CHAPTER TWO

The Festivalization of Garlic

Creating and Celebrating Community in Gilroy

Hours before the gates officially open, a long line of slow-moving cars snakes through Gilroy. The Festival goers inside the cars are getting an early start so that they can enjoy the Festival ahead of the day's inevitable heat and Festival crowds. The visitors' gradual approach heightens their anticipation of the food and festive fun that awaits them at the Gilroy Garlic Festival. To accommodate the thousands of visitors who descend on Gilroy each day of the three-day festival, a rancher donates the use of some of his land adjacent to the Festival site. For the weekend these dusty fields become a hive of activity as volunteers direct the swarm of cars, buses, and RVs through the well-marked parking lots. In efforts to control the sun-baked landscape, water trucks circulate the field *cum* parking lots throughout each day, spraying the parched earth as dust kicked up by vehicles fills the air and settles on everyone and everything in the area. Enthusiastic volunteers brave the heat and dust to facilitate visitors' parking; they also provide guests a spirited welcome to town. After a bumpy, bouncy, and brief shuttle bus ride along unpaved paths, guests arrive at the Festival

gates, where another team of vivacious volunteers sells entry tickets and Festival program books.

The positive energy is palpable as people queue to enter the Festival grounds. Smells of garlicky foods season the rapidly warming air and enhance everyone's mounting anticipation. The physical transition from non-festival space through the dusty car park to the actual Festival site combined with intangible details like the ambient festive spirit and the garlicky air creates the "sensory gates" that signify entry into distinctly separate time and space (Seremetakis 1994, 29). Welcome to the Gilroy Garlic Festival.

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It took a visionary outsider to appreciate the novelty and marketability of what was perceived by many as a communal liability. In 1978, Dr. Rudy Melone was a relative newcomer to Gilroy. As fund-raising chairman of the local Rotary Club, he was charged with devising new ways for the civic-minded group to support community organizations. According to the Festival's official history (Midtgaard), Melone saw economic and social potential in promoting Gilroy as a center—if not *the* center—for garlic production. He learned that Arleux, in northern France, proclaimed itself to be the Garlic Capital of the World and attracted eighty thousand people to its annual garlic festival.[1] Suspecting that Gilroy produced and processed more garlic than Arleux, Melone set out to convince the local power brokers that Gilroy would do well to celebrate rather than try to ignore this vital and often maligned economic resource. He saw promise in commemorating the city's main agricultural product and anticipated fund-raising potential in the festival format.

Dr. Melone and Don Christopher, owner of Christopher Ranch, asked Val Filice, an established local cook, farmer, and garlic lover, to prepare a special garlic-laden lunch for an upcoming Rotary meeting at which they would promote the idea of organizing a garlic festival. Attending this lunch would be local leaders and invited media guests, including food editors and writers. Betsy Balsley, then food editor for the *Los Angeles Times*, was one of the guests who enthusiastically supported the idea of a festival. Initially the idea met with hesitation from the mayor, who admitted to not liking garlic.

and from Christopher himself who wondered if there was enough interest in garlic to support a festival. There was skepticism about the Festival's success outside Gilroy as well: Don Christopher recalls that a county official thought it would attract such a small number of attendees that he did not bother to enforce sanitation standards. Despite reservations and with encouragement from Balsley and others, Melone and Christopher proceeded with organizational planning. They put Filice in charge of what would become the culinary backbone of the Festival, the area called Gourmet Alley, where garlic-laden foods are prepared by local volunteers and sold to hungry attendees.

The inaugural Festival took place August 4–5, 1979. Those dates were selected so that the Garlic Festival would not conflict with previously scheduled Bonanza Days events and because the garlic harvest is complete by August, allowing organizers to conceive of the Festival as a harvest festival. The Festival would be a full sensory experience: because Gilroy Foods' dehydrators would be processing the season's crop in August, they would be generating the distinctive aroma for which Gilroy was already famous. The first Festival was held on farmland donated by a local resident. Visitors walked over broken and dried garlic stalks as they visited booths sponsored by local civic organizations and businesses that offered "everything imaginable related to garlic: fresh garlic (pee-wees to colossal), garlic braids, all forms of dehydrated and processed garlic, books and information on garlic uses and its health aspects, folklore, garlic hats, tee shirts, belt buckles, garlic roses, garlic jewelry, paperweights, plaques, pet garlic and more" (Melone 1979a). The garlic-Gilroy association being promoted through the Festival was reinforced by olfactory as well as visual, physical, and gustatory stimulation.

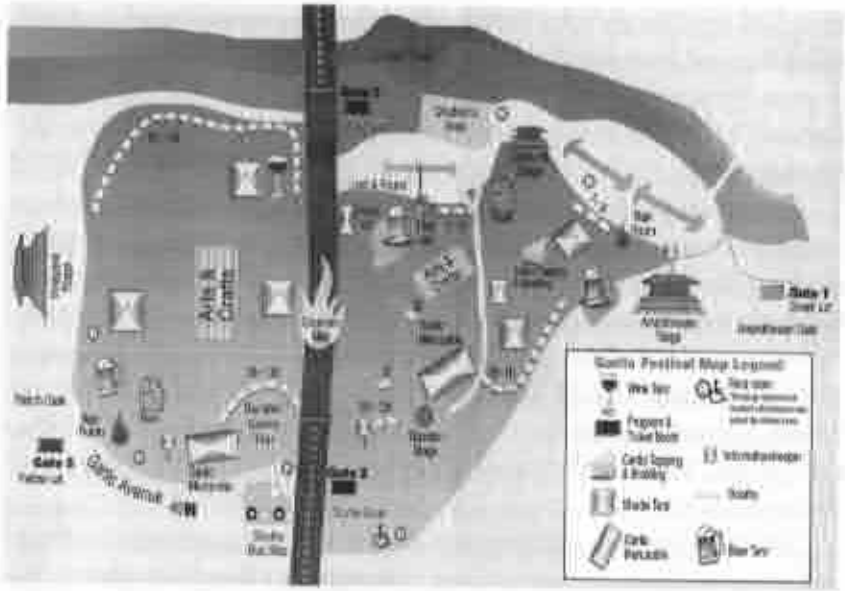
In addition to informational and retail booths, there was entertainment including country-western and rock musicians and minstrel singers, belly dancers and gymnasts, a magician, and roving mimes. Activities that are no longer part of the Festival calendar were tours of local garlic fields, packing plants, and processing plants, all discontinued because of liability concerns. Among the activities that continue to be incorporated into each year's Festival are the recipe contest and the garlic topping contest, considered in a subsequent chapter. But, as Melone noted, "the real drawing card—the unique quality of the Festival—is the GARLICKY FOOD" (Melone 1979a). Most of the garlicky foods made in the open air kitchen of Gourmet Alley then and now are Americanized versions of Italian dishes: *calamari*, *scampi*, pasta with pesto sauce, garlic bread, Italian sausages, and garlic seasoned beef, reflecting the influence of Val Filice's Italian heritage on the Festival menu.

Organizers expected between five thousand and ten thousand people to attend the inaugural Festival; they were nearly overwhelmed by fifteen thousand attendees. Val Filice humorously recalls having to send runners out to buy more food because there were so many more people than anticipated. He ordered men to drive to nearby Monterey for more prawns and squid. The beer chairman found himself in a similar bind. According to Festival history, partway through the first day the beer chairman called the distributor and said, "Heck, forget the kegs. Start sending us the trucks" (Midtgaard, Tognetti 2003).

Mr. Filice attributes the Festival's success to timing, to people's willingness to learn about a then-underappreciated food. He explains that in the late 1970s, "[p]eople were ready to learn about new foods, to learn about garlic. People didn't know how to use garlic." Among those who did use garlic, he suggests, many were ashamed to admit it. Because of the Festival, Mr. Filice laughingly says, the public "finally let [their enjoyment of] garlic out of the closet."

Since 1979 Gilroyans of all ages have participated with ebullience in the Gilroy Garlic Festival. Each July, Christmas Hill Park, an expansive public park southwest of town where the Festival has been held since 1980, is transformed into multipurpose outdoor performance venues, kitchen amphitheater, working kitchens, concessions venues, children's theme park, art fair, and general gathering place where people eat, drink, listen to music, and shop under the glaring watch of the inland California sun. The first Festival site was about one acre; since its move to Christmas Hill Park, the Festival site has expanded to seventeen acres, with an additional approximately ninety acres dedicated to parking.

