell and Hollows 2005:1-20). There is need to acknowledge these food writers as cultural intermediaries, agents with power to construct and shape these lifestyle media texts, whilst locating them within their specific context. The political

economy of the magazine informs the product's final design and content contributing to the product's commercial viability in the market place both at the point of production and consumption. The political economy of the magazine industry needs to be considered in a discussion of the production of magazines:

Political and legal frameworks (that) affect the practice of commerce, and commercial factors may also affect the consumer response... There is also a general culture of professional journalistic practice and within that a specific culture of magazines practice... both of which exert a material influence on the industry. (Holmes and Nice 2012:19)

Firstly there is a need to acknowledge the wider industry framework that goes beyond a specific magazine title. The need for commercial success is a primary driver in any industry, and is especially prominent within periods of recession. This issue was highlighted by several of the food writers in relation to job security. Secondly, journalistic practices can dictate a style and approach to content production. The food writers acknowledge this influence on their work, often articulated through a discussion of genre. There are two key factors identified by the food writers about genre and how it impacts and constrains their occupational work: standardised norms and the purpose of food magazines.

Lifestyle magazines operate in standardised cycles of production, which the writers recognise as vital to the process of preparing a magazine for publication and presentation to the market. As such, it forms part of the political economy of the magazine and acts to both inform and constrain the ways that the writers conduct their working practices. The writers recognise having an understanding of how this cycle works as vital. They conceptualise the cycle as time bound in a number of ways: the monthly format of food magazines, the role of seasonality and their ability to correctly pitching articles to editors at the right time.

The writers discuss the 'strange calendar' that magazines operate to, where the monthly magazine calendar differs from that of the normal calendar. For instance the writers highlight the case of the January issue, where Christmas is still heavily featured because it is actually available for sale in early December. For the writers, operating and understanding the time scales of the magazine year is vital in knowing at which point in the year content needs producing.

Magazines work to a strange calendar. It's out of sync with the rest of the world! It's important to bear that in mind as it does affect the timing of everything. Not only is the January issue available for the readers in December but my deadline is way before then. It, the timing, you know, takes some getting your head round before you get used to it... It's really important, especially if you're freelancing, you know, to get bought.

(Charlotte – Both Titles)

A working knowledge of the magazine production cycle is used as a tactical device to maximise the chances of getting articles commissioned. As a freelance writer this is something Charlotte sees as particularly relevant in her working practices. The ability to successfully sell editorial ideas and articles to editors is central for freelance writers who rely on individual articles being bought and published for their income. Success at having articles selected by editors requires on the one hand having an appropriate article, which the editor will see as a good fit for the magazine, and on the other, timing the pitch to suit the production cycle.

There's no point pitching a Christmassy idea too late when they've already decided the content and layout but likewise, no point too early they might forget about you! So there is a bit of a timing issue, the longer you're in the game the better you get at judging it and you get to know when people are doing what throughout the year. (Jessica – *Good Food*)

Seasonal timing issues, like those discussed above, are seen in other cultural industries, e.g. fashion. Fashion buyers need to be aware of their timing, as placing seasonal clothes in to stores too early or too late will affect sales and the success of items, it is suggested that the knowledge of when to place is founded upon reflection of industry standards, previous year's sales and personal knowledge and feeling (Entwistle 2006). These understandings are also expressed by the food writers in terms of maximising chances of publication, especially for freelance writers. This relies on writers not only understanding concepts of seasonality as part of the cycle of production, but also as a form of legitimacy and valuable resource for them to draw upon in creating their status of expertise. Essentially both the food writers and fashion buyers are working within constraints of their respective occupations, but rely on their understandings of this political economy to guide them through successfully.

Throughout the above examples, writers show an understanding that the magazines work not only on a monthly but also seasonal basis.

Within all magazine genres there's a traditional flow of content and themes across a year. This is always seasonal, so in travel magazines it's about beach holidays in summer and ski holidays in winter... For food there are several aspects to seasonality, there are the seasons like in winter we discuss soups and stews and in summer salads and picnics... and there, erm, special events, Christmas... Then there is food seasonality itself too like showcasing in season available fresh ingredients at the right time of year.

(Katie – both titles)

Here, several definitions of seasonality within food magazines are operationalised. This directly correlates with findings in Chapter 4 which also found these three ideas as central representations for what seasonality means within the magazines. The writers identify that their articles and recipes must fit within these traditions and meanings of seasonality for the magazines.

Many of the writers, although accepting of this 'strange calendar' as a part of the industry, express that it isn't a useful device for the industry, or at least not in their work where they so are concerned with the concept of seasonality. They situate this calendar of publishing as an accepted standard within the magazine industry that is unlikely to change due to its deep-rooted position within publishing practices. Since these interviews took place, in January 2014 *Delicious* announced that it would be changing its publishing strategy to be in line with a normal calendar year, citing the necessity to be seasonal, which they see as vital to their overall ethos, as their main reason, alongside making a stand within the magazine industry (*Delicious* 2014). This demonstrates how the writers have a good knowledge of the industry that they work within, understanding a magazine's operating practices and how this conflicts with their cultural ethos. It also exemplifies the way that the political economy of the magazine industry constrains the working practices of the writers and also where their instinctive knowledge for what the readers need can allow for acts of agency.

Seasonality also resonated with the writers in terms of how they create messages of thrift within the magazines. Several of the writers draw on Christmas as key example:

You have to get it right. I mean, Christmas is a time for luxurious over-indulgence, not frugality. A frugal Christmas doesn't sound fun. Yet at the same time, being thrifty can be used to afford all this extra expense. But after Christmas, everyone's always short in the New Year aren't they. So that's always a good time to do it. (Jessica – *Good Food*)

Here a tension between Christmas as a time of luxury, and the expense associated to luxury is demonstrated. The writers suggest that messages of thrift jar with the luxury concept. Several of the writers go on to echo messages that were seen in Chapter 4, where thrift is operationalised not in terms of saving money but as a device of convenience during Christmas where the domestic labour involved in food production is greater than at other times of the year.

It's not all about money though. It can be hard work at Christmas even if you can afford all the goodies. Finding time to get things done isn't always easy. It's good to have some tricks up your sleeve for that. (Rachel- *Good Food*)

In this sense they justify thrift not just in terms of economic necessity but as a time-management device.

All the writers recognised the post-Christmas period as a good time for thrift to be present in the magazines, noting it fits with wider socio-cultural norms about personal finance, and that this was a time where they personally felt more aware of money, which they also reflect on to be the case for their readers. Writers also suggested that these themes were found in spring issues when looking at the flow of content over the history of their magazines. I cannot comment on the historical nature of thrift messages within the magazines, but themes and messages of thrift are especially prevalent in the March issue in *Good Food*. The writers show how their own agency and knowledge of their readers is situated in the context of the magazine and acts to influence these definitions of thrift.

This is a useful example to work with as it situates the food writers as cultural intermediaries who negotiate the restraints of the political economy, the context of the food magazines, with their own instincts and tastes to develop mediated and culturally valuable narratives of thrift. By engaging in multiple 'regimes of mediation' (Cronin 2004) they ensure that they authenticate the thrift values they portray and that these become seen as legitimate across the circuit of culture that they operate within. Through this the writers simultaneously legitimatise their own position.

The cycles of magazines are not the only element of magazine production that is negotiated through the context of industry standards. The writers acknowledge that one of the ways the target readers of the magazines are identified is through market research conducted by independent organisations or the publishers themselves.

Gough-Yates (2003) identifies a shift in between the 1980s to 1990s in the reliance on traditional demographic information to more qualitative market research in defining who the audiences of magazines were, designed to help editors make informed choices about the editorial style and content for the magazines. However, all of the writers in this study first drew upon their knowledge and understanding of traditional demographics, based around class and age, when describing who the audience of their magazines was.

The press pack plays an important role in informing the writers who their readers are. Its influence is identifiable in the data from the interviews; as one of the writers stated ‘I guess you’re not so interested in just hearing the press pack spiel you wanna know what I think’ (Joanna – both titles). However, it seemed hard to escape from the format and wording of the press packs because of its status and place within the industry. The general feelings of all the writers about the readers matched that ‘press pack spiel’.

All of the writers who had worked for *Good Food* (n=7) used the terms ‘women’ ‘ABC1’ ‘30-45’ (although some age ranges varied at the upper end) and ‘family’ and largely recited these terms like a well-rehearsed speech including Joanna, who had early stated that she thought that this ‘press pack spiel’ wasn’t the angle she should approach this question from. This shows how ingrained these concepts are within their working practices and that the writers find it hard to escape from.

For *Delicious* magazine, the writers spoke of mainly women, ABC1 backgrounds with above national average incomes who like entertaining and eating out but like preparing good quality home cooking for their family and friends, and that they read the magazine to learn more about food and ingredients and to gain inspiration. Again all of the writers who had worked with *Delicious* used largely the same vocabulary to describe the basic identity of the readers of the magazine but used a more qualitative market research approach in their initial descriptions of readers, for example citing certain lifestyle traits of their readers. This suggests that *Delicious* may provide a more lifestyle based analysis of readers within the demographic information that they give to their writers.

One *Good Food* writer specifically discusses the use of market research in defining lifestyle and personality traits of readers. Emily recalls attending a meeting dedicated to informing the writers of the magazine, who the magazine readers were.

They told us all about our reader, they called her Liz I think. She was a working mother, with a partner, aged 35 had a young family and cared about providing good quality food etc. etc... They even told us where she liked to go on holiday... Of course this Liz was an amalgamation of market research and probably some imagination and maybe wishful thinking but that doesn't matter (Emily –*Good Food*)

This reflects how magazines rely heavily on advertising sales and so ideal target consumers must be understood in order to entice brands to advertise within their publications (Gough-Yates 2003). Emily felt that although some of the information was based on market research, that it was also based on an ideal reader that the editors and publishers had created. This echoes previous studies findings that situate both magazine editors (Crewe 2003) and book editors (Childress 2012) as cultural intermediaries who perform a vital defining role and draw upon their expertise to appropriately contextualise the characteristics of readers in the market place. Within the interview Emily recalls the character of 'Liz' as the ideal reader, unlike many of the other writers she does not move from beyond this definition of the readers, to expand her own personal opinion on who readers might be. Emily had been involved in research on *Good Food's* magazine readers, through the internet based *Magazine Insiders* that surveys readers of BBC magazine titles. It then produces statistical and demographic data about readers for the magazines beyond that supplied through circulation figures. Emily's involvement in this may have led to a commercialised view of the audience being deeply ingrained in her professional practices as none of the other writers at *Good Food* referred to this kind of audience information.

The writers move beyond this market research and express agency in explaining how their 'sixth sense' for who the readers are, is directly linked to their own sense of self (Gough-Yates 2003:120). This shall be discussed in the following section in this chapter where I look at the role of taste makers as proxy consumers.

The genre of food magazines also impacts upon their production. Food magazines fall under the wider genre to lifestyle media; this by definition means that the magazines perform a function within the everyday leisure time and life style activities of those who consume them. Two key purposes are reflected on by the writers, the magazines as an item of leisure which is explored through the experience of escapism, and as a tool for of instructional advice.

Radway 1984's study on reading highlighted that reading can be an act of escapism from everyday life, and that for women this is often specifically from their domestic duties and roles. Radway's study focuses on escapism from the point of view of the reader. However, food writers at the point of production, also engaged with ideas of escapism, and understand it to be important to their readers, and the genre.

I think that magazines in general are, like, a thing of leisure like we can pick them up and escape for a bit even if it's only for ten minutes whilst we drink a cup of tea. Magazines become part of our lifestyles in this way... It is important that readers learn to feel OK about getting a bit of me time, not feeling guilty about it, reinforcing that everyone needs that time regardless of how busy we are. (Charlotte – Both titles)

Aspects of experiencing escapism through magazine consumption are highlighted by a number of the writers (n=5), including Charlotte. This concept of escapism via reading the magazine is used by the writers to justify the role that the magazines play in contributing to the leisure time and lifestyles of readers. Escapism then frames personal time as justified, and on activities that are centred on the individual and not on their household or other duties, as valuable to the individual. This mirrors the findings in chapter 4 of time being a valuable commodity.

The physicality of the magazines adds to the experience of reading and the pleasure of escapism it offers (Winship 1987; Ytre-Arne 2011). These concepts, of reading magazines as an enticing, physical and tangible experience, are acknowledged by the writers in this study and seen to add value to their products through aesthetic qualities. Noting that despite the industry in general is concerned about the way that new media technologies are impacting on magazine circulation, that this particular aspect of the magazine experience is something which is hard to replicate through the internet. Although they suggest that more interactive digital copies, on iPads for instance, go some way in digitising this tangible experience, the writers still see the print magazine as an important cultural good. This narrative of the physicality of the magazine can be seen as an example of the pride they take in their work in producing such texts, but also reflects their relationship and use of magazines as readers themselves.

Existing studies on lifestyle media (Lewis 2008) and self-help culture (McGee 2005) have seen a blurring between leisure, lifestyle and more traditional forms of expertise. This is evident in the food magazines and is reflected upon by the food writers who highlight the role and balance of leisure and advice within the magazines.

The writers specifically suggest that the readers want to learn about food and cooking, and that it is the magazine's job to educate and inform the readers about all aspects of food, including: specific ingredients, techniques, recipes, health, costs, timings, equipment and popular food culture. They note that maintaining the balance between leisure and education is important so that all readers are kept interested in the content and that this distinguishes them from cookbooks where the focus is on instruction.

Women read *Good Food* to learn about for want of a better phrase good food in a non-scary way. It's accessible, they want good tips something I don't think cookbooks always give. (Victoria –*Good Food*)

This theme of learning was also found within the interviews with the *Delicious* writers:

Readers of magazines like *Delicious* like indulging themselves in learning about food. It's not all about the recipes. It's about everything food-ish. (Laura- *Delicious*)

In this sense lifestyle media act as pedagogic tools for informing individuals about the best ways in which to practice everyday life across a number of lifestyle based activities, including cooking (Gallegos 2005). This is a key defining characteristic of lifestyle media (Bell and Hollow 2005; Lewis 2008).

The writers argue that the magazines are more effective pedagogical devices than cookbooks. Positioning cookbooks as direct competitors in providing food education to readers, but strategically argue that the advice offered by a magazine will be more useful and relevant than that of a cookbook due to being a monthly periodical, meaning content will always be seasonal and contemporary. Although both types of texts contain some aspects of similar content, namely recipes, the food writers assert the benefits of food magazines over cookbooks through constructs of usefulness. In this sense the writers are demonstrating the 'disentangling' and 'singularizing points of attachment for others' (McFall 2004:83) through negotiating the marketplace for the readers and 'disentangling' food magazines from competitors, and 'singularizing' their unique qualities, they are marking the reason for 'attachment' for readers to these magazine as not only distinct from, but more valuable than other food media.

There is a tension between these two roles of food magazines, one which positions them as part of leisure and a thing of pleasure, and the other as a manual for developing skills

and knowledge. The ability in getting this balance right within the content of the magazine and individual articles themselves, is one which the writers understand as vital to their success as professional writers, but it is also positioned as a tool for asserting a position of knowledgeable authority. Here we see a negotiation between the perception of what the readers want, and the need for food writers to assert their self-declared status of experts.

One way in which this is demonstrated is through the writers understanding of how readers use different parts of the magazine. A large proportion of the magazines content is made up of recipes, the writers acknowledge that readers in general, cook very few of these recipes, but argue that this does not matter as long as the readers are satisfied with their experience of the magazine.

I think the magazine reckons on average seven or eight recipes are tried by each reader. I think it's much less to be honest... I know many readers who admit they never cook from them or they keep recipes with the best of intentions of trying them one day but never do. But that's OK as long as the readers are happy and keep buying us, does it matter really how many recipes they ever actually cook? (Natasha –*Delicious*)

This is essentially a discussion about the value of the magazine to the readers. Natasha understands the value of the magazine, and as echoed by other writers, in relation to benefits felt by the reader in terms of personal satisfaction and pleasure. I.e. that leisure and escapism, not education, is the primary basis of the value within the magazines. This is not to say that the educational aspects are unimportant to the writers, as this aspect is primary to their negotiated status of experts and cultural intermediaries. The writers discuss this not only in relation to market research on the issue, but their own personal experiences and professional instincts, illustrating their role as simultaneously effective consumers and cultural intermediaries. This is reminiscent of how thrift as a cultural value has been negotiated with both in this chapter 4 and this chapter so far and further reinforces that value is always a relative concept bound within the narratives of each writer or reader's personal requirements at any given moment.

By setting out the balance of leisure and education and how this works within lifestyle identities, the food writers suggest the best way to practice 'food lifestyles' are by reproducing and replicating food practices illustrated within the magazines, and that these messages are created from a position of authoritative expertise which are then seen as authentic by the readers.

The readers aren't supposed to question our advice... The magazine's reputation and the things we talk about and how we write makes, is supposed to make, the readers feel comfortable accepting the advice.

(Joanna – Both titles)

This move to authenticate and add value to their product serves as a way to legitimise their self-perceived expertise, through asserting that they have the ability to provide this educative knowledge. By constructing specific goods and practices as culturally legitimate, the writers encourage readers to adopt these particular practices over others. In this way writers shape identities for the reader, based on the products they advise readers to consume and ways of living (Bell and Hollows 2005).

The food writers demonstrate a clear understanding of the magazines role in defining legitimate practices. It is seen as responsibility of the magazine, to guide readers through market based decisions, and domestic practices to achieve particular identities, e.g. becoming a good consumer. In contemporary culture whereby the problem of identity is negotiated through lifestyle (Giddens 1991:81), the magazines offer solutions on how to address these problems through advising consumers of what constitute good taste lifestyle choices.

Providing advice, and a site for negotiating the formation of lifestyle identities, is a key part of the lifestyle genre (Bell and Hollows 2005; Iqani 2012). The writers' position in this process can be seen as both constrained by this aspect of the genre:

It is important that the advice we give fits with the magazine's overall message about whatever it is that we are talking about. (Katie – Both titles)

Whilst their positions as creative taste-makers allow them to set the boundaries of what these identities should be:

...But it's also my job to know what the best ways are and to know when to bring out new ideas about what we should be doing. (Katie – Both titles)

Featherstone (1991) describes 'tastemakers' as being 'constantly on the lookout for new cultural goods and experiences' (p.35). The writers, exemplified by Katie above, recognise their ability to identify new goods and ideas as appropriate and presenting these to readers, as part of their occupation, but this can be restricted by the realms of what will be seen as acceptable to both the readers and the magazines image. This demonstrates that the construction of taste is both constrained and informed by the political economy of the genre, and that the position of the writers within the market

grants them agency over the production of taste within the context of the lifestyle magazines they work for (Smith Maguire and Matthews 2012). Although, the writers acknowledge the role of genre as important in contextualising and constraining their creative work, they also move beyond the issue of genre and exhibit specific examples of agency in shaping messages and contributing to the construction of value, specifically through their role as proxy consumers.

5.3 Taste Makers as Proxy Consumers

Cultural intermediaries are distinctive in terms of their relationship to the market. They are positioned as their own ideal and ‘perfect consumers’ (Featherstone 1991:91) who have an instinctive knowledge of the market that they operate in because they promote their own lifestyle values. Their subjective preferences give them a ‘feel for the game’ (Bourdieu 1990:63) which enables them to bring about an orchestration of production and consumption (Bourdieu 1984:230). Such a ‘feel for the game’ involves both an understanding of their market context (the genre and political economy of lifestyle media and food publishing in particular) and their intended audience. Bourdieu advocates that cultural intermediaries:

‘always sell themselves as models and as guarantors of the value of their products, who sell so well because they believe in what they sell’ (Bourdieu, 1984:365)

In this respect cultural intermediaries are understood as ‘proxy consumers’ (Ennis 2005) who draw upon their own preference and instinctive knowledge of the market to inform and legitimise their work. I have already identified a few ways this is done in the previous section of this chapter, noting where the writers demonstrate agency in understanding the audience through their own personal experiences and through how they draw on their own uses of lifestyle magazines to underpin the uses of the magazines. For example, in demonstrating how readers use these magazines is based in part on market research but also on their own understandings of how they engage within magazines as avid readers themselves. These practices rely on both aspects of political economy and being a proxy consumer, these are not separate in practice, but both serve in different ways to inform working practices of the writers.

