

NEOLIBERAL BRITAIN'S AUSTERITY FOODSCAPE: HOME ECONOMICS, VEG PATCH CAPITALISM AND CULINARY TEMPORALITY

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Abstract *This essay examines contemporary Britain's foodscape in order to identify how mediatised life-quests uphold 'boom-based' culinary/consumptive motifs while mobilising a distinctive 'austerity aesthetic' that coincides and colludes with the British state's neoliberal austerity narrative. In part one, 'The British State of Home-Economics', we examine this austerity aesthetic as it came to the fore during the 'Great British Summer' of 2012. In part two, 'Localism, Veg Patch Capitalism and Austerity', we unpack the fundamental contradictions found in the modesty claims of recent gentrified culinary activities and pastoralised localist discourses. And, finally, in part three, 'Temporal Deficit and Culinary Work-for-Labour', we analyse the foodscape's investment in temporal presumptions, metaphors, promises and paradoxes in order to expose how the structure of deficit that shapes the way capitalism's 'economy of time' is maintained through culinary 'work-for-labour'. Throughout, we use the term 'foodscape' to 'map food geographies' onto cultural activities and socio-economic patterns, and to argue that Britain's contemporary foodscape consistently fuels and reveals the self-contradictory yet self-perpetuating logic of capital as manifest in the neoliberal enterprise of state-led austerity.*

Keywords neoliberalism, austerity, frugality, localism, 2012 the 'Great British Summer', contemporary British politics, Britain's foodscape, culinary culture in Britain

The 'new age of austerity', as invoked by David Cameron in 2009, has seen Britain's Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government pursue new and existing neoliberal policies in the name of crisis management and deficit repayment. A legitimising narrative of austerity as financial and even moral compensation for the preceding debt-based bubble has intensified political demands for austere lifestyles marked by spending cuts, hard graft, individual 'responsibility', and a new 'culture of thrift'.¹ Despite reprimanding New Labour profligacy, this austerity narrative cogently reinvigorates neoliberalism's aspirational promises and remains beholden to capitalism's unstable and unsustainable growth paradigm. The British state's self-protective allegiance to capital's perpetuation means that it insists that its consumer-citizens continue to perform their consumptive duties in order to aid economic recovery, at home and internationally, but that they do so with austere self-restraint. This paper explores this austerity narrative, its home-economic messages, and the aesthetic dimensions of its deployment within contemporary Britain's foodscape. We argue that the media-led food culture that took hold during the Cool Britannic² 'boom' has continued to expand during our 'bust' times, in large part by maintaining its pleasure-based consumptive appeal and mutating into forms entirely consistent with consumptive-austerity. Specifically, we read the culinary encoding of austerity through the aesthetic motifs, participatory claims and

nostalgic imaginary of the British foodscape of 2012. With media coverage of state-endorsed, corporate-sponsored celebrations invoking thrifty wartime resilience and postwar austerity-as-recovery, Britain's 2012 'moment' helped underscore the longstanding, but increasingly critical, disparity between the experience of food as economic burden and the culinary pursuit of frugal pleasure as consumptive self-fulfilment. The 2012 foodscape thereby enabled, and now requires, a provocative re-reading of the lifestyle programming, public-private interactions and labour-time relations that have structured British food culture and consumption patterns since the late 1990s.

The socio-cultural importance of food has become an area of burgeoning academic concern, especially within cultural studies, the sociology of food and the interdisciplinary field of food studies. A number of works have been influenced by Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984), with its emphasis on cultural capital and class-based consumption; yet, following Zygmunt Bauman's *Freedom* (1988), consumption studies commonly connects food habits with post-Fordist mechanisms of 'individuation', enhanced consumer 'agency' and self-narrating 'lifestyle choices' within what Anthony Giddens has called a 'post-traditional order'.³ As Alan Warde notes, a key tension has arisen between such claims for self-actualising practices and the (often class-bound) ways in which 'tastes are still collectively shared to a very significant extent'.⁴ Recent discussions have examined this tension in relation to both 'alternative' consumption habits,⁵ and the increasing prevalence of largely privileged forms of food-based activism.⁶ Discussions of international food activism and culinary diaspora also sit alongside interrogations of today's globalised food system - often highlighting structural unevenness, agro-ecological (un)sustainability and resource (mis)management - as well as examinations of the multi-layered tensions surrounding local-global foodways.⁷ The 2011 'Food on the Move' special issue of this journal marked the 'troubled cosmopolitanism' of food-based relations by navigating food's 'mobility in a lived multi-culture' and as a 'dynamic agent in the world'.⁸ Taking heed of Ben Highmore's editorial, our discussion works from a similar understanding of food's 'at once revealing and concealing' potential, but occupies a space left open by the issue as a whole; namely, the investigation of contemporary Britain's foodscape and the multifaceted ways in which food, food culture and foodism are aestheticised and sold through British media, particularly the televisual, in accordance with the priorities of the state and its commitment to capital.⁹ This approach notably resonates with Tracey Jensen's understanding of the government's affective austerity rhetoric, especially its retrogressive and hypocritical 'tough love' claims and its role within the media-led inculcation of 'austerity chic'.¹⁰ Our discussion also stands in close proximity to recent debates about food-based television,¹¹ including Heather Nunn's conception of 'retreat TV' and Lyn Thomas' analysis of the 'downshifting' and 'good life' narratives circulating in contemporary British 'lifestyle television'.¹² Like Thomas, we recognise that food has played a significant role in UK televisual culture and its advocacy of the consumptive 'good life' since the 1970s, and similarly foreground the visible growth of prime-time food programming from the late 1990s - most notably via the 'public-service' state broadcaster, the BBC, and the 'publicly-owned, commercially-funded' terrestrial broadcaster, Channel 4.¹³ This growth has expanded the range, quality and personalities involved with food presentation, established a cacophony of celebrity chefs, personalities, critics and food enthusiasts, and created a plethora of notably formulaic and often highly didactic food-formats. Where Thomas suggests that the self-fulfilment quests of DIY, fashion, health and 'heritage

cooking' shows reveal recession-based ambivalence towards consumptive lifestyles, we offer a panoramic picture of contemporary Britain's foodscape in order to identify how such mediated life-quests uphold earlier culinary/consumptive motifs while mobilising a distinctive 'austerity aesthetic' that coincides and colludes with the state's neoliberal austerity narrative.

In part one, 'The British State of Home-Economics', we examine this austerity aesthetic as it came to the fore during the 'Great British Summer' of 2012, tracking the tensions evident in spectacles of citizenly consumption and competition-orientated inclusion that characterised the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the London's Olympic Games and surrounding televisual events. We consider how these events functioned - individually and collectively - as home-economic festivities that served to reinforce state self-assertion at a time of obvious uncertainty, typically through faux-ironic nostalgia and feigned inclusivity. In part two, 'Localism, Veg Patch Capitalism and Austerity', we unpack the fundamental contradictions found in the modesty claims of gentrified culinary activities and pastoralised localist discourses - stretching from the late 1990s - positioning these as building towards, becoming part of and bolstering the state's austerity narrative. Lastly, in part three, 'Temporal Deficit and Culinary Work-for-Labour', we analyse the foodscape's investment in temporal presumptions, metaphors, promises and paradoxes in order to expose how the structure of deficit that shapes the way capitalism's 'economy of time' is maintained through culinary 'work-for-labour', which has become more obvious since the 2007-8 financial crisis, especially when considered in relation to domestic spaces. Throughout, we use the term 'foodscape' to 'map food geographies' onto cultural activities and socio-economic patterns.¹⁴ Like Josée Johnston and Kate Cairns,¹⁵ we follow Arjun Appadurai by using the suffix 'scape' to mark 'cultural flows' of influence and 'the fluid, irregular shapes of [...] landscapes that characterise international capital'.¹⁶ However, where Appadurai contends that the 'global cultural economy' has upheld 'fundamental disjunctures between economy, culture, politics',¹⁷ we investigate the continuities between the culinary economy of British food culture and the political economy of neoliberal austerity, reading this apparent lack of 'disjuncture' as part of the ideological foreclosure upon which the state, and capitalism more broadly, depend.

THE BRITISH STATE OF HOME ECONOMICS

At the start of 2012 David Cameron argued that a newly 'responsible' capitalism, based on a market that is 'fair as well as free', would emerge, phoenix-like, from the current crisis to bring forth a 'moral' economic recovery.¹⁸ This claim for a 'genuinely popular capitalism' stood hand-in-hand with his longstanding, and explicitly neoliberal, assertion that his coalition would move Britain away from 'Big Government' towards a 'Big Society' by enabling 'the biggest, most dramatic redistribution of power from Whitehall to people on the street'.¹⁹ The celebratory summer of 2012 offered the Con-Lib government a platform for their claim to reconcile these ideals of inclusive participation and responsible entrepreneurship. Yet the surge in street parties, industrious home-economic creativity, and British union iconography (with flags, bunting, clothing, party accessories and more besides) only highlighted the state's co-option of citizens as consumer-spectators subject to compensatory extravagance branded as moral civic endeavour. Across state and private message-media, the government's austerity narrative was taken up and used to advance collective stoicism as a stereotypically British response to necessity, recasting

the Jubilee and Olympic festivities as healing the home 'nation' (and its constituent nations) by insisting on the 'non-death' of neoliberalism.²⁰ A home-economics of thrift and survival had been growing since 2008, but 2012 brought the triumphant glorification of such an outlook. While recession loomed large, Britain's constitutional uncertainty (particularly in the face of potential Scottish independence) helped reveal how such unionising statist activities - and the neoliberal British state itself - consistently depend upon privatising enclosure, consumptive silence, and an amnesia-inducing pastiche of imperial mythology and wartime nostalgia.

The 'Thames Jubilee Pageant' and Danny Boyle's 'Isles of Wonder' Olympic Opening Ceremony brought to mind both Frederic Jameson's description of the 'insensible colonisation of the present by the nostalgia mode',²¹ and the ongoing pertinence of Tom Nairn's reading of 'parody-Britain' as the 'ceaseless puppet show of sere age, ever-unfolding legitimacy, and constant evocation of 1940'.²² Recalling Britain's post-WWII euphoria and London's Olympic 'Austerity Games' of 1948, the 2012 celebrations employed this parodic nostalgia to inculcate celebratory consumption as patriotic self-restraint and to reawaken the 1940s wartime ideal of consensual socio-political perseverance during 'national' crisis. Pushing together Cameron's Big Society bluster with Blair's fashionably-bold Britannia and Thatcher's domestic management, the foodscape aided British self-projection as self-protection in 2012 through a culinary aesthetic that functioned in three primary ways. First, as an austerity-bound development of former Prime Minister Gordon Brown's 2008 invocation of Britain's WWII blitz 'spirit',²³ redirecting 'make-do' wartime resilience towards Cameron's 'can-do' Big Society.²⁴ Second, as a mutation of earlier British food iconography and celebrity culture to fit with the state's austerity narrative and its Britishness claims. Third, as a choreographed mode of conviviality which, from 'public' street parties to 'private' garden picnics, animated neoliberal tensions between claims of popular participation and multiple forms of exclusion and enclosure. Through these dominant functions, the British foodscape revealed the state's ongoing insistence on capital's right to structure the union and shape domestic life on the 'home front'.

