

**How Culinary Histories Shape Modern Attitudes and Legislation of Foie Gras in
France and the US**

By

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Every country has its own unique culinary heritage that has developed over time and that has led to specific eating behaviors, eating patterns, and attitudes toward food. In this thesis, I aim to answer a central question: how have the culinary histories of France and the United States shaped their respective views of foie gras production, consumption, and legislation? How have these also impacted the cultural values placed on foie gras? The main objectives of this thesis are to analyze the culinary histories of France and the United States, to examine how foie gras has integrated into the two countries and how it is valued each, and to connect the value placed on foie gras in each culture with how the product is legislated. The methods behind this thesis include reading primary source documents, history books, legislative documents, and articles on the anthropology of food. Patterns and themes in terms of cultural attitudes toward food were noted from the research, from which conclusions and hypotheses could be drawn. Foie gras is a controversial product: in France, it is a prized national dish deeply embedded within the culture. In the US, it is a luxury product that is denounced by multiple animal rights organizations despite being relatively unknown. The value that each country places on foie gras has influenced the legislation surrounding it. For

France, this means protecting foie gras from increased legislation by the European Union. For the US, this has translated to bans on foie gras in multiple states due to the industry being small and relatively powerless. The future of foie gras remains uncertain in the US while remaining relatively stable within French culture, though there are some potential strategies in which both sides may meet in the middle to preserve this cherished French dish.

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Introduction

I believe the intersection of culture and eating patterns is an important topic to understand. As a nutrition and dietetics major, I have learned about the biochemical processes behind digestion, absorption, utilization, storage, and excretion of nutrients. I have also learned how to interact and counsel patients and clients, which includes being knowledgeable of other cultures and how those impact how people eat. As a French major, I have learned the mechanics of the French language as well as the country's history and culture. As an International Degree student, I wanted to find some common ground between my two majors and connect them. I wanted to find a thesis topic that is important to France and the United States; I wanted a topic that relates to food; and I wanted a topic that would allow me to explore how cultures develop overtime to shape attitudes toward food.

Foie gras is a food that, for France, serves as a national symbol of its traditional gastronomy. It is found almost anywhere in France in its many forms, though it is most commonly eaten during the holidays, such as Christmas. In the United States, foie gras is not so ubiquitous. In fact, it is very much a luxury item, as it is really only sold in high-end restaurants, and there are fewer than a handful of producers of foie gras in the US. On top of that, if foie gras elicits any kind of response, it is usually a negative one due to the production technique of *gavage*, which is the process of fattening the birds before slaughter. Gavage is also the main reason behind most legislation of foie gras. In this thesis, I want to explore the historical and cultural reasons behind how foie gras is valued in France and the US and how these dimensions of culture then influence

legislation. While there is currently no transatlantic debate about foie gras, a comparison between how these two countries approach this food item provides an important historical, anthropological, and cultural study in shaping modern politics.

To accomplish this, first I will describe the culinary histories of France and the US, noting recurrent themes and patterns throughout the centuries that have shaped each country's food culture and food attitudes. Then, I will present the history of foie gras and begin the conversation of the ethical dilemmas seen with gavage feeding. Each country's relationship with foie gras will be described in terms of primarily legislation and how it reflects each country's attitudes toward food that have developed overtime. Finally, the future of foie gras will be discussed, particularly whether a compromise can be settled upon wherein both sides of the debate can be satisfied. As a result, the objectives of this thesis are to analyze France and the US's culinary histories, pulling out patterns of thought and behavior that characterize each country's food culture, examine how foie gras fits into each country's culinary narrative and its value in each of these cultures, and to connect this value with how foie gras is legislated.

Methods

The research methods used to create this thesis included conducting secondary research by reading and synthesizing academic journals, newspaper articles, and books in English and in French. Additionally, some materials were used from courses I have taken in the past that relate to this topic. Due to the large volume of written materials used, more of a qualitative analysis was done on their content to explore reasons and explanations behind historical, cultural, and legislative aspects of foie gras in France and the US. With each piece that I read, I noted important information and connections I recognized in other documents, which I later was able to form into hypotheses and conclusions. As each section is presented, historical information is described, followed by critical thinking to make connections to the cultural implications of this information in relation to France and the US. A detailed list of the resources used for this thesis can be found at the end of this document.

Preface to Culinary Histories

The development of a nation's cuisine is a complex process that intertwines cultural norms, climate, religion, historical events, and integration of peoples from other nations. There are, however, some general developments and discoveries that are not bound to individual nations and that act as a catalyst for the development of cuisine. The use of fire, for example, is most likely one of the most important tools allowing humans to distinguish themselves from animals. Harnessing heat as a way to conserve meat and to make it safer to ingest paved the way for the development of multiple cooking methods used today that demonstrate all of the flavors and textures that can be derived from meat and meat products. Other processes, such as fermentation, have provided early civilizations with a safe hydration source as well as an additional preservation method, such as making milk into yogurts and cheeses.

Beyond these basic transformative processes, human cuisine developed even further based on the indigenous flora and fauna, eventually leading to cultural cuisines that vary drastically from one to the other. In the following sections, the culinary histories of France and the United States will be described in order to paint a picture of how their individual histories have shaped how their peoples eat today. For the sake of comparison, each country's culinary tableau will begin around the 15th century, marking the end of the Middle Ages in France and the arrival of Europeans in the New World. It is important to note that during this time in France, cuisine in the royal court and for noblemen was already well established, but this era marks the beginning of the record-keeping of cuisine. In this section, we will see how the cuisine of France developed over

the centuries to become the rich, traditional, classic art form that is engrained in the present culture, while the United States' cuisine has been constantly shifting with the arrival of new populations to the point where it can be difficult to pin point a national American cuisine.