The food writers’ occupation demonstrates their personal ‘passion’ for the genre. Holmes and Nice (2012) argue ‘Magazines offer people with particular interests the opportunities to turn these into careers’ (p.59). It is the personal dimension of lifestyle

which suggests that the food magazine writer's ability to identify what the readers want, is found not just through a generic understanding of the market, but instead is governed by their own knowledge as proxy consumers (Ennis 2005). The writers position themselves as expert producers in an industry which they understand implicitly from the viewpoint of the consumer, as they themselves mirror their ideal consumers (Bourdieu 1984; Featherstone 1991).

In this study, all but one of the participants said that before the start of their careers they had wanted to be involved in magazines and/or food. This reiterates that cultural intermediaries draw on their personal life and knowledge to inform their professional life. The writers here demonstrate a key point; that their personal interests were a key factor in shaping their careers as magazine writers, and how their occupations as food writers can be discussed as one of a cultural intermediary at the point where there is a blurring between their personal leisure interests and professional roles (Wright 2005:118).

Food writers turn their personal interests into occupational resources to help them define values of appropriate, good taste (Wright 2005:112; Moor 2007:61). Food writers draw on this resource to demonstrate their innate understanding of the reader but also to show they have the ability to correctly identify the good tastes that the magazine needs to express. As such, they use this resource as a basis for agency that allows them to move beyond the political economy of the magazines. They position themselves as a proxy consumer based on the personal investment in their careers, but also as a specific strategy for selling and placing work for publication.

This strategic approach to publishing is something that other writers acknowledge (n=3) and this demonstrates a wider understanding not only of their roles as writers but also the potential economic constraints at play within the magazine industry. This highlights that their creativity is positioned within wider structures yet their acute knowledge of their position works as a tool. In short: they know how to 'play the game' (Laura – *Delicious*) which principally demonstrates their legitimacy as food writers, exemplifying Bourdieu's suggestion about cultural intermediaries needing to have a 'feel for the game' (1990:63).

As a freelance writer, Charlotte sees this personal resource as another vital tool in legitimising her status as a writer, the personal economic imperatives as to why this is

important for freelance writers has been expressed throughout the chapter. For Moor (2007), the 'proxy consumer' is an especially valuable resource for freelance workers, as it bridges a gap in access to more formal resources that are accessible by those working directly for companies. Whilst for employed staff it is about the 'pleasure of work' and legitimising their positions within company structures (p.61).

By drawing on their own lifestyles the writers position themselves as both 'the perfect audience and transmitters' (Featherstone 1991:91). As such, the fact that they had a keen interest in food or magazines (or both) from the point of view as a consumer before they held positions within the industry, gives them the perceived ideal position to know what an audience wants, and identify themselves within this group.

Most of the writers use these instincts to construct deeper understandings about their readers. In this sense, we can see how the ideal reader is a constructed concept; and that the reliance of the market research data for this is not paramount. Childress (2012) argues that looking at market research data does not always provide accurate pictures, and that the instincts of editors are relied upon to gain accurate and useful information on the audiences. This idea is prevalent amongst the food writers.

Overall the writers fall on to a spectrum of identification with their audiences, for example Charlotte at the top level of this spectrum, identifies highly with her audience. Most of the writers fall in to the middle ground, for example Victoria who uses social media as a way of drawing out connections between her own interests and the readers. At the other end of the spectrum are writers such as Laura, who draws heavily on personal thoughts about what the audience should be like, without specifically associating this to a sense of defined audience or herself as she states that she doesn't have a strong interest in cooking. This spectrum and where the writers fall within it, ultimately influences their contribution to the magazines. It also frames the strength of their status as a proxy consumer and therefore their overall understanding of the magazine audience.

Charlotte (both titles) is the only food writer interviewed who makes substantial connections between herself and the readers through a number of lifestyle connections and narratives: 'Well they're a bit like me I suppose so I think I understand them pretty well.' Charlotte, along with three of the other writers all give similar accounts on who the readers are, relying heavily on six key characteristics: working mothers, whose lives

are structured between work and family commitments, who are the main cooks in house, but whose partners share their love of food, a passion for both food culture and cooking, and enjoy reading magazines. In essence: they describe themselves and their lifestyles through discursive and self-reflexive narratives but in relation to their readers. As will be highlighted in the next chapter, in this case, this is a relatively accurate description of the middle class mothers that make up the majority of my reader sample. The references to age, class, or social demographic that was made throughout their 'press-pack spiel' has disappeared, instead this becomes implied through their discussions. Instead, identities around mothering and navigating the boundaries between motherhood and work become key status factors.

In practice, writers drew upon both market research and instinct to construct their conceptualisation of the audience and discuss researching the magazines themselves to expand on their existing knowledge base:

if you go on the mag's Facebook or Twitter you can do a bit of research and work out who the readers are for yourself... and well you often latch on to bits that you like about them like can relate to and focus on them when approaching work well I do anyway (Victoria –*Good Food*)

In doing this, they link their own personal dispositions to that of the readers to inform their professional opinion on who the magazine audience is and what content they would want within the magazine and they filter out the parts they have less of a personal interest in themselves. This highlights the idea that writers do not identify with the readers, but instead identify the readers with themselves (Bourdieu 1984; Featherstone 1991). These writers didn't provide such discursive accounts of the readers initially but relied on their own consumption patterns to discuss and identify with the tastes of the audience.

Thinking outside the food box for a minute, I think that the women reading my stuff are like me, probably shop for clothes in the same places, John Lewis and so on maybe, a nice holiday to France or Italy, that helps to think about them like that, what I would like and what they would like.
(Rachel - *Good Food*)

McRobbie (1998) sees fashion editors as relying on personal style as a method to assert their positions as appropriate taste leaders (p.166); this is mirrored by the food writers in this instance.

Whilst at the other end of the spectrum, Laura's description was very brief about what she thinks the audience is and was the only writer to specifically mention class, and gender, as opposed to wider lifestyle traits. She discusses her contribution to the magazine of travel and restaurant review type columns, and that she hoped readers enjoyed them, and sought to legitimise her position by talking about the *Michelin* starred restaurants she had eaten in. In struggling to give an account of the readers, she instead displayed her expertise in the area through association with legitimate food culture, to validate her position within the magazine with relation to her consumption practice.

Ultimately, the writers are not just discussing how class status is negotiated; they are talking about the role consumption within their lives. Consumption is not, for these writers, confined to their leisure time but is also central to their working lives (Korczynski 2004, 2007). They consume in line with the narratives and values of the magazine messages that they create and in doing so they contribute to the maintenance and reinforcement of these values. Consumption is therefore, an aspect of both personal and professional work that informs one another and contributes to how their position of middle class consumers and professional taste makers is asserted.

As they perform the function Bourdieu (1984) and Featherstone (1991) describe, of selling their own lifestyles they exhibit how they are always acting as exemplars of the values, tastes and lifestyle they promote, they become situated between the moments of production and consumption. It is this position that allows the writers to act as proxy consumers and rely on their own personal opinions to inform editorial decisions.

In much the same way that editors in Gough-Yates' (2003) study use their own sense of identity to demonstrate an innate understanding of the audience in order to reassure advertisers that they have the skills to reach the right target markets (p.118), the writers in this study use this tactic to justify their work to their editors and create an aura of expertise for the readers. Instead of situating themselves as an intermediary between the advertisers and the magazine, the food writers situate themselves between the text and the reader. The writers openly express a blurring between their personal tastes and values and that of the dominant messages of the magazines they work for, whilst moving beyond generic conceptualisations of who the readers might be, to indicating an instinctive feel of who readers are by using their own personal tastes and lifestyle traits

as a resource and qualification to construct a richer sense of relationship between themselves as ideal consumers and the readers they presume to target. This notion of good fit is used by the writers as a form of legitimacy.

5.4 Legitimacy and Taste Making

Throughout this chapter there have been references to the creation and display of legitimacy. This chapter has demonstrated Bourdieu's (1984, 1996) and others' (Smith Maguire 2012) understanding that cultural intermediaries have a defining role as taste makers, who construct legitimacy for cultural goods, in this case the food magazines and the cultural messages within them. The food writers' narratives around their work resonate well with regard to constructing legitimacy both for themselves as experts in matters of values and tastes, and for particular food practices.

The writers recognise that a chain of legitimacy needs to be created. Starting with the legitimacy of the magazine title itself within the political economy of the industry, this feeds in to the legitimacy of the writers in the eyes of editors, in terms of commissioning and buying articles. This also requires the writer to have other skills, such as the feel for the cycle of production and who the readers are. These are not formal qualifications but cultural resources which are recognised as necessary to fulfil the job of a food writer. Legitimacy is created through 'dispositions' held by the writers, and the ways that writers situate themselves as cultural intermediaries as demonstrated above (du Gay and Pryke 2004).

The magazine content also needs to be legitimate in the eye of the reader. The writers produce editorial copy that they assume to be relevant to their readers. In this sense, legitimacy is created through tactically employed 'devices' to construct legitimacy within the texts for the readers (du Gay and Pryke 2004). Many of these legitimising roles can be exercised simultaneously, but in order to effectively conduct their roles, legitimacy must be established and embedded within the writer's everyday practices. A number of strategic devices are employed by the writers in this study.

Tradition and authenticity are used to frame new ideas as legitimate. Johnston and Bauman (2007) identify tradition and authenticity as one of the main legitimising frames in their work on gourmet food writing. They recognise authenticity as an important part of food writing in that it allows writers to justify content and guide readers to understand and qualify notions of good taste and good food.

We talk about tradition, authenticity... things the readers understand, especially if it's something new. (Helen – *Delicious*)

Helen's description of how she legitimises content, simultaneously asserts her position as an expert. This process of asserting their own expert position through the articles they write is widely done by the writers, as well as using the magazine title itself to add value to their own legitimacy.

We've earned the trust of readers on the reputation of the magazine as soon as they pick us up. We trade off that a bit. And like, having famous celebrity chefs on the cover and stuff it makes us relevant and they come, like, attached to popularity and their own reputation. (Katie – both titles)

The writers assume the magazine titles they work for have a high enough status that expertise will be presumed by a reader. They are appropriating the cultural capital associated with the magazine title and recognised chefs, to legitimise their position as a food writer, regardless of formal qualification. Lewis (2008) suggests that the popularisation of expertise can mean that formal qualification of the experts is no longer required as the role of lifestyle media experts become common place and accepted unquestioningly by audiences. Muzio et al (2011) suggests that this is part of an occupational strategy and legitimization whereby emphasis is placed on demonstrating competency and not just reliant on formal qualifications.

It's important to know what you're talking about, you don't want to jeopardise your reputation or that of the magazine. It's important that the readers can see you as trust-worthy, occasionally mistakes get made but we try really hard to get everything right, as we don't want to risk that status. (Helen – *Good Food*)

The food writers whilst demonstrating an acceptance of this principle laid out by Muzio et al, also acknowledge that this relationship needs to be managed, maintained and not taken for granted as any move by a food writer too far outside the accepted legitimate remit of the magazine, or errors in editorial or recipes, can damage this concept of trust in legitimacy for the readers, especially as there is little framing of traditional qualified expertise.

The writers expressed a concern about how the contemporary economic climate was impacting on the magazine industry, meaning a lack of security for both employed and freelance staff. Attempts to frame themselves as legitimate are in part aimed at

minimising the risk to their jobs, by asserting or demonstrating their value to the magazine and ultimately the readers. To successfully negotiate these concerns, the food writers employ, specific mechanisms and tactics which they explicitly acknowledge are designed to reconfirm legitimacy, including the positioning of themselves as proxy consumers and demonstrating this throughout the magazine.

I review, I don't know, cake mixers. They're really fashionable at the moment. And I suggest that they buy mixer A over mixer B because it's the one that I would choose. I don't just say choose this one, I tell them why I would choose A, or if I even already own A, what makes it better for me and so why it would be better for them. (Victoria – *Good Food*)

It is in this way that the writers situate their own consumption practices a valuable resource for understanding the needs of the readers. As the food writers are considered experts, their personal recommendation legitimises the good(s) that they promote. In this sense the writer can be seen to:

Construct value, by framing how others... engage with goods, affecting and effecting others' orientation towards those goods as legitimate. (Smith Maguire and Matthews 2012:552)

By recommending goods and services, on the basis that they would use them themselves, they frame goods as legitimate to readers. This demonstrates how the writers act as a filter, in narrowing down the goods on offer in the market to the ones that deserve consideration by the readers, the ones seen as good taste options, and discounting the others.

The food writers' act as effective filtering devices for goods and the content of the magazines. The writers both filter content to ensure its suitability for the magazine, and that it will appeal to the readers, using their personal taste as the filter. It involves individual writers negotiating their own opinions in relation to the genre and wider political economy of the magazines. Moor (2008) suggests that branding consultants acting as cultural intermediaries are called upon 'to provide a filter mechanism for assessing the value and relevance of information' (Moor 2008:422). This means that the branding consultants are expected to possess the correct knowledge and cultural values to determine what is valuable and appropriate to their markets. This is also expressed by the food writers, where they discuss the importance of being able to select appropriate products or ideas to include in their editorial copy.

I get lots of samples sent to me, but most I won't write about, some I don't even open it as I can see I don't want it and well it's just not relevant to me. There's no point me pitching my article about a product I know won't be of interest to the readers... Sometimes that's because it's, I don't know, weird, or sometimes it might just not be good enough quality or not have the right kinda image... But sometimes you get something and you know it's a good fit.
(Emily – *Good Food*)

Emily acknowledges, through her selection of products and ingredients, her personal opinions merge with her understandings of what the magazines' and readers require. This is echoed by several of the writers, they negotiate the restraints that the genre and political economy of the magazine places on them by using their own judgement, drawing on their status as both proxy consumers and experts to screen appropriate content. This is designed to make their work legitimate, drawing on their knowledge to know when a product is worthy of discussion, but also to make their work more saleable to editors and publishers.

Childress (2012) perceives that commissioning editors in the book publishing industry become seen as high-level filters for quality and taste which dictates what is and what is not deemed suitable for publishing, and that these individuals have a power and perceived expertise knowledge above that of the book author to understand the market. There is little consideration given to how and why they have the ability to successfully perform these filtering roles, it is presumed by the authors that they do. The food writers also adhere to this by acknowledging that the editor acts as higher level filter than they do.

Charlotte, and many of the writers, notes the importance of the editor's taste and direction for the magazine suggesting that shaping their own ideas within this, helps to guarantee success as in getting published or being seen as vital member of the editorial team. The writers recognise that an ability to understand, not just the consumers, but also other intermediaries is key to making their work both credible and saleable.

I know some of the editors well so I know what they like, what kind of style they pick and like, well that is important, they're the ones who say yes or no at the end of the day... and they're the ones who know what direction the magazine is taking overall both in that issue and longer term so they are really important to impress...I guess you could say they hold the power!
(Charlotte – both titles)

This shows that the writers are aware of other filters, beyond themselves, in the magazine industry. Somewhat contradictorily, the writers acknowledge this role whilst simultaneously reasserting that they have agency to operate within it, using their own legitimacy as proxy consumers to remind the editor of their valuable inputs. The writers expressed a fear of rejection of submitted articles on the basis that they would not fit with the magazine's style or identity, or that they would be asked to make specific amendments to editorial articles. This concerns the writers as it undermines their expert status or shows it to be inferior to that of the editors. This highlights a tradition of hierarchy within the magazine industry, but moreover an acceptance of the editor's power as a filter. The writers see the role of the editor as an important part of magazine content production, not just in a people management role, but also as an authoritative decision maker that looks across the entire magazine to steer its editorial direction.

The writers stated that they didn't have the authority or power to make such decisions, although they act in similar ways when editing their own individual submissions this is not the same as 'steering the overall picture of the magazine'. For some writers this is something to strive for, for a role where they can filter and edit over a whole magazine, or section, of a publication. Whilst others acknowledged that having the editor act as a final filter is important as they do not always realise how their work may come across to readers. The writers in this sense are placing the responsibility of ensuring that the chain of legitimacy across the magazine is maintained with the editor.

There are examples of where the chain of legitimacy within the magazine breaks down: Natasha (*Delicious*) recalls having to write an article on offal, something which she personally does not eat.

I was asked to write this article on offal, and well, I hate the stuff, never touch it. I just thank god I didn't have to eat it as part of writing about it... I was given a brief outline of what to include, it was basically about it being cheap, nutritious and coming back in to fashion and, well erm (laughs), tasty. Someone else had already got a few recipes together I just had to add the copy... I gave it to the editor and was told to rewrite it they didn't think that I had hidden my hatred for the stuff very well. I think the editor actually said something like 'you failed miserably' but was light hearted about it... I went away to try, and... distance myself from my words (*pauses*) yeh that's tough (Natasha –*Delicious*)

This is an example of where cultural intermediaries inform their professional life through their own personal tastes. Natasha's narrative underlines the overlap between

her own taste and her ability to write about something which she did not like. When these tastes did not align she identified how difficult it was to remove herself from the process and to write the piece in a more neutral manner, indicating the level of personal investment she places in her work as a writer. She expresses both embarrassment that this happened, but also appreciation that the editor did not just ‘dump the piece’ but highlighted ways in which she should adjust her style and filtering technique for pieces where she had less of a personal connection.

The ability to get this chain of legitimacy correct is important to their status as writers, they acknowledge that this is what links their expertise through the magazine to the readers, as such getting it wrong, will destabilise their authority.

5.6 Constructing the Cultural Value of Thrift

This chapter has so far illustrated how the working practices of food writers situate them in the role of cultural intermediaries, and in doing so demonstrate that they have the cultural authority to define tastes and values through legitimising the circuit of their production and consumption. A number of references to thrift have already been made, this section puts these issues into context, and aims to both explore how the food writers understand thrift, and also how they operationalize its use within their work.

Thrift as a cultural value was for the writers rooted in historical context. When initially asked about what thrift meant to them, many described WWII posters and slogans. This nostalgic role of thrift in British past was framed by the current trends for using war time slogans. The ‘dig for victory’ and ‘make do and mend’ slogans now form part of fashion items. Brammel (2011) observed this same trend as a way of contextualising meaning, whilst simultaneously misrepresenting the serious issues that they were created for. For the writers, the contemporary context of the recession makes these messages meaningful again to a new generation due some of the values and principles employed during that time, being seen as relevant again.

Many of the writers themselves felt that they had become more aware of their financial position since the recession started. With many stating that whilst their own financial situation had not changed, the effect of job losses overall made them feel that they should be thriftier. A general level of vulnerability was the driving force behind attitudes to consumption change. Although five said they felt this need to be thriftier, only one explicitly referenced doing anything practical towards this aim, as they

described feeling vulnerable after close friends were made redundant. This would suggest that closer proximity to the realities of the recession make potential impacts more tangible.

A shift from war time thrift to the contemporary recessionary context of thrift was described by eight of the writers as their initial response to the question ‘what does thrift mean to you?’ These links to war time and recession seem to serve as a point of reference and connection to a legitimate and authentic source of cultural and symbolic meaning, in order to give their own definitions validation. This meaning seemed personal, and not reflected in their editorial themes, so whilst the writers all relied on this for personal contextualisation, they don’t make reference to it as part of the wider thrift messages within the magazines.

For all the writers, their own definition directly linked thrift to notions of saving. These messages of saving are bound in concepts of economic and domestic management, enacted through practices, which mirrors the pedagogical content in the magazines. The writers sought to contextualise these definitions of thrift in relation to their own lifestyles, drawing on abstract ideas and material practices, and gave specific consideration to how thrift would have similar meanings for their readers, again drawing on the assumption that they, and their readers, share similar world views and lifestyles (Featherstone 1991). They conclude that the majority of thrift content in the magazines, relates to saving money, time or waste and that this forms both part of their production of these messages in aligning their work with their personal understandings of thrift, but also serves to legitimise this as the messages of thrift from other writers are consistent with their work.