Although numerous celebrity chefs bridge New Labour and Con-Lib phases, the public personae and career trajectory of Jamie Oliver make clear post-1997 continuities and the rhetorical and aesthetic mutations that have occurred under austerity. From the inception of *The Naked Chef* (1998), 'Jamie' the 'mockney charmer' stood for the state-endorsed entrepreneurial adventure of London's 'Brit-Pop' food culture, and the popular rise of soft ladism on primetime British TV.²⁵ While Oliver's Thatcherite/Blairite upward mobility appeared to contradict his reputation as a 'modern day Robin Hood',²⁶ his marketised social conscience exposed what Gerry Hassan calls 'social democracy's ... collusion with neoliberalism'.²⁷ Oliver's socially-aware programming and food-health campaigns between 2002 and 2008 underlined the state's longstanding failure to educate, nourish and provide for its working/would-be-working classes,²⁸ but also highlighted his proximity to the hypocrisies of New Labour's 'Third Way' welfare and its reliance on privatising adjustments. In the mid-to-late-2000s, Oliver's increasing awareness of Britishness also coincided with Gordon Brown's promotion of Britain's 'multi-cultural, multinational' uniqueness.²⁹ Praising Britain's 'patchwork' food culture, *Jamie's Great Britain* (2011) worked imperially nostalgic recipes (e.g. 'Empire Roast Chicken') and retro-royalist dishes (e.g. 'ER's Diamond Jubilee Chicken') into a unionist narrative that endorsed the 'maggie nation' and its imperial-derived ability to absorb all it encounters - an ability captured visually during the Olympic Closing Ceremony.³⁰ Oliver's latest ventures into

'brand Britain' via his *Union Jacks* restaurants and *Jamie* magazine reveal the persistence of this imperial-unionist outlook. As Owen Hatherley rightly observes, brand Oliver has also tapped into the retrogressive statism characterising recession Britain with his *Ministry of Food* TV programme and post-2008 public-engagement efforts, which overlapped with the 'austere consumerism' that enabled the 'Keep Calm and Carry On' poster campaign to gain ground within 'austerity nostalgia'.³¹ Indeed, Oliver's Jubilympic³² offerings were notably aligned with the state's austerity programme. The cover of his Olympic magazine issue pictured the eponymous culinary hero championing the union flag, and the Jubilee issue captured 2012's 'retro-chic' reimagining of Britishness with the strap-line 'Food Fit for the Queen' emblazoned on its cover alongside an image of a 'royally blinged-up' cupcake.³³

The cupcake was the definitive food item of 2012. Indeed, the Jubilympic austerity aesthetic managed to mobilise the cupcake's longstanding association with Manhattan's 1950s-inspired Magnolia Bakery (as eroticised in HBO's *Sex and the City*) and to re-orient and extend its flirtatious, feminine, metro-fashionista appeal by amalgamating references to postwar US prosperity and trendy 1950s diners with Britain's postwar rationing, Women's Institute baking and English village fetes.³⁴ This mix-and-match pastiche was supplemented by a particularly bourgeois air of self-deprecation and quasi-ironic thriftiness alongside media coverage of the popularity of the miniature cakes among celebrities and Britain's political elites. With images of David and Samantha Cameron tucking in to seemingly homemade and patriotically-iced cupcakes, British newspapers suggested that public celebrations of laboured domesticity were united with the state's investment in retro-nostalgic collectivity and sexualised/infantilised pleasure, as sugar-coated escape.³⁵ Dan Hancox has similarly analysed the 'post-colonial melancholia' of cupcake-overload as captured by 'Keep Calm and Eat Cupcakes' posters, and rightly identified the purposefulness of Jeremy Gilbert's examination of 'Keep Calm and Carry On' memorabilia as evidence of austerity Britain's reliance on 'nostalgic kitsch'.³⁶ For Gilbert, this fetishised campaign 'condenses ... the whole affective regime through which emotional responses to the crisis of neoliberalism are being organised'.³⁷ The iconic phrase works not to reclaim a 'stiff upper lip', nor to refute nostalgic attachments to the past, but rather to convey the painful, potentially paralysing, rupture that results from being caught between the impossibility of calmness in late capitalism's disaster-melee and the desire to maintain sanity in the face of all-consuming chaos.³⁸ Hatherley's earlier examination brought out the poster campaign's coupling of faux-ironic humour with neoliberal terror - conflating 1936 invasion paranoia (when the poster was first designed but not deployed), wartime survival (with which it is mistakenly associated) and the 2000s 'boom' (when it was first sold). Significantly, he also highlights the 'hauntology' of a benevolent, protective/repressive and all-seeing state that is offered through the campaign's 'legislated nostalgia' - a term coined by Douglas Coupland to explain how a population can be commanded to remember that which never existed.³⁹

As Hancox observes, union-adorned street party images set a 'counterfactual' historical tone during the Jubilympics,⁴⁰ drawing from the 1919 'Peace Teas', Victory in Europe or 'VE Day' celebrations, the 1951 'Festival of Britain' exhibition, and numerous royal coronations and weddings. Despite contemporary anti-austerity resistance, the 2011 London riots, and the difficult realities of 'home-front' struggle, this counterfactual nostalgia allowed Britain's (but specifically England's) streets to appear as wholesomely supportive of the state and its dignitaries. Further, although repeatedly described as all-inclusive celebrations, the parties

consistently revealed the ways in which British 'public' space is always-already enclosed, state-managed and defined by ownership and access patterns. With at least 9,500 Jubilee road closure requests in England and Wales, street party enclosures were widely reported as evidence of communal integration, 'public' participation and recession rallying.⁴¹ Cameron even 'hosted' his own weather-affected 'Big Society occasion', inviting an assortment of guests, including organisers of the Eden Project's 'Big Jubilee Lunch'⁴² to a closed/private Downing Street party.⁴³ With advertisements rearticulating the Con-Lib rationale of contributive participation, asking celebrities and 'ordinary' Britons 'what will you bring to the table?', the Eden Project's neighbourly efforts built a nostalgic ensemble of imagined equality and inclusivity that reportedly attracted some 8.5 million picnickers during summer 2012.⁴⁴ Notably, this Big Society-inflected campaign relied upon a public-private amalgamation of support, revealing how state, private business and 'third sector' organisations collectively endorsed consumptive camaraderie.⁴⁵ Unsurprisingly, British supermarkets led 2012's ideological push for food-based participation with advertising centred on 'retro' street parties, garden summers and domestic provisions. Tesco's black-and-white, mock-BBC infomercial portrayed a 1950s housewifely baking enthusiast offering jubilee discounts and employing faux-ironic humour to account for the suggestion that feminine re-domestication might cure economic instability. Despite Tesco's leading marketing position (and long-running 'Every Little Helps' TV ad campaign), Morrisons had perhaps the most telling advert, depicting former England cricketing star Andrew Flintoff at the centre of an in-store 'street' party just as staff claimed to 'feed the street' with an impressive spread of flag-adorned British party food. This was a scene of enclosure, of private capital reworking popular 'patriotic' participation into aisle-based insularity and excessive 'bargain' purchases, which rearticulated the state's attempts to co-opt 'the public' into consensus-led purchasing as a form of consumptive 'responsibility', even state-capital teamwork, and resonated with the Con-Lib's neoliberal rhetoric of participation as market-determined, all-inclusive competition.

Markedly similar motifs were deployed by McDonalds in its Olympic 'We All Make the Games' TV ad campaign. Here, supposedly 'voluntary' participation was enacted through a series of 'user-generated' corporate ads making inclusive participatory claims whereby even the young or disinterested were still Olympic contributors. With a background piano version of the 1985 Tears for Fears hit 'Everybody Wants to Rule the World', McDonald's presumes to 'welcome [you] to your life' as they, together with the wider 'Food Vision' for 'London 2012', replicate the neoliberal buzz vocabulary used by multinational corporations and neoliberal states to call on 'people' to join their 'vision' for the world.⁴⁶ While McDonalds' status as Olympic world sponsor has already been much critiqued,⁴⁷ corporate capital's capacity to embody the official rhetoric of public-private relations was crystallised in 2012 through the temporary creation of the 'Biggest McDonald's on the planet' inside the Olympic Park, with four additional branches - 'two open to the public, one for the athletes and officials in the Olympic Village and one at the press centre'.⁴⁸ The separation of paying populations as well as the organisation of once-public space into corporate realms of urgent excess conformed to the larger pattern of collective- or common-cost and private benefit that characterised the Olympics. Yet the construction and redevelopment of the 'Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park' in the London Borough of Hackney in East London also draws from longer patterns of urban regeneration and gentrification of London's marginal or outlying neighbourhoods.⁴⁹