French Culinary History

The development of a national cuisine can be influenced by multiple factors, one of which being populations of people that migrate and settle into the area that would later become a nation. France has known multiple waves of migration from various parts of Europe and, later, other parts of the world, that have made their way into France and have permanently settled. Ultimately, these settlements of people had to eat, and they likely brought what food preparation methods and ingredients they knew with them. Eating styles, patterns, and etiquette are another part of people's food patterns that many brought with them. As time went on, these ingredients, methods of preparation, and etiquette slowly integrated to create a national gastronomic identity and culture.

For France, this translates to the creation of one of the most famous cuisines in the world that serves at the basis of culinary education. Due to France's prominent role in influencing the world's cuisine, it can be argued that its strength stems from how deeply rooted it is within French culture. This appreciation for French culinary heritage accompanies the increased value placed on foods that are considered to be uniquely French.

Some of the first prominent groups that settled in what is now France include the Celts, the Greeks, the Romans, the Germanic hordes, the Arabs, and the Vikings, each establishing settlements in different parts of France (Labrune, 2010). These peoples made their way into this part of western Europe between the 9th century BCE through the 10th century CE (Labrune, 2010). The Celts of Gaul (the antiquated name for France) are credited with introducing Romans to sausages and salted meats, and the French even

claim that ham was a Celtic Gaul invention (Kurlansky, 2002). Other food patterns from Gaul during this time period included charcuterie and beers made from barley, which have become part of France's culinary heritage (Poulain, 2004). Additionally, one of the Germanic hordes was the Franks, who became the dominant population in France, eventually giving their name to the nation of France (Labrune, 2010).

The settling of these various people had a lasting impression on France's culinary history, though this history was not well recorded. The Middle Ages represented a shift in that aspects of everyday life were written down. Food habits and patterns as well as dining etiquette and menu offerings were recorded, and those most frequently recorded were those related to the nobility and royalty. While the food itself is important when studying a culture, examining the culture surrounding food, like etiquette, demonstrates people's attitudes toward food and meal times, which provides us with another dimension of food culture in its development.

One of the first and arguably most important figures of French cooking from the Middle Ages is Taillevent. During the late 14th century, Guillaume Tirel, or Taillevent, who was a chef for Charles VI, compiled his recipes in a book called *Le Viandier* (Poulain, 2004). While the author of this work remains somewhat contested, *Le Viandier* marked an important change in how cooking and cuisine was passed down. Traditionally, learning the art of cuisine was passed from master to apprentice, and recipes were memorized. Putting pen to paper clearly clashes with this tradition, but the recipes themselves did not include instructions, which assumes the reader would know how to treat the ingredients in question (Poulain, 2004). In this case, Taillevent's

collection was most likely a recipe book for other chefs instead of one that would allow the public to learn and duplicate the recipes. Nevertheless, it allows a glimpse into commonly used ingredients and commonly prepared dishes of that time.

One category of dish Taillevent pays much attention to is sauces (Poulain, 2004). A main characteristic of French cuisine in the Middle ages is the use of acidic ingredients in sauce bases, like vinegar or verjuice, the juice from unripe grapes or other unripe fruit (Rambourg, 2010). Another characteristic is the absence of fat in sauces (Poulain, 2004). Fat can absorb and retain undesirable flavors and aromas, so the acidic, fat-free sauces were preferred. Additionally, sauces made from a base of roux (fat cooked with flour) would not be developed for some time. Spices were then added to make fragrant, strong-tasting sauces that had multiple functions: display the host's economic fortune, mask the spoiled flavors of meat or other ingredients, provide medicinal effects (Rambourg, 2010; Poulain, 2004), and preserve foods by preventing microbial proliferation (Hostetter, 2013). *Cameline* was a popular sauce from the time period, which was made with ginger, cinnamon, saffron, and wine (Rambourg, 2010). One example of a sauce from the Middle Ages that has withstood the tests of time is mustard (Poulain, 2004), a vinegar based sauce flavored with ground mustard seeds.

During the Middle Ages, countries already displayed differences in their national tastes, and sauces demonstrated those differences. As previously mentioned, French sauces were characteristically acidic and strongly spiced. English and Italian sauces, however, were sweet and made so by the addition of honey or sugar (Rambourg, 2010). Patrick Rambourg, the author of *Histoire de la cuisine et de la gastronomie françaises*,

argues that these flavor preferences have endured over the centuries and are still prevalent today, particularly in wine and beer preferences. He says that while the French enjoy acidic white wines, the English prefer ales, and the Italians prefer sweet wines. In fact, a 13th century Italian Franciscan monk described French wines using nine terms, none of which included the word “sweet,” but did include words such as “strong” and “frank” (Rambourg, 2010).