When I write articles with a focus on saving, I guess I am considering thrift. Like way of consuming so that you save something definitely fits with how I understand thrift, like how I think about my food shopping and stuff, I draw on that. Magazines have similar ideas all the way through so I guess that’s how others see it too... the readers must see think like this too, they, like, have the same issues to contend with I guess. (Katie – Both titles)

Katie, and four other writers make specific connections between these consistent understandings of thrift across their own perceptions, the magazines and the readers. Writers position their own understandings of thrift alongside other perceptions of thrift both within the magazines and in people’s lifestyles, as a part of legitimising their own stance. In doing this the writers vocalise their understanding of thrift in a personal sense

to act as their framing for the thrift messages they produce, but also demonstrate that their wider knowledge of this vis-a-vis the social context and for other people, and use this to assume an expert position of understanding thrift and therefore, its use within their work.

The writers acknowledge that thrift is a relative issue and that each individual's circumstance will influence their main motivation for thrift, but that thrift will always be conceptualised through saving.

For me, I think of thrift and I think of saving money I guess although I'm not sure I am very thrifty in that way but I also don't need to be... I guess in the same way or at least same idea though, I am thrifty with my time instead. If you can be thrifty with time? Because that is what I am short on.
(Emily –*Good Food*)

Emily justified her definition of thrift in relation to time; describing how traditionally she thinks of thrift as relating to money, but that is not something she feels the need to save, so instead describes the resource which she is short on, time. Even though the writers expressed that they primarily thought of the concept as being relative to money, a further seven of the writers echoed that their personal focus on thrift centred on time and not money. This was not prompted by questions over the context of thrift but offered as part of a wider response about the meaning of thrift. It is through talking about saving, that the importance of time comes to the fore for this group. The food writers define thrift as saving on a resource that you are short of, be that time or money, but their personal experience of feeling 'like I just never have enough time' reinforces the lack of time as an issue.

The writers discuss this shortage of time in relation to a balance between their professional and personal lives, with several commenting that we live in a 'time starved' world and they are willing to spend money on things which will allow them more time as individuals; they choose to invest money to buy time. Through their justifications of this, they begin a process of calculating the meaning of thrift in terms of the value of their time, as a value to their lives; with several commenting that time is 'precious'. By contrasting their needs in relation to time and money they attempted to legitimatise this idea.

The writers' sense of their domestic duties in relation to their work based duties form part of this calculation. Their value in the work place, combined with the value that they

place on the family life, and the unpaid domestic labour they are involved in, play a role in constructing their perceptions of time as value. Seven of the writers were mothers; this was not widely referenced in relation to any discussions relating to their work based practices until they were discursively describing their readers. Through this they related their personal story of being a mother in relation to the contemporary demands placed upon them. Here the understanding of thrift practices through domestic and family spheres is presumed by the writers to be shared by readers.

Five of the writer's factor guilt as a motivation for practicing thrift. They specifically make the point, that women, and mothers in particular, feel guilty about not providing certain things for their family, for example about negotiating guilt when they aren't the main providers of food for their families, and have to rely on schools to provide the main meal of the day for their children because they don't have time on a weekday to do this at home themselves. The writers are reflecting on what they perceive as moral obligations placed on women to cook. By placing an emphasis on the female domestic role of food provisioner, the idea that women should be doing this is emphasised, and if they are not then there is a need for guilt. The writers, who expressed this view, did so personally, as well as in relation to their perceived readers. The role of sacrifice is key here, for the writers and therefore the readers, in deciding how and what should be done in order to address work life balances. For the writers this is a function of their articles. Articles are designed to help navigate these balance issues and writers state that they draw upon the strategies that they employ in everyday life as source of advice to offer to readers. Here their experiences as consumers are translated into expertise in resource management. No formal justification for why their advice is useful is given at any stage; it is assumed. Assumed expertise though is framed by an understanding by the writers that they possess knowledge that is useful to others, and a presumption that readers will also consider their knowledge relevant.

The writers acknowledged that whilst for them, saving time was the necessity, for others economic restraint took priority. A sense of social awareness fuelled their need to understand this socio-cultural issue which could not be ignored. In discussing this issue many of the writers reflected on their own circumstances and began to see a relationship between various shifts in their lifestyle, and their relationship to thrift and money. Their relationship between thrift and money, and now thrift and time, were seen as an historical trajectory influenced by their social context at any given time. Context that

influenced their relationship to different aspects of thrift included: shifts from being a child to a student to their occupations in adult life; relationships; owning their own home and moving in with partners; and having families. These contexts are seen as rites of passage that cause shifts in the priorities of individuals, but moreover the writers experiences of this act as a resource for expertise in how to navigate through these trajectories for others.

Within both time and money thrift concepts, relativity also occurs. Here there is an understanding that saving is not defined by amounts but about the concept of saving itself. The writers suggest that cheap and quick are not clearly defined neither in their own mind, nor in the magazine, but instead serve as a point of relativity to mark these processes as saving money or time in relation to other processes not identified in this way.

Thrift is not just about saving as the writers first suggest, but bound in wider socio-cultural norms of value and the experience of achieving good value, e.g. saving money through the ‘thrill of a good BOGOFF’ in the supermarket, to ‘buying wine by the case as it really does work out much cheaper’. The writers here are both referencing the relativity of their purchases as good value, and also exhibit that pleasure is experienced through these practices.

Overall, thrift is not as perhaps the writers first imagined, a stable concept, but through their discursive approaches to thrift, show that thrift can be flexible to meet the demands of individuals and their priorities.

The conceptualisations of thrift above are largely taken from the personal perspective of the writers. It is these personal perspectives and understandings of demands on daily life that are drawn upon as a resource to construct ideas around thrift within the magazines. A few examples of this have been highlighted already, e.g. how the writers understand the impact of motherhood on food work, and the thrift practices required to manage this. Another example of this influence may be taken from closer examination of how the writers produce the advice around thrift practices included in their magazine articles.

When writing about thrift, the writers draw on their own experiences and practices to shape the production of thrift concepts within the article. Specifically, the writers

suggest that the tips and advice on thrift practices they write about in the magazine are reflections of their own practices. Five writers specifically state that they would never include a tip in an article that they had not tested and incorporated into their own repertoire of practices. This serves to authenticate the tip and this is often summarised through the phrase ‘tried and tested’ which is also found in the magazines, and is a deliberate move to build trust between the magazine and readers through the reliability of the content. Here expertise in thrift is framed through valid experiences of their own, and is deliberately pointed out to both editors prior to publication (in order to ensure it will be published), and to readers through the magazine. This expands upon their presumed expert status in offering food advice, to include aspects of domestic resource management.

An understanding of what tips are appropriate to be written about required both knowledge and expertise of the magazine itself, reader needs and more generally around food. Writers demonstrate their role as active filters for their knowledge of thrifty practices and will only write about those deemed appropriate. For example, Charlotte (both titles) discusses how she ‘trawls the reduced section in supermarkets’ for food that is reduced as it is nearly out of date and has two further practices that accompany this. The first practice involves freezing these items as per the instructions on the packaging, so that they can safely be used at a later date, this practice she has advocated the use of in magazines previously. The second practice, involves ‘hoping it’ll still be alright in a few days’ time’, this practice she would never write about as the ‘risk is too high, so it’s inappropriate’. Other writers describe similar filtering processes whereby they draw upon their personal and professional expertise to produce useful advice within the magazine, and make certain that all the advice is good advice. This demonstrates how the writers use their own food practices for inspiration for tips, and how they have the right expertise to distinguish good advice, from bad. Additionally, this also suggests that the writers see themselves as expert enough to take risks as they understand what it is they are doing, where as they position that their readers wouldn’t necessarily possess the expertise necessary to make the same decisions around risk.

The writers are less forthcoming in ascertaining themselves as experts of thrift in comparison to how they discuss legitimising processes and expertise in relation to their magazine work more generally as seen in the rest of this chapter. The way that expertise in thrift was reflected on was still done through the transformation of personal

knowledge to expert advice, as with other forms of expertise that the writers discuss and used this to imply their expertise rather than openly discuss it in this way. I propose that this is a consequence of two issues.

Firstly, the writers are used to conceptualising their professional role in relation to the magazine industry, the audience and more generally food and cooking, and have established ways of articulating this to others, in part through frames of expertise. The writers were not informed prior to the interviews that this research was also interested in thrift and could therefore not prepare in advance for making claims specifically about this. Although thrift, in terms of saving time, money and waste was identified as an established theme within the magazines as part of genre conventions and response to the social context, they were also asked to identify how they specifically conceptualised and negotiated with this in their work. The writers prior to these interviews may not have previously considered the way that they draw on their understandings of thrift as a way to inform their construction of thrift related messages within the magazine, like they had for other aspects of their work. Therefore the writers were unable to demonstrate the same level of competences in directly linking their expertise to thrift.

Secondly, the writers are actively engaged with these thrift concepts themselves, and negotiate with issues of guilt, moral expectations, and assessments of needs in relation to their own lifestyles. These negotiation processes are highly personal to the writers, as they reflect on whether they are getting this balance right for themselves. It is not that the writers do not engage in the same processes of relying on their own experiences as a resource to guide their expertise, they do, as seen in the example above. It is their involvement in these negotiations and experience of managing daily work-family-leisure balances and that frame thrift messages within the magazines. However, through their own negotiations with guilt around these issues, there is a level of vulnerability associated to these discussions, in a way that expressing expertise on food practices does not have. The explicit links between thrift and expertise are therefore not made as strongly by the writers themselves, and instead are implicit in their description of practices which replicate the practices they use to frame expertise in other respects.

Chapter 6: Food Magazine Readers

The previous two chapters have highlighted two key areas of the circuit of culture, representation and production, the discussions within these chapters outline the ways that thrift as a cultural value is represented within the two food magazines *Good Food* and *Delicious*, and how the work of the magazine food writers, acting as cultural intermediaries, frame the creation of these values within the magazines. Writers legitimise the notion of thrift amongst other content, and draw on their own dispositions and status as ideal consumers to inform their work in symbolic production.

In order to assess and understand how value is created it is important to see each stage in the process; as such this chapter will focus on the consumption element of the circuit of culture.

Consumption is not just an end point of reception for messages, but is equally involved in the production of meaning through the various ways that products, services and ideas are used by consumers within their everyday lives. Consumers are active in this process of consumption and value formation, engaging in with the products and messages they consume. We cannot presume that the messages created by the cultural intermediaries, such as the food writers, are fully accepted or understood by consumers, and so need to be aware of the role that acts of consumption play in value formation through interpretation and use (du Gay et al 1997:5; Hall 1980). With specific regard to reading magazines, Hermes conceptualises that it is through reading the magazines that the final layer of meaning production takes place. Therefore, assessing what readers think about the texts and how they are used is vital to understanding what magazines and the values within them mean.

This chapter shall first outline the identities of the readers interviewed in this study (n=26), and consider their personal dispositions. I shall then look at their relationship to the magazines in this study, considering how they use these texts within their everyday lives, their reasons for engaging with them and how a relationship of trust is built up between the readers and the texts that they read, in a sense interpreting the legitimacy that the food writers work to incorporate in to the texts. From this, stems a discussion of food practices and understandings around food provisioning. Finally, looking at how thrift is consumed, used and valued by the readers of these magazines and the role of the magazine within that process.

6.1 The Readers: Understanding Identity and Status

In total 26 participants were interviewed, all were regular readers (reading at least six issues of the magazine per year) of one or both of the food magazines used throughout this study, *Good Food* or *Delicious*.

All participants were female, British and aged between 25 and 48 years old. In total, 11 of the participants read *Good Food*, 10 read *Delicious* and five regularly read both magazines¹². The titles read did not seem to impact upon how the readers responded to questions throughout the interviews, the range in responses to the magazines were shared across the titles. Where there are distinctions made between readers' responses these will be highlighted. This reflects the finding from the textual analysis chapter that noted comparatively little difference between the magazines.

The participants can be broadly defined into social demographic class groups based on their (and their partners if appropriate) current occupations, clothes, homes, expressed lifestyle and consumption habits (Hermes 1995:179). Eighteen participants fell broadly into the ABC1 category, with the remaining eight C2D. Although I had set out to recruit a more equal number of ABC1 and C2D readers, this wasn't possible in practice. Coincidentally, this 70% ABC1 reader split, reflects the magazines' demographic circulation information (*Good Food* 2009; *Delicious* 2009) so although the sample is not representative in terms of volume, it is representative of the nature of the audience overall. Again, this study does not set out to compare these class groups but forms part of the identity of the readers and where differences between the class groups are found this will be discussed.

The reader defined their own sense of identity to a lesser extent based on class, and to a greater extent occupation and family status. These are important contextualising features for understanding the readers in this study, their motivations and their practices and the elements of regulation and identity within the circuit of culture.

Traditional concepts of class were not the predominant way that readers defined their identities. Four of the readers (2 middle class and 2 working class) did specifically identify with class affiliations, these four participants not only stated their class, but expressed strong collective alliances with these groups.

¹² Full details in Appendix.

I think of myself as working class, I'm a secretary at a nursery, my husband works in a shop and does odd jobs too you know and my parents were working class. It's part of who I am. (Shivani – *Delicious*)

For Shivani, her background and occupational status define her as working class, and that in turn defines her sense of self. The other three participants who shared Shivani's feelings of strong class alliance did so in similar ways by drawing on their occupation and background as well as descriptions of material practices and consumption choices to reconfirm and display their identity.

The majority of the readers (n=22) made no reference to class or perceptions of class at all, reflecting the absence of overt class representation in the magazines in this study. Instead identity and status is displayed largely in terms of performing tastes and practices along middle class lifestyles. This reflects how class is overtly absent in the magazines but that a presumption of middle class-ness is embedded throughout the content (Winship 1987), and how the food writers make assumptions about the readers as being middle class.

The majority of the readers defined their identity in relation to their occupational identity and their domestic roles and duties, and the relationship between them.

Although the reader's relationships to the magazines are not occupationally driven, as with the food writers, occupation was still a key part in shaping and performing of identity. Chan and Goldthorpe (2007) suggest 'occupation to be one of the most salient positional characteristics to which status attaches in modern societies' (p.514-515) and that they use it as a 'proxy for class position' (p.518). Occupational status was discussed by the readers as an instant form of communication about who they were, instead of reference to class.

However, here we see an observable difference between the ABC1 and C2D categories of readers. At the lower end of the class spectrum, having a job and an income of any sort was the key identity component, not the job role itself. Whereas, at the higher end of the class spectrum they discuss how their job role, its qualities and how job satisfaction feed into their own sense of worth, and becomes part of their identity. In this sense occupation is not just used as a description of their work but as a marker of who they are, this is perhaps best illustrated by Anna's loss of occupation:

My job was such a key part of who I am or should that be who I was? I didn't tell anyone for a while only family, not friends I was scared they would view me differently and stop inviting me to things. Hopefully I get another job soon, something similar, so I won't need to really tell anyone else. I'd rather they didn't know just in case it changes things. (Anna – *Delicious*)

The role of occupation in identity in this sense is not only about a financial income, or personal fulfilment but is part of performance of identity for others. A loss of job therefore meant a perceived loss of part of Anna's identity.

In addition to occupation that was used as a proxy for denoting class, motherhood was the most prominent way that most of the readers in this study articulated their identity. In total sixteen of the participants were mothers, whilst one was pregnant with her first child. This dimension to their identities was framed in a number of ways. Firstly and most obviously, as a proud and joyful role and secondly motherhood was positioned as unpaid domestic work, although that readers didn't express dissatisfaction for being unpaid, they did about the lack of value placed on the role.

I love being a stay at home mum and wife... I'll probably go back to work one day when the youngest one is in high school or something and then they will have more independence too... It does annoy me sometimes that people don't acknowledge that what I am doing is still work though. Ok not typical paid employment but work nonetheless. (Georgia – Both Titles)

As a stay at home mum, Georgia seeks to legitimise her role, both in the sense of what she contributes to her family, what she gets out of it on a personal level but also as a statement in lieu of occupation. Georgia sees her time at 'work in the home' as having value, just as formal employment does, but is concerned that others do not see her work in this way. Her sense of value in this role is justified through savings made in child care costs and 'being there' for her children. She states that this was a lifestyle choice for her, and her family, made realistic by her husband's income and recognises that this is not an option for all mothers.

Motherhood is spoken about by many of the readers as domestic work, both as comparable to and distinct from their occupational work, however none place the same monetary value on their time spent doing this domestic work to the extent that Georgia does. This dynamic between motherhood, and employed work, that Georgia expresses frames motherhood as an occupation but in the domestic setting.

Several of the women draw upon these differences in occupational and domestic work as part of maintaining a sense of balance within their identities and for retaining part of their pre-motherhood identities.

For me I love how challenging my job can be, and when I get the job done, and well, that sense of achievement... yeh [that's where] I get my job satisfactions from. Well, and at home I'm 'Mummy', and covered in carrot puree from my daughter and mud from my football loving son, and that's great and it's hard work too. But I quite like putting on smart clothes and going to work where people take me seriously. I need both, I'm a good mum because I work and I'm good at work because I get to go home to my kids.
(Rosie, Both Titles)

Gove and Geerken (1977) note that mothers who engage in paid employment hold a greater sense of status, power and self-efficiency compared to women in unpaid roles. This may go somewhere towards assessing these last two framings of motherhood in relation to identity. For Rosie her paid work gives her a sense of status in an environment where she is taken 'seriously' and that this makes her a better mother. Whereas Georgia, conceptualises her unpaid work as valuable in order to achieve the same status.

Readers demonstrate that occupation and domestic roles are key sites of displaying and performing identity. It represents a wider shift in society whereby increasing participation in the labour market has produced competing identity roles for women (Woodward 1997b:252). Whilst for some readers such as Rosie, this offers the chance to expand on their own sense of identity; it simultaneously creates a demand on the time available to perform either of these roles. Despite an increase in the amount of time women are involved in formal work; their share in domestic labour is still likely to be higher than their male partners (Beagen et al 2008). Domestic roles have not been seen to shift to a more equal sense of responsibility between genders to account for this, therefore women must negotiate how to successfully balance these conflicting roles, especially through time management (Wattis and James 2013). This conflict is recognised by all the working mothers in this study, to a greater extent than the non-mothers. However, it is acknowledged by several of the non-mothers (n=4) that their perception of this will change when they have children. This suggests the expectations of motherhood based on social conventions normalise the need for women to, as part of motherhood, learn to manage these competing identities so they become competent in

performing multiple roles simultaneously. This contributes to wider understandings about what being a good mother and a good woman means, informed by social norms and their own experiences of either being a mother or being mothered, and reinforces normative notions of gender roles (Woodward 1997b:240). Although not articulated in this way, the women in the study do acknowledge this issue and its impact on their lifestyles and forms part of a wider discussion of gender identities.

None of the readers explicitly reference their gender, i.e. being female, as part of their definition of self-identity. This is because this aspect of identity is embedded in society to the extent that it is seen as unnecessary to comment on specifically, but instead is understood and articulated through subject positions (Gauntlett 2005). In the case of the readers, specifically the role of motherhood and the pressures this creates in relation to other aspects of their lifestyle.

The mothers within this study acknowledge these pressures as being real and problematic; they are also seen as unavoidable. It presents the readers with a number of issues which they must overcome in order to maintain their identities as good mothers or good women more generally. Here, the mothers do not discuss any attempt to eliminate these conflicts from their lives. This is not seen as an option as dictated by how they understand the role of women in contemporary society. Instead, these issues must be managed. The relationship between the readers who were mothers and the magazine is interesting to explore here.

For example, the readers consider that the magazines understand that there is a pressure on readers to cook for their families even when they are involved in full-time employment, meaning that the time for cooking is short. The magazines acknowledge this issue and offer solutions to them. Again, the readers personify the magazines, referring to how the magazine itself understands them and not how the content reflects the issues they face. The readers identify that home cooked meals are positioned in the magazines as the ideal, but also as quick and achievable to create, offering advice on how home cooking can be achieved within time constraints. This is one of the reasons readers give for their engagement with the texts (Cole 2014). However, this serves to reinforce and naturalise the problematic subject position itself and no movement to change the nature of the issue is ever offered, and nor is it expected by the readers (Radway 1994).