The state's dominant role in the gentrification of Britain's foodscape has been played out in recent years through the food-based interests of the BBC - the broadcaster subsidised by compulsory license payments from every UK TV viewer. Backed by commercial subsidiary BBC Worldwide, the BBC heads up a raft of food programming that consistently relies upon consumptive 'participation' as a sign of 'good' and 'active' citizenship, as evidenced by BBC2's 'Great British' programming.⁵⁰ *The Great British Menu* (2006-2012), *The Great British Bake-Off* (2010 onwards) and *The Great British Food Revival* (2011-2012) consistently expose the fallacies of their own participatory idiom by insisting upon internally-judged competition and elite modes of consumption while claiming unity with and among an imagined 'great British public'. Repeatedly, the domesticated world of culinary normativity these programmes create serves to distract from their exclusionary norms. *The Great British Menu* fetishises gastronomic meritocracy but brings its Michelin-starred cookery and regional competition to 'the public' via its own distancing televisual spectacle. Each series culminates in an extravagant banquet finale seeking to capture and exploit the cultural/culinary zeitgeist of the time. In 2012, the show's 'Olympic Banquet' conflated the marketised language of time-pressured culinary risk with wartime perseverance and sportsmanlike glory in a display of culinary-sporting exclusivity that series judge Matthew Fort portrayed as ripe for popular domestication in one online BBC blog post.⁵¹ A comparable predicament arises from the 'amateur' competition offered up by *The Great British Bake Off*. Pivotal to 2012's culinary aesthetic, this show's cake-baking nostalgia, ironic self-deprecation and quaintly competitive spirit brought the BBC record viewing figures alongside gushing media reports of viewers being 'galvanized' into Women's Institute-related baking - despite the BBC offering no direct route for viewer participation.⁵² Significantly, the 'Bake Off' capitalises upon an imperially-rooted presentation of Britain's saleable version of pastoral Englishness, offering pseudo-colonial fair-play claims alongside cricketing countryside visuals and re-uniting the nostalgic 'charms' of British bunting with English village tea-parties and countrified kitchen aesthetics. *The Great British Food Revival* similarly uses ruralised farmhouse visuals alongside a peculiarly military 'call to action' to support celebrity chefs' claims to 'rediscover' the 'heritage' foods of a non-identified culinary golden age.⁵³ Rallying viewers to consume, cook or grow prized artisan ingredients themselves, participation is again reduced to consumer purchasing power and/or individual domestic work offered up as moral 'foodie' endeavor. In each programme 'Great British' consumers are encouraged collectively to buy in to the seemingly wholesome lifestyle and imagined culinary authenticity embedded within specific localities, food products and cookery techniques.⁵⁴ Reconnecting the home-economics of England's suburban middle class with the state's worldly ambitions/Britishness claims, the BBC's culinary invocations of archaic, rural and 'local' aesthetics markedly overlap with and re-enforce state politics in a manner that becomes increasingly evident in relation to the Con-Lib's growing localist agenda.

LOCALISM, VEG PATCH CAPITALISM AND AUSTERITY

The contemporary British foodscape has experienced a burgeoning of culinary localism that has been successful across 'boom' and 'bust' largely because its sale of local self-sufficiency as moral, ecological and economic 'good' upholds the neoliberal incongruities consistently disseminated by the state. By instigating local governance strategies to advance environmental

and socio-economic wellbeing in support of their community engagement and responsibility drive, the Con-Lib coalition - like their New Labour predecessors - have endorsed an 'eco-sustainability' ethos that follows Britain's signing up to the United Nation's 'Agenda 21' (LA21) in 1992.⁵⁵ Unsurprisingly, where Blair's neighbourly 'new localism' relied upon the 'managerial marketisation'⁵⁶ and centralising control mechanisms that characterised New Labour governmentality,⁵⁷ Cameron has repeatedly insisted that his coalition will bring 'emancipation' into being by allowing people to act for themselves within their local communities. This message took legislative form with the 2011 'Localism Act', which proclaimed ambitions to devolve unprecedented 'power to the people', to cultivate local 'enterprise zones', and to minimise bureaucratic intervention in favour of communal/voluntary assistance within the Big Society.⁵⁸ For all his 'new approach' insistence, Cameron's localism-as-change programme entails a transparent continuation of earlier state efforts to manage 'the public' and the economy through 'the local'. His austerity-led localism is, if anything, an extension of Thatcherite 'small state' domestic self-management rhetoric coupled with a Blairite insistence on equal 'opportunity for all' rather than actual socio-economic equality.⁵⁹ Akin to the rhetoric surrounding new 'free' schools and especially 'farm' schools, Con-Lib localism is clearly a way of articulating conserving and reactionary ambitions with 'liberatory' self-determination and 'liberal' socio-green motifs. As Harvey has argued, 'there is more than a hint of authoritarianism, surveillance, and confinement in [...] enforced localism'.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the coalition's state-managed local 'emancipation' narrative not only upholds centralised power, but redeploys neoliberalism's 'lure of localism' to offer gestural compensation for the very destruction of 'public' or, better still, common spaces at the behest of the private interests determining its recovery agenda.⁶¹ Following Harvey, we can therefore read the government's localist agenda as evidence of the neoliberal state's ability to create and enable 'an extensive oppositional culture' that nonetheless accepts the 'basic principles of neoliberalism' thereby foreclosing potential for significant radical opposition.⁶²

Reclaiming social responsibility alongside domesticated entrepreneurship, the expansion of what we call 'veg patch capitalism' helps maintain the state's austerity-localism narrative despite and even by means of its own oppositional self-projection. Gentrified food crusades and urban agricultural projects commonly work to re-articulate neoliberal empowerment tropes and to bind participants to the state's interest in small-scale compensatory gestures. The Capital Growth scheme's 'Big Idea' to create 2,012 new community gardens as part of 2012's 'leafy Olympic legacy' epitomised Con-Lib efforts to recuperate self-reliant communal participation through consensus-building public-private partnerships and cooperative 'green' endorsements.⁶³ Moreover, despite using the language of 'alternatives', the wholesome face of culinary localism means its own well-intentioned ideals repeatedly ignore, conceal or simply miss the superficiality of its gestural opposition.⁶⁴ Prevailing discourses insist that localised foodways and domestic caution offer viable alternatives to globalised exploitation by working towards socio-economic liberation and against waste creation, mass consumerism, corporate retail, and agri-business corruption. Although worthy and useful imperatives, this vague anti-capitalist positioning regularly overlooks a series of incongruities and contradictions within its own practices. In Britain this is often accompanied by a wholly romanticised image of the rural past as a quasi-feudal golden age. Such a fantasy serves to erase or obscure the connections between contemporary localism and the uneven global expansion of capitalism

and its asymmetric labour relations. Thus, locally-branded produce frequently depends upon extensive 'food miles' and global labour exploitation;⁶⁵ middle-class 'foodies' often drive to farmers' markets, despite individual claims to environmental responsibility, in order to seek out fresh 'bargains' even as farmers face supermarket price-pressures;⁶⁶ and, celebrity-endorsed frugality campaigns invariably reify aestheticised gastronomic excess and property ownership while portraying lifestyles to which most cannot aspire.

In line with Con-Lib efforts to 'manage' economic recovery through oxymoronic calls to conserve and consume, culinary localism seeks to showcase consumptive privilege and yet conceal class-based unevenness. This is achieved by holding on to an aspirational 'Cool Britannic' mindset while simultaneously returning to the self-conscious modesty of traditional English domesticity. The growth of urban farmers' markets is particularly indicative of how the aspirational culture of Blair's Britain has been reworked to combine notions of thrifty pastoralism with accumulated affluence, organic wellbeing and consumptive enjoyment.⁶⁷ Since the 1997 opening of Bath Farmers' Market (BFM), the local food 'enterprise' has proliferated into an assortment of business opportunities: farm shops and on-site eating venues; 'pick your own' activities and home delivery schemes; and temporary food vans and 'pop-up' restaurants. Such ventures often benefit from state endorsements, offering promotional literatures that repeat compensatory neoliberal claims to the environmental 'good' provided by local 'economic development strateg[ies]'.⁶⁸ Having arisen in direct response to LA21,⁶⁹ BFM positions itself as taking a 'leading role' in the eco-sustainable 'development' cause and, like the coalition government, promotes farmers' markets as bypassing the 'middleman' to provide mutually beneficial 'exchange'.⁷⁰ Culinary localism hereby epitomises Con-Lib endorsements of local consumer-collectives selling 'directly' to 'known' consumer-allies by extending opportunities for consuming rurality among a wealthy urban-suburban clientele. In this vein, Borough Market (an early Jamie Oliver haunt) sells itself as a local 'open public amenity' despite its profit-seeking reliance upon the consumptive investments and cosmopolitan ambitions of the international and urban gastro-tourists arriving daily at London's South Bank.⁷¹

Gastronomic localism has prompted mimicry and mutation within a variety of commercial settings seeking to capitalise on the quasi-farming appeal of this ever-expanding 'market'. One online venture called 'The Virtual Farmers' Market' domesticates and reformulates localism's directness claims so as to disconnect those it claims to digitally unite.⁷² Meanwhile, British supermarkets increasingly exploit localist aesthetics by partitioning stores into market-like grocery, bakery and 'deli' sections. Morrisons uses their new 'Fresh Market' to display 'locally-sourced' produce alongside 'exotic vegetables', cultivating an urban-pastoral cosmopolitanism that emulates high-end, transnational urban food markets like Borough. While such cosmo-chic food venues proliferate in London's gentrified areas, Morrisons sells their trendy status to those lower down the class-food-chain. As private price-competitive spaces, these commercial markets and local eateries all forcefully qualify Amanda Wise's generally positive reading of the spatial contexts in which 'low-level cosmopolitanism' might facilitate 'commensal practices'.⁷³ Instead, the explosion and evolution of farmers' markets has palpably underscored the mapping of exclusion that connects culinary gentrification, poverty-exploiting price disparities, the erosion of small town market spaces, and the failure of recession-hit retail to foster local 'spirit'. Supporting Local Government MP Eric Pickles' ambitions to reinvigorate British high streets, the state-commissioned 'Portas Review' (2011) championed by TV retail guru Mary Portas

called for further deregulation and recommended a British-localist 'National Market Day', positing that 'once we invest in and create social capital in the heart of our communities, the economic capital will follow'.⁷⁴ In this version of reality, our hearts and our social worlds are only about preparing the way for capital and cultivating growth whereby all markets ultimately lead to the 'free' and 'fair' market of Cameron's neoliberal fantasy.⁷⁵

The popularity of farmers' markets speaks to their insistence upon gastronomic pleasure and vegetable abundance in conjunction with ethical, frugal and wholesome lifestyles. This aesthetic is crucial to veg patch capitalism and the ways in which localist vocabulary has merged seamlessly into the discourse of contemporary foodism. With the fashionable resurgence of allotments, communal gardens and domestic self-sufficiency campaigns, the affectionate abbreviation 'veg patch' ('vegetable patch') circulates on television programmes and in culinary texts.⁷⁶ Yet kitchen gardens have been deeply embedded within British (though predominantly English) self-understanding, at least since the Small Holdings and Allotment Act of 1908. Rebecca Bramall foregrounds the 'function of historicity' in renewed, austerity-linked calls to 'Dig for Victory' as a central feature of the affective mythologies accompanying contemporary anti-consumerist discourses.⁷⁷ Expanding on Bramall's point, it is clear that vegetable patches have evolved to fulfill period-specific requirements and now draw upon an assortment of historicised ideals - from Victorian kitchen gardens and wartime 'home-front' nourishment, through 1970s 'green' aspiration and new-age holistic retreats, to the rooftop gardens popular among today's urban-trendies.⁷⁸ Typically, the nostalgic idealisation of allotments as collections of publicly-available, domestic growing spaces nevertheless fails to register their historic ties to the English enclosures, the destruction of the commons, and capitalism's growth via land acquisition.⁷⁹ The food-writing 'home chef' Nigel Slater captures this in his 2009 book *Tender*, volume 1, by equating his vegetable patch with a 'feeling of enclosure and protection', of individual 'sanctuary' from the urban frenzy 'outside' his garden walls.⁸⁰ The veg patch aesthetic here works to claim pastoral retreat as possible in the city, to carve out privileged, private and privatising green spaces that exclude the undesirable aspects of city life while remaining within and relying upon its globally-networked, wealth-producing potential. This urban-pastoral dialectic marks out veg patch capitalism's interaction with state efforts to build 'brand' Britain as a sustainable urban metropolis by maintaining an imperially-derived and elastic vision of English ruralism trapped within (the) British 'capital'.