Over the years the focus of the Festival has changed. By organizers' own admission, Festival activities in its early years leaned toward hosting a rowdy party, including serving copious quantities of alcohol, in the interest of generating positive perceptions of garlic and Gilroy. The party atmosphere led to safety concerns, especially after a 1993 knife fight resulted in thirteen arrests.



Garlic Festival map, from 2003 program booklet. [Image used with permission from the Gilroy Garlic Festival Association, Inc.]

Since then, food, merchandizing, and entertainment have been emphasized more than drinking and partying. To create and sustain a family atmosphere, organizers expanded the children's area, selected entertainment suitable for a family venue, and reduced the centrality of the beer tents in promotional materials and by their physical placement on the Festival site.

As attendance increased, so have the number and diversity of the Festival's consumer offerings. In 1998, organizers formalized merchandizing of Gilroy Garlic Festival ephemera by opening the "Garlic Merchantile," controlled-access tented areas functioning as the on-site stores for official Festival merchandise. The number of independent vendors increased from 141 at the 1981 Festival to 181 at the 2004 Festival; in 1981 there were sixteen bands and entertainment acts booked for the Festival as compared to the more than forty bands, strolling musicians, and entertainers scheduled for 2004. Cook-off contest emcee Narsai David commented during the 2003 Cook-off that the Gilroy Garlic Festival is "more and more like a state fair . . . [with] different stages, different venues or areas" for food sales, music, children, and shopping.

Banner for Gourmet Alley. Visible just below and behind the banner are the booths from which garlic-hungry diners order and receive their food, 2006. [Photograph by author]

A fast-up at Gourmet Alley, 2003. [Photograph by author]

One of the main attractions of the Festival is Gourmet Alley, a covered area that literally bisects the Festival grounds. In the Alley, "pyro chefs" work over huge propane burners and grills cooking garlic-infused foods for guests and workers. The volunteer cooks are noted for producing dramatic "flame-ups" or "flare-ups," tall pillars of flames emanating from large sauté pans, dramatic visual displays loved by visitors and media.

The foremost enticement of Gourmet Alley is gustatory. Massive quantities of garlic-laden food are prepared and consumed each year using literally tons of garlic. In 2002, for example, Festival visitors consumed 32,186 servings of garlic bread, 15,589 pepper steak sandwiches, and 10,079 orders of garlicky mushrooms. In 2003, some 132,000 visitors consumed ten tons of garlicky beef in the form of steak sandwiches, seven tons of the pasta that served as the vehicle for garlicky pesto sauce, four tons of garlic-rich shrimp scampi, and four tons of garlic-laced crisp calamari; the cooks in Gourmet Alley used over two tons of garlic in three days. (For better or worse, such numbers are not available for garlic ice cream, a highly sought-after taste treat at each year's event.) Each year's press release boasts food sales numbers from the previous year's Festival, further reinforcing the importance of food as the event's focus. In addition to highlighting the centrality of the garlic-laden foods prepared at Gourmet Alley by local pyro-chefs, such media attention glorifies the Festival's carnivalesque excess. Such braggadocio exemplifies *aggrandizement*, the strategy employed to create distinction. For Gilroy, the Festival is an enactment of their Garlic Capital of the World assertion; it is the celebration of a garlic-centric aggrandizement campaign.

Festivals, Time, and the Enactment of Identity

Communities throughout the country host food festivals, many focusing on a single food item. Examples abound from all corners of the nation: from Gilroy, California, where visitors to the Gilroy Garlic Festival celebrate the most odorous member of the lily family, to Rockland, Maine, where people gather at the Maine Lobster Festival to commemorate and consume the beloved crustacean.

Why are food festivals so popular among community leaders seeking to distinguish their towns? Perhaps it is the absence of a historical event

to commemorate, or not wanting to highlight a single ethnic group to the exclusion of others. Maybe it is recognizing the economic or nostalgic value of agricultural heritage, or knowing that visitors are drawn to food-themed events. Most likely, it is a combination of these considerations that accounts for the persistent popularity of food festivals among event planners. Somehow, community leaders determine that a food item will stimulate enough interest to make such a festival worthwhile. The sheer ubiquity of festivals that iconize food on community calendars across America warrants critical attention.

Place-specific food festivals, like contemporary community festivals in general, are descended from traditional agricultural fairs. The American agricultural fair is a composite social institution, "part Roman carnival, part medieval market fair, and part English cattle show" (Marling 1990, 77). American agricultural associations, which emerged in great numbers after the 1840s, and the agricultural fairs they spawned, are regarded as "the paramount forms of collective activity among the rural population and the fair the dominant institutionalized expression of that activity" (Neely 1935, 89). The evolution of the agricultural fair over the course of the nineteenth century from a "practical farming community event into a more complex leisure and profit-oriented event" (Borish 1997, 155) reflects the century's general societal, economic, and population shifts. Even as populations relocated increasingly to cities during the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, agricultural fairs retained their appeal: in 1935, Wayne Caldwell Neely observed that fairs had become "an intimate part of the immediate social scheme," so much so that "'[g]oing to the fair' ha[d] become a significant recreational event in the social life of many generations of the human family" (1935, 184–185). Contemporary community festivals persist in being significant recreational events for many families, and their ubiquity on community calendars across the country suggests that civic leaders recognize their appeal.

If the nineteenth-century American agricultural fair was a metaphor for rural society, as Linda Borish (1997) asserts, the modern community festival is a metaphor for contemporary society. At community festivals, as in urban and suburban America, agricultural elements are enclosed, contained, and spectacled (e.g., petting zoo), consumption of food and entertainment are highlighted, and competition is privileged in carnival amusements and

themed contests. Community festivals continue to be a metaphor for and an articulation of the host-locale's collective identity, or, rather, the identity that image makers and festival organizers hope to affirm among residents and have associated with the locale for visitors. Food festivals share these defining characteristics, but with heightened symbolic and programmatic attention to food.

Food and festivals embody both traditional and contemporary cultures; they are simultaneously personal and communal, global and local, dynamic and stable. Food and festivals are ephemeral cultural expressions, but, like tangible cultural products, the effects of food festivals extend beyond their physical presence. However temporary a place-based food festival may be, the effects of a deliberately created communal identity promoted through a festival potentially are enduring. The food-land-place association established through a place-specific food festival may linger in the imaginations of local residents and visitors long after the festival, suggesting the tenacity of food as an identificational symbol.

The processes of promoting and celebrating collective and place identities both inform and are informed by the identities. That is, identities are never static; they are always being shaped and modified, and shaping and modifying. Displays of these dynamic processes constitute enactments of identity.[2] Community festivals as a category rightly are considered performances of collective identities. More specifically, they are enactments of multidimensional, desired collective identities determined by image makers.

Festivals are a "'time out of time,' a special temporal dimension devoted to special activities" (Falassi 1987). That festivals are a time out of time does not diminish their importance as part of everyday life of the host community. On the contrary; they often embody a hyper-awareness of communal life or of an idealized cohesion as residents and visitors come together in the spirit of play, suspend the rigors and conflicts of daily life and, for a short time, participate as a collective of individuals in an experience that reinforces a sense of a shared past and present. Festivals "provide *the* occasion whereby a community may call attention to itself and, perhaps more important in our time, its willingness to display itself openly" (Abrahams 1987, 181; emphasis in original).

Festival denotes a particular framed experience as well as an interpretive framework through which this articulation of expressive culture can be studied.[3] Just as a picture frame delimits background and directs the viewer's focus and perception, the festival frame informs the way attendees experience the festival. The festival frame keys participants' and observers' expectations, making the medium part of the message. A structured expressive form, whether it is framed as ritual, play, or a hybrid genre, is "a deliberate and artificial demarcation" that brackets behavior and informs meaning, thus making the medium part of the message.[4] To participants and observers, *festival* implies that predictable, though variable, activities will take place during a distinct time period, in a demarcated space.