6.2 Readers and their Relationship to their Magazines

Within a diverse lifestyle magazine market, with a wide range of food media products available, the reasons why readers choose these magazines give an insight into the purposes of the magazines, and illustrate how consumers act and make decisions within this competitive market (Bell and Hollows 2005; Lewis 2008; Palmer 2008).

Here a number of motivations are uncovered, grouped under two themes, the magazines as part of leisure and lifestyle, and the magazines a pedagogical device. This represents a blurring between leisure and work, which can be seen reflected in the type of content within the magazines, and amplified by the food writers who make their passion for food their work. These two themes identified within this study echo Winship's observation that cooking can be both a site of pleasure, and a site of obligation, and therefore at times has an uncertain status. This is embedded within the magazines, where by food-as-work, and food-as-leisure, are both common themes often in relation to use and entertainment distinctions (1987:55). Whilst this has been the focus of attention of previous studies looking at gender roles around food provisioning and food as leisure, the magazine readers in this study also engage with these two concepts and negotiate between them in own lives (e.g. Warde 1997; Hollows 2003a; Ashley et al 2004:68,130; Bove and Shobal 2006).

More generally, the readers express a bond between them and the magazines, which helps to position magazines as legitimate forms of lifestyle and leisure.

Some people like going to the cinema or whatever, me though, no, I like reading magazines, always have... I guess I have a love affair with magazines.
(Emma – *Good Food*)

Other readers talk about reading magazines through the concept of being a long-term relationship. The way that the readers discuss this consumer to commodity relationship is personified; the magazine titles become individualised personalities with whom the readers interact with as part of their daily lives. They also interact with the texts through social media in this way. The readers that use the social media sites of these magazines (n=5), always refer to talking to the magazine '*Good Food* retweeted me!' and never someone who works for the magazine. The readers are personifying the magazine as an individual identity in its own right, this suggests that the invisibility of the production process combined with the strength of brand name creates an interesting dynamic which sees the readers accepting that the magazine has a voice. A number of previous studies

discuss how magazines are constructed to act as a ‘friend’ to the reader and how this builds trust between reader and text, (e.g. Winship 1987:66-67; Jackson et al 2001:76; Stevenson et al 2003:120). The readers’ comments suggesting this relationship is effectively built by the food magazines.

The brand, or the title of the magazine, also serves as a connection of trust: ‘If I know it’s in the magazine, at least I know it’ll work, not like on the web. *Good Food* hasn’t lied to me yet!’ This also serves to reinforce the value of the magazines to the readers, and legitimise the inclusion of it within their lives. The conscious efforts of the food writers to build trust and legitimacy for readers, is in this sense realised.

By positioning the magazines in this way, the readers make reference to other forms of media consumption, Emma uses the cost of the magazine combined with the level of pleasure she gains from the texts to legitimise her consumption of them, stating that magazines are ‘comparatively cheap really for what I get out of them, not like going to the cinema, that’s expensive’. Through these processes of comparison and justification, the readers confirm magazines as justifiable, useful, affordable treats to themselves (Winship 1987:53).

The readers express that they like the physicality of reading magazines, which in comparison is missing from other forms of media. The writers, as we have seen in the previous chapter, also comment on this, in part because it legitimises their roles and that of their products in the market place. However, for the readers this is part of the experience of magazines and why they engage with them. All of the readers in the study buy a hard paper copy the magazines. In the past several of the readers had tried buying a digital copy but had all reverted back to the paper versions.

I like to buy, you know, actual magazines... they’re glossy and special, not like a screen, that’s not as cosy on a cold day with a cuppa, or on a lazy night with a glass of wine, dunno it just detracted from the whole thing for me I want that paper in my fingers. (Vicki - *Good Food*)

The glossiness of the magazines is a highly appreciated quality, and one of the reasons that readers prefer print magazines to the digital versions. The glossiness of the magazine was a reason that magazines appealed and was also seen as an indicator of quality, here the aesthetic design of the magazine contributes to making it a legitimate format (Winship 1987:52).

Even where online content is free, the readers still engage with the print versions of the magazines, confirming the position taken by the food writers about the importance of their print based publications. Ytre-Arne (2011) suggests websites and digital copies still cannot offer the same experience that a magazine can (p.467). This concept of experience is also important to readers within this study. This is not say that new media technologies are not embraced by readers. Readers interact with social networking sites as describe above, but also use the magazine's website as a resource.

Emma (*Good Food*): Like, when I know I've spotted a recipe in the magazine, and I can't find it now, or it's just not to hand, I know I can find it on the website so I look it up on there.

Interviewer: Would you ever stop buying the magazine and just browse the recipes online, because that's free right?

Emma (*Good Food*): Yeh it's free, but it's not the same. I like the magazine, so, I suppose if sometimes I miss an issue, or whatever I might look more online, but not really, that's not how I use the site.

The magazine websites, for many of the readers in this study (n=18), perform the function of a database which they can access when they cannot remember which magazine something had appeared in. Although there was not a wide spread of ages in this study, all the women in their twenties (n=7) referred to the magazine website in this way, and proportionally more women in their thirties than in those in their forties. Likewise, the women in their forties were more likely to rip out and keep recipes or write them in to personal recipe books than that of the younger participants. This suggests that age is an influential factor in how magazines are used and recipes are managed in relation to new and old technologies. For Hermes (1997) this behaviour of keeping recipes was not about the value of the magazine but about the readers 'fantasiz[ing] about being well-organised, perfect women' and that whilst this created a sense of fictional value, the value around the magazines could only be made if these recipes were eventually used (p.49). However, the readers in this study also placed value on the recipes themselves, regardless of if they were abstractly read or if they were ever cooked. Hermes' concept of fictional use value is useful to consider here. Nearly all the readers in this study acknowledge that few recipes are cooked from the magazines they read; with several readers noting that they had been reading for many years and probably only cooked a handful of recipes. The value that readers in this study place upon recipes is not found through organising them, but in actual appreciation of

recipe content itself. In this sense, recipes are not just about knowing how to cook, but about the experience of reading them.

Sometimes it's nice just to read the recipes I don't need to cook them but it's nice thinking about the flavours. (Harriet – both titles)

This symbolic reading of recipe content is not captured in Hermes' account. Readers make several references to the reading and collecting of recipes, not just to use, but because they enjoy reading them. This process also acts as a reflection of their identity and style, 'you can tell a lot about me from my cobbled together recipe book'.

Baudrillard (1998) provides context to this discussion, as goods do not just have exchange and use values, but rather symbolic ones, through which identity is bound in acts of consumption. Therefore these magazines are multifaceted in their appeal and function, and serve to both inform and reinforce the readers own sense of work-domestic and work-leisure balances as discussed earlier.

The physical act of reading is important as it becomes an act of personal indulgence, where readers choose to invest their time and money in to this activity over others. This is not related to food as a genre, but is about the act of reading itself. Reading magazines for these women is a key part of their lifestyle activities. They are regular and invested readers, as illustrated by their commitment to the titles and the way that they form relationships to the magazines. The element of escapism that this affords readers is an apparent.

It's a bit of me time, just for me, and I don't have to do anything.
(Jane – *Good Food*)

I like that it's a chance to escape the chaos for a while.
(Maggie – *Good Food*)

Foodie stuff and ten minutes peace and quiet is great
(Sarah – *Delicious*)

I love reading, it's like I can shut off from the world.
(Kay- *Good Food*)

I love foodie stuff so it's great I escape into my own
little world for ten minutes.
(Elizabeth – Both Titles)

This is another example of how the magazines allow the readers to address the conflicts presented to them by the demands on their time as highlighted as being problematic and an expected part of a woman's identity in contemporary society. Here the women use the magazines not for advice on how to manage their domestic duties, as exemplified

before, but as an opportunity to escape from them. Radway's (1984) seminal study on reading romance novels, observed that the act reading forms a method of escape from everyday life, making connections between the pressures of motherhood and domestic labour, and the indulgence in personal time (p.86-89). This is reflected in the statements of the readers in this study, where specifically they describe reading as an act of personal indulgence.

This sense of indulgence is framed in association not just to the texts themselves, but to a love of food and food culture more generally, distinguishing this part of reading food magazines as distinct from food work, here food is for leisure. Assertions are also made about the selfish nature of reading in this sense. Women are often seen to make 'sacrifices' around their own needs, to allow for other people's needs to take priority. This is one instance where the readers sacrifice the needs of others, and engage in reading activities to prioritise their own interests (Miller 1998). This however conceptualises reading as selfish, as is acknowledged to a greater extent by the mothers, and to a lesser extent by non-mothers. This reflects that the sense of sacrifice for mothers is greater, and that concepts about what being a good mother or bad mother might mean in regards to acts of selfishness (Woodward 1997b; Miller 1998). The mothers also more readily linked reading to aspects of escapism and self-indulgence than the non-mothers, who viewed their reading as leisure time more generally, and not as escapism. Both groups recognised a tension between personal leisure time, and their other life roles.

To negotiate this issue of selfishness, readers frequently felt the need to justify their magazine reading. Readers move to reinforce the cultural value of these food magazines over what they perceive to be less valuable sub-genres of magazines, 'it's not just all gossipy stuff', legitimising their use and value within their daily lives. Implicit in these suggestions is that reading food magazines, even though 'I am short on time' is acceptable because they provide a deeper function and not just personal gratification. The readers draw upon their other purpose of the magazine as a site of learning about cooking to negate the guilt they feel in expressing the pleasures of selfish reading. Arguably, this works to reinforce the need for guilt as they hide one aspect of their reading behind another because of their understanding that their needs should come behind others as positioned through stereotypical gender positions (Miller 1998).

Whilst they talk about a sense of withdrawal from their surroundings that can be achieved in reading they emphasise that this does not take too much time away from their other responsibilities. The fact that reading can take place within the domestic setting, and can be put down and picked up again, as and when disruption occurs, is another way that the readers negate the guilt of spending time on themselves. Radway noted similar trends as whilst reading, the body of the reader could be in the room whilst the mind was elsewhere (1984:86-87). This was particularly accentuated in the accounts of the readers who had young children where the demands placed on them to be constantly available, meant that magazines allowed them to read and enjoy moments of personal time, whilst also care for their children.

The nature of magazine reading in this way suggests that whilst the readers are keen to acknowledge their escapism through reading and speak about how much pleasure they derive from their magazine consumption. This is always done in reference to their ability to still carry out their other domestic roles. Here the magazines are not just a form of leisure, but an acceptable form, as they do not disrupt notions of duty.

For Radway, this would have been problematic, using food magazines to escape from the domestic duty of child care and food provisioning is not productive, as it reinforces the sense of duty in reality, and nothing is done to change the social situation that positions women's share of domestic labour as greater than men's, or the collective understanding that women's pleasure must be justified to ensure it does not distract them from their domestic roles (1984:84). To an extent this is the case, as the readers enjoy this escapism and whilst acknowledging the conflicts between leisure and duty make no effort to change the situation, only to manage it and ensure that they are seen to be maintaining their domestic duties even if engaging in acts of personal indulgence.

Whilst the leisure values, and uses, associated with the magazine are a dominant theme, readers also situate the texts as pedagogical tools. The readers talk about using the magazines to 'educate' themselves about cooking, food preparation, presentation and food culture more generally. The majority of discussion about learning was linked with a common and reoccurring theme throughout this chapter; navigating the boundaries between competing work and domestic roles, and the demands this places on them as individuals. The pedagogical role of the magazine is not just about learning to cook, or following recipes. Gallegos' (2005) sees 'cookbooks as manuals of taste' (p.99), where

instruction is not the priority, but allowed for learning about the culture of food and what was considered good taste; this role is clearly also echoed by the food magazines. The food magazines act as manuals of good taste, guides to food culture and how to manage resources and everyday life and these functions are recognised and appreciated by the readers. Once again gender roles were vital for readers in contextualising their needs as readers in relation to the magazines.

Shifts in work and domestic roles, often referring to becoming a mother, or to a lesser extent, wife, was given as a key reason for reading food magazines (n=10). The food magazines are specifically used as guides that ‘helped them change from someone who liked food, to a mother or wife who needed to know about preparing good-quality meals’ (Cole 2014:2; see also DeVault 1991; Thompson 1996; Moiso et al 2004). In these cases, food magazines were used to address concerns about how motherhood impacted on food provisioning. For readers this was about acquiring a sense of what was ‘acceptable’ to feed their family brought about by understanding the ‘moral ethic to provide healthy meals for their families’ (Cole 2014:3).

The magazines are organised I guess, like, in terms of everyday meals for the family that are usually quick or cheap to make, and then things to do at the weekend. Each issue is like that and well that helps. You flick to the bits that are relevant. Or like if you’re looking for something to cook. I don’t want to be cooking for hours when I’ve got two hungry kids to feed after work. But that’s not because I don’t love cooking I do but I don’t have time to pretend to be a posh gastro-chef every day of the week.

(Michelle – both titles)

The food magazines acted as manuals not just for good taste but as an authoritative guide on what, and how, to cook for a family. In addition, the mothers were concerned that they would not have enough time, or it would be too expensive to ‘cook properly’ every day. The magazines acted as guides to resource management through the transmission of expert advice to the readers. The women not only trusted the advice, but once again saw the magazines as understanding their concerns through the frame that mothers could be in both working and caring roles (Woodward 1997:263-264).

Learning about incorporating good food into limited time and economic budgets was important to the readers, whether they were mothers or not. All the readers made reference to increasing pressures on time and money resources caused by the context of

contemporary society. The magazines provide informative 'survival skills' to cope with these issues in everyday life, without sacrificing the quality of the food that they were consuming, nor their consumption of the magazines (Winship 1987).

Therefore, the magazines have multiple purposes in the day-to-day lives of the readers. Leisure and educative purposes are not mutually exclusive; the magazines content discusses both in any given issue, and the readers experience both aspects throughout their reading, although often with one emphasis over another depending on their needs at the time. For Winship it was vital that magazines successfully negotiated the boundaries between work and leisure in order to 'provide for these rhythms and routines in women's lives in which...work and leisure merge' (1987:13) and the readers comment frequently on the food magazine's ability to do this.

Regardless of why they read, the readers viewed magazines as a good fit to their lifestyles because the magazines simultaneously allow for pleasure and education which reflect their needs in everyday life. The readers were able to select the content that they require most closely based on their needs at any given time and reject any that is irrelevant. This allows them to choose if, and when, to transform this into practice, or if the value to them was in the reading and pleasure of the text itself (Hall 1980).

Jackson et al (2001) found that the working class respondents were more likely 'to view the magazines as a mirror to their own lifestyle practices, or as resolutely not for them. Conversely, middle class participants...tended to want to debate the magazines as an aspect of contemporary cosmopolitan commercial cultures' (p.155). Whilst none of the reader said that food magazines were 'not for them' due to being active readers who engaged in food lifestyles, the middle class respondents more immediately aligned their lifestyles to that of the magazines, whilst the working class respondents were more likely to debate the nature of food culture, especially some of the aesthetic components of it, and reject this aspect from their own lifestyle. This indicates that the magazines attract a less negotiated response from the target audience (70% ABC1), than those who read the magazines but are not, based on their class status, part of this imagined ideal audience. Reflecting on chapter 5, the food writers position themselves as proxy consumers based on their own understandings of good tastes and good lifestyles, the responses from the majority of the participants in the study would suggest that there is a close match between writer and reader within this concept. It also reflects on their class

backgrounds and preferences for aesthetics (Bourdieu 1984), although not all of the readers aligned themselves strongly with their class group, there was a trend that saw the working class readers as less interested in the aesthetic aspects of foods.

Throughout this discussion, magazines can be seen as meaningful for their readers. Magazines are both sites of consumption, and sites of producing meaning, through their use, interpretation of purposes and in positioning the magazines as friends. The women in this study embrace the magazines into their lifestyles and through this the magazines become valuable resources. Practices and identities are, even if not exercised in reality, valued symbolically in relation to their personal needs.

Other studies, such as Hermes (1995) and Jackson et al (2001) noted the ambivalent reaction their participants had to the magazine titles in their studies. For Hermes, this was problematic, it placed magazines as items of mundane convenience with no cultural value attached to them; something she was not expecting to find. This ambivalence may be a consequence of their research designs.

These previous studies did not use active and engaged readers. It seems somewhat paradoxical to want to uncover the meaningfulness of magazines, as Hermes did, and not speak to those who were most engaged with the process of making potential meaning. The studies focused on titles that were general women's and men's lifestyle magazines not specialist subject titles. The nature of specialist titles, including food magazines, means that their readers are not exposed to content that is totally irrelevant to their interests. This may account for my findings of less ambivalent relationship between readers and texts. Also, Hermes' approach to mundane magazine reading as value-less is questionable, as Bell and Hollows (2005) suggest, just because something is ordinary, does not make it unworthy of comment. Instead I found that a magazines' ability to fit in to mundane environments and practices, contributes to their popularity, and gives them cultural significance for the readers.

6.2 Relationship between Legitimacy and Trust

The relationship between the readers and the magazine content serves to inform a number of practices around food, and indeed thrift. The formation of legitimacy around the magazines for the readers takes place in several places as has been highlighted above. Although, whilst the writers talk about legitimacy and authority, the readers talk about this as trust.

Trust is formed through the relationship with the magazine; it is built upon the magazine title itself, with the reputation of the brand acting as a source of expertise and authority (Holmes 2007:514). The same way that the food writers claim legitimacy from the title, readers assume they can trust this. The magazines' content, how expertise is framed through the use of recognisable food actors, and the nature of the advice being laid out, is presumed to be credible without any requirement of formal qualification. Trust is also built through the friendship style bond and how the magazine understands the needs of the reader.

These three understandings around how trust is built within in the relationship between reader and text contribute to how readers interpret and make legitimate the messages within the magazines. This is important to consider in terms of situating the readers use of texts in regard to their material practices, and allows us to consider the extent to which the magazine influences how and why readers perform certain practices.

6.4 Food Practices

The material food practices that the readers employ in their everyday lives include habits of food shopping, cooking and eating. These are of course not all directly linked to the reader's magazine consumption, but the readers do recognise a number of influences from their reading of these magazines. These influences are not always about informing the practice itself, but about drawing on the magazine as a way to legitimise their actions.

As discussed earlier, the readers consider that the role of food provisioning within their domestic lives is one of their main roles as a woman and particular as a mother. Whilst three of the participants indicated that they share food duties equally with their male partners, fifteen of the readers state that they have the sole responsibility for food shopping and preparation. Even when the readers acknowledge that their partners do cook and shop, they still assert that they have primary responsibility. This reflects previous studies which suggest that despite the change in working patterns of women, men still do proportionally less food work (Warde 1997; Giard 1998; Hollows 2003a; Ashley et al 2004; Wattis and James 2013). Out of the other eleven readers, eight suggest that the division in labour is shared, but skewed. These readers consider that they fulfil the 'chore' side of food work, whilst their partners contribute to less mundane cooking and shopping tasks: 'he'll go to the nice local butchers, but try and

get him in *Asda* for the weekly shop, I always do that'. This highlights the leisure basis for men's cooking, whilst the women's as still bound by more of a sense of domestic duty (Szabo 2012).

Even where the readers express dissatisfaction on the unequal distribution of food provisioning roles, many also express that they do not want substantial changes to this situation. There are several references to how cooking is, and should be a woman's job but that it is nice when the men help out.

Readers demonstrate their desire to continue food provisioning, not out of pleasure, but as part of maintaining their identity. This is because food work for women forms part of their identity as good mothers, for them personally, but also as a display of care and identity to others (DeVault 1991; Warde 1997; Moiso et al 2004). The readers that discuss cooking with their partners consider this as a leisure activity, even when it is part of creating everyday food, suggesting that the value here is placed on the time for doing something as couple, rather than on the division of duty.