With escalating commands to 'eat local' inevitably overlapping with 'buy British' campaigns, Britain's 'localised' foodscape increasingly combines patriotic iconography with romantic ruralism in its appeals to collective harmony. Indeed, food marketing repeatedly deploys statist insignia and pastoral connotations simultaneously. With its twee aesthetics and monarchist connections, the Prince of Wales' 'Royal Duchy' brand is a telling case; yet the union flag also adorns an array of 'heritage' foods and earth-clad 'local' produce. Lacking geographical specificity, such 'local' food promotions repeatedly rely upon vague nostalgic appeals to a typically English reserve and to the hazy bucolic bounty and 'organic community' of 'the countryside'. In this manner, adverts for supermarket Sainsbury's 2010 'Taste the Difference' campaign used Jamie Oliver's celebrity credentials and rambling monologue during a countryside romp to sell the supermarket's 'locally-sourced' but '100% British' pork sausages.⁸¹ Similarly, a recent Morrisons ad saw celebrity TV hosts 'Ant and Dec' learning about the store's 'local-sourcing' policy through chatty in-store repartee and source-site visits.⁸² While the reified

'local' producers remain either absent or spatially-bound in these adverts, the easy countryside access displayed by both sets of celebrity-consumers compellingly reinforces Raymond Williams' sense that Britain's privileged classes connect the urban and rural through their capacity to shape, inhabit and consume both spaces.⁸³

Seemingly fleeing London to find domestic-pastoral bliss, TV chefs Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and Jamie Oliver encapsulate middle-class urban-rural mobility. Fearnley-Whittingstall's *Escape to River Cottage* (1999) was a paradigmatic case of localism's insistence on pastoral escape as self-protective, self-indulgent, 'downsizing' retreat. Following his self-sufficiency 'dream', the successful London chef apparently chose to relinquish urban privilege in order to embark upon a 'pioneering' homestead adventure and become a 'Dorset downsizer' in his charmingly dilapidated rural 'cottage' only later to upsize into a fully-fledged farm at 'River Cottage HQ'.⁸⁴ Financed by private capital accumulated in the metro-financial centre, this series packaged the home-economic risk of Hugh's food-autonomy quest into fulfilling self-reliance and the satisfaction of domestic growth. Throughout, the chef-presenter relied on a familiar self-mocking tone to claim knowing ironic distance from his consumptive privilege, and this stylised whimsicality continues to defend and secure his ever-expanding River Cottage empire and online product overflow.⁸⁵ A similar pattern characterises Oliver's *Jamie at Home* series (2007-2008), in which the celebrity chef narrates his newfound gardening pleasure by showcasing the culinary potential of the seasonal, organic and heritage foods cultivated in his sizeable veg patch.⁸⁶ The accompanying book, subtitled '*Cook your way to the Good Life*', referenced the BBC's 1970s suburban self-sufficiency sitcom *The Good Life* (1975-8) to reclaim the aspirational logic of domestic modesty, while deploying Oliver's roots 'in a village in Essex' to reinforce ideas of both quasi-rural 'return' and aspiration-based self-improvement.⁸⁷ 'Jamie' consistently portrays this accessible-inaccessible domesticity and class-based self-referentiality to advertise his own entrepreneurial path as part of the sales pitch for his expanding culinary empire. With both Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, the celebrity performance of growing home produce, displaying domestic perseverance, and showcasing semi-ruralised entrepreneurial success has since been translated into the austerity rhetoric of culinary self-sufficiency and home economic restraint during recession.

In the context of socio-economic upheaval, the self-deprecating tone of localist discourse is loaded with the moral and nostalgic implications of home economy. Citing Delia Smith's return to 'make do' wartime frugality in her re-released *Frugal Food* (1970-2008), John Burridge rightly observes that, under austerity, food-based 'incitements to economy sit alongside incitements to extravagance'.⁸⁸ While Fearnley-Whittingstall's trend-setting 'back-to-nature' enterprise indicated how celebrity chefs have long led the 'modest' lifestyle campaign, the media personae and culinary offerings of Nigel Slater are especially useful in this context. Slater's autobiographical *Kitchen Diaries* series notably tracks the mutation of New Labour's cosmopolitan self-indulgence into the frugality-morality discourse underpinning Con-Lib austerity-localism. Where *Kitchen Diaries* (2005) foregrounded his fondness for North London's elite gastronomic hideouts, its 2012 sequel created an imagined anti-commercial domesticity that privileged frugal living. Slater increasingly performs the domestication of hard times through his narration of individualising home retreat and repetition of the mantra of frugality entrancing today's self-declared 'foodies'.⁸⁹ The cook's delight in the 'homely smell[s]' of thrifty grain-based meals sits alongside his appetite for 'humble pleasures' based

on carefully selected specialist ingredients.⁹⁰ This insistence on frugality as culinary choice reinforces localism's emphasis on the bourgeois ideology of thrift,⁹¹ reminding us of Bourdieu's 'self-imposed austerity' which, for most, is no austerity at all.⁹² Characteristic of post-crash governmentality, Slater's rhetoric of austere choice and domestic resourcefulness becomes a means of (re)claiming privacy, time and space - a therapeutic compensation always-already set within excessive consumptive comfort. Numerous recipes and anecdotes predicated upon 'leftovers' provide telling evidence of purchase and culinary preparation beyond the point of consumptive need. Slater even considers 'leftovers as treasure, morsels of frugal goodness', delighting in the 'gorgeous, frugal little snacks' made from leftover 'cold-cuts'.⁹³ Here, 'using up' items is seemingly optional, to be encouraged, but never make-or-break - a far cry from the living realities of shopping budgets, income prioritisation, and the daily 'burden' of economising faced by Britain's growing number of low-income and/or indebted families.⁹⁴

With his Boxing Day 'Celebration of Frugality',⁹⁵ Slater's innovative use of leftovers vividly highlights the self-contradictory logic of recycling as a form of home economic prudence predicated upon previous excess, present satisfaction, and a secure future. This gesture of thrift as compensation for over-consumption invites direct comparison with government spending cutbacks. Such measures are consistently justified by the coalition as future-oriented self-protection, as compensating for past excess or excessive practices, and as a supposedly resourceful way of repaying fiscal/moral debt. In May 2012, Cameron rebranded austerity as an 'efficient' way of compensating for capitalist profligacy - a competent management of resources and labour-time that supposedly 'saves' wasteful expenditure and allows the 'streamlining' of labour fundamental to the accumulation of capital.⁹⁶ The 'recycling' here is simply a move back around the 'boom-bust' mentality that enables the capitalist cycle to continue ad infinitum. Where overworked, underpaid or simply unpaid labour represents successful state-led corporate 'efficiency', localism's veg patch rhetoric frames anti-waste as pro-ecology and pro-sustainability, and simultaneously pro-health and pro-pleasure. Yet, from the unwanted surfeit typical of organic 'veg boxes' to the energy costs accompanying small-scale production,⁹⁷ 'eco'-foodie initiatives are repeatedly tied to capitalist excess, to consumptive privilege, and to the gestures of disavowal enabled by the state's quasi-Thatcherite 'waste not want not' attitude that nonetheless demands consumptive indulgence.

TEMPORAL DEFICIT AND CULINARY WORK-FOR-LABOUR

In the *Grundrisse* (1857-8), Marx states that 'all economy' is reducible to the 'economy of time' because capital's insatiable need for evermore surplus-value is largely dependent upon the prolongation and extraction of evermore surplus-labour time.⁹⁸ As explained in *Capital* (1867), this involves a combination of 'absolute surplus-value', achieved by compressing all non-work activities and lengthening overall work hours, and 'relative surplus-value', achieved by compressing necessary-labour into ever-smaller portions of time.⁹⁹ In late capitalism, the multiple ways in which time-labour relations are manipulated to facilitate the elongation, compression, and exploitation of wage-labour have become easy to observe. So too the demand for speed in relation to the unending openness of time-for-labour through the normalisation of variable work hours, multiple/multiplying tasks, work-time domestication, and mobile technological access. Such pressure-and-expansion patterns relate to the 'time-space

compression' with which Harvey characterises postmodernity and the neoliberal 'efficiencies' of globalised financialisation.¹⁰⁰ In contemporary Britain, the language of 'time-saving' as 'cost-saving' efficiency has been brought into sharp relief as it is deployed against labour in all its forms. Unpaid labour came to the fore as UK unemployment figures began to rise substantially in the late 2000s and, as Guy Standing makes explicit, 'work-for-labour' - any task outside of wage-labour that is oriented towards capital accumulation - is prospering in flexible labour markets.¹⁰¹ Under neoliberal austerity, working hard to gain wage-labourer status (e.g. job applications, interviews, re-skilling and CV updating) or to enhance wage-labourer security/prestige (e.g. working during 'leisure' time or enhancing work-skill efficiency) is increasingly demanded and glorified as part of a self-flagellating response to precarity. In the UK this has become an essential part of the move from welfare to 'workfare' that began under New Labour and has made a headline assault on benefit claimants, the disabled, and the young and out-of-work under the Con-Libs.¹⁰²