Another constitutive element of the festival frame is that festival events are most often affectively charged with positive energy. The festival frame predicts playful and positive moods, and connotes rules for behavior different from daily non-festival life. Within the festival frame—that is, during the bracketed festival time—there is the potential for affirmation of, challenges to, and inversions of social norms. Until social inversion happens, and often even when it does, the positive affective mood of the festival frame dominates participants' and visitors' expectations, expectations that are informed by prior lived and learned experiences. Lived festival experiences perpetuate expectations that community festivals are appealing, fun, and affirmative events. And these experiences affirm the mediated identity being commemorated through the festivities. Visitors to the Gilroy Garlic Festival not only partake in the festive fun, they literally and ideologically consume the Gilroy-garlic association.

Festival also implies social interaction, social license, and foods different from those that comprise most daily diets. As with other performative genres, festivals "provide an intricate counterpoint to the unconscious practices of everyday life insofar as they are stylistically marked expressions of otherness" that situate habitual activities in an alternate frame; as such they "are characterized by a higher than usual degree of reflexivity" (Kapchan 1995). This sort of reflexivity is inherent in county fair domestic arts competitions: "By locating in a time and space dedicated to a special purpose related to but removed from everyday life and by adopting stylized procedures, judging and exhibition reorder, highlight and comment on the everyday occupational and domestic experiences of fairgoers' lives" (Prosterman 1995, 16). In addition, within the festival frame, undertaking quotidian activities like eating and cooking is temporarily reframed: there is license to abandon

normative food-related behavior, thus allowing for enjoyment of exotic or unhealthy foods like garlic ice cream or funnel cakes, excessive consumption, and spectacularized eating and cooking through contests.

While annual festivals are "a time out of time," as recurring events they also are part of the host locale's community calendar, and thus are part of its routine life. That festivals function in part to affirm communal identities makes festival time part of everyday life. Although it may initially seem contradictory, festivals are both within the realm of the everyday and special, differentiated experiences outside the realm of the everyday. Annual community festivals like Gilroy's exemplify that the constructs *everyday life* and *special events* are not mutually exclusive but are relational, existing only as complements to and in contrast to each other.[3] In fact, one factor that contributes to the success of the festival genre as a strategy for identity affirmation is the juxtaposition of everyday/special that coalesces in this traditional form. Roger Abrahams articulates a similar view when he notes that "there is a continuity and a dialectic between everyday activities and these [enactments or marked behavior such as festival and rituals] heightened events" (1977, 100). Part of what makes the Gilroy Garlic Festival such a strong affirmation of the city's mediated food-themed identity is its time out of time-ness: the once-a-year Festival affirms the city's everyday (self-proclaimed) status as Garlic Capital of the World. As long as a community festival remains vital to its host community, the affirming dialectic and continuity continues.

An unsuccessful "annual" event—one that is so poorly attended or not well received within the host community that it is not repeated—interrupts continuity of identity formation not only by disrupting the community's calendar but by derailing the organizers' attempt, through the festival, to create historical continuity for the community and to affirm a promoted identity. Even if a festival does not evoke a specific moment in the locality's past, its promotion as an "annual" event implies a connection to the past and to the future. The higher the number of years an annual festival can claim, the greater its implicit and explicit links to the past. Contributors to Eric Hobsbawn and Terrence Ranger's celebrated anthology (1983) ably demonstrate that although historic continuity might be largely fictitious, that may be of little concern to organizers or attendees. Linnekin and Handler (1984) alternatively suggest that traditions, whether regarded as genuine or spurious, are social and cultural constructs reflecting discourses of power, representation, and interpretation. Indeed, whether or not an event is interpreted as an authentic tradition depends in part on how it is variously presented and interpreted by organizers, participants, and observers.

Each of these approaches to interpreting tradition is useful when studying how people engage traditional forms of creative expression, including the community festival, to facilitate senses of place and senses of community. Most important is recognition that all traditions are social or cultural constructs that reflect relationships of power (individual and/or group relations: hegemonic, subversive, or a changeable combination of both) and that the traditions' meanings will change over time, just as social and power relations change over time.

A useful way to embrace the dynamism inherent in discussions of tradition without getting bogged down in the rhetorical danger of "authentic" so often associated with "tradition" (Bendix 1997) is to embrace the complementary notion of a "useable past": the application of creative imaging to the interpretation of a group's heritage and collective memory that results in re-presentations of a potentially artificially constructed past in the service of community building. The evocation of a usable past to invent, justify, or explain communal traditions as an element of identity negotiation and affirmation is one possible strategy utilized by community leaders and sometimes embraced by individuals to ascribe meaning and establish a sense of communal identity and place.[4] Again, the Gilroy Garlic Festival presents a salient example. Image makers organized the inaugural Festival in an attempt to put a positive spin on their city's malodorous reputation. Because it was successful, image makers established the Festival as a city tradition, thus affirming and promoting a positive association between Gilroy and garlic. Celebrating useable pasts through inventing traditions can also provide sociocultural refuge amid rapid social change, affirming local identity when external forces seem to threaten it (e.g., Bendix 1989, Conzen 1989, Hobsbawn 1983, Hoelscher 1998, Teluja 1997).

Whether they are invented or rooted traditions, community festivals are part of the process of individual and collective self-authentification. They can be a means of integrating individuals into the spirit of a collective identity and celebrate as well as enhance individual, group, and place identities (de Rees and Davis 2001, Schultz 1994). A festival is one way a locale

calls attention to itself. Part of the appeal of the community festival is that it serves multiple functions in the economic and symbolic lives of individuals and locales: when successful like the Gilroy Garlic Festival, a recurring event brings people together in the spirit of celebration at a definite time and in a situated place, generates financial gain, and, similarly, generates a sense of community.

Place-specific, food-themed festivals, like the Gilroy Garlic Festival, orchestrated to promote a locale's foodscape identity are cultural performances. As such they are enactments that display culture in action. As framed, symbolically charged intensifications of experience, they become venues where people enact individual and collective identities and expectations (Singer 1959, Turner and McArthur 1990). Cultural performances are constructed from the same complex historical, political, and social processes that inform daily life, aesthetically reconfiguring the worlds of those who produce them; they are collective representations of social desires, sacred longings, and personal motivations of their performance communities (e.g., Flores 1995). Whether local festivals or grand spectacles like the Olympics, such displays are "occasions in which as a culture or society we reflect upon and define ourselves, dramatize our collective myths and history, present ourselves with alternatives, and eventually change in some ways while remaining the same in others" (MacAloon 1984a, 1).

The cultural performance model recognizes dramatic displays as reflecting, interpreting, and influencing the society matrix within which they are enacted.[5] This approach facilitates interpretations of social dramas, spectacles, rites, festivals, and other performative events as part of the ongoing processes of identity formation and negotiation. Performance theorists "read" these events as semiotic texts variously employing the familiar tropes of metaphor and, drawing on Mikhail M. Bakhtin, the carnivalesque, correctly recognizing that these two processes, as well as others, can occur within the same event (Brown 1997, Geertz 1973, Lavenda 1997, Noyes 2003). Cultural performances are part of a dialectic between structure and agency, may exhibit symbolic reversal of hegemonic social and power relations, express identity, are liminal so potentially transformational, are potentially counter-hegemonic, and may affirm the existing social order (e.g., Brandes 1988, Erlman 1996, Fernandez 1986, Limón 1989, Turner 1982). The Gilroy Garlic Festival illustrates that these processes are not necessarily mutually exclusive: several of these processes are at work at any given time within most cultural displays. Multidimensional events warrant multilayered readings. MacAloon's (1984b) analysis of the Olympic Games exemplifies this approach: in developing a theoretical paradigm for complex performative events, he outlines the synchronism of the four central performative genres (spectacle, festival, ritual, game) that coexist within the metagenre of the Games.

Creating and Sustaining Community

The Festival brings together Gilroy residents from all sectors of the community who volunteer their time for Festival planning and events. Their efforts raise funds for local nonprofit organizations, charities, and school groups. Their repeated volunteer participation instills and reinforces a sense of communal spirit year after year. As 2002 Gilroy Garlic Festival President Kurt Chacon reminded visitors in the Festival program book: "As you enjoy your day here, please keep in mind that this wonderful event is put on by over 4,000 volunteers who donate their time (42,000+ volunteer hours) to more than 150 non-profit groups. Over the last 23 years, the Festival has awarded almost $6 million to these groups. In addition to the economic benefits derived from this event, the Garlic Festival has taught us that giving of ourselves to the community has made our Community one that we are all extremely proud of" (Chacon 2002). Mention of the 4,000+ volunteers "clocking" from 38,000 to more than 42,000 volunteer hours, as well as a general reference to the more than 150 charities who benefit from funds raised at the Festival, consistently appears in the President's Message in each year's program.