Readers understandings of the subjective identities of women in food magazines reinforces these already socially ingrained concepts, and normalises the divisions of domestic labour within their own lives (Warde 1997; Cairns 2010). Indeed they see the representations in the magazines reflecting a truth about food work; here magazines act as a site for reinforcing traditional stereotypes. Social norms and conventions, external to the magazines, position women's gender roles as bound to a sense of duty of care, and frame how the readers in this study conceptualise the demands on their own lives, and in particular the role of mothering.

The amount of time that readers spent on food work was a site for negotiation. They all like cooking, and yet don't always have the resources to cook in the way that they want to, so food-as-work is distanced from their general love of food. This was particularly true of the women who worked full time, and had children, suggesting that the conflict of work and care, and work and leisure, are bound through similar preconceptions around gender roles in contemporary society (e.g. Warde 1997; Cappellini and Parsons 2013b). This is also reflected by the single women who only have to prepare food for themselves; but this was framed by a lack of personal energy, rather than a sense of duty.

Throughout the interviews the conflicts on personal time are discussed, in addition, the readers have concerns over their personal economies. Both time and money are framed as scarce and valuable resources which play a role in shaping the day-to-day practices of the readers. As the readers negotiate the competing demands on their resources, they exercise a number of strategic devices to help them manage their domestic duties, including food provision, and the ideal aim of providing good, and proper, home cooked food.

6.4 Practices of Thrift

A basic understanding around thrift was common to all the readers, (irrespective of their class background, occupational or family status, or which magazine they read). It centred on the concern over the impact that a scarcity in money would have on the quality of food, and the types of food, that they would be able to buy and cook with, and about having the necessary time in order to cook from scratch. Cooking from scratch was always seen as the most desirable achievement in food provisioning and therefore thrift would be needed to achieve this.

To negotiate these concerns the readers employed a number of thrift practices of saving as a way of maximising their available resources. This collective understanding of thrift as saving is always relative, in both relation to time and money. Motivations for thrift are not consistent, they are tied to the personal circumstances, and end goals for each reader individually. Thrift is not a fixed definition, but is renegotiated both daily and throughout life as new restraints or demands on their resources emerge changing their motivations for thrift.

There are a number of common thrift practices that are shared by the readers. Their understanding of the thrift process doesn't start in the kitchen, but at the point where food is purchased.

Thrifty shopping habits for readers are, on a basic level, anything that saves them money and/or time. The readers all state that they do a weekly shop in a supermarket, as this is the most convenient option. Convenience here is a way of saving time spent on certain practices. However, those readers with available time spread their shopping around 'maybe I pop in to three stores as part of the weekly shop, as I know one is cheaper for this, and one is cheaper for that'. These shopping practices can be focused on saving time, or with the investment of time, potentially saving more money. The

need to save money or time is therefore prioritised by the readers. The readers that refer to the practice of shopping around either do not work in formal employment or have part-time jobs. This would suggest that the money-time priority is linked to the time pressures that the structure of formal working hours places on an individual's time for domestic duty.

All the readers take advantage of special offers as part of their shopping habits. This approach to shopping is flexible to allow them to take advantage of any offers in the supermarkets.

When they launch new products or just want to increase sales they
sometimes put money off coupons in the magazines, like the other day I got
20p off some butter spread. (Jane -*Good Food*)

Jane explains how she looks for coupons and then calculates if they will actually serve the purpose of reducing the cost of her shopping. This involves not being tempted to buy products she wouldn't normally, switching brands as necessary, and making sure that the saving with the coupon is the cheapest option. Each offer is therefore assessed and she understands that taking advantage of every offer in the magazines will not help her to save money, instead selective use and purchasing decisions are taken both through the magazine but also in relation to in-store offers. For Jane, these practices are part of everyday money management. Meanwhile, Angela, used a readers offer for 20% off a designer kitchen. She describes the kitchen purchase as a great bargain and a huge saving and how much she loves the kitchen to justify its purchase. This also links to the idea of hedonistic thrift, whereby the readers indulge in a treat, but feel like they are getting a bargain (Bardhi and Arnould 2005).

To these individuals each of their acts was thrifty, and acted as part of saving money through engagement in particular offers within the magazines. However, the relative monetary values involved in these examples were very different, showing that thrift is always relative to the individual circumstances.

These shopping based thrift practices were generally acquired through readers own experiences of shopping. The readers also identify several techniques used within the magazine texts that they find useful in framing their thrift practices, these thrift practices relate to cooking, rather than shopping as a form of economic and time management.

Sign-Posting in the Magazines

The readers find it helpful that the magazines prominently display where recipes are budget or quick. For the readers this is helpful in understanding that home cooking needn't be expensive or time consuming. Five of the readers defined quick cooking as meaning that a meal can be prepared from scratch in less than thirty minutes, and directly link this to how they think the magazines define quick. These readers make explicit connections to deriving their understanding of quick from the magazines, similar observations can be made about how other readers define thrift concepts as mirroring the understandings highlighted in the textual analysis chapter. This underpins how the expertise of the magazines is expected and embedded within their readers' lifestyles.

The readers use the magazines in this sense as 'survival guides' (Winship 1987) to help them navigate their own needs within the content of the magazines and therefore in relation to their food practices. Signposting is employed in a number of ways in the magazines as discussed in Chapter 4, but for the readers the sectioning of the magazines in to everyday and weekend, are the most useful tools in helping to develop an understanding of thrift practices in the context of food provisioning.

There's like recipe sections. Some are quick. Some are cheap. Some are slow cooking. Some are, well, expensive! And like it's everyday, and weekend. That helps when you're thinking about the type of food to cook as you don't have to think too hard! (Marie – *Good Food*)

All the readers expressed an understanding that the magazines frame advice on how to save money or time in relation to everyday cooking and that cooking at the weekend or for special occasions usually required more time, and cost more. This indicates that all the readers are familiar with the content and understand why the magazines are structured in this way. This sectioning device is seen as a convenient way that the magazines explain to them what are going to be quick and cheap ideas, and what are not. They also conceptualise their own understandings of cooking in this way.

It is hard to distinguish to what extent their own notions of everyday and weekend cooking stem from the magazines, and to what extent this is a consequence of other factors. In all likelihood a combination of factors are at play here. Firstly, that the magazine readers align their understandings and views of cooking to that of the magazine both in practice and as a way of articulating understandings of cooking in

contemporary society. This is evidenced through their rich descriptions of these two distinct sections within the magazines and also how the language that they use in their own descriptions of this division in cooking styles corresponds with that used in the magazines. Secondly, it is a response to the pressures on women's lifestyles and work-domestic conflicts, where the time and energy for cooking is distinct because of the different restrictions on weekdays to that of weekends. This is not only acknowledged through the magazine but experienced in practice for the readers. Thirdly, that both the magazine and the readers operate within wider conventions that designate weekends for leisure based and family activities, thus more time and effort should be taken in food preparation for both purposes of leisure and family care.

The magazines reinforce to readers that in operationalising thrift practices, needs around saving money or saving time must be assessed and prioritised, as they cannot be achieved simultaneously, and therefore sacrifices must be made in order to achieve the saving of time, or money. Whilst the readers discuss making decisions around their need to save money and time as distinct from their magazine reading, their understanding that resource management is both possible and acceptable does stem from the content of the magazines where readers gain a sense of legitimacy in their own practices through the representations of saving within the magazines.

Negotiations for mothers in this area were more complex than for the other readers, as they affirmed their status as good mothers through cooking and resource management (Cappellini and Parsons 2013a). This conflict was often solved through sacrificing personal needs, and investing more time, to provide good food for their family (Miller 1998; Cappellini and Parsons 2013a, 2013b).

Signposting in the magazines directs readers, not just to recipes but to useful hints and tips around saving time or money. The readers (n=18) indicated that these are often the most used aspects of the editorial content.

I read the recipes but it's more the advice I like. I must admit I don't cook much from the recipes specifically but I read all the stuff around them. They tell you what to do with the odds and ends you have left from stuff that's really useful as most of time I wouldn't know that. I look at it and see odds and ends, they see supper!
(Grace – *Good Food*)

Often highlighted in different colours or in boxes and situated next to recipes, these short snippets of advice are often referred to by the readers and is where they remember specific pieces of advice from, as the format of this advice is usually short and easy to remember. Some of this advice is put into practice in daily life, whilst other information gets retained for if it is ever needed. It is also this advice that the readers (n=15) say they share the most with their friends, as Grace expands on: ‘I rarely give anyone a recipe, but I tell everyone all the useful tips. you know about using stuff up’. Here thrift practices that stem from the magazines are disseminated to wider social circles as expert advice. The readers feel assured in sharing this advice because of the legitimate source they acquired it from. This situates recipes are about reading for pleasure in this sense, whilst the advice is seen as more valuable to the readers as it can be applied in many contexts.

This advice is often in relation to wasting less, in order to save, including the use of leftovers in cooking practices.

Leftovers

Leftovers are defined through the idea of reusing food (Cappellini and Parsons 2013a). Food that is left uneaten after the initial cooking require assessment and skill in order to decide if these foodstuffs have become waste or if they are can be transformed in to another. This relies on the cook to understand how to store and re-cook the food stuff in order for this to be done (Evans 2012).

Several of the readers (n=8) stated that they actively incorporated leftovers as part of their everyday practices. In order to do this, they paid attention to how they cooked and stored ingredients so that they knew what and how items could be re-used. Whilst for some these practices were unrelated to their interactions with food magazines, others could specifically demonstrate how the advice offered in magazines impacted on their practices.

Three readers describe that the advice in magazines and current food media was useful as it allowed for leftovers to be ‘transformed in to something exciting unlike some traditional leftover recipes’. This new and ‘exciting’ advice about leftovers served to justify the use of leftovers in creating other meals, both to themselves but also to their families. These readers described explaining to their families how they had created meals out of leftovers with specific reference to the magazines. The readers explained

the advice that they had drawn upon in order to legitimise their practices and position the food as good and encourage their families to eat and enjoy the food. It also negotiated any feelings about guilt in serving leftovers. This draws upon the perceptions of trust and expertise that has been commented on throughout this chapter, these readers use the advice given about leftovers because it comes from the magazine which they trust. In this example, the magazines can be seen to have tangibly added value to the concept of using leftovers for these readers, which in turn influenced material practices.

Six readers suggested that they were worried about the process of using leftovers out of a concern for safety. In this case leftover food was described as sitting in the fridge until they knew that it was no longer safe to use, often because it had gone mouldy. Gregson et al (2007) defines the process of leftovers as ‘moving things along’, however for these readers who do not possess the right knowledge, these foodstuffs get stuck in the ‘conduits for disposal’ so are just left. These readers express regret for this waste of potentially edible food, but justify the waste on the basis of potential risks around not understanding food safety.

Issues around leftovers are loaded with insecurity about safety, prominently displayed by the mothers. A lack of knowledge over what is safe contributes to leftovers becoming waste (Evans 2012). This is compounded by food scares in the media which make the public acutely aware of food safety issues but without educating them on how to handle food safely (Dickinson 2013). The food magazines were acknowledged as playing a role in developing a knowledge base for a better understanding of food safety. Readers identify that the small snippets of information. According to the readers, the advice on how to safely store leftovers is found in these snippets, and the readers pass on this information in the interviews to demonstrate their acquired knowledge.

However, only one of the readers makes any reference to actually using this advice, instead most readers are still reluctant as fears around food safety outweigh the advice given. However the knowledge is still abstractly consumed and remembered in case the need to use it arises. This too was situated against priorities of need. Several readers explain if they were more restricted by budget, they would be more inclined to practice this new advice, but their circumstances meant they didn’t have to at this time. Hermes (1997) observed similar patterns of how advice in magazines did not translate into actual use for readers. This suggests that one of the roles of food magazines isn’t just to promote uptake in practice, but to offer advice that prepares readers for future

eventualities. Leftovers in this case become a point of negotiation between risk and thrift. It is this sense of risk that the majority of the mothers cannot overcome in their leftover practices. Readers with children stated that although they understood the advice, they didn't want to put this into practice, as although they didn't like to waste the food, at the same time were concerned that giving their families leftovers was inappropriate. DeVault advises that feeding the family is not just about providing food, but it 'must be food that will satisfy them' (1991:40). This seems to be central to the negotiations held by many of the mothers in this study, they felt that their waste of food was problematic but because they were unsure that leftovers were acceptable foods, they choose to throw them away. One the readers who expressed always using leftovers said she never told her family if food was leftovers so they 'don't get all fussy'. This suggests that a negative social stigma is attached to leftover foods (Gregson et al 2007). The readers recognise that the magazines try to form a site of resistance against this social stigma by conceptualising leftover practices as good, however, the actual impact of this resistance varies as readers responses to this are contextualised by wider knowledge of food, and their resource requirements.

Convenience

The pressures of maintaining balance between domestic and work duties are recurring themes within the reader interviews. Many of the readers suggest that cooking completely from scratch is their ideal but that this takes more time than using pre-prepared food. Therefore practices of convenience are employed to make this ideal realistic. The readers explain that they find solutions for this problem through the magazine's 'quick' and 'easy' recipes, likewise they look for those snippets of advice about which pre-prepared foods are acceptable to use, and how best to make use of freezing to help them with easy meals for future use, and keeping products fresh so as they don't enter into the waste debate described above. For Shove (2003), the use of a freezer 'helps redistribute time and labour within the household and so alleviates some of the pressure of modern life'. For the readers, this concept of redistributing time is a crucial function of convenience and is used frequently by the readers, to refer to how they save time.

All of the readers frequently refer to practices of convenience, including using pre-prepared products, microwaves and freezers etc., as being a dominant part of their food

provisioning habits. In comparison with the discussion on leftover practices, all the readers exhibit high levels of knowledge around the use of convenience practices. This is arguably a consequence of convenience products being accepted as part of modern day life and as one of the necessary tools of home cooking as part of maintaining the work-domestic balance (Warde 1997; Carrigan et al 2006). Convenience practices are seen as effective and guaranteed ways of saving time.

Readers also reference this in relation to the magazines, highlighting where the themes of convenience are found throughout the magazines and specifically how these are signposted, demonstrating their understanding of the role of convenience within these texts as well as their own life. However, the magazines are not being used by readers to educate themselves about convenience, as seen in discussions of leftovers, because the readers all feel competent in convenience already. Instead, the expertise of the magazines is drawn upon to authenticate patterns in existing food practices and negate the guilt of whether using these products and methods still counts as cooking from scratch. Because the magazines recommend these practices they become acceptable for the readers. Whilst this does not generate practice, it contributes to reader's concepts of thrift as saving time and how these are articulated as legitimate understandings through reference to the magazines. This use of the magazine is no less important, the consumption of symbolic messages that add value and validate readers existing practices was seen as a core benefit of reading these magazines.

Conflicts of Interest

As a dominant theme within this chapter, the discursive accounts given of readers about their lifestyles, and consumption habits are sites of conflict. Here I highlight the specific example of Christmas which helps to demonstrate these conflicts and contradictory notions of thrift.

Christmas is a consumption event in contemporary society not just a religious one (Tynan and McKechnie 2009), indeed Christmas is not described as a religious festival at any stage within the interviews with these readers; instead it is framed as an event in their year, which involves family time, presents and food.

Despite enjoying the Christmas period, it is also described as problematic for the readers of this study, as it involves an increase in domestic labour which contributes to greater demands on the ability of women to manage their time and lifestyles. For

mothers, this conflict is felt even deeper as they must manage their resources in accordance with making Christmas special for their children. Christmas is universally experienced as an expensive time of year for all the readers regardless of economic income, therefore careful economic management is required, which links to a concern about the balance between treats and excess in regard to food and presents. In this context, Christmas needed to be managed (Brewis and Warren 2011). Several of the readers cite the detailed Christmas 'how to guides' that are published each year, are useful to reference for advice about planning as part of managing Christmas,.

Although food was seen as an important part of Christmas for the readers, they described how they sacrificed their own leisure time at Christmas to ensure that everyone else is catered for. Despite a love of cooking expressed by the readers, only three said they enjoyed cooking at Christmas. Despite being a special occasion, which was normally associated to leisure aspects of cooking, cooking at Christmas was seen as a duty not a pleasure.

Thrift practices of convenience are drawn upon at Christmas time by readers so they spend less time performing domestic duties. For the readers who had sole responsibility for cooking at Christmas they apologetically admit to using more pre-prepared foods than they would normally in everyday cooking, demonstrating how shifting contexts and the demands this places on individual resources requires accessing different patterns of thrift practices to meet these needs.

All of the readers felt that Christmas was becoming an increasingly expensive occasion, and that they felt unable to skimp at such as special time of year. Therefore thrifty practices were employed across both food, and present shopping. In this sense the need for both provisioning and hedonic consumption coincides, and tactical shopping and time investment are needed to achieve both these goals (Miller 1998). For some readers this meant spending longer shopping so they would save money, whilst for others the opposite was true. It is also worth noting the relative costs of Christmas vary greatly between individuals. Taking two mothers with two similar aged children as a point of comparison, one says she will spend around £50 on each child whilst the other £250. Both talk about the restraint of 'not going mad' and although the language used to define spending is the same, the value is relative to each individual.

What is also explicit in this is that for these readers, the choice must be about saving time or saving money; there is little reference to being able to do both. This situates time and money as competing resources, and decisions largely made around family and work commitments, dictate which resource they most feel the need to save and which to sacrifice. The goal here though is not to save money or time; this is merely a vehicle in order to meet the goal of producing a good Christmas, which conforms to traditions of food, presents and excess.

In times of excess, increased levels of waste are normalised as acceptable (Tynan and McKechnie 2009). Wasting food at Christmas for all readers was seen as inevitable because of the volumes of food bought, yet only one reader said they were planning on buying less in the future. Additionally, food at this time of year is more likely to get stuck between food and waste, as readers lose track of how long things have been open, or what the dates on the original packaging said, so it remains uneaten, and then thrown away (Gregson et al 2007; Evans 2012). Even those readers, who emphasise the cost of Christmas as being problematic for them, don't set to address this by limiting the products bought in the future. Here it is not just resources competing for attention, but wider socio-cultural norms around what is expected in certain circumstances.

These types of negotiation are not absent from readers everyday mundane practices, it happens daily. Through the one special event readers were more able to articulate the competing and shifting demands and needs for thrift practice that they experienced. This is because distinct practices and change in practice are made more consciously, and so are easier to extract from the mundane decisions that get made daily.

6.5 Understanding, Using and Negotiating with the Cultural Value of Thrift

Through the practices described above, the readers demonstrate that thrift is a device through which to manage food practices, provisioning and mothering work. These have been shown to be contextual to the individual needs of readers. However they also sit within a larger socio-economic context which must be considered.

A number of readers (n=13) expressed that the recession had impacted upon their economic security, although as previously mentioned, only Anna had been directly affected by the recession having been made redundant. Many of the readers felt that it was appropriate to save at the moment and therefore economic restraint and thrift practices were seen as relevant and even fashionable to engage in due to the timing of

this study. For those readers who felt more economically secure, the recession is either unmentioned or disregarded. Within the group of readers who express a concern over the recession, eleven of them also talk about how the magazine has explicitly referenced issues relating to the recession since 2009 to the time of interview (Nov 2011- Feb 2012). Yet within the textual analysis, which covered this time frame, only ten references to the recession were made across both magazine titles, and most of these were framed about the 'credit crunch' or about 'recession busting tips' as such they were not the explicit discussions of recession that the readers were implying. This would suggest that the readers are mapping their own insecurities and debates on to the content of the magazine. The magazines may be discussing saving money but this is done without reference to the recession.

Overall, a concern over limited money and time is how the readers conceptualise thrift. Through their own framing of money and time as limited, the scarcity of these resources makes them valuable, and this is what ultimately shapes the readers descriptions of thrift practices as a management tool. These are used to maximise the capabilities of their resources as most commonly defined by saving, though saving is always a relative concept defined differently for each individual individually, and changes to meet their contexts. The readers see the engagement with these processes as a part of everyday life and mundane practices.