The neoliberal rhetoric of workfare and working-for-labour has been readily absorbed, reified and refashioned by the British foodscape through its promotion of culinary work-for-labour. Time has always been of the essence when it comes to food production, distribution, preparation and consumption, with each phase revealing the manipulation of time and time-labour relations for surplus-value creation. Within the professional domain, long working hours, restaurant kitchen efficiency, just-in-time (JIT) delivery logistics and best-before/use-by dates are all obviously geared towards maximising profit. Meanwhile, the time-pushed work-force is typically maintained via quick, easy access to cheap, fast calories - often via instant, frozen or ready-made meals, in-house restaurant provisions, and the exploitation of domestic, typically gendered, work-for-labour.¹⁰³ Distinct from food-based wage-labour, we define 'culinary work-for-labour' as any task involved in food purchasing, preparation and consumption that is outside of paid work but serves the accumulation of capital by reproducing labour-power (e.g. practicing culinary skills and acquiring dietetic knowledge in order to create quick, nutritionally-balanced meals after work); by facilitating surplus-labour exploitation (e.g. consuming foods and supplements in order to prolong productive activity, pre-preparing and eating office-based lunches, or food-shopping in 24-hour supermarkets); and, by catering for extended wage labour-time by offering fast solutions for food consumption (e.g. buying fast food or snacks 'on-the-go', mastering speedy cooking techniques, or purchasing kitchen efficiency aids). The language of time is also deeply embedded in culinary literature, from precise recipe timings and meal planners to evocative time-based descriptions of consuming seasonal produce. Yet, significantly, the temporal vocabulary of culinary texts increasingly connects consumption with the desire to compensate for the speedy and productive lifestyles that disrupt, even destroy, ideas of domestic routine or consumptive regularity. As food consumption takes on evermore uncertain forms, with increasingly limited, non-existent or individualised meal times, culinary discourse points to the ways in which we respond to time-pressure by managing our domestic time-spaces and daily rhythms through techniques of culinary self-mastery. In different but overlapping works, Dale Southerton (2009), Mark Fisher (2009) and Peter Fleming and Carl Cederström (2012) have all analysed the explosion of a lifestyle management industry geared toward curing the psychosomatic consequences of neoliberalism's vast apparatus of time-based exploitation. We argue that Britain's austerity foodscape plays a crucial role in what Southerton describes as the 'contemporary malady' of time-pressure.¹⁰⁴ We posit that a 'temporal deficit' - or, the sense of

a loss or lack of time, of an excess of temporal obligation, of perpetual time-task arrears - is pivotal to the foodscape's compensatory culture, feeding into the reification of culinary work-for-labour and consumptive self-management as 'remedies' that nonetheless support capital's self-serving temporal logic. Such culinary 'solutions' are propagated most forcefully through televisual spectacles, advertising campaigns and celebrity-endorsed products connecting consumptive pleasure with aspirational organisation. Promoting culinary competence as home-economic prudence, these food-media commodities notably support the Con-Lib's austerity-efficiency plan wherein to 'save' or avoid 'wasting' time is to become a 'good' citizen of economic recovery. Britain's time-obsessed food culture then glorifies and strengthens a neoliberal understanding of individual agency and domestic efficiency as social 'goods' that can free-up 'spare' time for both additional consumptive leisure and additional work-for-labour activities.¹⁰⁵

Today's foodscape insists upon dual compensatory motifs of time-saving acceleration and calming deceleration, reminding us of the ways in which fast and slow temporalities exist in dialectical tension. Food discourses repeatedly equate daily nourishment with temporal burden, and propagate the need to 'save' time via culinary efficiency but also to 'savour' time via culinary pleasure and escape. Carlo Petrini's 1986 description of Slow Food's opposition to 'Fast Food' hegemony even demonstrates how the gastro-ethical 'slow' claim is bound to and by 'fast' as its imagined nemesis but also its *raison d'être*.¹⁰⁶ This slow-fast dialectic is integral to the culinary 'economy of time', the promotion of temporal deficit, and the boom/bust mythology embedded in the state's austerity narrative. For the dialectical bind between 'fast' and 'slow' vividly maps onto the mutual co-dependence of economic 'boom' and 'bust'. Where the latest 'boom' accumulated rapidly accelerating debt and long-term repayment chaos, the 'bust' has brought short-term repayment together with drawn-out phases of low-interest and structural unemployment. The boom-narrative of the wealth-producing 'fast' life and associated 'fast' pleasures also promises the 'slow' pace of pleasure-pausing or temporal escape via holiday homes and rural retreats. Meanwhile, the bust-narrative of 'slow' recovery after a lightning-fast market collapse has yielded 'efficiency' claims and the persistent frenzy of work-for-labour tasks. In these interweaving narratives, the fast-slow dialectic connects with the ways in which time and consumption are manipulated so as to enable consumers to 'buy out' of capitalist frenzy by 'buying in' to temporal deficit.

Daniel Miller observes that one of the 'most curious aspects of the relationship between time and consumption is the circumstances under which we are able, in some sense or other, to 'buy time'.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, the temporal deficit is consistently deployed to sell products indicating that we can 'buy time' by purchasing time-saving, task-saving culinary commodities. Contemporary food retail is replete with products enabling domestic consumers to 'save' kitchen time - or to minimise the time-costs of culinary work-for-labour - in order to 'buy time' for other activities. This market appears to have widened under austerity despite specifically catering to Britain's flourishing food culture. Luxury time-related food products include: an expanding range of gastro-friendly pre-packaged options (e.g. nutritionally-tested 'food-on-the-go' ranges and celebrity-endorsed ready-meals); a proliferation of cooking aids and high-tech domestic equipment (e.g. multi-tasking food processors and convection microwave-oven hybrids); and a plethora of pre-prepared ingredients (e.g. pre-washed salad bags and pre-chopped vegetables). Many of these products speak to capital's slow-fast dialectic by marketing speedy solutions that

maintain the idea or aesthetic of slowness by offering culinary shortcuts for traditionally slow-cooked or leisure-linked foods. Stews, soups and curries are ostensibly made quicker and easier by using stock cubes, ready-pulverised garlic or pre-mixed spice blends, just as part-baked bread or pre-mixed cake batters enable consumers to capture the feeling of leisurely baking without the temporal cost or affective culinary risk. Mimicking professional expertise and enabling celebrity-endorsed accomplishment, such time-saving high-demand commodities highlight the coercive nature of the temporal deficit within which we are consistently told that we can 'buy time' but only if we also 'buy in' to fetishising excess and celebrity culture. Meanwhile, the culinary market offers temporal compensation through acts of purchasing that not only contribute to surplus-value in production, but help to 'free up' more surplus labour-time for its creation. The temporal deficit thus results in a double-bind: to 'buy time' is repeatedly sold as a way to 'buy into' an alternate temporal rhythm so as to 'buy out' of today's profit-driven rush; yet this 'buy out' is always-already defined by the necessity both to buy and 'buy in' to capitalism and the myth that we have 'no time' for ourselves.

Food discourses commonly promote culinary work-for-labour as a leisurely activity that compensates for temporal deficit through the temporal wealth of unhurried consumptive pleasure and sensory escape. Taking time over shared meals, losing oneself in moments of sensual enjoyment, and savouring episodes of culinary creation or product selection are all exoticised and eroticised even as they are packaged as domestic bliss, culinary care and holistic self-fulfillment. TV chefs have capitalised on the popular uptake of Slow Food's gastronomic localism to depict their own pastoral meanderings into culinary work-for-labour as forms of protection or flight from the urban rush. Tellingly, River Cottage programmes open with an audible 'slow-down' by moving from traffic sounds to bluegrass jazz, and *Jamie at Home* uses Tim Kay's (2008) song 'My World' to frame countryside cookery as 'making up for losing so much time'. Both make clear that the attractive 'slow' life always relies upon, just as it seeks to escape, a lifestyle built upon professional city-speed and personal wealth. Recuperative 'slowness' and domestic harmony have also been the bedrock of Nigella Lawson's urbanite claims for 'work-life balance' as described in her TV programming and accompanying cookbooks. In 2000, the 'domestic goddess' imagined a split between the professional 'working week' and her domesticated 'weekend alter-ego',¹⁰⁸ and in *Nigella Express* (2007) Lawson similarly claimed that, although dedicating 'the odd weekend' to the 'general pursuit of unhurried cooking', she usually exists in a 'state of obligation-overload' where 'food has to be fitted in'.¹⁰⁹ Here, temporal deficit and compensatory weekends premised on abundance allow culinary work-for-labour to function as an exercise in the time-management needed to balance family and professional commitments. Sainsbury's current 'Live Well For Less' TV ad campaign moves this culinary management into the time/cost-saving mindset of austerity-efficiency while maintaining the week-to-weekend split of earlier industrial work patterns. One advert encourages consumers to use Sunday roast 'leftovers' to create speedy and thrifty follow-up weekday meals. With idealised family mealtimes and a musical appeal to 'slow down' on Sundays, the advert romanticises the consumptive leisure of lavish weekend dining as well as the efficient acceleration and economic efficiency of extending one meal into several.

Combining the slow-oriented implications of gastronomic 'goodness' with the speed-oriented demands of flexible labour, 'Good Food Fast' has become the culinary slogan of middle-class foodism. *Jamie's 30 Minute Meals* (2010) capitalised on this temporal mantra by

deploying the consumptive aspiration accompanying the domestication of professionalised efficiency. 'Jamie' even boasts that 'this is an energetic workhorse of a book' as his own culinary labour is fetishised as a fast-paced, competitive, masculine endeavour.¹¹⁰ The book's quick exposure shots and photographic 'busyness' celebrate rapid culinary activity, and the televisual counterpart uses dramatic music and a visual countdown to impart an exhilarating sense of labour-driven urgency. In line with Con-Lib 'crisis' discourse, speed is sold as a compensatory risk-based response to temporal deficit just as the series visibly reinforces Cameron's workfare-inspired 'connection' between labour, risk and rewards.¹¹¹ This neoliberal matrix of domesticated efficiency and faux-competitive risk-taking is then incorporated into the book's illustration and Oliver's televised creation of fresh, vibrant food, as well as the imagined sociable leisure-time set aside for its consumption. Oliver's latest book release *Jamie's 15 Minute Meals* (2012) repeats these gestures, with an introduction explaining that to enter the 'world of *15 Minute Meals*' readers must first purchase the 'kitchen gadgets' needed to 'get the meals done in time'.¹¹² As the fake clock-time, challenging time-scale, and display of expertise all make clear, the aspirational spectacle of Jamie's 15 minute 'world' is defined by the consumptive access and professional skill-set that cogently distances 'the public' with whom Oliver claims empathy and to whom he dedicates the book. Such distancing was reinforced by a recent advert for Freeview TV which depicted a young couple, dinners in hand, repeatedly rushing to watch *Jamie's 15 Minute Meals* on TV. The advert ingeniously juxtaposes Oliver's time-pressured proficiency with the sale of a product designed to record, delay, pause and rewind; that is, to manipulate time in accordance with the demands of neoliberalism's time-efficiency, flexible labour, and meal-rush realities.