The Gilroy Garlic Festival, like most community festivals, is not held solely for the entertainment of and economic gain from outsiders. In addition to tangible financial gains are intangible benefits felt especially among the locals whose volunteer efforts make the event successful. These benefits come in the forms of friendship among volunteers and individuals' sense of contributing to the betterment of the city, both of which engender communal spirit. Gilroyans' voluntary participation is a form of civic engagement that Robert Putnam (2000) argues has been in decline in America, especially

since the 1970s. Yet community festivals throughout the country are staffed by local volunteers whose efforts exemplify Putnam's contention that individual civic participation leads to the betterment of the collective. The repeated volunteerism of Gilroyans challenges Putnam's argument about the decline of civic engagement: the 4,000-plus volunteers—nearly 10 percent of the city's population—who staff the Festival each year demonstrate that civic engagement is alive and well, at least in Gilroy, at least for this town's annual identificational event.

Many people return year after year as volunteers, often working in the same area each year. Young Gilroyans whose parents volunteer often end up assisting with Festival tasks themselves at a young age and develop zealous aspirations to work their way up the volunteer chain of command. Among the young volunteers with whom I spoke is Lauren Bevilacqua who, for example, began volunteering at the Festival when she was seven years old, working alongside her father as he helped set up and man the massive parking lots. When she was fifteen years old, Lauren aspired to be the first female chair of the parking committee by the time she was twenty-two. Each year Lauren took on additional responsibilities within parking lot operations, working the week before the Festival as well as all three days of the Festival. At eighteen years of age she was no longer determined to be the Parking Lot Committee Chair, although she did admit that it was "still kind of a goal . . . it would still be pretty cool to be the diamond in the rough so to speak." In addition to raising money for local nonprofit groups and learning leadership and management skills, Lauren commented that it is the camaraderie shared among fellow volunteers that keeps people returning year after year: "you go to the same place because you know and are practically family with the people out there." She says that she and a few other parking lot volunteers get together at least once during the year to recall anecdotes and memories they've collected working together over the years. Many other Festival volunteers see each other only once a year, at the Festival, thus endowing those intensive days together with a spirit of reunion and stressing the Festival's time out of time-ness.

The contagious energy of volunteering is what brings people back every year to stand in the dusty parking lot or work over hot flames for hours and hours. Longtime resident, former Festival Board of Directors member, and continuing volunteer Jodi Heinzen commented to me that many of her friends volunteer at the Festival, where "strong bonds are made when people work together for a similar goal." Besides, she continued, "it's a fun place to be. Everyone there is happy and having a good time. It feels good to make other people happy."

Amid all the hard work and fun, the volunteers' interactions produce a sense of community, the fuzzy yet desirable sense of belonging in a physical place as well as belonging to a group. The more than four thousand volunteers can be understood as a temporary, imagined community, one that contains multiple imagined subcommunities. A sense of community emerges that sustains volunteer workers through the intensive days before and during the Festival. This temporary and intensive sense of community is similar to *communitas* explored by Victor Turner (1979 [1969]). Initially conceived as emerging during the liminal phase of rites of passage, Turner's notion of communitas is applicable more broadly: it can refer to groups of individuals that come together for a defined period of time during which intensive, focused, and heightened positive or negative emotional energy and activities facilitate a spirit of oneness. Going through such an intensive, mutual experience produces a sense of community, one that is potentially transitory or periodically revived. The sense of camaraderie Festival volunteers articulate exemplifies how shared participation in an intensive experience can generate a sense of community. Some volunteers, like Jodi Heinzen and Lauren Bevilacqua, sustain the fellowship throughout the year; others partake only in the temporary community generated during the Festival.

Visitors similarly create a temporary community, albeit one even more short-lived and amorphous than that of the volunteers. They also participate in the temporary community created by the volunteers. An important element of the visitor-volunteer Festival relationship is their reciprocal exchange that is an essential thread connecting people in a community. At the Gilroy Garlic Festival, volunteers and attendees engage in important material and ideological reciprocal exchanges. At the most basic level, in exchange for the ten-dollar entry fee, Gilroyans reciprocate by providing opportunities to consume Gilroy's imaged identity. The hosts provide their guests with food (garlic-laden foods iconic of Gilroy, for an additional fee), entertainment (live music, the opportunity to dance, cooking demonstrations, children's games), mementoes of the visit (a plethora of garlicabilia, for an additional fee), and the experiential pleasure of being at the Festival.

Each of these exchanges involves interaction between the Festival participants and visitors. Through these exchanges, locals and guests strengthen the significance of the temporary communities defined by the festival frame. The consumption of garlic-laden foods and participation in or observation of the garlic-themed events, as well as consumer transactions in the Garlic Mercantile where garlicabilia are sold, affirm Gilroy's identity as a foodscape and contribute to the perpetuation of Gilroy as a festive foodscape.

The volunteers are hosting a party to which thousands of people come and, as Lauren Bevilacqua so astutely said, "the community feels the need to come through for all the people who enjoy it. There is something exhilarating about knowing that you are needed to pull together a huge event. . . ." In addition to being hosts, the volunteers are affirming the value of their city as a branded place and of the people who inhabit it: "there are the true devotees who love to do it [volunteer] because they simply love Gilroy and love Garlic and love what Gilroy stands [for] and how it looks compared to the rest of the country," Bevilacqua continued. That the volunteer efforts raise money to assist community groups adds another positive dimension to the volunteers' sense of contributing to and being part of a community. And it adds another layer of reciprocity: volunteers give of themselves for the betterment of the local organizations, which in turn contribute to the quality of life for residents of Gilroy.

Not everyone catches the contagious positive communal spirit of the Festival. Since its inception, some city officials and residents have been ambivalent about, inconvenienced by, or disenfranchised from the Festival. One community leader, speaking strictly "off the record," critiqued the importance granted to garlic and the Festival by those with "tunnel vision." This person wondered what the life of a garlic festival could be. Charged with some aspects of long-term planning for the city, this business person opined that city leaders should be considering the changing economies of Gilroy and of the region, and that they should be looking beyond garlic rather than focusing on it to the seeming exclusion of other profitable local industries and businesses.

Longtime resident George White's family began raising garlic in Gilroy early in the twentieth century. Even though he thinks the Festival makes a "big deal of nothing," he conceded the he "likes anything that brings people to Gilroy" (Vashel and Eggers 1986, 11). Even ardent supporters of the

Festival like Heinzen do acknowledge that although "the attitude of most Gilroyans is positive . . . there are always some grumblers." It is especially the residents of Eagle Pass, one of the newer residential developments west of town, who don't like the Festival because modified traffic patterns and traffic jams during the Festival congest the roads leading to and from their upscale development.

Although the voices of dissenting residents are few, they are part of the local discourse. Absent from conversations and from most of the festivities are the workers who labor long hours harvesting and processing the garlic. Late summer is the busiest time of the year for Christopher Ranch and Gilroy Foods, as it is for most agricultural enterprises. The workers who produce the iconic food that defines Gilroy as a festive foodscape exist in the background. Like the "army upon army of migrant workers" in California that have been part of "the material production of landscape and the production of landscape representations" (Mitchell 1996, 1), these workers contribute to but are not a significant presence in the celebration of garlic.

The organizers, volunteers, and paying attendees are, for the most part, several steps removed from the processes of garlic agriculture. There are important exceptions including, notably, Bill Christopher from Christopher Ranch, who has been and continues to be involved with multiple aspects of Festival planning and presentation. Dissenting voices are few and faint. Organizers, city leaders, and residents affirm that the Festival's economic and intangible benefits far outweigh the power of those whom it inconveniences or disenfranchises.

Since its inception the Gilroy Garlic Festival has been a celebration of the locality and the intangible yet palpable sense of small-town spirit that exists in this city. As one observer commented, Gilroy has "the town spirit of boosterism that makes its glory in such agrarian championships [as claiming to be the Garlic Capital of the World], a kind of naïve civic optimism that stretches back to its roots" (Steinhardt 1979).