Informed by their competing and conflicting roles, duties and obligations, the readers make strategic decisions in order to achieve the best balance that they can within the restraints of their situations, and in relation to the goals they wish to achieve. This includes providing quality food, and through this care, to their families, but also on making time for their own personal priorities, balancing their leisure time with their work time (both domestic and formal) and justifying their decisions within this. However, these priorities shift constantly, both day-to-day and across their lives as they encounter different situations and contexts which change the demands they face.

There is little overall difference in the way that the readers within this study conceptualise the thrift, nor in the ways that they understand it can be enacted through specific practices. However, the extent to which thrift is a priority to them is influenced by their family status. The mothers in this study were more explicit about the conflicting demands on their time and money, and their concern that this would impact

negatively on their ability to be a good mother. As such, their sense of moral duty to their family heightened their awareness of the actions they were discussing. Their thrift practices therefore were undertaken with a number of considerations about what it meant for their families, but also what it meant for their status as a good mother and often hinged on notions of sacrifice (Miller 1998; Cappellini and Parsons 2013a).

By comparison the non-mothers in the group were not unconcerned with thrift, but nor was it a priority. Saving was described by all the participants as both important and desirable, but for those that were not mothers, concern was often hedonistic in pursuit, as a way of affording themselves luxuries such as new kitchens, or to gain a sense of free time, to spend on leisure pursuits.

Overall it is hard to assess the extent that the magazines influence these decisions, choices and practices around thrift. However, the readers constantly refer to the magazines as a way of checking that their actions are appropriate.

It's good to see that the magazine is recommending like ready-made sauces sometimes. It makes it seem more OK to use them!

(Kay – *Good Food*)

This use exemplifies the magazines as manuals for resource management and for legitimising certain practices as well as good taste (Gallegos 2005). Through this the readers can navigate their decisions based on the content they see. This reinforces the assertions made earlier in the chapter, that magazines are not only useful, but their content is meaningful in contributing to producing new practices and identities for the readers, but also legitimising readers' existing practices and identities.

In terms of making connections between reader's thrift practices and the magazine's content, a number of key examples about how advice is used are given in the previous section of this chapter. The readers note that the magazines' recognition of the conflict between saving time and money accurately reflect their own experiences of this. This means that the magazines are made useful for negotiating the tensions, and alleviating the guilt these tensions can cause. This is important as the readers make it clear that it is precisely because the magazines have such a good grasp of the real world problems faced by readers, that the magazines use in this way is validated. This serves to legitimise the food magazines as sources of expertise in relation to all aspects of the

readers' food lifestyles, but also to reinforce the existence of this conflict and a need to manage it.

The extent to which this translates in to practice is hard to define. In relation to certain thrift practices, such as using leftovers, the readers identify specific impacts that the magazines have had on their practices, and/or how it has contributed to their knowledge of certain subjects. I argue here that an influence on knowledge is also a valuable part of thrift messages within the magazines, as the potential for using this information is available should the reader need it, or if their priorities in needs shift to require a different set of thrift practices than they currently engage with. In this sense, the magazine create not just thrifty consumers, but its expertise works to create more informed consumers, which in itself adds value to the magazines from the perspective of the reader.

Thrift practices are also discussed away from the context of the magazine and just in terms of personal practice. Much of the discussion on Christmas as a resource management event for example did not refer heavily to the magazine as specifically influencing or impacting upon practices. However, many of these readers did discuss Christmas and thrift messages in the magazines separately to their own practices, and there are close parallels in the information they recall about the content in magazines, and their own Christmas thrift practices.

Therefore, thrift practices are simultaneously distinct from the magazines, a result of magazine consumption and in some cases indistinguishable in terms of their origins. In this sense, the readers have problems disentangling practices of both thrift and reading the magazines from their other practices and understandings of the social world, in part because they are so embedded within their lifestyles. They do not demonstrate the same skills that the writers do in articulating their roles in these processes, because their role as a consumer in contemporary society is complex and multifaceted, hence their use of these magazines to attempt to navigate the food part of this consumer world (Warde 1997).

Chapter 7: Discussion Chapter

The preceding three chapters have outlined the empirical analysis of the three data sets of my study in order to address the research questions RQ1.1, RQ1.2, RQ1.3, and contribute to a wider understanding of the circuit of culture as applied to food magazines. Throughout these chapters an analysis was made at each stage that contributes to a deepening understanding of how the production-text-consumer process of food magazines operates, and more specifically about the production, representation, consumption of the cultural value of thrift. This chapter will not attempt to go back over all these finer points in detail¹³, instead it will draw out a number of key points, looking at them in conjunction with one another in order to arrive at a response for **RQ1: How can we define the cultural value of thrift?** In doing this, the chapter shall move on to talk about the circuit of culture approach.

This chapter attempts to situate the findings from the three empirical chapters into a theoretical stance that collectively explains the cultural value of thrift, not as isolated moments, but as a cultural value found within food magazines and in relation to their writers and readers.

In order to assess the cultural value of thrift in relation to the study as a whole, it is necessary to consider a number of components which the data reflects as significant in the understanding of thrift in this context.

7.1 The Notion of Time and Money as Scarce Resources

There is a presumption that contemporary domestic and work lives of women, in context with the current economic climate, make time and money scarce resources. Whilst the women in the study do not use the word scarce, they do contribute agreement to this as an overall stance, through numerous discussions around being ‘short on’ or ‘needing more’ time and money. Specific examples where they describe not having enough time or money to achieve an end goal situate an understanding that these are resources which are scarce, or at least have the potential to become scarce given changing circumstances. The magazines meanwhile offer ways to maximise both time and money through the efficient management of these resources. However, the relativity of scarcity needs more attention, as I note anecdotally in my fieldnotes:

¹³ A recap of the major findings will be offered in Chapter 8.

This morning I interviewed Anna where she spoke about not having gone on holiday this year as she really needs a new oven, as hers hasn't worked since she moved in four months ago (for someone who loves cooking I think it's driving her a bit mad. She can use the grill, and has a microwave but it's not the same – she's saving up as she can't afford to just buy it straight away with all the other moving costs. I've just interviewed Angela and she showed me a picture of her new kitchen, it looked like a kitchen from a TV ad or interior decor mag – It's almost ironic that she told me she was only going on the one cruise this year as they'd bought the kitchen – even though they got 20% off the kitchen they could only have the one holiday. All things are relative! (Fieldnotes: 3rd June 2011.)

There are less extreme examples found in the interview data, including subtle discussions on wishing that they could afford to buy something, suggesting a scarcity in funds to do so, although not overtly discussing it. Whilst others talk of owning top of the range products, but still wishing they had the latest model and being unable to justify upgrading yet. Or in relation to time, 'it was great to have that spare time I spent all afternoon baking but still didn't get to finish icing the cake' as opposed to 'barely enough time to boil the kettle this week let alone cook'. This goes to show how the same notions of saving and perceptions around economic and time management are relative to the situation of the individual at any given time.

The point is that absolute scarcity is not the *raison d'être* of economics; relative scarcity, the paradoxical scarcity of abundance, is...After all, the point is not denying scarcity at all but rather distinguishing relative from absolute scarcity by examining the concepts of needs versus want. (Raiklin and Uyar 1996:55)

Raiklin and Uyar (1996) provide a useful discussion of relative scarcity, something which I would argue is missing from much of the literature which refers to scarcity in passing or as a social condition based on the contemporary context. This is not to say that scarcity does not matter as it is not fixed by one definition, instead the opposite is necessary to consider, relativity always matters, at all levels. A distinction between the levels of scarcity needs to be discussed. In this sense both time and money can be conceptualised as relative scarce resources. By positioning these resources as scarce, individuals calculate the value of them, both to their lifestyle as a whole, and in relation to individual actions and outcomes. Scarce resources are not fixed, peoples positioning to them vary over life-course and day-to-day. This is described through the participants' discursive reflections on thrift within their everyday life, both in relation to their current

practices but also in reflections on changes in practice in relation to specific events, such as motherhood.

Within the interview data for both readers and writers this becomes a way of talking about the value of how they invest their personal resources of time and money within food provisioning: ‘I invested a lot of time in that roast but the kids appreciate’ and ‘It was the most expensive steak I have ever bought. It was worth the investment though for our special occasion’ compared with ‘I couldn’t afford the time think how long it would take’ and ‘I can’t afford the ingredients think how much the shopping would cost’. Through themes of investment participants were able to talk about the acts of spending time and money as part of an assessment of investment in relation to a perceived value gained. By framing some food and recipes as quick/cheap and every day, and others as special with no reference to time or cost, the magazines imply when to invest and when to save, and define when it is good to save, and what requires investment. This serves to position certain acts of thrift, and indeed indulgence, in both time and money as legitimate.

The notion of investment may seem paradoxical when talking about scarce resources. However it is through calculating which resource to invest in, and when, that investment becomes imperative to practices of thrift.

7.2 Scarce Resources and Thrift

By positioning both time and money as scarce resources, it allows for both time and money to be considered in conjunction with the concept of thrift. Existing literature suggests thrift occurs in relation to economy, and saving time is placed within discussions of convenience; as such they become seen as separate issues (Warde 1997). I argue that money and time are both aspects of thrift, and that convenience is a mechanism of practicing or enabling this notion of thrift.

Through money and time being constructed as scarce resources both these resources can be conceptualised as part of the thrift debate. This allows individuals to calculate the value of both time and money into their thrift practices. This is demonstrated in a number of ways across the data, as we have already seen in previous chapters. To summarise: the use of the thrift terms and phrasing applied to both time and money, serves to contextualise both resources with the term thrift through diminishing differences in their application and description, thus legitimising them both under the

concept of thrift. An emphasis is placed on both time and money as scarce resources, with a need to manage the investment, and saving, of each in everyday life: i.e. when to spend more or less money on something, and when to spend more or less time on something.

Going back to Warde's understanding of convenience, I suggest that for the participants in this study, convenience is a way of enacting thriftiness of time. It is through the products, recipes, advice, technologies and skills of convenience that the participants explain how they save time, indeed placing great importance on convenience in their everyday lives as a time management tool. This definition of convenience does not differ from that put forward by Warde, centred on 'speed', 'ease of preparation' and 'storage' solutions (197:134-137) instead it repositions convenience as a set of thrift practices which allow for the saving of time.

Whilst Warde suggests that care and convenience are linked, through the process of repositioning convenience as a set of thrift practices, thrift becomes part of the care debate. This is seen in particular reference to family life and mothering practices, here thrifty food practices become a point at which the identity of being a good mother is negotiated.

Performing motherhood through food practices has been discussed in a number of previous studies. Being a good mother (and to lesser extent wife) is seen as enacted through cooking and domestic duties (e.g. DeVault 1991; Moiso et al 2004). All the participants that were mothers made reference to this idea seemingly reinforcing the idea that mothering and food practices are simultaneously embedded in gender roles. Within this thrift becomes a contentious point of negotiation. There is a conflict of interest between wanting to provide good nutritious home cooked food every day and not having the time and/or money to do so. The magazines were drawn upon as guides in order to decide how this should be done, and decisions were made through calculations of 'sacrifice' (Miller 1998; Cappellini and Parsons 2013a). Magazines therefore can be used as pedagogical devices for learning new methods of cooking that meant less sacrifices would have to be made when providing good food. Food magazines on the one hand provide the tools to learn how to do this, and simultaneously legitimise these skills for those who already hold them. It was through these practices that statuses of good mothering were negotiated.

7.3 Considering the Relative Motivations for Thrift Practice

At the surface level understandings of that thrift are about saving time and money through thrifty practices. However, this does not fully explain, nor does justice to, individual or collective motivations for this or how they calculate the values which they demonstrate as being scarce and important. Instead it is the context that they place aspects of thrift, and the negotiations around this which make these processes meaningful and are therefore what best serve to define the cultural value of thrift.

Here I found that motivations for thrift were not a constant factor for any of the participants involved. This was not just a matter of distinct understandings and motivations between individuals, but collective and shared multifaceted understandings and expressions of motivation in relation to what thrift meant to each of them at varying times, and how they performed acts of thrift. As such, although shared meanings were expressed across the participants, the need to be thrifty and the method of how thrift was enacted differed not just between participants, but also within each participant's own narrative. Usefully, Sue (44) expresses this concept in one extract from her interview:

Sue: It can be really hard at the end of the month, you know, just before payday. So I'm a bit tight on funds. But it's also the busiest time for me in our business, I have lots of admin to do and I can't always do it during office hours, as it's our business I just bring it home so it's done for the next day. But then that means I don't really have time to cook properly either. So that's when I get thrifty! It's hard working out what to do and still give them a good meal. They're growing boys!

Interviewer: So, what do you do in those situations?

Sue: It depends. Partly on what's in the fridge or freezer that day, sometimes there might be some leftovers I can rustle up. But also on what else has happened that week. It might just be beans on toast if I decide I'm too busy for anything else. But other times I think I should cook properly, so if maybe we've not really seen much of each other. So then I dig around the cupboards for bits and bobs but that does take longer. It would be easier to grab takeout but then you spend a lot, we do it sometimes but I can't afford that every time, so beans will do.

Reflecting on Raiklin and Uyar's (1996) discussion of the relativity of scarcity, Sue expresses a tension between two scarce resources simultaneously, these resources are in competition with one another, and one must be selected as the priority. The decision of which resource is most valuable at that moment in time is calculated through

consideration of the context and the relative scarcity in relation to each factor. Notably, this context centres on family food provision, which was seen as a common point of negotiating with thrift money and time practices (even non-mothers made reference to this ‘when I have kids I suspect that my food priorities will change to make sure they get the good stuff’), suggesting that care is be highly important within women’s lives, and a factor in their thrift based decision-making. Sue’s decisions were not based purely on which resource was most valuable to her personally, although this was a consideration (and was when the beans were served), but becomes part of her ‘sacrifice’ practices (Miller 1998; Cappellini and Parsons 2013a). Moreover the context of her decisions around access to leftovers and store cupboard goods, and the needs of her family were all considered in making a valuation of time and money needed in those instances. In this sense, each of these decisions is bound by similar characteristics, but changes with relative needs and conceptualisations of the necessity that needs addressing each time a problem arises. Thrift practices therefore are selected in relativity to the needs of any moment, and are not fixed.

Whilst the magazines cannot embody these kinds of actions and decisions, they represent the key themes of needing to save money or time and/or prioritise family food provisioning. They reinforces and legitimise certain actions in certain circumstances, which is not ignored by the readers ‘they give you quick things to do during the week, and proper cooking at the weekend’ through which relative necessities are portrayed and normalised, authenticating their attention .

7.4 Enabling Thrift thorough Practice

The conceptualisation of necessities is how appropriate thrift practices are selected from a repertoire of sites, skills and recipes: including the magazine as a source for information and inspiration. Participants’ understanding of their current needs dictate the thrift practices they rely upon.

These practices are also conducted at a relevant level. For example, a need to economise in food shopping, may for one individual mean strategic and targeted shopping practices, buying reduced items and offers, whilst for another it is using a voucher for a few pounds off. Similarly, leftover practices depending on how they are conducted, can be about saving money, or time or both, it depends on the precise

application, which varies according to context and the necessity being addressed (Cappellini and Parsons 2013a).

Leftover practices are often discussed as a way of managing food waste in order to maximise money and time resources, not as part of ethical considerations of waste, but in relation to personal benefits to individuals. For some participants leftovers were categorised by items that were still in their fridge by the end of the week, or making double portions so leftovers are purposefully created in advance, for others it is about saving the cooked but uneaten items from meals for re-use – here there is a material difference. Within these processes some leftover practices require little time, added to make the item ‘re-usable’ whereas others require time to ‘transform’ them into new dishes (Cappellini and Parsons 2013a).

Likewise, a lack of competing necessities may mean thrift practices are not required, or thrift will be part of achieving personal pleasure, or leisure, through a hedonistic consideration (Miller 1998; Bardhi and Arnould 2005): ‘It’s nice when you feel like you don’t need to watch what you spend...but I like getting a bargain, either way it’s a great feeling!’ (Elizabeth – Both titles).

These factors are also taken as part of the relative calculations made about what and how thrift needs to be conducted, not as part of saving per-se, but as a way of addressing their relative proximities to scarce resources in a practical way.

7.5 Moving Away from Saving to Value

These concepts of relativity, negotiation and the relationship between them move towards explaining the value of thrift found within the circuit of culture of food magazines. By shifting away from an explanation of saving, to one based on defining and valuing scarce resources, situating this within personal priorities and use of appropriate thrift practices, allows for thrift to be discussed in a new context. Bourdieu’s notion of ‘distance from necessity’ (1984:53-56) provides a way to define this.

For Bourdieu different degrees of ‘distance from necessity’ are based upon the bourgeoisie as being distanced from economic necessity, whilst the working class are closer to it. The limited resources and capital of the working class make them unable to become distanced from necessity. This is embodied in their lifestyles:

The principle of the most important differences in the order of life-style and, even more, of the 'stylization of life' lies in the variations in objective and subjective distances from the world, with its material constraints and temporal urgencies (1984:376).

It is this relationship of 'material constraints and temporal urgencies' that is relevant to the concept of thrift. Whereby what ultimately defines both different groups and individual's thrift practices is their access to different resources of capital (both time and money) and their shifting relationship to these resources and material needs.

The proximity to the relative and competing needs in life become a defining factor in the calculation of thrift in order re-address the balance between necessities and the performance of everyday life. It is through this that I come to an understanding of the cultural value of thrift, as expressed within the context of this study.

This study contextualises and defines a contemporary notion of thrift based on value and resource management; whereby the value placed on resources and the process of defining resources as valuable, through their relationship to scarcity, is the core definition of thrift. By highlighting how thrift practices are enacted in relation to necessities, it becomes evident that thrift is a highly relative concept which is negotiated through an individual's conceptualisation of value and is calculated in relation to competing demands and shifting proximities to various necessities at any given time.

7.6 Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motives

This conceptualisation of thrift as a cultural value is based on the discursive accounts of what thrift means to these participants, the thrift practices they describe using and motivations for this, and the way that thrift is represented in the magazines. What it cannot do is judge the extent to which the descriptions of thrift translate into material practices.

Mills (1940) suggests that 'situated actions and vocabularies of motive' is a way of individuals making sense of, and describing their practices through socially acceptable understandings around any given activity. It is through discussion that people vocalize their motives to others, but if/how these motivations operate is not explicit in the statement. Therefore their vocabulary may not be a reflection of their actions.

Around thrift and food practices, there are a number of practices which are socially unacceptable such as food waste, although participants may vocalise not wasting food, their actions in practice may not reflect their vocabulary, rather their understanding of social values around food waste.

This does not mean this conceptualisation of thrift as a cultural value does not matter; it is still the reflection of what thrift means to this collective, and although they might not always practice this, when their proximity to necessity is close, these processes are the ones which would translate into material practice.

7.7 The Circuit of Culture as Applied to Food Magazines

At this stage in the discussion I have not made reference to the role of the circuit of culture. A number of observations are made about the legitimising role of the magazines in communicating acceptable thrift practices, and discussed the participant readers and writers together, as a collective group of social actors, through this the overall definition of thrift is conceived. Thrift is not different between the two groups; instead they share common collective thoughts, with varying degrees of proximity to the needs they define.

It is important at this stage to re-consider the circuit of culture and look at why this approach is useful.

Through the analysis of the three data sets, it becomes clear that although an understanding about thrift could be gathered from looking at only one of the data sets, this would not serve to reflect the understanding of thrift overall, nor how the magazine's operate in society.

My research demonstrated why it is important not just to look at the magazine texts as a way of assessing how cultural values might be viewed and used by consumers. Textual analysis alone would not have illustrated the nature of negotiations between shifting priorities of necessity for the consumers and the producers, which is intrinsic to how thrift is viewed. It would only have offered a number of ways that thrift might be enacted or considered.

Consideration of the food writers as producers allowed the investigation into how their working practices are situated at and between moments of production and consumption. Highlighting their role in shaping content and the devices they use to legitimise taste are

not just bound by structural elements within the magazine but on their own perceptions and dispositions as cultural experts. In terms of the circuit this is important, if the producers operate to construct the text through their own understandings as a proxy consumer (Ennis 2005), then a link in moment of production and consumption is established.