The fast-slow dialectic of culinary media consistently relays aspirational spectacle through highly gendered, sexualised or fetishistic depictions of work-for-labour and food consumption. Although programming such as Oliver's or BBC2's *Masterchef* fetishise hyper-active culinary masculinity, food is most commonly associated with the female body as a provider of both nurturing domesticity and carnal satisfaction. No British celebrity is more famous in this regard than Nigella Lawson, whose televisual performances consistently exploit her maternal and feminised curves to emphasise the already eroticised temporalities of food consumption. *Nigella Express* carries a particularly sexualised slow/fast temporal dynamic with a 'Quick quick slow' chapter offering up '[p]repare ahead' recipes designed to delay and heighten satisfaction.¹¹³ Similarly, the *Nigella Bites* (1999-2001) TV show saw 'Nigella' storing away her culinary creations then returning at night to indulge in secretive acts of gustatory self-pleasure. With an erotic marketing history dating back to Cadburys' infamous Flake adverts of the 1960s-1980s, the British foodscape's investment in chocolate provides overt examples of this sexualised 'guilty pleasures' narrative. Mars' 2011 'I know what I fancy' campaign for Galaxy chocolate granted allusions to female self-pleasuring as a way of unwinding after a busy working day, using slow-seduction to suggest an absent moment of climatic satisfaction. Likewise, in the early 2000s, Marks & Spencer (Britain's middle-class staple-retailer) launched its famous 'This is not just ...' TV ad campaign, which similarly used sensual jazz sounds, elongated breathy descriptions and drawn-out 'gastro-porn' visuals to create temporal-aesthetic tension. The explicitly sexualised consumptive slowness worked to flaunt 'M&S' excellence as the exclusivity of temporal opulence while offering up ready-made gastronomic pleasure without work-for-labour time-investment. Although

repositioning slightly post-crash, M&S has upheld its play with culinary temporality in their ‘Terribly Clever’ (2011) and ‘Simply M&S’ (2012) ready-meal advertisements, using audible tempo shifts to move from meticulous culinary instructions to the task-saving time-provision claim of pre-prepared gastronomy. A further play on temporal expansion compensating for temporal contraction is offered in the brand’s 2010 ‘Fuller for Longer’ range, offering to delay hunger by providing high-protein options to help weight loss. Clearly, M&S continues to appeal to a ‘guilt’ consumption paradigm, selling exclusivity to middle-class consumers while moving from elongated gustatory pleasure to dietary purpose via protracted satiety. Aspirational rationale here becomes entwined with the neoliberal achievement of self-regulatory weight-loss achieved by managing consumptive timings. Self-managed bodily normativity then becomes compensation for protracted labour-time and an economic market wherein one must have less, to last longer, and work harder, in order to be more.

In 2012, a triad of cookbooks - *Cook Yourself Thin Faster*, *Jamie’s 15 Minute Meals*, and *Laura Santini’s Flash Cookery* - all used the triple rationalisation of time, price and caloric/nutritional breakdown to gesture towards the accumulating guilt-based pressures weighing down today’s consumers. These diet-culinary hybrids indicate the ways in which dietary techniques and culinary work-for-labour are increasingly positioned as fruitful, even necessary, methods of self-improvement. With its reflexive title, the expanding *Cook Yourself Thin* brand markedly rearticulates neoliberalism’s entrepreneurial self-management as the aspirational self-moderation achieved by acquiring a new skills-set. Indeed, their culinary philosophy speaks to the Con-Lib’s ‘Welfare to Work’ insistence on attaining ‘independence’ (from benefits) via apparently admirable, yet necessarily unpaid, work-for-labour activities that enhance ‘employment prospects’.¹¹⁴ *Cook Yourself Thin Faster* (2012) even promotes culinary re-skilling in order to break the boom/bust dietary ‘cycle of self-deprivation and cheating’ in language explicitly akin to the neoliberal mantra of re-skilling for renewed wage-labour opportunities. Such compensatory promises underpin all ‘new start’ resolutions, as captured by the ‘wipe the slate clean’ and ‘get back on track’ ethos of Activia’s 2011 New Year’s TV ad campaign. While both brands claim respite from the dietary pendulum, they nonetheless hold to the vocabulary of guilt, denial and regret that simply re-affirms the cyclical dietary-temporal economy of debt and credit – the logic of restricting, purging, exercising or delaying hunger in order to repay the ‘debt’ of past indulgence and to purchase dietary ‘credit’ for speculative future consumption. These well-known dietary techniques echo, in dietetic form, austerity-based claims for a new beginning, positioned as compensating for previous debt-based excess by inaugurating a new cycle of growth. Moreover, just as an ever-expanding diet-food industry continues to profit from consumers’ attempts to manage a controlled, consumptive life, this almost bulimic-based hope for ongoing ‘boom-and-bust’ looks set to continue and to do so as demanded by a system of cyclical, if accelerating, surplus-value creation.¹¹⁵

CONCLUDING NOTE

This discussion has been concerned with the culinary austerity aesthetic of 2012, its ties to earlier and ongoing localist discourses and motifs, and the imagined temporal deficit and dominating fast-slow dialectic that structures experiences of food and food’s televisual presentation in the contemporary British foodscape. We have shown how food and food culture have performed

a central role in connecting wartime/postwar thriftiness with home-front jubilation; promoting 'veg patch' self-provision as a form of green capital; and cultivating self-managed domestic routines that aid capital accumulation and rearticulate the coalition government's 'Get Britain Working' campaign.¹¹⁶ These culinary tropes have thrown into sharp relief the ways in which the state's governing austerity narrative enables consumptive excess but demands consumptive modesty and positions individual and competitive moral 'goodness' as the basis for economic self-maintenance. Advancing such neoliberal 'freedoms', the Con-Lib government has helped spawn and foster an austerity-defined culture of 'disavowal' within which ironic and knowing distance might be claimed by those able to engage in state-defined yet culturally reified acts of 'gestural anti-capitalism'.¹¹⁷ This has become a central feature of Britain's austerity food culture wherein claims for 'modest' or 'responsible' consumption and 'all in it together' quips are deployed as compensation for unacceptable living standards, a lack of democratic freedoms, and the absence of an oppositional politics of substance. In 2013, the 'Horsemeat Scandal' that continues to rock Europe and the UK has crystallized this superficial non-opposition by instigating moral panic over - and widespread disavowal of - a widely discredited food/financial system. Yet here, as elsewhere, the claimed 'solutions' to the 'crisis' only serve to bolster structural asymmetry by justifying privileged forms of 'alternative' consumption and prioritising expensive home-made, local, slow(er) food.

Britain's contemporary foodscape consistently fuels and reveals the self-contradictory yet self-perpetuating logic of capital as manifest in the neoliberal enterprise of state-led austerity as the latest self-serving response to capitalism's ongoing/permanent crisis. Fundamentally, the relationship between capitalism, its crises, and state intervention has been at the core of leftist critiques of the mode of production at least since Marx, and more recently Noam Chomsky, David Harvey, Naomi Klein, Slavoj Žižek¹¹⁸ and others have explored the self-induced nature of capitalist crises and the means by which crises are capitalised upon, as Milton Friedman famously declared, to 'produce real change'.¹¹⁹ Citing Friedman, Stuart Hall situates the Con-Lib's policy 'avalanche' within Britain's longer neoliberal trajectory to reveal how 'change' has been the rhetorical calling card of new governments despite their acceptance of pre-established neoliberal patterns.¹²⁰ Harvey has similarly enumerated the brazen contradictions of neoliberal states which typically advocate individual and market freedoms while imposing 'good' business conditions and 'favour[ing] the integrity of the financial system [...] over the well-being of the population'.¹²¹ In dealing with their 'credit-crunch' inheritance the Con-Lib government has made these impulses more obvious than they were under both New Labour and Thatcherism. Consequently, with a 'master narrative' advancing 'Reform' and 'Choice',¹²² the government of austerity offers neoliberal pronouncements, faintly recalling bourgeois liberalism, insisting that the individual remains free to choose and to consume, but only if s/he chooses to be an exploited labourer and a fetishised as well as fetishising consumer; caught in a marketplace described as open and equal but predicated upon asymmetry, inequality and exclusion.

Throughout 2012, British food culture and food-based asymmetries became integral features of the flagrant contradictions between state-enforced austerity and state-sponsored mega-events. By December, a flurry of news stories documenting the rapid rise in food banks ran alongside festive supermarket adverts advocating domestic entrenchment via familial meal times.¹²³ In Westminster, David Cameron maintained that food bank volunteers should be praised as part of his Big Society and responded to food poverty questions with promises of

inflation avoidance, tax improvements, benefits management and business developments.¹²⁴ Unsurprisingly, the prime minister ended the year as he began, advocating the neoliberal fallacies of economic moralism, political voluntarism and asymmetric growth as holding the key to recovery-survival. Operating within the discursive mode of ‘capitalist realism’, the Con-Lib coalition thus bespeaks the neoliberal language of ready-made ‘solutions’ to an ongoing economic downturn that has come to stand for capitalism’s end even as it is used to perpetuate capitalism and reinforce the myth of its pre-eminence.¹²⁵ In 2009, Cameron mobilised a markedly Platonic metaphor to characterise his government as ‘[s]teering our country through this storm’.¹²⁶ At the start of 2013, he reworked this image of directional leadership to describe his resolution to ‘stick to the course’ in order to steer clear of ‘the abyss’.¹²⁷ Resuscitating the rhetoric of pre-determined capitalist-paralysis to explain austerity’s persistence, Cameron admitted his government ‘are making tough choices about our future’ yet repeated the Thatcherite mantra that ‘there is no alternative’.¹²⁸ In so doing, Britain’s PM revealed the neoliberal state’s guiding principle: that the choices made by governments can offer no alternative realities for those they govern.¹²⁹

Notes

1. See David Cameron, ‘The Age of Austerity Speech’, 26 April 2009. Full recording available from: <http://www.conservatives.com/Video/Webcameron.aspx?id=b3b3d2c1-353a-4d53-bef2-c5ab79fbae5d>.

2. ‘Cool Britannia’ was the name given to a supposed upsurge of commercial and popular cultural vitality in the UK under the auspices of the early New Labour government 1997-2001.

3. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991, p5.