If Imitation Is Flattery . . .

It is not just the Festival's rapid and tenacious success or Gilroyans' demonstration of civic pride that makes Gilroy's status as a festive foodscape

noteworthy. The Gilroy Garlic Festival is particularly appropriate to study because other festival organizers look to the Gilroy Garlic Festival as a highly successful model. Gilroy and its Festival were included in a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development publication "The Urban Fair: How Cities Celebrate Themselves" (Office of Public Affairs 1981). As the title suggests, fairs and festivals are regarded as vehicles for communal self-affirmation through celebration of community identity. The publication is designed to facilitate self-evaluation of existing urban festivals, and aid city leaders who want to organize new ones, for "the betterment of the community." Inclusion of Gilroy in this publication provided official, external validation of and for the festival as well-run, and as a model of successful city-boosterism.

If imitation is the most sincere form of flattery, organizers of Gilroy's Festival indeed should be flattered. Further validating Gilroy Garlic Festival's success is its acceptance among festival planners from other cities as a model to emulate. Visitors from across the country and throughout the world study Gilroy's Festival. For example, in 2002, representatives from the Philippines Province of Llocos, including officials from the Philippine Department of Tourism, visited the Festival. Other years, members of CalFest, the Californian and Nevada Festival and Events Association, have come to study the intricacies of producing this Festival. In anticipation of interpreting or mimicking the Gilroy model for the betterment of their hometowns' celebrations, visiting festival organizers meet with Festival administration, talk with volunteers, and take behind-the-scenes tours. At the 2005 Festival, I joined a representative from the Delray Beach, Florida, Chamber of Commerce on a VIP tour, led by Gilroy volunteer Jodi Heinzen. During the tour we had access to areas off-limits to regular Festival attendees and were encouraged to ask questions about all aspects of Festival production. Providing an example of imitation bordering on repetition, consider nearby Stockton's Asparagus Festival which is modeled after the Gilroy Garlic Festival and is complete with their vegetable-themed version of Gilroy's famed Gourmet Alley, "Asparagus Alley" (Lewis 1997).

Gilroy's image makers worked without the assistance of professional festival organizers, yet their event became the envy of image makers determined to produce community festivals throughout the world. That they could create a festive foodscape based on an ingredient on the fringe of

mainstream American foodways attests to their creativity and commitment, and people's curiosity. Residents' repeated participation in all stages of the Festival facilitated and continues to reinforce their sense of Gilroy as home and as a valued public space.[7] Once established, personal and communal connections to place seem natural, even innate. If well marketed, presented, and received, a food-place association can seem organic as well. Such is the case with Gilroy and garlic. The Festival's ongoing popularity substantiates Festival organizers' anticipatory assertion that Gilroy is the Garlic Capital of the World.

CHAPTER THREE

From Foreign to Fad

Garlic's Twentieth-Century Transition

Gilroyans who are sentimental about the days when Gilroy's air reminded them of spaghetti sauce are also realistic. They know that not everyone appreciates the ever-present olfactory stimulation that blankets southern Santa Clara Valley during processing season, and that a negative reputation can spread further and linger longer than Gilroy's distinctive smell. Food columnist Elizabeth Mehren incorporated comments of derision about Gilroy's "pungent presence" into newspaper articles published in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, emphasizing the city's odoriferous reputation (Mehren 1979a, 1979b, 1979c). Former garlic farmer, local chef, and Festival cofounder Val Filice reminisced that years ago, as he stood watching water run through his farm's irrigation system, tourists driving along Route 152 would stop to inquire about the "terrible smell"—the smell of "Gilroy's gold," garlic, being dehydrated. It wasn't just the smell of garlic processing that caused many people to wrinkle their noses and reinforced Gilroy's negative reputation. Mr. Filice recalls that outside the Italian community, "people were embarrassed to use garlic . . . because

[it caused] bad breath and [because of] its odor." Prejudice against garlic as an ingredient and widespread mockeries of Gilroy's smell left Gilroyans with low communal self-esteem. Festival cofounder Rudy Melone noted that upon his arrival in Gilroy in the late 1970s, "[t]here was a general air of embarrassment about garlic—an absence of pride" (Midtgaard).

The inaugural Festival facilitated the transformation of Gilroy's association with garlic from negative to positive. Not only did Gilroy's place image change, so too did garlic's. The quirky Garlic Festival accelerated garlic's transition from a food on the dietary and social margins into mainstream American foodways.

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That food is a metaphor for identity is readily accepted when related to regional and ethnic identity. Foodways are acknowledged "as a ticket to understand the power sustaining the continuity of ethnicity and region as matrices for the membership of individuals in groups" (Brown and Mussell 1984, 3). Many contemporary scholars correctly recognize ethnicity as a social process rather than a fixed category, and situate foodways within the performative process of identity (e.g., Kalčik 1984). Associations of ethnic groups with particular foods, perpetuated through "ethnic" restaurants and at ethnic food festivals, reinforce a general perception among members of the group as well as among outsiders or tourists that food is emblematic of ethnic identity (Heldke 2003, Maglocco 1998). Whether consumed at an ethnic eatery or an ethnic food festival, food is perceived a "safe" way to experience the exotic Other (Kugelmass 1990, Van Esterik 1982).

It is not just tantalizing flavors that attract image makers to food as an organizational theme: the simultaneous intrigue and seeming symbolic neutrality of many food items are among its attractions. Because food is regarded as a safe medium for experiencing the Other, be it a people or a place, organizers can avoid potentially divisive issues such as ethnic identity or contested history. Group or community identity can be unintentionally or deliberately consolidated into a food item and, through that item, outsiders and insiders figuratively consume the identity while literally consuming the iconized food. Food festivals and the food served at them are food-culture

consolidation in a festival frame. As Sally Moore and Barbara Myerhoff note, "[c]eremonies that make visible a collective connection with some common symbol or activity can minimize for a ceremonial moment their disconnections and conflicts . . . even while depicting them" (1977, 6). Festival organizers create ceremonial food events in hopes of drawing people together, even temporarily, to generate a sense of communal spirit and identity based on the perceived accessibility of food. Food is encoded with multilayered systems of meaning and symbolism, however, making it "different from run-of-the-mill commodities, both in the depth of meaning ascribed to it and in the complexity of the system that produces it" (Charles 2002). But, like that of most commodities, food's symbolization is dynamic and subject to change.

Concisely stating a truism, Howard Marshall comments that "like dialect and architecture, food traditions are a main component in the intricate and impulsive system that joins culture and geography into regional character" (1979, 400). Over time and through intergroup interactions, traditional foods of one group, be it a cultural or a geographic group, may take on varied or new meanings: encoded meanings can change, reinforcing the dynamic character of symbolic signification. The post–Civil War transition of Maine lobster from a low- to high-status food (Lewis 1998) and the evolution and mainstreaming of a Southwestern cuisine (Bentley 2004) exemplify the changeability of food's emblematic significance. Place-food associations, such as Maine and lobsters or Michigan and cherries, like many ethnic-food associations, are often unquestioningly accepted. As natural as they may appear, however, place-food associations become familiar through deliberate manipulation and promotion. A casual tour through any grocery store reveals labels promoting a relationship between place and food product. Even the produce section, mostly devoid of labels, bears witness to the custom of associating certain products with specific places. For example, the consumer might find Idaho baking potatoes, California berries, New York and Washington state apples. Regional specialties increasingly find homes in mainstream markets, but in general the markets continue to stock items popularly associated with specific places. Place-food associations are imaged and reinforced through commodification, from food labels (de Wit 1998) to festive foodscapes.

Immigrant Foodways, Nativism, and Dietary Reform

The embarrassment about which Melone spoke and that people felt toward garlic predates Gilroy's negative press and odoriferous agribusiness. It was rooted in culinary egocentrism lingering from the colonial era and reinforced during the period of massive southern European migration to the United States in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century.