Meats were another topic covered extensively in *Le Viandier*. If meat was purchased, as opposed to hunted (which was reserved only for aristocrats), it was typically done soon after slaughter and was followed closely by cooking to decrease the chances of it spoiling (Rambourg, 2010). The nobility displayed their wealth both in what they could purchase to eat and by eating the game they hunted, which included birds like swans, herons, storks, and peacocks (Poualin, 2004). The chef or cook in charge had a few dilemmas. Keeping meat cold was not a guarantee, because they could have cellars, but the temperature within the cellars was out of their control. Aging the meat was also challenging: if the cook waited too long to use the meat, it could very well spoil, especially since meat was often hung on meathooks in the kitchens. *Le Viandier* employs a method that tries to mitigate between the two by first boiling or poaching the meat and then roasting it (Poulain, 2004). Boiling the meat first destroys the bacteria on the surface of the meat that would cause it to spoil more rapidly while keeping the inside moist. Next, roasting creates a crisp crust that locks in the moisture and further protects the meat from outside bacteria. Besides boiling and roasting, the other main cooking methods were frying and braising (Poulain, 2004).

Dining is an aspect related to food that, during the medieval period, added the necessity of correct etiquette. Manuals of proper conduct appeared around the 12th century, and many were aimed at children, though it was expected that all members of the nobility know and follow these rules (Rambourg, 2010). Some aspects of dining etiquette from the Middle Ages have persisted to the modern day: avoid putting food back on the platter after having served yourself, do not kick the person sitting facing you, and do not elbow your neighbor (Rambourg, 2010). Plates did not come into usage until around the 14th century, meaning that bowls were used instead, and they were usually shared between two diners (Poulain, 2004), as were goblets. It was imperative, then, to maintain proper behavior while sharing these items, for one did not nor should they want to come across as “promiscuous” (Rambourg, 2010).

Utensils were also not very common. Men used small daggers or knives to cut and eat meat, and sometimes spoons were used, but foods were mostly eaten with one’s hands or picked up using bread (Poulain, 2004). The daggers and knives used by men were not exclusively reserved for meal time - they were also their personal weapons. The dinner host, who was usually the man of the house, carved the main meat dish using his own sword or knife, using this display as an opportunity to show to his guests his skills and high rank (Poulain, 2004). To add to the man of the house’s position of power, he also usually had a locked vessel containing his eating utensils and his spices of choice (Poulain, 2004). With time, rules of etiquette will stay relatively stable while typical dining patterns, utensils, and set up will see new developments.

As the Middle Ages progressed into the Renaissance, some aspects of the aforementioned flavor profiles, food preparation, and etiquette either remained relatively the same or were transformed. Some of these transformations in France are thought to have been brought about by the marriage of Henry II of France to Catherine de Medici of Italy in 1533 (Poulain, 2004; Rambourg, 2010) and Catherine's subsequent move to France, in which she brought with her many of the customs of Italian cuisine and dining.

The book *Le Viandier* that was initially written in the Middle Ages experienced multiple revisions and republications throughout the 15th and 17th centuries (Poulain, 2004), which indicates that flavor profiles did not experience very much change during that time. The use of strong spices to flavor dishes as well as acidic sauces were still a common practice during the Renaissance. Interestingly, the word "sauce" was not used at the time; instead "vinaigrette" or "poivrade" (meaning pepper sauce) are seen in cookbooks and menus from that era (Poulain, 2004). Additionally, game continued to be a prominent main dish at meals of the nobility and royalty (Poulain, 2004). At the end of the 17th century, Pierre François La Varenne published *Le Cuisinier françois*, which is considered to be the first book that described French cuisine (Poulain, 2004). One important development in sauce preparation in this book is the use of roux as the thickening agent (Poulain, 2004). Roux is usually the first step in making a sauce and involves cooking fat, like lard or butter, with flour before adding the liquid to be thickened. Prior to using roux, bread or ground almonds were commonly used as thickeners (Poulain, 2004). In the first publication of La Varenne's book, about 23% of

the recipes use flour as a thickener, whereas only 13.5% of them use bread, indicating a shift in sauce preparation had already taken place (Poulain, 2004).

Another culinary technique that emerged in La Varenne's book was the reduction of sauces to increase their viscosity (Poulain, 2004). In fact, about 47% of the recipes in *Le Cuisinier françois* used reduction. Another addition to sauce recipes during the 17th century was the use of stocks and *coulis*, or thin pureed soups, as the liquid to be thickened in sauces (Poulain, 2004). Coulis typically contained multiple ingredients and spices, which added more flavor and depth to dishes. Many of the ingredients in coulis are still found in soups today such as onions and thyme, while others, like cloves and almonds, are not (Poulain, 2004).

The most drastic changes in this era were related to dining etiquette. *De l'éducation des enfants*, written by Erasmus of Rotterdam in 1530 is an educational guide for children on how to have proper manners that had considerable influence on dining etiquette for a number of centuries (Poulain, 2004). A substantial portion of this book discusses table manners, which become essential in distinguishing upper from lower socioeconomic classes (Poulain, 2004). Some important dimensions of dining etiquette included individualized place settings and the development of utensils made specifically for dining. Not only were bowls and goblets no longer shared, but it was considered impolite to share any food that had touched your plate (Poulain, 2004). Finally, daggers and knives that had the dual function of weapon and eating utensil were separated, and there were now knives made especially for eating. The man of the house or the host carving the meat remained as a common practice for some time

longer as a demonstration of his status, but eventually the task was given to a staff member in the household (Poulain, 2004).