4. Alan Warde, *Consumption, Food & Taste: Culinary Antinomies and Commodity Culture*, London, Sage, 1997, p3.

5. See, for example, *Cultural Studies*, Special Issue ‘Cultural Studies and Anti-Consumerism: A Critical Encounter’, 22, 5, (2008).

6. See Roopali Murkerjee and Sarah Banet-Weiser (eds), *Commodity Activism; Cultural Resistance in Neoliberal Times*, New York, New York University Press, 2012; Josée Johnston, ‘Counter-hegemony or Bourgeois Piggery?: Food Politics and the Case of Foodshare’ in Wynne Wright and Gerard Middendorf (eds), *The Fight Over Food: Producers, Consumers, and Activists Challenge the Global Food System*, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008, pp93-121; Wendy Parkins and Geoffrey Craig, *Slow Living*, Oxford and New York, Berg, 2006.

7. See, for example, ‘Food and Foodways; Explorations in the History and Culture of Human Nourishment’, Special Issue Food Globality and Foodways, *Localities* 19, 1-2, (2011); Tim Lang, ‘Conclusion: Big Choices about the Food System’ in Geoffrey Lawrence, Kristen Lyons & Tabatha Wallington (eds), *Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainability*, London, Earthscan, 2010, pp271-288; and Tim Lang, Sue Dibb, and Shivani Reddy, *Looking Back Looking Forward: Sustainability and UK Food Policy 2000-2011*, London, Sustainable Development Commission, 2011.

8. See Ben Highmore, ‘Introduction: “Out of the strong came forth sweetness” - sugar on the move’, *New Formations*, 74, (2011): 5-17, <http://doi.org/fxnndd6>.

9. *Ibid.*, p9.

10. Tracey Jenson, ‘Tough Love in Tough Times’, *Studies in the Maternal*, 4, 2, (2012): 1-26, available at www.mamsie.bbk.ac.uk.

11. See, Martin Caraher, Tim Lang and Paul Dixon, ‘The influence of TV and celebrity chefs on public attitudes and behaviour among the English public’, *Journal of the Association for the Study of Food and Society*, 4, 1, (2000): 27-46; Heather Nunn, ‘Investing in the “Forever Home”: from Property Programming to “Retreat TV”’ in Helen Wood and Beverley Skeggs (eds), *Reality Television and Class*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp169-183.

12. Lyn Thomas, ‘Alternative realities: downshifting narratives in contemporary lifestyle television’, *Culture Studies*, 22, 5, (2008): 558-572.

13. See, ‘*The Royal Charter for the Continuance of the British Broadcasting Corporation*’, available online, http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/about/how_we_govern/charter.pdf; and, Channel 4’s self-defining corporate statement, <http://www.channel4.com/info/corporate/about>.

14. Bent Egbery Mikkelsen, ‘Images of Foodscapes: Introduction to foodscape studies and their application in the study of

healthy eating out of home environments', *Perspectives in Public Health*, 131, 5, (2011): 209-216.

15. See José Johnstone and Kate Cairns, 'Eating for Change', in Roopali Mukherjee and Sarah Banet-Weiser (eds), *Commodity Activism: Cultural Resistance in Neoliberal Times*, New York, New York University Press, 2012, pp219-237.

16. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1996, p33.

17. *Ibid.*, pp32-33.

18. David Cameron, 'Moral Capitalism' Speech, 19.01.2012. Full transcript available from: <http://www.newstatesman.com/uk-politics/2012/01/economy-capitalism-market>.

19. David Cameron, 'Big Society' Speech, 19 July 2010. Full transcript available from: <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/big-society-speech/>.

20. See Colin Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2011.

21. Frederic Jameson, 'Postmodernism: Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', *New Left Review* 1/146, July-August (1984): 59-92.

22. Tom Nairn, *Paviah: Misfortunes of the British Kingdom*, London, Verso, 2002, pp16-17. This point is also made by Michael Gardiner in 'London and the Right to Govern', *Bella Caledonia*, 14 January 2013, available from: <http://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2013/01/14/london-and-the-right-to-govern>.

23. Gordon Brown maintained that the 'calm, determined British spirit' will 'lead the way' through and beyond global financial crisis in 'Stake could not be higher; this is the moment of truth', *Sunday Mirror*, 11 October 2008, available from: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/stakes-could-not-be-higher-this-is-moment-346891>.

24. David Cameron, 'Leadership for a Better Britain' Speech, 5.10.2011. Full transcript available from: http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2011/10/David_Cameron_Leadership_for_a_better_Britain.aspx.

25. Rachel Moseley, "'Real lads do cook ... but some things are still hard to talk about": the gendering of 8-9', in Charlotte Brunson, Catherine Johnson, Rachel Moseley, and Helen Wheatley, 'Factual Entertainment on British Television: The Midlands TV Research Group's 8-9 Project', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 4, 1, (2001): 29-62.

26. Gilly Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, André Deutsch, London 2006, p181.

27. Gerry Hassan, 'Don't Mess with the Missionary Man: Brown, Moral Compasses and the Road to Britishness' in Andrew Wright and Tony Gamble (eds), *Britishness: Perspectives on the British Question, The Political Quarterly Special Issues*, 2009, pp86-100.

28. Notable TV examples include Channel 4's *Jamie's Kitchen* (Nov-Dec 2002), *Jamie's School Dinners* (Feb-March 2005) and *Jamie's Ministry of Food* (Sept-Oct 2008).

29. Gerry Hassan, *op. cit.*, p89.

30. Jamie Oliver, *Jamie's Great Britain*, London, Penguin, 2011, pp12, 138, 146.

31. See Owen Hatherley, *op. cit.*, p3.

32. 'Jubilypic' was a 2012 UK media coinage referring to the convergence of the Queen's diamond jubilee and the London Olympic Games during the summer of that year.

33. 'Jamie: making you a better cook', *Jamie Magazine*, Issue 29, A. Harris (ed), London, 2012, p13.

34. See Xanthe Clay, 'Cupcakes, Sex and the City style', *Telegraph*, 23 May 2008, available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/foodanddrink/recipes/3343601/Recipes-cupcakes-Sex-and-the-City-style.html>.

35. See, for example, images by David Hartley, *Daily Mail*, 4.06.2012, available from: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2154478/Dave-SamCam-enjoy-jubilee-party-near-Oxfordshire-home-sun-comes-day-celebrations>.

36. Dan Hancox, 'Let Them Eat Cupcakes', *Open Democracy*, 4.01.2013, available from: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/dan-hancox/let-them-eat-cupcakes>.

37. Jeremy Gilbert, 'Sharing the Pain: The Emotional Politics of Austerity', *Open Democracy*, 28.01.2011, available from: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/jeremy-gilbert/sharing-pain-emotional-politics-of-austerity>.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Owen Hatherley, *op. cit.*, p2.

40. Hancox, *op. cit.*

41. BBC News (quoting the LGA) reported that the 'appetite for a street party ha[d] "ratcheted up" since the wedding' because, 'with the economic climate and red tape being relaxed, people [we]re keen to be distracted' while, as one party attendant said, 'you need your neighbours when times are hard'. See Caroline Gall, 'Diamond Jubilee: Almost 10,000 Street

Parties Planned', 26.05.2012, available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-18210417>.

42. An extension of the 'Big Lunch' project to encourage neighbourly street-parties (effectively the equivalent of neighbourhood barbecues in the US, but a far rarer occurrence in the UK, traditionally only associated with major royal occasions or very major, non-repeating national holidays).

43. See The Guardian Press Association Release, 3.06.2012, available from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2012/jun/03/downing-street-jubilee-party>.

44. See <http://www.thebiglunch.com>.

45. This included sponsorship from the Department for Communities and Local Government, 'The Big Lottery Fund', MasterCard, breadmaker Kingsmill, and supermarket chain Asda. See <http://www.thebiglunch.com/partners/index.php>.

46. This 'Food Vision' claimed to celebrate 'British regional food', promote 'sustainable change' and support 'the growing public agenda on healthy living'. Full document available from: <http://www.london2012.com/documents/locog-publications/food-vision.pdf>.

47. See, for example, John Amis and T. Bettina Cornwell (eds), *Global Sport Sponsorship*, Oxford, Berg, 2005.

48. See Louise Eccles, 'McDonald's Supersized', Mail Online, 25.06.2012, available from <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2164517/Worlds-biggest-McDonalds-First-pictures-inside-Olympic-Stadium-fast-food-restaurant>.

49. See Anna Minton's *Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the Twenty-First Century City*, 2nd edition, Penguin, London 2012; and, Michael Hall's 'Urban entrepreneurship, corporate interests and sports mega-events: the thin policies of competitiveness within the hard outcomes of neoliberalism', *The Sociological Review*, 54, (2006): 59-70.

50. *The Great British Menu* involves regional chefs from across the UK competing for the prize and prestige of catering the annual celebration banquet; *The Great British Bake-Off* sees amateur cooks bake in competition with another in order to be named 'Bake Off' winner and earn a place in the accompanying cookbook; and *The Great British Food Revival* has celebrity chefs and food personalities state their case for the revival and protection of heritage ingredients or outmoded culinary techniques.

51. Matthew Fort, 'Let the GastrOlympics Begin', BBC Food Blog, 13.04.2012, available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/food/2012/04/let-the-gastrolympics-begin.shtml>.

52. See, for instance, Clemmie Moodie, 'The Great British Bake Off inspires 50,000 to join the Women's Institute', which reports a peak audience of 7.2 million for the grand final. In the *Mirror*, 18.10.2012, available from: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/tv/tv-news/the-great-british-bake-off-inspires-50000-1384738>.

53. See the BBC website <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00zf9vd>.

54. The show has spawned several BBC-endorsed cookbooks, for example, *Great British Food Revival: The Revolution Continues*, London, Orion Publishing, 2011.

55. For a qualitative examination of LA21's impact in Britain, see Karen Lucas, Andrew Ross and Sara Fuller, *What's in a name? Local Agenda 21, community planning and neighbourhood renewal*, Joseph Roundtree Foundation, York 2003.

56. Stuart Hall, 'The Neo-Liberal Revolution', *Cultural Studies* 25, 6, (2011): 705-728.

57. See Nick Ellison and Sarah Ellison, 'Creating "Opportunity for all"?: New Labour, new localism and the opportunity society', *Social policy and society*, 5, 3, (2006): 337-348.

58. For full documentation of the Local Government Information Unit's (LGIU's) updated guide to the Localism Act, see online: <http://www.lgiu.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Localism-Act-an-LGIU-Guide-updated-September-2012.pdf>.