Italians have been coming to the American continent since one of their countrymen was instrumental in documenting previously uncharted lands in the Western Hemisphere. The greatest number of Italian immigrants came to the United States between 1896 and 1910, with some three hundred thousand recorded as arriving in 1907 alone (Federal Writers' Project 1938). While most stayed in northern and eastern cities to live and work, some were taken or went by choice inland to work the land or help develop the unsettled spaces of the American West. Substantial Italian immigration to California began around the time of that state's gold rush, facilitated by passenger ship service between Italy and San Francisco that began mid-century (Gumina 1978). As California's economy shifted from mining toward agriculture and industry, Italian settlement patterns shifted as well. Drawn by the gentle climate and availability of rich farmland, many Italians from San Francisco moved toward the agricultural counties of San Joaquin, Santa Clara, and Sonoma, contributing knowledge and labor to these counties' nascent agricultural industries.

Despite the cultural diversity of California's population, prejudices against certain immigrant groups informed the social landscape, as they did throughout the country. One manifestation of cultural bigotry came in the form of culinary egocentrism. Such "deviations from the logic of the table," notes Reay Tannahill, historically "had very little to do with food. They were political or social gestures" (Tannahill 1988, 347). She observes that those in "the Western world who canalized their ordinary human need to feel superior" did so through intolerance of "homosexuals, Jews, people who ate garlic or colored their hair, Catholics, blacks . . ." (ibid., 348). The presence of garlic eaters among her list of people discriminated against indicates how widespread the distaste was for both the food and the people who ate it.

Since people articulate individual and collective identities through incorporation of or aversion to particular consumables, it follows that rejection of specific foods can be really a prejudicial dismissal of the people associated with that food. Hence, the early aversion to garlic among Anglo-Americans, particularly those of northern European descent, was an expression of their prejudice against garlic-eating immigrant populations. The historical anti-garlic sentiment can be understood as a minor articulation of nativist ideology, what John Higham (1955) described as nationalism guided by an antiforeign spirit and related fear of internal threats to the nation (see also Anbinder 1992, Billington 1974, Jacobson 1998, Knobel 1995).

This antiforeign spirit has its roots in America's colonial heritage, specifically pre–Civil War anti-Catholic sentiments expressed by Protestants, a prejudice carried with the colonists from England (Higham 1955, Tannahill 1988). The antiforeign spirit among the people who were themselves recently transplanted foreigners evolved into a sense of American exceptionalism. Early feelings of American exceptionalism were a natural outcome of the Puritan conception that their "city on the hill" was a fulfillment of scriptural prophecy.[1] The ideological seeds of American exceptionalism slowly germinated and manifested in the nativist movement. Throughout American history, the targets and expressions of nativist prejudices, though not always called that, have varied. In the mid-nineteenth century, an antiforeign spirit was articulated in political and social ways, including the short-lived Know-Nothing Party and longer-lasting reform efforts intended to expedite the Americanization of immigrant populations. At the turn of the twentieth century through the First World War, the population that commanded much of nativists' attention was the Southern European immigrants, including especially Italians. Reflecting the opinion of the time, Jacob A. Riis wrote in his muckraking expose that the "swarthy Italian immigrant," who is also "honest" and "lighthearted," "claims a large share of public attention, partly because he keeps coming at such a tremendous rate" (1971 [1890], 47, 45). So widely known and shared among Riis's readership were the Italian's "conspicuous faults" that Riis was not inclined to enumerate them.

The concern felt by nativists over controlling the flow of immigration, and their anxiety about exerting control over those immigrants already living in America, informed official and unofficial activities in the interest of Americanization. A multitude of reform efforts attempted to expedite

Americanization of the immigrant masses. This is not to suggest that all reform efforts were articulations of nativist ideology; they were not. Yet many reformers linked foodways with one's fitness to be an American citizen. These reformers interpreted the continuing practice of immigrant populations' native foodways as un-American.

Several historical contingencies informed nativists' inclination to reform immigrants. A sense of cultural and ethnic superiority among some Anglo-Americans of northern European descent, bolstered by a festering fear of losing political power as the population was diluted by these immigrant populations, fed the flames of the rekindled nativist movement. The flood of Catholic immigrants, specifically immigrants from southern European Catholic countries such as Italy, was perceived as a threat to the American political system and national identity. Labor clashes, right-to-vote issues, and muckraking that revealed the squalor in which many urban immigrants lived brought concerns about assimilation or lack thereof to the fore, resulting in what was perceived as an immigration problem. The turn of the twentieth century witnessed increased distrust of immigrant populations. The steadily increasing distribution and readership of newspapers and magazines perpetuated and spread the negativity. The prejudicial title and content of a 1901 article in *American Kitchen Magazine* exemplify the era's prejudice against immigrant foods. In the article "Queer Foreign Foods in America," the author called immigrant foods "coarse and unsavory compared with the food of his [the immigrant's] adopted land" (Shapiro 1986). Dr. Allan McLaughlin of the U.S. Public Health and Marine Hospital Service was a frequent commentator on immigrants and "the immigrant problem" in the early years of the twentieth century. In his authoritative magazine articles he perpetuated detrimental stereotypes of several immigrant "races," including the Italians (e.g., McLaughlin 1904, 1903).

Food reform was one of several avenues pursued by Progressive Era (~1890–1920) reformers seeking to improve the lives of urban immigrants. That era's attitudes toward food reform were a continuation of earlier health-diet reform efforts. Sylvester Graham (1794–1851) was one of many early nineteenth-century health reformers whose teachings emphasized vegetarianism, temperance, and sexual abstinence. Like many other dietary reformers of that period, he advocated a diet devoid of all condiments and spices because they overstimulated the body (Haber 2002, Nissenbaum 1980).

Following in Graham's footsteps were many whose health-motivated, dietary reform teachings had long-lasting influences on the American diet. Other nineteenth- and early twentieth-century reformers, including especially Wilbur Olin Atwater (1844-1907, who introduced the calorie to Americans) and John Harvey Kellogg (1852–1943, creator of Kellogg's cereal), talked about food and morality without reference to taste, tradition, or context; for them food was regarded solely as fuel for the body (Carson 1976 [1957], Coveney 2000, Wharton 1982). The teachings of these early dietary reformers forever changed the ways Americans think about and consume food (Schwartz 1986, Stacey 1994). As the health-dietary reform movement secured a foothold among nineteenth-century Anglo-Americans, they began to turn their reform-mindedness toward others. Believing their foodways and lifestyles to be superior to those of the increasing numbers of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, reformers sought to Americanize immigrants' diets.

Reformers involved in settlement houses and the home economics movement regarded foodways as an appropriate medium through which to instill American values among immigrant populations (Jass 2004). Reformers targeted food because they equated healthy eating with the health of the nation. Robert Woods, who ran one of Boston's settlement houses, expressed the reformist ideology that foreign foodways were ill-suited to the American way of life; in a 1904 charity organization publication he wrote that the Italian's "over-stimulating and innutritious diet is precisely the opposite sort of feeding from that demanded by our exhilarating and taxing atmospheric conditions. This fact suggests [that dietary reform is] the first and perhaps the chief step in bringing about the adaptation of the Italian type of life to America" (1904, 81). Visually and odoriferously distinctive, Italian immigrants' foodways were particularly conspicuous to those concerned with assimilation. Continued use of exotic flavors was interpreted as resistance to Americanization and, therefore among radical nativists, a threat to national security. As Harvey Levenstein noted, "[t]he acrid smells of garlic and onions wafting through the immigrant quarters seemed to provide unpleasant evidence that their inhabitants found American ways unappealing; that they continued to find foreign (and dangerous) ideas as palatable as their foreign food" (2003, 104).

Several other undercurrents were swirling about during the Progressive Era that informed dietary reform efforts. One of the social forces directing

reformers' attention to foodways was the "cult of domesticity" that fortified early nineteenth-century domestic life (Cott 1997 [1977], Sklar 1973). The cult of domesticity empowered women with superior moral sensibility and positioned their domain, the domestic sphere, as critical to the development of strong individual and therefore national character. This ideology fostered belief in the civilizing capacity of women among many of the era's elite and the emerging middle class; and it was women in these strata of society who had both the time and the inclination to participate in reform movements. As the century matured, the belief in women as keepers of morality was absorbed into American ideology. The idea that women and women's work, such as domestic food preparation, can shape and control the morality of society is at the foundation of much of the late nineteenth-century social reform ideology. Settlement houses and classes taught there, including cooking classes, were perceived to be for the good of the immigrants and of the nation; resistance in the form of failure to assimilate was interpreted as disloyalty to the immigrants' adopted home and a threat to the strength of the nation.