The Renaissance represents an important time of development for Italy both culturally and economically that spread and influenced all of Europe (“The Renaissance,” n.d.). In a cultural and philosophical sense, people began discussing and debating the intersection of science, religion, and Greek and Roman philosophy. Italy sits strategically in the Mediterranean, making it an advantageous location from which to conduct trade, particularly of spices from the East (Poulain, 2004). This allowed for merchants to become wealthier, having extra income to support the arts as patrons and sponsors for painters and sculptors, but also for bakers and chefs. With additional support, artists of all kinds were able to practice and perfect their craft and allowed for its export to other European nations like France. As previously mentioned, Catherine de Medici was an important influence in bringing Italy’s food culture to France.

The most notable Italian influences on cuisine and dining at this time were meal service and in patisserie (Poulain, 2004), particularly in the increase in sweets consumption by the French (Rambourg, 2010). In her moving to France, Catherine de Medici brought forks with her, though they did not come into fashion for dining until the reign of Henry III, when it is said that “strawberries and ruffs” came into fashion (Poulain, 2004). The ruffs were the ruffled collars that were popular clothing items in the 16th century, and forks made it easier to eat things like strawberries that could easily stain these piece of clothing. Additional table wares imported by the Italians were individual plates and glassware. While cups existed already in France, they were made

of pewter, while those from Italy were made from materials like Murano glass (Poulain, 2004). These new implements with which to consume foods, sophistication and refinement was demonstrated during meals by avoiding direct contact of diners' hands with the food (Poulain, 2004).

In terms of patisserie, things like jams, jellies, nougat, marzipan, and gingerbread were brought to France from Italy, and many of these products are still popular today (Poulain, 2004). Remember that sweeter flavors, particularly in wines, were already popular in Italy, as described previously. Interestingly, sugar permeated into more than desserts and into dishes that were not traditionally sweet. Beyond appearing in pastries and desserts, sugar was added to meat and fish for seasoning and even to wine and water (Rambourg, 2010). Compared to the dominant, acidic flavors of the Middle Ages, this move to sweeter dishes and beverages signals a new development in French cuisine. This move was reinforced by multiple cookbooks that mainly focused on jams and other forms of preserved fruit but also included recipes resembling pickling with vinegar and salt and recipes for inedible products such as perfume and soap (Rambourg, 2010). The reason that beauty products were included in these recipe books is thought to be because it was believed that sugar had medicinal qualities that improved digestion and thus also improved your outward appearance (Rambourg, 2010). Nevertheless, the continued appearance of acidic flavors again shows the connection with flavor preferences that have carried over from the Middle Ages while also integrating flavors from other countries like Italy.

One last addition to France's culinary history brought about thanks to Italy, albeit a little over a century later, was the café. A man by the name of Procopio opened what is considered to be the first café in France in 1674 (Poulain, 2004). Menu offerings were quite similar to what one can find in any café today, such as coffees, teas, hot chocolates, pastries, and even ice creams or sorbets. Procopio's café had newspapers posted on the walls, which provided both conversation starters and encouraged people to visit cafés to get the news. Cafés also became a space for women, artists, philosophers, and future revolutionaries to gather. Some notable figures who appeared in Procopio's café were d'Alembert, Diderot, Voltaire, and Rousseau (Poulain, 2004). Within 50 years of the first café opening, there were around 300 cafés in Paris, and around 2000 by the end of the 18th century (Poulain, 2004). Today, cafés remain an essential part of French culture and are readily found in every city where patrons can stay for a short or long time to discuss things such as the news, art, literature, and more.

Another important influence on European cuisine as a whole during the 16th century was the discovery of the New World. A number of important foods, such as cacao, potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, beans, chiles, and maize or corn, originated in the Americas and were gradually brought back to Europe (McWilliams, 2015). Most of these foods took time to integrate into the daily lives of Europeans, because they were generally reserved for the nobility and were realistically only available to those who could afford them. Another factor in the successful integration of foods into another culture is people's ability to prepare them well and in a way that is acceptable enough for it to be frequently used. Potatoes, though recognized today in French dishes like

potatoes *au gratin*, took more time to integrate into French cuisine, because people initially tried to make bread with them, which was never successful (Poulain, 2004). Corn, however, quickly became the main feed used for small farm animals and poultry, like ducks and geese (Poulain, 2004). It also made its way into the people's food, and its lasting impact can still be appreciated today in dishes such as the *millas toulousain*, which is a sweet, cornmeal-based cake from Toulouse in the south of France (Poulain, 2004). Beans from the New World were also quickly incorporated into French cuisine since other types of beans were already present in their cooking, as with fava beans in *cassoulet* (Poulain, 2004).

In addition to products coming in from the Americas, merchants from all over Europe were engaging in the spice trade. As a result, they flooded the spice market, causing their prices to drop and making them more available for lower classes of European to purchase and add to their food (Poulain, 2004). At this point, the nobility distinguishing themselves from commoners by consuming strongly spiced foods was no longer an option. Instead of using spices as the luxurious aspect of their meals, the nobility began gravitating toward more intricately prepared meals (Poulain, 2004). Only they could afford to hire chefs with enough skill to make complex dishes, and as such refinement in cuisine became the next distinguishing factor between upper class eating patterns and lower class eating patterns.

One example of foods with increasingly complex preparations was mousse. Mousse was born out of a sociologic need of the upper class to distinguish themselves from the lower class and as a way to separate the enlightened soul from the animalistic

human body (Poulain, 2004). It was also born out of the philosophy of cartesian dualism of separating the enlightened mind from the animalistic body.