59. Tony Blair mobilised this phrase repeatedly during his premiership, including at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton (September 2004) in anticipation of his third-term in government. Full transcript available from BBC News online: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3697434.stm. For a useful examination of New Labour's claim to equal opportunity without economic equity see, Nick Ellison and Ellison, above, particularly pp343-5.

60. David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1996, p202.

61. Hall, op. cit., p720.

62. David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford, OUP, 2005, pp70-71.

63. The 'Big Idea' was established in November 2008 with an amalgamation of financial support from London Food Link, the Mayor of London, and the Big Lottery's Local Food Fund. Available from: http://www.capitalgrowth.org/big_idea/.

64. For a discussion of attempts at 'alternative consumption' and their pre-emptive co-option, see Jo Littler, *Radical Consumption: Shopping for Change in Contemporary Society*, Maidenhead, Open University Press, 2009.

65. Highmore explains the 'bizarre trips some foods make' according to the 'asymmetrical divisions of global labour' and in the interests of profit. For instance, Scottish langoustines are flown to Bangkok to be hand-shelled by cheap labourers, then travel back to the UK to be sold as scampi in 'local' British pubs. See Highmore, op. cit., p5.

66. For an analysis of farmers' market car-reliance, see Cathy Banwell et al., 'Fast and Slow Food in the Fast Lane: Automobility and the Australian Diet' in Richard Wilk (ed), *Fast food/Slow food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System*, AltaMira Press, Plymouth 2006, pp219-240.
67. For a comparative reading of the rise of the Farmers' Market in Union Park Square, New York, and the associated discourses of authenticity and process of gentrification see Sharon Zukin, 'Consuming Authenticity', *Cultural Studies*, 22, 5, (2008): 724-748.
68. See Lewis Holloway and Moya Kneafsey, 'Reading the Space of the Farmers' Market: A Preliminary Investigation from the UK', *Sociologica Ruralis*, 40, 3, (July 2000): 285-299.
69. BFM's current website explains that it was 'the first Farmers' Market in the UK', 'established in September 1997 in response to Local Agenda 21', available from: <http://www.bathfarmersmarket.co.uk/about>.
70. The socio-economic benefits of farmers' market are promoted by the 'Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' homepage, see online: <https://www.gov.uk/farm-shops-and-farmers-markets>.
71. See <http://www.boroughmarket.org.uk/about-us>.
72. See <http://www.vfmuk.com/about-the-virtual-farmers-market.html>.
73. Amanda Wise, 'Moving Food: Gustatory Commensality and Disjuncture in Everyday Multiculturalism', *New Formations*, 74, (2011): 82-107, <http://doi.org/10.1215/00141801-1271111>.
74. This supposed investigation into 'the future of our high streets' was led by Mary Portas, fashion-consumer-advice expert of BBC fame. Full report is available online: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/31797/11-1434-portas-review-future-of-high-streets.pdf.
75. See Nick Ellison and Sarah Ellison, above, for a delineation of the uneven distribution of 'social capital' as 'social closure', p342.
76. Examples include Jimmy Doherty's *Grow Your Own Christmas Dinner* (aired on Channel 4, 12.12.2012), Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's *Vég Patch: River Cottage Handbook 4*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London 2009, and the Royal Horticultural Society's *Step-by-Step Veg Patch*, London, DK Ltd, 2012.
77. Rebecca Bramal, 'Dig for Victory!: Anti-consumerism, austerity, and new historical subjectivities', *Subjectivity*, 4, 1, (2011): 68-86.
78. The latest veg patch craze is captured in recent publications, including Alys Fowler's *The Edible Garden; How to Have Your Garden and Eat It*, BBC Books, London 2010, and Alex Mitchell's *The Edible Balcony: Growing Fresh Produce in the Heart of the City*, London, Kyle Cathie, 2011.
79. Greg Sharzer outlines localism's aesthetic and ideological 'return' to the enclosures as part of its investment in the falsities of neo-classical economics and bourgeois liberalism in his *No Local; Why Small-Scale Alternatives Won't Change the World*, Winchester, John Hunt, 2012, see particularly pp52-55.
80. Nigel Slater, *Tender: Volume One, A cook and his vegetable patch*, London, Fourth Estate, 2009, p9.
81. Oliver's promotion of Sainsbury's 'Taste British sausages' first aired on 24 April 2010, during the *Britain's Got Talent* advertising break - as noted by one televisual campaign-tracking website, available from: <http://www.campaignlive.co.uk/news/999022/>.
82. Adverts coincide with the supermarket's 2012 'Market Street' revamp where in-store Butchers, Fishmongers and Greengrocers offer consumers the 'pick of the street'.
83. See Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, London, Chatto & Windus, 1973.
84. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, 'Episode 1', *Escape to River Cottage*. First aired on Channel 4, 18.03.1999 – 22.04.1999.
85. This point was also made by Lyn Thomas in her analysis of lifestyle TV's 'downshifting' narratives. See Thomas op. cit., p690.
86. *Jamie at Home*. First aired on Channel 4, 7 August 2007 – 8.02.2008.
87. Oliver, 'A nice little chat', *Jamie at Home*, London, Penguin, 2007, p6.
88. Joseph Burridge, 'Introduction: Frugality and Food in Contemporary Historical Perspective', *Food and Foodways*, 20, 1, (2012): 1-7.
89. For a comparable analysis in the context America's 'gourmet foodscape', see Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann, *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction in the Gourmet Foodscape*, New York, Routledge, 2010.
90. Nigel Slater, *Kitchen Diaries Two*, London, Fourth Estate, 2012, pp58, 89.
91. Sharzer explains how the petit bourgeoisie's 'ethical system thrives on thrift and self-discipline', which 'creates a part of localist ideology', op. cit., p92. Also useful in this context is Alan Warde's understanding of the 'structural antinomies of

- taste', including the culinary dialectic of 'economy and extravagance'. See his *Consumption, Food & Taste* (1997).
92. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, p173.
93. Slater, 2012, op. cit., pp19, 120.
94. For a qualitative study of low income and indebted food consumption patterns, see Jackie Goode, 'Feeding the Family When the Wolf's at the Door: The Impact of Over-Indebtedness on Contemporary Foodways in Low-Income Families in the UK', *Food and Foodways*, 20, 1, (2012): 8-30.
95. Slater, 2012, op. cit., p510.
96. Speaking at a tractor factory in Essex, Cameron rebranded 'austerity' as 'efficiency'. See Kiran Stacey, 'Cameron defends efficiency drive', *Financial Times*, 8.05.2012, available from: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8b5333ce-9939-11e1-948a-00144feabdc0.html>.
97. Sharzer argues that the environmentalist claims of small-scale producers are often limited by their inability to utilize the expensive eco-efficiency techniques of large-scale industry, op. cit., p25.
98. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, Martin Nicolaus (trans), 1973, London, Penguin, 1993, p173.
99. Karl Marx, *Capital*, David McLellan (ed), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp300-301.
100. See Harvey, 2005, op. cit., p4, 161; and Andrew Gamble, *The Spectre at the Feast: Capitalist Crisis and the Politics of Recession*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2009, pp178-179.
101. Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, London, Bloomsbury, 2011, p120, <http://doi.org/fxwcdg>.
102. See Julie MacLeavy, 'A 'new politics' of austerity, workfare and gender?: The UK coalition government's welfare reform proposals', *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 4, (2011): 355-367.
103. See, Anne Murcott, 'Women's place: cookbooks' images of technique and technology in the British kitchen', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 6, 1, (1983): 33-39; and, in another context, Meg Luxton, *More Than A Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work In The Home*, Toronto, Women's Press of Canada, 1980.
104. Dale Southerton, 'Re-ordering temporal rhythms: coordinating daily practices in the UK in 1937 and 2000' in Elizabeth Shove, Frank Trentmann and Richard Wilk (eds), *Time, Consumption and Everyday Life: Practice, Materiality and Culture*, Oxford, Berg, 2009, pp49-63.
105. Here we are drawing on Standing, op. cit., p118.
106. Carlo Petrini, *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2001, pxxii.
107. Daniel Miller, 'Buying Time' in Elizabeth Shove, Frank Trentmann and Richard Wilk (eds), op. cit., pp157-170.
108. Nigella Lawson, *How to be a Domestic Goddess: Baking and the Art of Comfort Cooking*, London, Chatto & Windus, 2000, pvii.
109. Nigella Lawson, *Nigella Express*, London, Chatto & Windus, 2007, pvi.
110. Jamie Oliver, *Jamie's 30 Minute Meals*, London, Penguin, 2010, p14.
111. David Cameron, 'Moral Capitalism' Speech, 19.01.2012. Full transcript available from: <http://www.newstatesman.com/uk-politics/2012/01/economy-capitalism-market>.
112. Jamie Oliver, *Jamie's 15 Minute Meals*, London, Penguin, 2012, p15.
113. Lawson, 2007, op. cit.
114. See Department of Work & Pensions 'Get Britain Working', available from: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/get-britain-working>.
115. This phenomenon was revealed by a recent Channel 4 documentary exposing the restrictive bind of Weight Watchers' 'points system'. See *Weight Watchers: How They Make Their Money*, first aired on Channel 4 on 28.01.2013.
116. See online: <http://www.conservatives.com/getbritainworking/>.
117. Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*, London, Zero Books, 2009, pp12-13.
118. See Noam Chomsky, *Profit Over People: Neoliberalism and the Global Order*, New York, Seven Stories Press, 1998; David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford, OUP, 2005; Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, London, Allen Lane, 2007; and Slavoj Žižek, *Living in End Times*, London, Verso, 2010.
119. Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1962, pxiv.
120. Hall, op. cit., p707.
121. Harvey, 2005, op. cit., pp70-71.

122. Hall, *op. cit.*, p719.

123. Tesco recommended all family members 'Get It On' with Christmas cracker hats; Sainsbury's showed children 'Being Good for Santa' by clearing dinner plates; Asda suggested that 'Behind Every Great Christmas There's Mum'; and Morrisons had a harried Mum wrestling a turkey.

124. PMQs 19.12.2012. Full recording and transcript available from: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2012/december/prime-ministers-questions-19-december-2012>.

125. See Mark Fisher, *op. cit.*, particularly pp16-20.

126. David Cameron, 'The Age of Austerity Speech', *op. cit.*

127. David Cameron, 'Speech on the Economy', 7.03.2013. Full transcript available from: <http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2013/03/07/david-cameron-s-economy-speech-in-full>

128. *Ibid.*

129. *Ibid.*