Reform efforts in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century were inspired also by tremendous changes taking place in nearly all aspects of food science and technology. Among the many influences shaping Americans' perceptions about food and consumption at that time were the discovery of vitamins, the nascent field of nutritional science, the advent of scientific cookery, the emergence of home economics as a respectable source for domestic management advice, the growth of corporate food purveyors, and the increasing importance of food advertising.[9] Scientific discourse within the domestic science movement about food and the body resembled those of previous dietary reformers: food was sustenance and fuel, pleasure and taste simply were not part of the rhetoric.

Additional undercurrents informing the evolution of American attitudes toward food and dietary reform included a tenacious vestige of Puritan ideology and lingering influences of British culinary tradition. Waverly Root describes "a Puritanical disapproval of self-indulgence and a feeling that there was something sinful about enjoying one's food" (1995 [1976], 162). This Puritan spirit may be so firmly planted in Americans' psyche that, as he suggests, it nourished the nineteenth-century moralistic dietary reform movement, and continues in the contemporary apprehension toward foods

that are offered and consumed more for pleasures of the palate than for nutritional sustenance.

In his exploration of American culinary heritage, Harvey Levenstein (2003) notes that, despite the presence of non-British immigrants, American foodways during the colonial era through the nineteenth century were most significantly influenced by British foodways (see also Harris 1979 [1974]). Consistent with the restraint displayed toward the use of spices among the British middle and upper classes during the eighteenth century, the new Americans eschewed heavily seasoned foods. Garlic and other strong flavors were regarded as dangerous to the moral fiber of society because spicy foods were thought to stimulate the body, which in turn led to sinful sexual thoughts and excessive consumption of alcohol. The association between Italians and garlic was so firmly implanted in the popular imagination that an aversion to garlic expanded into a negative attitude toward Italian immigrant foodways (Levenstein 1985). The Italians were certainly not the only immigrant population whose traditional foodways embraced garlic, nor the only ones subject to culinary ethnocentrism. In his study of changing foodways among Greek immigrants to America, Robert Theodoratus (1981, 1983) stresses the potent negativity among Anglo-Americans toward garlic and its eaters in general, and toward Greeks in particular: "No food has raised more ire among anglicized Americans than has garlic. Both garlic and those who ate it were viewed as offenders against public decency and morals." His research concludes that after 1960, however, as other ethnic foods (notably Italian and some Spanish) became more popular, Euro-Anglo American acceptance of garlic became more "liberal." By the 1970s, he continues, garlic was used in Greek recipes in larger amounts and with increased frequency. Since there were so many more Italian than Greek immigrants settling in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century, it is no wonder that the association between garlic and Italians was more firmly established in the popular imagination than an association between garlic and other immigrant communities.

The well-intentioned reformers did not anticipate that their efforts would meet resistance. Despite reformist pressures and the challenges of procuring familiar ingredients, Italian immigrants generally clung to their foodways. Food is, after all, a sensual link to one's homeland, and familiar foods are all the more comforting for those living in a new or foreign country.

Italians immigrants used food—traditional Italian foods, or American foods prepared in traditional Italian ways—as what Tracy Poe (2001) calls "portable systems of ethnic unity," and tangible symbols of their mother country. In cities like New York, and in small towns like Roseto, Pennsylvania, Italian immigrants tended to live in close-knit communities with other Italians. In San Francisco, for example, there existed a "small colony with a physiognomy all its own . . . [that] was essentially self-sufficient, in small part, of its own volition, in much larger part, because it was socially and economically constrained to be so. The presence of this homogeneous core of Italians naturally re-enforced habits, customs and modes of thought . . ." (Radin 1935). Adding to the fact that food played "particularly important roles in Italian family life[,] . . . it was extremely difficult to gain entry into Italian family home and kitchens or to coax the women out of them" (Levenstein 1985).

Dietary reform efforts had little impact on changing Italian foodways also because reformist ideology and practices, taught primarily through cooking and nutrition classes, undermined the role and significance of Italian women as domestic authorities and knowledgeable cooks. As Hasia Diner summarizes in her study of immigrant foodways, "Discussions of Italian women as cooks, and good ones at that, and as the ones who stood by their food as the symbol of their indispensability, ran through the remembered details of immigrant and first-generation life" (2001, 77). The fact that these women had to learn to use new ingredients and new appliances made them likely candidates for the cooking classes offered by reformers at settlement houses and by home economists at public schools. But such classes were viewed with disdain. Although they attended other classes such as sewing with enthusiasm, few participated in classes on nutrition, cooking, and food budgeting.

> This general pattern predominated in most settlement houses and other sites for immigrant adult education. American ameliorative organizations tried hard to appeal to Italian women to modify their cooking habits. But Italian women mostly ignored them . . . [because] attending a class on a particular subject amounted to an admission of ignorance, incompetence, a need to improve. Since Italian women in America defined much of their personal worth in terms of cooking, cooking classes were cultural land mines. . . . For a woman to sign up for a class would be tantamount to a public declaration that her family somehow found her cooking skills wanting.[3]

From Culinary Periphery to Food Fad

The lingering suspicion toward particular spices and seasonings, and reformist prejudice against foreign diets continued well into the twentieth century. Yet despite the best efforts of social reformers and lingering foodways prejudice, garlic slowly infiltrated mainstream American cookery. Garlic's gradual incorporation into revised editions of Fannie Farmer's *The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book*, the cornerstone of classic American cookery instructional books, reflects incremental assimilation and acceptance of the pungent bulb. The book's first edition in 1896 neither included garlic among the list of condiments "used to stimulate the appetite by adding flavor to food," nor was garlic an ingredient in any of the five tomato sauce recipes, including "Sauce à l'Italienne" (Farmer 1896, 241). The only recipe in the 1896 cookbook that called for garlic was "A Chapon," a piece of bread rubbed with raw garlic and incorporated into a tossed salad to season salad. Garlic was not included in the "Seasoning" section of the 1912 edition (Farmer 1912 [1906]). Yet by 1933 garlic was listed as an ingredient in a few dishes including a recipe for "Mexican" tomato sauce, which called for one clove of garlic; surprisingly no garlic was among the ingredients for that edition's "Italian" tomato sauce (Farmer 1933). The 1951 revised edition finally included garlic in its "Spices and Seeds" section, noting that "Garlic adds particularly appetizing seasoning to many dishes" (Farmer 1951, 36). Garlic is also present as a key ingredient in several dishes, among them "Garlic Olives," "Garlic Bread," and "Sauce for Spaghetti."

Despite a gradual incorporation of more recipes with garlic in the 1959 tenth revised edition, editor Wilma Lord Perkins advised caution, noting that "Many foreign recipes owe much of their special quality to unusual seasonings. Use unfamiliar seasonings with discretion" (Farmer 1959, 15). Other cookbooks printed in America included recipes with garlic, indicating that it was not a completely unfamiliar or wholly eschewed ingredient. For example, *Miss Corson's Practical American Cookery and Household Management* (1886), penned by New York Cooking School founder Juliet Corson, included a recipe for "mock-caviare" made by pounding boned anchovies with a clove of garlic.

Amid dramatic changes in American foodways during the first half of the twentieth century, ambivalence toward some foreign foods, including garlic, remained. In his social history of eating in America, Levenstein claims that American culture's phobia about garlic made it "a particular embarrassment" (2003 [1993], 29). The author of a 1939 article about the charismatic and hugely popular New York Yankee Joe DiMaggio affirms that he is "well adapted to most U.S. mores," specifically mentioning that he used water instead of olive oil to slick his hair and that he "never reeks of garlic" (Bunch 1939, 69). Even though garlic retained its negative aura among non-Italians, Levenstein (1985, 2003 [1993]) also notes that some "Italo-American" dishes were so resistant to reformist Americanization that they were adapted and incorporated into the mainstream foodways. Rather than being Americanized out of existence, dishes like spaghetti transgressed cultural boundaries, were adapted (thus Americanized by modification), and were incorporated into mainstream foodways. The incorporation of spaghetti and meatballs into restaurants frequented by non-Italians and onto domestic and commercial menus of non-Italians exemplifies how Italian foodways contributed to an evolving twentieth-century American cuisine.* In 1946, Hector Boiardi sold his Chef Boyardee canned spaghetti business to an American conglomerate, a move that exemplifies the "uncoupling of enclave foods from enclave businessmen": going corporate marked the transition of "ethnic foods into the national marketplace and the cultural mainstream of American life" (Gabaccia 1998, 158–151).