The process of making a mousse during the 17th century was a long process involving partially breaking down flesh by some combination of drying, grinding, and mixing it with other ingredients to yield a light, fluffy final product that melted in the mouth (Poulain, 2004). Avoiding the action of chewing was seen as especially important for women at this time period, since chewing was considered an animalistic behavior that noblewomen were expected to avoid. Molière even wrote a play based on this idea, entitled *Les Précieuses Ridicules* (Poulain, 2004). In this play, Molière provides social commentary by mocking the upper class for their excessive lifestyle and forced and exaggerated behavior (Molière, n.d.)

Moving into the 18th century, the two main forces pushing culinary development are court life, especially at Versailles, and the idea of alchemy, which is the “science” of making metals into gold. Particularly at the end of the 18th century, Louis XVI, king of France at that time, and his wife Marie Antoinette, spent the majority of their time at Versailles, which was a considerable distance from their subjects (“History,” 2016). Not only did this distance create tension between the people and the monarchy, but the monarchy’s lavish lifestyle put a strain on the people, since their tax money went toward funding this lifestyle so different from their own.

Part of this lavish lifestyle they led involved the exploration of gastronomy. The 18th century marked the beginning of the phenomenon of eating with one’s eyes before eating with the mouth and tasting the food. This is when considerable effort was put into

the presentation of dishes and also into table decorations (Poulain, 2004). Today, this dimension of food preparation has been fully engrained within classic French cooking - the extra time put into preparation and presentation are appreciated aspects of this art form by diners all over the world (McWilliams, 2015).

While eating beautiful food was a privilege enjoyed strictly by the rich, there was also a hierarchy within the nobility that was made very apparent during meals despite all parties eating the same foods. Where diners were seated around the table indicated their status in relation to the host, or the king in this case (Poulain, 2004). Seating arrangement dictated who could have conversations with who and who had to rely on other diners to have dishes to be passed to them. If dinner guests were seated around a rounded table, those seated at the ends of the table were in the most unfavorable position, because they had to ask for dishes most often and had access to the smallest number of dishes (Poulain, 2004).

Interestingly, the bourgeoisie attempted to replicate the nobility and monarch in these ways, which in turn spurred the nobility and the monarchy to fund more chefs, artisans, and artists to create more art that would allow them to distance themselves even further (Poulain, 2004). It is this increased distance and misuse of funds that will eventually be the downfall of the French monarchy and fuel the French Revolution. Post-Revolution, the newly formed bourgeoisie will replace the nobility in terms of primarily funding chefs and the further development of French cuisine.

The second and arguably stronger force behind culinary development, alchemy, greatly influenced chefs in that they aimed to find the essence of an ingredient and to

prepare it in such a way that it exalted the food as a whole, making it far more valuable than before, much like turning any old metal into gold. In fact, it was said that making the perfect sauce was equivalent to making liquid gold (Poulain, 2004). One of the essences of foods much sought after was known as *osmazone*, *Osmazone* is the umami, meaty flavor one can extract from cooking down meat and bones that adds depth of flavor to sauces, soups, and other dishes (Peterson, 2012).

With this exaltation of ingredients came the belief that well prepared foods could lift the human spirit (Poulain, 2004). Menon, a figure from this period credited with writing multiple volumes about cuisine of the bourgeoisie and at court, asked if it would be too much to put modern cuisine as one of the driving forces behind “reminding us of the power of etiquette, the talents of the spirit, the arts and the sciences?” (Poulain, 2004). This mindset of a food passing its qualities to the person eating it echoes one from Antiquity wherein eating an animal would pass on its qualities to the consumer (McWilliams, 2015).

Beyond cuisine itself, changes in meal service also indicated increased tensions between servers and their employers, which ties back to the nobility and monarchy at Versailles flaunting their wealth at any given opportunity. For a long time, servers were present throughout the entire meal service to take dirtied plates, replenish them with clean ones, and to set up each course (Poulain, 2004). However, as the 18th century progressed, servers became less enthralled with their duties as they became increasingly frustrated by the economic disparity displayed right before them.

The nobility sensed this shift and reacted accordingly: servers were slowly phased out of meal service and were replaced with carts on which guests could place their dishes. It even went so far as some households using an intercom and dumbwaiter system with a single employee appearing for food delivery (Poulain, 2004). These strategies allowed for the nobility to continue living their lavish lifestyle without the constant reminder that the rest of the population was growing impatient and frustrated.

Servers were not the only employees of the nobility who were experiencing this shift. Chefs also had to choose whether to leave France with their employers or to stay in France and find other work (Poulain, 2004). As frustration with the upper class continued to grow, some families chose to leave France for a more peaceful life where they would not be bothered by impending revolt. If chefs chose to leave, they knew they would have work, but if they stayed, they would need to find new work.

While this was not the exact situation of Antoine Beauvilliers, a chef for the count of Provence (who later became Louis XVIII), he is credited for opening the first restaurant in 1782 (Poulain, 2004). This was a catalyst for other chefs and cooks, who had stayed behind as their previous employers fled, to open their own restaurants and make a living. Beauvillier found himself in an interesting situation: his restaurant mainly catered to the aristocracy, which made common people wary of him, while Louis XVI, the king at the time, published an edict declaring that restaurants were selfish endeavors that were a detriment to society (Poulain, 2004). He was even imprisoned at one point, though he continued opening restaurants following his release along with publishing his book *Art de cuisine* in 1814 (Poulain, 2004).