Within this study, there was an ability to identify a match between the producers' lifestyles and the lifestyles promoted by the magazines they work for, and also between the writers and the readers. In previous studies how cultural intermediaries act as their own 'perfect consumer' (Featherstone 1991:91), is assumed at the level of production as a resource for legitimising their position (Crewe 2003; Gough-Yates 2003) or as reflected in the texts that they work for (Jackson et al 2001). By interviewing both the writers and regular readers of the magazines, I was able to look between these groups to assess to what extent this perceived self-reflection of the audience matched the identities, not just in demographic terms, but in lifestyle, choices and outlooks. In this case there is a close parallel between the two groups. Their expressions in interests, what and how they liked to shop and cook, their priorities in lifestyle (family versus work etc.), are displayed and exhibited through similar ideals and examples of practices. Although, I cannot assess the extent to which this is true in practice, the fact that they use the same 'vocabularies of motives' suggest that they share an overall outlook through which they frame expressions of themselves (Mills 1940). There are also exceptions, such as for the food writer Laura, who doesn't like the food genre or cooking, but has an interest in eating out and foreign travel, she holds less affiliation to the readers interviewed, however these interests of hers are still shared by many of the readers. This was not something that other studies had been able to fully identify.

For the readers of the magazines, how they conceptualise themes within the magazines provides a useful point of comparison. On the main part the readers discuss recognisable themes that were highlighted within the textual analysis data and were predominantly close to those highlighted by the writers. However, there are instances of the readers identifying themes that there was little evidence of across the rest of the data e.g. the impact of the recession and their perception of discussions of recession within the magazines (as discussed in chapter 6).

The purpose of the food magazines is also useful to consider through the circuit of culture. The magazines recipe content represents a distinction between everyday cooking and weekend or special cooking. Illustrating the food-as-work, food-as-leisure dichotomy expressed in existing studies in relation to food preparation (e.g. Warde 1997; Hollows 2003a; Ashley et al 2004:68,130; Bove and Shobal 2006). This is reflected in the tensions expressed by the food writers about getting content balance right between being a useful pedagogic tool and a source of leisure, and the commercial pressures to ensure commercial access but not at the cost of editorial freedom (Jackson et al 2001; Gough-Yates 2003). The readers also confirm this, they use the magazines either individually for sources of pleasure, or sources of learning, or a combination thereof (Winship 1987; Jackson et al 2001). At each stage in the circuit, this dual use and purposes of the magazines is reinforced, and through this, these purposes are legitimised.

The readers find the way the magazines are divided into sections is useful as it helps to fit within everyday life allowing time for moments of leisure, whilst also making it easy to find practical information (Winship 1987). For Hermes (1995) this suggested that readers did not attribute meaning to the texts as they were just mundane items of convenience. However the readers in this study attribute value through these processes, indeed citing uses of the texts beyond the leisure versus food work ideas. Ten readers discuss in depth how they deliberately used the texts as sources of information on how to transform their food practices and their identities, in specific relation to personal and important transitions such as into motherhood. Although this relies on the pedagogical nature of texts, it moves beyond this for the readers as they attribute their own lifestyles to their relationship to the magazines (Cole 2014). Here meaning is created at the point of use, and not just at the point of production (du Gay et al 1997:85). Hermes, in this case under-estimates the value in the process of 'ordinarization' in lifestyle media texts (Bell and Hollows 2005).

Certain features in the magazines also demonstrate how thrift is enacted through the same item but at different moments within the circuit. For example, tips and pieces of specific advice. Tips are used to represent thrift within the magazines, construct expert advice around thrift for the producers, and as a way to understand and engage in practices thrift for the consumers. The intersections of these relationships is where the

definition of thrift is formed, contributing to the overall definition of thrift as a cultural value.

In terms of the discussion of regulation and identity, this was discussed throughout the three data sets and not as separate concepts, but as embedded within the context of discussion in representation, production and consumption, as is seen in Jackson et al (2001). In this case, regulation can be considered from the political economy of the magazines, the socio-economic background to this study, and the traditional stereotype of women's role in food provisioning. Likewise, the role of women in the domestic setting formed the majority of identity based themes, often in regard to attaining the identity of being a good mother. Class background and/or occupational status also play a role in assessing the proximities to various necessities, however, only in conjunction with family duty first. For those participants that were not mothers their status as women and the jobs that they do are used as a way to position their identities rather than reflection on class background. Class within the magazines is also largely absent reflecting Winship's (1987) observation that identity and background is instead framed by gender, family and work roles. Additionally the brand identity of the magazines and the concept of ideal consumers can also be viewed within elements but as forming part of the wider dialogue on identity within the circuit.

These observations come out of a wider interpretation of the data sets in conjunction with one another; the circuit of culture does not provide in this sense the theoretical framework to do this, instead it positions related data sets in the same context and allows the researcher to locate intersections and disparities as a way of discussing how value is formed. However, its limited theoretical operations don't detract from its methodological uses.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

As laid out in chapter 1, this thesis set out to study the value of thrift through a comprehensive study of selected food magazines in order to address a number of gaps in existing literature. Chapters 2 and 3 contextualised and explained the processes applied to this study, before chapters 4, 5 and 6 outlined the analysis of each empirical data set. The preceding chapter discussed these findings in relation to one another in order to assess the cultural value of thrift, alongside the usefulness of the circuit of culture approach.

This final chapter sets out a brief summary of the findings from this study and its contribution to a number of academic disciplines it sits within and highlights the limitations and directions for future research that I have identified.

8.1 Re-Cap of Findings and Contributions

RQ.1: How can we define the cultural value of thrift?

As stated in Chapter 2, existing research on thrift specifically is somewhat limited, instead there are a number of related studies on saving be that: money, time (often through convenience) and waste (the reduction of). These discussions frequently take place with reference to domestic practices including for example using leftovers (Cappellini and Parsons 2012). This body of work often conceptualises time and money as scarce resources that need saving, however an assumption is made that this is the case and they do not look at how these issues are conceptualised for the individuals or their motivations for enacting certain saving strategies at any given time. Instead the notion of scarcity, and therefore a need to save, is positioned as a statement of social condition.

Despite the conceptualisation of both time and money as scarce, studies that consider thrift, consider only money as specifically thrift related, even though they also discuss time within the same context (e.g. Warde 1997). Time in this sense is linked to convenience rather than thrift. Instead I assert that both time and money can be issues of thrift.

Within my study it was noteworthy that time was seen as a highly valuable commodity for the participants, often framed as more valuable than money due to this being the resource participants had the least access to. Time is discussed through the same use of language and themes as money is across the three data sets, and this forms a way for the

participants of the study to talk about time, not just as a limited resource but as valuable to them.

Beyond this, studies are often focused on one dimension of thrift. Looking at how consumers save money, time, reduce waste, or through looking at specific practices that are conducted, and not what thrift means as an overarching value. I contribute that thrift, whilst practiced and enacted through the saving of money, time or waste (and indeed on a surface level often spoken about in this way), is not what thrift means to the participants in this study. Instead their motivations for saving are an insight in to what the value of thrift is. Thrift therefore is not about a saving per-se, instead thrift is an understanding of value and calculating values in relation to shifting proximities to numerous necessities at any given time. Thus thrift is relative both between individuals, but also for individuals themselves. Thrift is constantly being renegotiated with, both in relation to phases in life, for example transitions into motherhood, but also on a day-to-day basis.

Motherhood plays a key part in the identity of my participants (even the non-mothers), and acts to reinforce gender stereotypes around food provision as highlighted in a number of other studies (e.g. Warde 1997; Giard 1998; Hollows 2003b; Beagan et al 2008; Cairns et al 2010). However, the act of mothering seems to magnify the attentions paid to thrift negotiation and the calculating of proximities to necessities, as such thrift becomes part of the role of motherhood, just in the way that food provisioning has.

RQ1.1: How do food magazines represent messages of thrift?

The magazines act as vehicles for messages of thrift. Thrift is not a hidden concept it is openly promoted within these magazines with prominent themes of thrift relating to saving time, money or waste, continuing the trend observed by Warde (1997). It highlights that these are competing resources as there is the option of saving one or the other and rarely both. These ideas are framed through notions of ease which was a reference to convenience¹⁴ and as a form of enabling legitimacy to reiterate these are achievable within everyday life. Secondly, it highlights how the magazines conceive food in two different ways, mundane and special, reflecting a blurring of work and leisure as reflected in other studies (Winship 1987; Jackson et al 2001). Moreover it

¹⁴ Convenience here is related to time-use achievability and as such is distinct convenience food products Warde (1997:133-134).

places thrift practice predominantly in the domain of the mundane, whilst special food occasions are seen to require more investment (in both time and/or money). Thirdly, gender roles regarding mothering and care through food are emphasised through the language of the texts, visual imagery relating to social actors, and themes of articles. This reinforces ideas of good mothering and care through food giving practices.

RQ1.2: What role do the food writers play in producing the magazine and in turn the cultural value of thrift?

The food writers, conceptualise thrift in a personal sense, most strongly through the scarcity of time, although they were acutely aware of thrift as a saving money process, few of them associated their own primary needs in this way, reflecting the nature of professional-personal conflicts within their lifestyle. They recognised both within their own life, and they perceived the same for their readers, that shifting priorities and multi-roles were demands that alongside personal desires required the management of resources, and the calculating of what took priority, in order to maintain a balanced lifestyle.

The magazine's role (and therefore the writer's role in the production of content) was conceptualised as to provide advice and concepts of practice which readers could follow as and when needed through a vehicle that was also a source of escapist leisure. Through their occupational stances and processes, the writers were conceptualised as cultural intermediaries, previous studies had established this in regard to editors (Jackson et al 2001; Crewe 2003; Gough-Yates 2003). Through this writers assume the role of proxy ideal consumers (Featherstone 1991; Ennis 2005) whereby they envisage the readers of their magazines to be like them. The nature of this circuit of culture approach allowed for this to be tested and explored not just as a theoretical concept or assumption, but in practice. Strong connections were found between the groups of writers and readers in the case study in terms of how they felt about food magazines, but also overall lifestyles, family status, and background. The role of family, and being a mother in particular was used to assert this, where writers use their own experiences and anxieties to form an understanding about what the reader requires from the magazine, thus assuming that their readers are also mothers whose experiences reflect their own.

RQ1.3: How are messages of thrift viewed by readers of food magazines and how do they negotiate with these messages in everyday life?

The readers of these magazines conceive thrift as an important part of their food and general lifestyle practices. Based on individual needs and desires at any given time they prioritise their need to save money and/or time. There are a number of negotiations that take place in understanding these priorities that are often based on traditional subjectifications of domestic gender roles and importantly their own perception of their ability to be a good mother or wife through their food practices. In terms of the purposes of the magazines to the reader, they provide a site for multiple uses: pedagogic use, in terms of learning how and what to cook, thrift practice and food safety issues, and a leisure purpose as experienced through escapism. Through the analysis of this, I reject Hermes' (1995) suggestion that readers place little cultural value or meaning on the texts. The readers in my study, as in hers, highlight the ease that magazines fit into their everyday life and state that they like that they can dip in and out of them, moreover much of the potential use value of food magazines (e.g. recipes) is never actually put into practice, but instead of this being a rejection of cultural value, it is part of what contributes to the cultural value of a source of escapism in a time-limited lifestyle as related to their understanding of thrift.

RQ2: What are the benefits and limitations to the circuit of culture as a theoretical framework?

I suggest that the circuit of culture is a useful methodological tool for studying the cultural value of thrift, because it forces the consideration of the multi-dimensional aspects of production, representation and consumption within a time-limited period, therefore making comparisons between data sets and checks between them more comparable. As such, the circuit provided a way of performing checks on claims made in each of the data sets, such as the idea of food writers as proxy consumers (Ennis 2005). Likewise it asserts that the elements of identity and regulation are consistent, or otherwise, across the data sets. However, theoretically it relies heavily on interpretations and observing trends across data sets. This does not necessarily reflect the influences that one or another elements have over each other, more that there are points of reference and connectivity across them, and therefore across aspects of the producer-text-consumer relationship. However, by applying the same process of analysis, in this instance a thematic analysis, across the data sets allowed for themes to

be assessed for differences and similarities more easily than if varied forms of analysis were applied. I put forward that the circuit of culture is a useful methodological structure, but that it does not provide a theoretical position on its own.

8.2 Non-Academic Implications

A number of organisations including the *Love Food Hate Waste* campaign centre their attention on encouraging thrift related food practices, this study could provide a useful insight in to how female consumers view thrift and their motivations behind practicing it. Findings such as those extracted from this study may be a useful way for these campaigns to gain a better understanding of how the value of thrift is conceptualised in conjunction with food practices by consumers and inform the delivery of their messages.

8.3 Limitations and Future Directions

As with all research, there are a number of methodological decisions that impose limitations on the study. The interpretive approach to my research relies by definition on my own interpretations, especially as I was the only coder. Efforts were made throughout to ensure a consistent approach and coding was conducted systematically to make sure the data was adequately captured and reflected in my analysis.

The research does not claim to be representative of a wide population, but is instead a situated case study of how food magazines, their writers and readers make sense of and consider the value of thrift. Wider generalisations were not my aim; however the study provides a useful basis for future studies in related contexts to consider notions of thrift.

My personal interactions with research participants and the data were not abstracted from the process of research as a whole. My interest in food media was for example both a useful resource and a site of potential issues. My existing knowledge of the food media genre served to help me understand the references to other forms of food media, individuals from the food media world throughout both the magazines and the interviews, and indeed it helped with the interview processes from the beginning. For the writer participants, they appeared to assess my credibility to be conducting this research, not through my academic affiliation, but through my personal commitment and investment to food media. I was careful not to divulge my personal feelings on thrift or their magazines specifically, but if I had not engaged with this discussion at all successful recruitment would have been unlikely. This was also problematic as it meant

participants would often want to talk more generally about food or food culture rather than the topics of the interview, so levels of digression were high. The reader participants seemed to assume my interest in food and magazines, and frequently asserting notions of collective thinking; ‘well you know what they’re like’, rather than explaining their own opinions (e.g. Jackson et al 2001:172).

This study looks only at how selected food magazines, and their specific readers and writers represent, understand and conceptualise the value of thrift. Although my analysis contributes a case study approach to how thrift is valued, by definition it does so by privileging food magazines over other food media and likewise other genres of media overall. Further studies could analyse how other media, such as television food programmes and food blogs, produce and represent the value of thrift, and how their audiences interact with these messages. This would be a timely consideration. A number of television shows in recent years have emerged with specific thrifty themes both in relation to time and money. Many of which were heavily criticised at the time on social network sites, and in the mainstream news, e.g. Channel 4’s *Fifteen Minute Meals* and *Save with Jamie*, and the BBC’s *Great British Budget Menu*, for their interpretations of what counts as thrift or the achievability of what they proposed (Monroe 2013a,2013b; Poulter 2010). Whilst the rise of food blogs could also provide research texts, ‘*A Girl Called Jack*’ would provide an interesting entry point to this, the blog charts Jack’s journey between food practices, mothering and her varying positions in regard to distance and closeness to necessity over the last three years (agirlcalledjack.com). Looking at other food media would be a ways of assessing the ‘principles of recommendations’ in regard to food-thrift messages (Warde 199:47).

This research idea also prioritises food over other lifestyle genres. It therefore would provide a useful point of comparison to move beyond food media and see how other sub-genres of lifestyle (e.g. general women’s and men’s titles, home and garden etc.) circulate messages of thrift. This would again serve to see if thrift values are seen through ‘principle recommendations’ across lifestyle texts or if sub-genres had unique characteristics and the reasons for this.

Secondly, this study speaks to participants about their understandings of thrift messages which they explain through their practices. However, this study is unable to judge to what extent these thrift practices are actually embedded in daily food preparation

practices (Murcott 1995), indeed this is common issue with food media research (Dickinson 2013) and magazine research in general (Hermes 1995:178). Nor can I tell if/how contact with food media shapes their practices as opposed to those who do not engage with food media (i.e. does the food media play a pedagogical role in shaping practice). A more ethnographic approach might enable these practices to be assessed such as Cappellini and Parsons' (2013) study on mothering practices in the kitchen (2013b).

Thirdly, no account is given within this research about how male consumers view and use messages of thrift; this was a methodological decision in order to capture the core readership of the magazines. Future studies that consider how male consumers conceptualise these values, would not only enhance the understanding of the cultural value of thrift, it might serve to provide an interesting comparison between male and female thrift consumption, and if in regard to food – to gender divisions and identities in domestic labour.

Finally, a direction for future research that stems from a number of comments made by participants: the role of family food practices in influencing our future habits and practices.

Throughout the study, a number of participants made reference to their families in regard to thrifty cooking practices, for example: Mothers as a site for acquiring skills, a concern over lost thrift practices that previous generations knew of, and a concern over passing on skills to the next generation. These themes were found across a number of interviews (n=27), and could provide an area of future research to examine the role in the transfer the inter-generational transmission of food and thrift practices and cultural values, to see the influence this form of socialisation has on how and if thrift-cooking practices are conducted.