In the mid-twentieth century garlic was continuing its gradual transition from a food on the margin of mainstream American foodways to a familiar ingredient. A recipe for garlic bread was not included in *The Boston Cooking School Cook Book* until the 1951 edition. By 1956, the author of an article in *Collier's* magazine seemed to be complaining that garlic bread had become so ubiquitous in restaurants and on domestic dining tables throughout the country that it "borders on the commonplace" (MacDougald Jr. 1956). Consumption of fresh garlic rose from about 4.5 million pounds in 1945 to over 36 million pounds by 1956 (ibid.). Even allowing for population growth, those numbers indicate an impressive rise in use, and suggest that Americans were acquiring a taste for the pungent product. A few years later, the American Dehydrated Onion and Garlic Association sponsored

a consumer survey, the results of which were noteworthy because they "disprove[d] some widely held theories about the use of garlic in the home" (Gentry Foods 1961). From the survey Gentry Foods, a producer of dehydrated garlic, concluded that "Garlic, in all its forms, is a growing market, with greatest use among younger families . . . . Garlic is a sophisticated product, appealing more strongly to persons of above average economic status and education . . . . And garlic is now socially acceptable, being used almost as often for 'company' meals as for family meals, and is being used by over 90 percent of all families." That a garlic-processing company published such optimistic statements about one of its products is self-serving, but, even if their optimism was hyperbolic, they were commenting on an existing food trend: the increased use of previously eschewed ingredient.

Historians position the late 1950s and early 1960s as pivotal years for American food culture (e.g., Belasco and Scranton 2002, Shapiro 2004).[5] Ongoing developments at all levels of farm and food industrialization since the last decades of the nineteenth century facilitated the industrialization of cooking and consumption practices from the 1950s onward (Symons 2000). Two disparate events took place within days of each other in 1963 that bolstered an ongoing transformation of American foodways and domestic cooking landscapes: the airing of Julia Child's television show *The French Kitchen*, and the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. Jessamyn Neuhaus summarizes that "the 1960s saw the rapid 'gourmetization' of United States food culture" (2003, 323).

Early popular American celebrity chefs such as James Beard and Julia Child did much to promote the use of garlic among American home cooks. Included in James Beard's 1965 cookbook, *Menus for Entertaining*, were numerous recipes incorporating garlic as a primary seasoning agent, among them several breakfast dishes. His encouragement of home cooks to incorporate garlic into the first meal of the day, especially dishes prepared for company, indicated his willingness to set aside previously popular notions of restraint in favor of flavor.[6] Julia Child's 1968 *The French Chef Cookbook*, based on her wildly popular PBS television program, included a recipe for *Ai'go Bouido*, Provençale garlic soup. Although there is only one garlic-centric recipe in the book, its inclusion indicated her interest in getting American domestic cooks to be less inhibited about using garlic. Beard's and Child's enthusiastic incorporation of ingredients previously regarded with

suspicion served to expand domestic cooks' and diners' willingness to work with and eat such ingredients.

Before becoming widely accepted by the American public, garlic developed a cult-like following. Among its leading proponents was Lloyd J. Harris who, in 1974, founded the organization Lovers of the Stinking Rose to spread the gospel of garlic. In addition to an annual newsletter called "Garlic Times," Harris authored two books about garlic that became classics among devotees: *The Book of Garlic* (1979 [1974]) and *The Official Garlic Lover's Handbook* (1986). In 1976, at the suggestion of Harris, Berkeley restaurateur and chef Alice Waters organized a garlic-themed Bastille Day dinner at her Chez Panisse restaurant. Already known in culinary circles for her commitment to using only seasonal, organic foods long before it was trendy, Waters's theme meal elevated garlic to an ingredient worthy of critical acclaim among other chefs and foodies.

By the mid-1970s, the number of garlic fans was increasing and cooking with garlic became a fad. The emergence of a genre of garlic-themed cookbooks around this time reflects garlic's status as a food fad ingredient. Early in the publishing trend were *The Great Garlic Cookbook* (Meyer and Cato 1975) and *Garlic Cookery* (Shulman 1984). The Gilroy Garlic Festival Committee contributed to a growing garlic-centric literature, self-publishing *The Garlic Lover's Cookbook* (1980) followed by several others, including *Garlic Lover's Greatest Hits: 20 Years of Prize-Winning Recipes from the Gilroy Garlic Festival* (1998). There is no shortage of garlic cookbooks in the contemporary marketplace, indicating garlic's popularity among American eaters, or at least among cookbook authors and publishers.[7] Documentary filmmaker Les Blank commemorated garlic's apparent Bay area cult-type following in his 1980 film *Garlic Is as Good as Ten Mothers*. Included in the fifty-one-minute film is footage from the first Gilroy Garlic Festival as well as from the Chez Panisse garlic dinner. Garlic is the main ingredient not only of books, videos, and theme dinners, but also of some restaurants, most notably San Francisco's famed garlic restaurant, The Stinking Rose: A Garlic Restaurant. The restaurant's owner Jerry Dal Bozzo published his homage to the bulb, *The Stinking Cookbook: The Layman's Guide to Garlic Eating, Drinking, and Stinking* (1994), which is sold, along with other garlicabelia, through the restaurant's web site (www.thestinkingrose.com) and in a San Francisco retail store.

The measurable change in garlic's acceptance is partly the result of changing attitudes toward the populations who used garlic. The steady flood of immigrants from Southern Europe that contributed to what had been conceived as "the immigrant problem" slowed during World War I. Immigration restrictions in the 1920s further curtailed the influx of immigrants from southern Europe. With the passage of stricter immigration laws, interest in Americanization reform waned.[8] A postwar desire among Anglo-Americans for national unity likely contributed to increased tolerance of southern Europeans already living in the United States, although ongoing prejudice against Asians belied the presumed wish for national unity. Social, political, and economic crises, including the Great Depression, World War II, and Cold War ideology diverted attention away from Americanization to matters of survival and national unity, especially between Anglo-Americans and the European immigrant communities they previously considered outsiders. Changes in immigration law and immigration patterns continued to inform American foodways. As the population changed, so too did what constituted mainstream foodways. For example, increased immigration of Mexicans and Latin Americans in the late 1960s and 1970s facilitated exposure to and availability of new foods and flavor combinations, some of which gradually entered the mainstream.

Renewed health concerns in the 1960s had middle-class Americans thinking about food differently and initiated a quest for ways to cook and eat with less fat and less salt.[9] Using spices, including garlic, to season food was presented as a healthier way to cook and eat for health-conscious Americans. The ethnic revival of the 1970s elevated ethnic clothing, dialect, and foodways. It also stimulated Americans to think about ethnicity in new ways, as negotiable, voluntary and, therefore, not quite so foreign.[10]

Gradually garlic entered the world of gourmet foods and from there it rapidly transitioned, as do many foods that mark distinction, to the mainstream. Genovese pesto, a sauce made from garlic, fresh basil, pine nuts, and parmesan or pecorino cheese blended with olive oil, for example, now is readily available in jars at grocery stores throughout the country.[11] Increased international travel also roused an interest in what previously had been foreign flavors. All of these factors exposed an increasing number of people to different foods and foodways, including garlic, which less than a century ago was the subject of condemnation.

By 1979, garlic was still on the fringe of American foodways, but it was less negatively charged as an identificational icon than it had been. The immediate success of the first Gilroy Garlic Festival indicates that at least fifteen thousand people were curious about garlic and to see what Gilroyans would do with garlic. The Festival owes its success, according to Mr. Filice, to people's willingness to try what he called an underappreciated food. That culinary curiosity is attributable to garlic's gradual incorporation into American foodways and the willingness of Bay area residents to attend a quirky food festival. Many forces coalesce to inform the constantly evolving American culinary landscape; likewise, many forces contributed to Gilroy image makers' successful branding of the city as a festive foodscape.