Toward the end of the 19th century, there were approximately 1,400 restaurants in Paris, with a good portion of those being fine dining establishments (Poulain, 2004). The new post-revolutionary bourgeoisie, while they were able to enjoy these restaurants, they were not raised with the same table manners or food knowledge as the nobility, which paved the way for additional food writers to step in to create works that educated these people and that discussed other aspects of food (Poulain, 2004). The education of this new bourgeoisie on French cuisine maintains its place as an important aspect of French culture. Two noteworthy figures emerge to fill these educational needs: Grimod de la Reynière and Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin.

Grimod de la Reynière wrote *Les Almanachs des gourmands* during the 1800s, which involved Reynière gathering culinary professionals together to sample and rate dishes from around Paris (Poulain, 2004). For the chefs and cooks that prepared these dishes, this process "legitimized" their dish, which meant that the dish received a proper name that was then published in Reynière's work (Poulain, 2004). Furthermore, chefs could receive certificates from this process to display in their restaurants as a demonstration of their skill and to potentially attract more business (Poulain, 2004).

Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote *La Physiologie du goût* (The Physiology of taste) in the early 1800s, which was not so much a collection of recipes as a series of philosophies around food and the science of food (Poulain, 2004). Brillat-Savarin was not a chef, instead he would be considered today as more of a "foodie," or someone keenly interested in gastronomy. This kind of writing contributed to the new post-

revolutionary bourgeoisie learning about food culture and served as the precursor for the style of food writing that exists today.

As a whole, the 19th century represents the golden age of French cuisine, because this is when French cuisine became internationally renown. There were also some important developments in meal service that took place during this time. These changes can be summed up in the transition from the French style table service to the Russian style (Poulain, 2004). French service involved bringing out a variety of dishes all at once from which guests served themselves. The Russian style, by contrast, eliminated the need for diners to serve themselves. Instead, food was arranged on each diner's plate in the kitchen, and each diner served their individual plates, which eliminated the need for diners to serve themselves from large, communal dishes (Poulain, 2004). This shift emphasized the importance of the order in which dishes were served and the flavors of each dish (Poulain, 2004). Since one plate was served at a time, it would be considered repetitive to have a flavor reappear in multiple dishes during the same meal.

Additionally, a pattern of dish type and order was established. Hors d'oeuvres and soups were served first, followed by main courses, salads, and pâtés, and ended with desserts (Poulain, 2004). Another trend during a meal was a kind of crescendo of lighter fare, to heavy and rich fare, and back to light fare (Poulain, 2004). This new service style also eliminated the strategic placement of guests signifying their status in relation to the host (Poulain, 2004). One aspect of service that did not change was French wine service (Poulain, 2004). Wine service followed a pattern echoed today in that lighter wines are followed by more robust wines as the meal progresses.

Another notable figure from this period is Antonin Carême, who is considered to be the founder of *haute cuisine* (Root, 1992). Carême was a notable chef who was employed by the royalty of England as well as the tsar of Russia and was also a successful pastry chef (Poulain, 2004). He is responsible for writing numerous important cuisine-related works, such as *Le Cuisinier français au XIXe siècle* (The French Cook in the 19th century) and *Le Pâtissier pittoresque* (The picturesque patisier) (Poulain, 2004). In this second work, he leads another movement within this era, which is that of the presentation dishes with large, ornate, edible decorations that often took weeks of preparation to create (Poulain, 2004). Additionally, he was the first to name French gastronomy's five mother sauces: espagnole, velouté, béchamel, sauce tomate, and hollandaise (Poulain, 2004). Carême's contribution as the father of *haute cuisine* is his refinements to the presentation of food as well as establishing basic aspects of the cuisine, like with the mother sauces.

It is later in the 19th century and in the early 20th century that contributions like Carême's and many other notable French chefs from history were compiled by Auguste Escoffier (Poulain, 2004). By organizing and compiling years of gastronomic writings, Escoffier essentially established the terms and processes that made up French cuisine. This collection was more than a recipe book: the details within it broke down dishes into each component, giving it a classification and method of preparation (Poulain, 2004). By establishing these basic aspects of French cuisine, it was believed that this would give chefs foundational techniques from which they could build new dishes (Poulain, 2004). It

can be said that this marks the origins of the educational usage of French cuisine techniques.

With foundational French cuisine officially established, increased tourism during the early 20th century served as a catalyst for making French cuisine world famous (Poulain, 2004). The *Guide Michelin*, inspired by another work by Reynière called *L'itinéraire nutritif dans Paris*, served as a guide book for travelers particularly interested in trying French fare (Poulain, 2004). Today, Michelin stars are awarded to fine dining restaurants as a symbol of their gastronomic excellence and creativity. This increased tourism allowed producers of French delicacies from every corner of France to benefit from visiting tourists from all over the world, further expanding the reach of French culinary fame.

It isn't until the 1960s that there are any new developments in French cuisine due to Europe being at war and France slowly rebuilding its economy (Poulain, 2004). Fortunately, French cuisine could pick up from where it left off due to the compiled written records by Escoffier. Michel Guérard is one of the chefs that revived French cooking along with Henri Gault and Christian Millau (Poulain, 2004). Together, these men were the fathers of *nouvelle cuisine*, which took classical French foundations and incorporated the culturally relevant aspects of the 1960s (Poulain, 2004). Some of these new cultural considerations that reflected the political climate of the time were a new appreciation for healthful eating and a desire to be in harmony with nature and the earth (Poulain, 2004).