Appendix

Textual Analysis: Basic Codebook

| No | Variable Name | Instruction/Comment: |
|----|------------------|---|
| 1 | MagTitle | Magazine title |
| 2 | MagIssue | Month/Year |
| 3 | MagPrice | As stated on front cover |
| 4 | Pages | Total number of pages in the magazine, including the front and back covers. |
| 5 | Recipes | Total number of all recipes in the magazine – there is a recipe index in both magazines that can provide this information |
| 6 | CelebRecipes | Total number of recipes associated with a celebrity chef. These chefs are usually famous for being on TV and are credited in the magazines making it easier to identify. |
| 7 | PicMaleCeleb | Number of male celebrity chefs pictured in the magazine – (see 7 for notes on celebrity chefs) Exclude adverts |
| 8 | PicFemaleCeleb | Number of female celebrity chefs pictured in the magazine – (see 7 for notes on celebrity chefs) Exclude adverts |
| 9 | PicMaleWriter | Number of male writers/contributors pictures in the magazine – these images are usually found next to the article/section by-lines. |
| 10 | PicFemaleWriter | Number of female writers/contributors pictures in the magazine – these images are usually found next to the article/section by-lines. |
| 11 | PicOtherMale | Number of other males (not celebrity chef or writer) pictured in the magazine: this may include actors in photos which accompany editorial or sections in the magazine for example. (exclude adverts) |
| 12 | PicOtherFemale | Number of other females (not celebrity chef or writer) pictured in the magazine: this may include actors in photos which accompany editorial or sections in the magazine for example. (exclude adverts) |
| 13 | Adverts | Total number of advertisements in the magazine – including advertorials, advertorials are clearly marked in both magazines (excluding classifieds) |
| 14 | FoodAdverts | Total number of advertisements for food or drink products – including advertorials (excluding classifieds) |
| 15 | UtensilAdverts | Total number of advertisements for cooking utensils (e.g. frying pans) - including advertorials (excluding classifieds) |
| 16 | ApplianceAdverts | Total number of advertisements for household appliances (e.g. Washing machines) - including advertorials (excluding classifieds) |
| 17 | HouseholdAdverts | Total number of advertisements for other household products (e.g. Cleaning products and air fresheners) including advertorials (excluding classifieds) |
| 18 | OtherAdverts | Total number of adverts that do not fall under any of the above categories. |
| 19 | EverydayAdverts | Within ‘OtherAdverts’ how many of these are for everyday products (such as health or make-up products). Including advertorials (excluding classifieds) |
| 20 | ExtraOrdAdverts | Within ‘OtherAdverts’ how many of these are for extra-ordinary products (such as cars or holidays). Including advertorials (excluding classifieds) |

- 1. Magazine title (MagTitle):** 1= *BBC Good Food*
2= *Delicious*
- 2. Magazine issue (MagIssue):** 1= July 2009
2= August 2009
3= September 2009
4= October 2009
5= November 2009
6= December 2009
7= January 2010
8= February 2010
9= March 2010
10= April 2010
11= May 2010
12= June 2010
- 3. Magazine Price (MagPrice):** 1= £3.20
2= £3.30
3= £3.40
- 4. Total number of pages (Pages):** _____
- 5. Total number of recipes (Recipes):** _____
- 6. Total number of celebrity chef recipes (CelebRecipe):** _____
- 7. Total number of photos of male celebrity chefs (PicMaleCeleb):** _____
- 8. Total number of photos of female celebrity chefs (PicFemaleCeleb):** _____
- 9. Total number of male writer bio-pictures (PicMaleWriter):** _____
- 10. Total number of female writer bio-pictures (PicFemaleWriter):** _____
- 11. Total number of other males pictured (PicOtherMale):** _____
- 12. Total number of other females pictured (PicOtherFemale):** _____
- 13. Total number of advertisements (Adverts):** _____
- 14. Total number of food and drink adverts (FoodAdverts):** _____
- 15. Total number of cooking utensil adverts (UtensilAdverts):** _____
- 16. Total number of household appliance adverts (ApplianceAdverts):** _____
- 17. Total number of other household product adverts (HouseholdAdverts):** _____
- 18. Total number of other adverts (OtherAdverts):** _____
- 19. Out of 'other' total number of 'everyday' products (EverydayAdverts):** _____
- 20. Out of 'other' total number of Extra-ordinary products (ExtraOrdAdverts):** _____

Textual Analysis: Front Cover Codebook

| No | Variable Name | Instruction/Comment: |
|----|-----------------|--|
| 1 | MagTitle | Magazine title |
| 2 | MagIssue | Month/Year |
| 3 | Picture | What is the main picture on the front cover? |
| 4 | TestRecipes | Does it state how many tested recipes are in the magazine? – if not stated code as 0 |
| 5 | TagLine | On both magazines there is a slogan or tag-line written above the title of the magazine – what is it? |
| 6 | NoStories | Number of stories or features being promoted on the front cover |
| 7 | CelebChefs | Are any celebrity chefs featured (named or pictured) on the front cover? |
| 8 | SpecialIssue | Does it indicate that it is a special issue? When this is the case it is prominent on the cover usually with the wording of special edition/issue. |
| 9 | Thrift | Any reference to thrift in any sense this can include specific thrift vocabulary or short phrases indicating thrift (for more details refer to detailed guidelines in the thrift codebook) |
| 10 | CostEffective | Indicate if there is any reference to cost effectiveness (cheap or low in price or good value etc.) on the front cover. |
| 11 | TimeEffective | Indicate if there is any reference to time effectiveness (quick, under x minutes etc.) on the front cover. |
| 12 | Ease | Indicate if there is any reference to ease or simplicity on the front cover |
| 13 | SpecialOccasion | Are there any mentions of specific special occasions e.g. Christmas |
| 14 | Season | Any mentions to a specific season or general seasonality |
| 15 | Luxury | Indicate if there are any references to luxury or treats or special etc. |

1. Magazine title (MagTitle): 1= *BBC Good Food*
2= *Delicious*

2. Magazine issue (MagIssue): 1= July 2009
2= August 2009
3= September 2009
4= October 2009
5= November 2009
6= December 2009
7= January 2010
8= February 2010
9= March 2010
10= April 2010
11= May 2010
12= June 2010

- 3. Main picture on the front cover (Picture):** 1= Main Meal Dish
2= Dessert
3= Cake
0= not stated
- 4. Number of tested recipes (TestRecipes):** _____
- 5. What is the tag-line (TagLine):**

- 6. Number of stories promoted on front cover (NoStories):** _____
- 7. Are there any references to celebrity chefs? (CelebChefs):** 1= Yes 2= No
- 8. Any mention of being a special issue? (SpecialIssue):** 1= Yes 2= No
- 9. Any indications of thrift? (Thrift):** 1= Yes 2= No
- 10. Any reference to cost effectiveness? (CostEffective):** 1= Yes 2= No
- 11. Any reference to time effectiveness? (TimeEffective):** 1= Yes 2= No
- 12. Any mention of ease/simplicity? (Ease):** 1= Yes 2= No
- 13. Any mention of special occasions (SpecialOccasion)?**
0= No
1= Christmas
2= Halloween
3= New Years
4= Birthday
5= Pancake Day
6= Mother's Day
7= Father's Day
- 14. Any reference to seasonality (Season)?**
0= No
1= Summer
2= Autumn
3= Winter
4= Spring
5= Seasonal
- 15. Any references to luxury (Luxury)?** 1= Yes 2= No

Textual Analysis: Recipe Codebook

Code every 10th Recipe: Use a random number generator to indicate start page and always start with recipe on top left of that page (or nearest recipe to this point) then code every 10th recipe after this until you reach the start point.

| No | Variable Name | Instruction/Comment: |
|----|---------------|---|
| 1 | MagTitle | Magazine title |
| 2 | MagIssue | Month/Year |
| 3 | PageNo | What page is the recipe on? |
| 4 | Dish | Indicate what sort of dish the recipe is for e.g. main or starter. Some 'lunch box' items are clearly flagged as such in the magazines. If unclear code as 0. Desert refers to something designed to be served after a main meal. Baked goods can refer to bread, cakes etc. |
| 5 | Cost | If the cost of ingredients is stated please give amount. If not stated code as 0 |
| 6 | Time | If the time taken to prepare and cook is stated please state in minutes (add prep to cooking time in minutes). If not stated code as 0 |
| 7 | Serves | How many does the recipe serve? If not stated code as 0 |
| 8 | Skill | Is there an indication of skill level for this recipe? |
| 9 | Ingredients | Total number of ingredients in the recipe (not including suggestions for any additions). |
| 10 | RefThrift | Any reference of thrift in relation to the recipe– for details on thrift refers to thrift codebook. E.g. Any text linked to the recipe that suggests this is a thrifty recipe in terms of money or time? |
| 11 | RefLuxury | Any reference of luxury in relation to the recipe? E.g. Any text linked to the recipe that suggests this is a luxurious recipe (include reference to special treats etc.) |
| 12 | Author | Who is credited with writing or creating the recipe- What is their status? If not stated code 0. Concerned with the 'qualification' not the specific name, as indicated next to the recipe, with the section of recipes or on the page generally. For food producers code both manufacturers and growers/farmer. For food expert include dieticians, nutritionists etc. |
| 13 | Freeze | Any reference in relation to the recipe about freezing/ how to freeze |
| 14 | Batch | Any reference in relation to the recipe about making in a batch |
| 15 | Leftovers | Any reference in relation to the recipe about how to use up leftovers (either to make the recipe or from the recipe) |

1. Magazine title (MagTitle): 1= *BBC Good Food*

2= *Delicious*

2. Magazine issue (MagIssue): 1= July 2009
2= August 2009
3= September 2009
4= October 2009
5= November 2009

6= December 2009

7= January 2010

8= February 2010

9= March 2010

10= April 2010

11= May 2010

12= June 2010

3. Page Number (PageNo): _____

4. Type of dish (Dish):

0= Unclear

1: Starter

2: Main course

3: Dessert

4: Baked goods

5. Snack

6: 'Lunch box'

7. Drink

5. Cost indicated (Cost): _____ 0= not stated If the cost of the dish indicated

6. Time indicated (Time): _____ 0= not stated Is the time the recipe takes to prepare and cook indicated

7. How many does the recipe serve? (Serves): _____

8. Skill level indicated (Skill):

0= Not stated

1= Easy

2= Moderately Easy

3= For the Confident Cook

9. Number of ingredients in the recipe (Ingredients): _____

10. Reference to 'thrift' (RefThrift):

1= Yes

2= No

11. Reference to 'luxury' (RefLuxury):

1= Yes

2=No

12. Recipe Author/acknowledgment (Author):

0= Not stated

1= Celebrity Chef

2= Chef

3= Food Writer

4= Home Economist

5= Food Producer

6= Food Expert

7= Cookery School Teacher

8= Reader

9= Other

10= No 'status'-name given

13. References to freezing (Freeze):

1= Yes

2= No

14. References to making in a batch (Batch):

1= Yes

2= No

15. References to leftovers (Leftovers):

1= Yes

2=No

Textual Analysis: Thrift Codebook

| No | Variable Name | Instruction/Comment: |
|----|---------------|--|
| 1 | MagTitle | Magazine title |
| 2 | MagIssue | Month/Year |
| 3 | PageNo | What page is the word or phrase on |
| 4 | Word | Code for instances of the following words/phrases in the codebook. Some notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words which are essentially the same but just used in different tenses or with different endings: such as thrift – thrifty and thriftiness should be all coded under the umbrella term thrift. • For the term economic it is important to check the context – coding should apply to a term which is under the context of being economic or an economy product and not for home economics or a discussion of the wider economy. • Value should include all phrases associated with value e.g. ‘good value’ • For the term offers check the context = code if it expressed as an offer or a product that is on offer – not about offering food to guests etc. • Free: Should be in relation giveaway not a reference to availability et • Less: Including ‘for less’, and ‘spend-less’, and should be in relation to time and/or money- check context. • Cut: Cut(ting) back; usually linked to saving – check context do not in relation to ‘cutting’ food in terms of prep etc. |
| 5 | Context | What was the word in variable 4 in reference to- indicate the context |

1. Magazine title (MagTitle): 1= *BBC Good Food*
2= *Delicious*

2. Magazine issue (MagIssue): 1= July 2009
2= August 2009
3= September 2009
4= October 2009
5= November 2009
6= December 2009
7= January 2010
8= February 2010
9= March 2010
10= April 2010
11= May 2010
12= June 2010

3. Page Number (PageNo): _____

- 4. Thrift word (Word):**
1. Thrift: thrifty, thriftiness etc.
 2. Frugal: Frugality
 3. Austerity: Austere
 4. Recession
 5. Economy: Economic
 6. Budget: Budgeting
 7. Save: Saving(s), saver
 8. Cheap: Cheaper
 9. Low-Cost: Low price
 10. Cost-effective
 11. Value: Good Value, great value, value for money etc.
 12. Bargain
 13. Offer(s)
 14. Free
 15. Affordable
 16. Half-price
 17. Less: Including 'for less', and spend-less,
 18. Cut: Cut(ting) back;
 19. Special Price
 20. Discount(s)
 21. Moneywise
 22. Quick: Quicker, Speedy, Fast
 23. Easy: Easier, Simple
 24. From(or under) £XX per head/number
 25. Dinner in under xx minutes
 26. Reduce
 0. Other

5. Thrift word in context of (Context):

1. Money
2. Time
3. Waste
4. Space
5. Skill
- 0: Other: _____

Food Writer Interview Guide

Section 1 - Personal Dispositions:

PD.1: How did you get in to food writing? – What's your background? Were food and magazines something you have always been interested in?

PD.2: Who do you think the magazines are aimed at? – How/why do you know this?

PD.3: Do you think you are like your target reader?

PD.4: Did the recession change the target audience or the content? - How and in what ways?

Section - Material Practices:

MP.1: How does your job on a day-to-day basis work? What's your writing process?

MP.2: What is the selection process for articles, recipes, ingredients and products?

MP.3: What do you think the purpose of the magazine is?

MP.4: How are celebrity chefs and other experts/social actors used and represented within the magazines? – Why is that?

Section 3-Thrift:

T.1: What does thrift mean? – To you personally and in the context of the magazines?

T.2: How do you determine what is thrifty? – How to you make thrift interesting and relevant?

T.3: Thrift Vs. Luxury – is there a place for both concepts in the same magazine or even article? – Why? How does this work?

T.4: Does thrift content flow over the year?

T.5: If/how do you think these notions relate to the readers of your magazines?

Reader Interview Guide

Section 1- Personal Dispositions:

PD.1: How long have you been reading these magazines?

PD.2: Why do you read these magazines?

PD.3: Who do you think the magazines are aimed at? Why do you think that?

PD.4: Do you think you fit into that target audience? How/Why?

Section 2 - Material Practices:

MP.1: How do you read this/these magazines? – Participants given examples of the magazine and allowed to flick through them indicated how they select content of interest to them if desired.

MP.2: What is your opinion of the selection of articles, recipes etc. within the magazines?

MP.3: How do you use the magazines? – What is/do they fulfil a purpose for you?

MP.Q4: What do you think of the celebrity chef? – What, if anything does the use of celebrity chefs add to the magazines? - How does your use of their content differ to the rest of the magazine?

Thrift:

T.Q1: What does thrift mean – To you personally and in the context of the magazines?

T.Q2: How do you determine what is thrifty? – How do the magazines determine what is thrifty?

T.Q3: Do you consider thrift to be a lifestyle choice? – E.g. in relation to seasonality? – Personal situation? – Do you think this is reflected in the magazine?

T.Q4: Did the recession influence your consumption of these magazines? – Did your wider consumption patterns change? – Do you think the magazine content changed?

T.Q5: Thrift Vs. Luxury – is there a place for both concepts in the same magazine or even article?

T.Q6: Thinking about your own understandings of thrift do you think you practice thrift at all? – Is this influenced by the magazine?

Food Writer Participant Information Sheet

Project: The Cultural Production and Consumption of Messages in Food Magazines.

Contact Addresses:

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Date: May 2011

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The title of this research is “The cultural production and consumption of messages of food magazines”. The principal investigator of this project is Jennifer Cole, a PhD student at the University of Leicester in the Department Media and Communication.

My research focuses on food magazines as a lens to study the cultural production and consumption of value. Drawing on a circuit of culture approach, my research involves the study of the production-text-consumer relationship through the textual analysis of food magazines *BBC Good Food* and *Delicious*, interviews with food writers, and interviews with consumers. In cooperation with my supervisor Dr Jennifer Smith Maguire, a lecturer at the University of Leicester Department of Media and Communication, I am collecting data from members of editorial staff at food magazines *BBC Good Food* and *Delicious*. This data is being collected to obtain information about the production of the magazine in terms of content, how cultural intermediaries view their consumers and specifically the way in which meanings and messages are created within the magazines. This data is being collected to obtain information about the role of writers of the magazines in producing meaning and how they contextualise their understandings of readers. This will then be used in conjunction with the textual analysis of the magazines and interviews with readers in order to examine production-text-consumer relationship and the ways in which cultural values are produced, represented, consumed and understood.

PROCEDURES AND PROTECTION

The research involves semi-structured interviews with the use of extracts from the magazine as a visual prompt for discussion. The interviews will be recorded and then transcribed.

Your participation in the project is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the project at any point. If you are uncertain or uncomfortable about any aspect of your participation please contact the Principal Investigators listed at the top of this letter to discuss your concerns or request clarification on any aspect of the study.

Any information you supply to use will be treated confidentially in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act: your name and identifying affiliations will be anonymized in

any resulting publications, unless you give us your explicit consent to identify you as a subject.

If you have any questions about the ethical conduct of this research please contact the supervisor, using the contact details at the top of this letter.

Thank you very much for participating,

Jennifer Cole

Reader Participants Information Sheet

Project: The Cultural Production and Consumption of Messages in Food Magazines.

Contact Addresses:

Principle Researcher:

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Date: November 2011

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The title of this research is “The cultural production and consumption of messages of food magazines”. The principal investigator of this project is Jennifer Cole, a PhD student at the University of Leicester in the Department Media and Communication.

My research focuses on food magazines as a lens to study the cultural production and consumption of value. Drawing on a circuit of culture approach, my research involves the study of the production-text-consumer relationship through the textual analysis of food magazines *BBC Good Food* and *Delicious*, interviews with food writers, and interviews with consumers. In cooperation with my supervisor Dr Jennifer Smith Maguire, a lecturer at the University of Leicester Department of Media and Communication, I am collecting data from readers of the food magazines *BBC Good Food* and *Delicious*. This data is being collected to obtain information about the way in which audiences of the magazine consume, use and understand the texts they read. This will then be used in conjunction with the textual analysis of the magazines and interviews with readers in order to examine production-text-consumer relationship and the ways in which cultural values are produced, represented, consumed and understood.

PROCEDURES AND PROTECTION

The research involves semi-structured interviews with the use of extracts from the magazine as a visual prompt for discussion. The interviews will be recorded and then transcribed.

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Any information you supply to use will be treated confidentially in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act: your name and identifying affiliations will be anonymized through the use of pseudonyms in any resulting publications, unless you give us your explicit consent to identify you as a subject.

If you have any questions about the ethical conduct of this research please contact the supervisor, using the contact details at the top of this letter.

Thank you very much for participating,

Jennifer Cole

Participant Consent Statement:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Before we carry out the research, we would like you to read the following statements and confirm your agreement to take part in this study.

Please tick to confirm

I confirm that I have read and understand the Participant Consent form dated..... ●

All the questions that I have about the research have been satisfactorily answered. ●

I give my consent to the recording and transcription of the interviews by the researcher. ●

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving reason. ●

I agree to participate.

Participant's signature: _____

Participant's name (please print): _____

Tick this box if you would like to receive a summary of the results of this study (no personal results) by e-mail

E-mail: _____

Date: _____

List of Reader Participants

| Pseudonym | Age | Mag | Relationship | Children | Demo | Education | Occupation | Partner Occupation |
|------------------|------------|------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Vicki | 28 | GF | Married | No | ABC1 | Uni | PR Consultant | Freelance Camera operator/film editor |
| Emma | 25 | GF | ? | Yes | C2DE | A-Levels | Hair dresser | n/a |
| Zoe | 27 | GF | LT.Relationship | Pregnant | ABC1 | Uni | Department Store Management | Owns event management company |
| Grace | 25 | GF | | No | ABC1 | Uni | Software developer | n/a |
| Angela | 45 | GF | LT.Relationship | Yes | ABC1 | Uni | University Lecturer | Senior manager in manufacturing company |
| Maggie | 40 | GF | Married | Yes | ABC1 | Uni | Legal Secretary | Doctor |
| Rebecca | 33 | GF | ? | Yes | C2DE | College | Classroom assistant | n/a |
| Kay | 46 | GF | Married | Yes | C2DE | No | Works for local council | Estate agents |
| Lisa | 46 | GF | Single | Yes | C2DE | No | Child-minder | n/a |
| Alice | 30 | GF | ? | Yes | C2DE | No | Till operator in a Supermarket | n/a |
| Jane | 47 | GF | Married | Yes | C2DE | No | Call-centre | Cleaner/porter |
| Louise | 26 | Del | LT. Relationship | No | ABC1 | Uni | Accountant | Accountant |
| Shivani | 31 | Del | Married | Yes | C2DE | No | Nursery School Secretary | Shop worker |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|------|------------------|------------|------|----------|---|---|
| Sue | 48 | Del | Married | Yes | ABC1 | No | Owns an electrical fitting business (family business) | Family run business |
| Hazel | 42 | Del | Single | No | C2DE | College | Admin | n/a |
| Marie | 29 | Del | LT.Relationship | No | ABC1 | Uni | High-School teacher | Finance |
| Fiona | 38 | Del | Single | No | ABC1 | No | Police Force | n/a |
| Cheryl | 35 | Del | ? | No | ABC1 | Uni | Nurse | n/a |
| Rosie | 36 | Del | ? | Yes | ABC1 | Uni | Solicitor | n/a |
| Sarah | 39 | Del | LT. Relationship | Yes | ABC1 | Uni | Customer services manager | Senior Headhunter - recruitment business |
| Anna | 28 | Del | ? | No | C2DE | No | Unemployed - previously civil servant | n/a |
| Michelle | 44 | Both | Married | Yes | ABC1 | A-Levels | Finance Officer | Council Executive |
| Georgia | 32 | Both | Married | Yes | ABC1 | Uni | Stay at home Mum | Works in research and development in power industry |
| Harriet | 30 | Both | LT.Relationship | No | ABC1 | Uni | Food Technologist | Fire-fighter |
| Amy | 40 | Both | Single | Yes | C2DE | Uni | Part-time in a care home | n/a |
| Elizabeth | 40 | Both | Married | Yes | ABC1 | Uni | Teacher | Owns own manufacturing business |

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