To meet these cultural considerations, these chefs needed to be creative (Poulain, 2004). This was aided by increased globalization of food all over the world, allowing chefs to use new ingredients and flavors to further innovate French cuisine (Poulain, 2004). It is from this point that the foundations of French cooking are utilized both to educate and to innovate cuisine and revitalize old dishes, with chefs traveling all over the world to establish restaurants and expose people to the expertise, refinement, and creativity of French cuisine.

With France's culinary history so embedded within its culture, French cuisine is a treasured food culture all around the world. Its influence is made keenly aware due to the fact that it is used as the foundations for culinary education and its vocabulary permeating throughout food cultures everywhere. Within France itself, a sort of gastronationalism, or national gastronomic pride, exists among the people who appreciate uniquely French products, such as foie gras, and see them as a part of their heritage.

American Culinary History

The culinary history of the United States can be characterized by the arrival and gradual integration of foreign food traditions to Native American food patterns. With the passing of time, the interactions between individual food cultures became increasingly complex as they became inextricably intertwined, creating a new, unique, multicultural food culture that also became differentiated by region. It can be argued that the United States has no singularly defined food culture, and that instead, the cuisine as a whole can be described as a melting pot due to its complex culinary history. While the US has some dishes the world sees as “American,” like cheeseburgers, hot dogs, and apple pie, its food culture is not placed on the same kind of pedestal as French cuisine is. In the same way, American foods in general are not placed on a cultural heritage pedestal in the same way that certain foods in France are. In this section, the various waves of immigration of peoples to what is now the United States are described, and each of their contributions and impacts are analyzed in order to give a picture of how this history has influenced what American cuisine encompasses today.

Beginning with the Native American, while there are differences between tribes and their cultures, environments, and social structures, there are some general patterns in their food ways. Some foods enjoyed by Native Americans that are indigenous to the Americas include potatoes, tomatoes, squash, turkey, cacao, chile peppers, pineapple, and avocados (McWilliams, 2015). Probably the most famous of these indigenous foods is what we call corn today, which played a central role in many Native American cultures and will play an important role in the interaction between Native Americans and early

European settlers. In addition to corn, cacao, potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and chiles were imported to Europe from the Americas (McWilliams, 2015). The importance of corn can be highlighted by Native American translations of the word corn. For example, in the Iroquois language, corn translates to “our life;” similarly, the Delaware’s word translates to “our Mother,” emphasizing the central role corn played in the lives of these people (Wallach, 2013). Native Americans’ diets usually revolved around corn or another grain, which could be made into bread with nuts, seeds, or beans of various kinds. Meat and fish were either dried, roasted, or stewed, while vegetables and starches were either boiled or steamed (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). The rest of the world uses the word *maize* instead of corn, but our usage of the word corn has roots with Europeans who settled in the New World. Back home in Europe, any grain was called “corn,” and they were distinguished by what plant they came from, like “wheat corn” or “barley corn” (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). Upon meeting the American Indians, this new grain that they came across was thus called “Indian corn,” and overtime, we simply dropped “Indian” from the name (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004).

Beyond the foods themselves, Native Americans valued hospitality and communal living. Guests were always offered food or drink, and it would be an insult not to do so. People’s daily lives were communal in that most activities were done in groups, though food-related tasks were divided by gender (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). In terms of attitudes toward food, Native Americans traditionally showed ritual respect for the plants and animals that provided them with sustenance,

because depending on the season, food availability could vary widely (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). Another factor playing into food availability was a tribe's location. If the climate and geography were suitable for cultivating crops, the need to migrate was minimized. For tribes living in more plain-like regions, migration was essential in following food sources, such as bison.

In 1620, the Pilgrims came from England to North America to escape religious persecution, but one of their main struggles upon arriving was producing enough food to sustain their colony. In England, a commoner's diet consisted of bread, which was the backbone of their diet, cheese, small amounts of meat or fish, and fruits and vegetables that were grown, purchased, or gathered (Wallach, 2013). While corn was the center of many Native Americans' food cultures, bread made from wheat was the English equivalent. The ideal loaf of bread was light in color as well as being made from wheat (Wallach, 2013). While this was the ideal, only about 5% of 17th century Europeans could afford this kind of bread (Wallach, 2013). People who could not afford wheat bread resorted to using beans or peas to create a bread-like product (Wallach, 2013). Because meat was typically eaten in small quantities by common people, having access to abundance of it was a sign of prosperity and good wealth (Wallach, 2013). Additionally, dairy was referred to as "white meat," and was a larger staple in poorer people's diets than their affluent counterparts (Wallach, 2013). With these norms in mind, early European settlers, and especially English settlers like the Pilgrims, expected to have the foods they enjoyed at home but in larger quantities, such as wheat bread

and meat (Wallach, 2013). This notion of “more is better” in America has persisted through the ages, and perhaps has its roots with some of the earliest European settlers.

The Pilgrims also brought with them additional attitudes about the food that they ate in terms of the effects it had on the body and thus a person’s health. They, like many people in Europe, believed that people contained 4 humors that affected a person’s physical and mental health. These humors were yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, and blood. Certain foods had hot or cold influences on the body and could equalize or disrupt a person’s humors and heal or cause illness, respectively. This echoes Europe during the Middle Ages with foods being prepared with certain spices to balance out the hot or cold nature of the food to bring the most benefit to the consumer, as discussed in the previous section. For example, eating hot or choleric foods like peppers or garlic was thought to neutralize excessive phlegm; drinking wine was believed to increase the volume of a person’s blood; and eating the flesh of a particular animal would transfer certain properties of that animal to the person consuming it (Wallach, 2013).

Interestingly, this last belief is one that has existed since antiquity and can be seen in multiple ancient cultures (McWilliams, 2015). It is important to note that eating for the sake of balancing one’s humors, called humoral eating, was a privilege reserved mostly for the upper class who had the funds to purchase whatever foods or spices needed (Wallach, 2013). The rest of the population, which included the Pilgrims, ate what they could afford to stave off hunger, because they did not have the luxury to focus solely on health.

As previously discussed, the Pilgrims wanted to preserve their usual ways of eating in the New World, so one of their first endeavors was attempting to grow wheat. Wheat was what made the flour they made into bread every day back home, and it was imperative to them that they continue this in their new home. Unfortunately, wheat grew very poorly in Cape Cod, and famine swiftly overtook the colony, wiping out 40 colonists out of 102 colonists during the first winter (Wallach, 2013). The Pilgrims' persistence in growing wheat demonstrates a fear of losing what they believed was a healthful way of eating while ironically also being the reason this first winter took such a toll on their population. It can be argued that what saved the Pilgrims is the Native Americans' generosity and hospitality. It can also be argued that this represents the beginning of the decline of Native American populations despite their well-intentioned initial relationship with the English settlers.

These well intentioned beginnings entailed to the Native Americans teaching the Pilgrims how to grow corn, squash, and beans together in a way that benefits all three crops, and they taught them how to use fish as a fertilizer (Wallach, 2013). These newly acquired skills were essential in the Pilgrims' survival, yet they still held fast to their beliefs around both food and about their superiority vis-à-vis the Native Americans. At times, the Pilgrims and other early European settlers had to find ways to reconcile their beliefs they imported from their homeland with what they observed with the Native Americans. One example of this is with hunting: back home in England, hunting was reserved for the upper class who had land on which to hunt. In the New World, hunting was associated with Native American men, since this was a commonly gendered task.

While the Pilgrims did not want to liken themselves to the rich they disapproved of back home, they also did not want to have something in common with the Native Americans. The Pilgrims also needed to hunt to supplement their meager harvests, so they had to find a way to reconcile these ideas. This resulted in them agreeing to hunt but only to hunt game that resembled game from England (Wallach, 2013).

Despite the Native Americans' initial attempt at fostering a positive relationship with the Pilgrims, the Pilgrims were arguably too preoccupied with their own self-image to return the sentiment. This becomes apparent in many depictions of the first Thanksgiving known in the US today, like the one pictured below in Figure 2, which are very likely inaccurate, as they depict the Pilgrims sharing their harvest with the Native Americans, when in reality, these roles were reversed (Wallach, 2013). This is perhaps the first instance of the appropriation of a historical event by White European settlers in the New World. The same can be argued about the eventual adoption of corn into people of European descent's diets, since most traces of its roots with Native American populations go largely unrecognized.



Figure 2. A common depiction of the first Thanksgiving

This becomes especially true with the arrival of the Puritans, who set food in the New World about ten years after the Pilgrims (Wallach, 2013). The Puritans' transition to living in the New World was made much smoother due to the knowledge they could easily acquire from Europeans who were already settled there. The Puritans, similar to the Pilgrims, also came to the New World to escape religious persecution, though their food practices were much more centered around God, as their religion heavily influenced their way of life. For example, the Puritans engaged in many days of fasting, frequent thanksgivings to God, and avoided gluttony at all costs (Wallach, 2013). Overall, their mindset was that spiritual nourishment was more important than physical nourishment.

Once these new colonies became more firmly established, survival was no longer as strong of an influence on daily life, so many allowed themselves additional luxuries when they could afford them. One of the main products that demonstrated this transition was with the purchase and consumption of meat (Wallach, 2013). This is an important theme echoed throughout American culinary history: without survival at the forefront of people's minds, the first thing they will do purchase more luxury goods, such as meat. Puritans maintained their more simplistic, God-centered eating habits of pottages made with grains, vegetables, and meat; however, overtime, the portion of meat grew, while the grains and vegetables became more like side dishes, much like we see today on Americans' dinner tables (Wallach, 2013).

It can be argued that the creation of American cuisine began with the arrival of African slaves in colonial territories and the subsequent melding of Native American,

English, and African cuisine. From this point on, American cuisine becomes increasingly complex with each wave of people arriving from all over the world on both East and West coasts and in the South, further contributing to distinct regional cuisines.

Upon arrival in the colonies, African slaves not only combined their culinary traditions with those of the colonists and Native Americans, but each distinct African tribe that was brought to the colonies also combined their native cultures (Wallach, 2013). These fusions established a new culture for the slaves to identify with in this new place that included dimensions such as language, cuisine, dance, music, etc. In terms of contributing to American cuisine, many African women were placed in slave owners' kitchens, where they were able to combine their own knowledge of food and cooking with those of the colonists (Wallach, 2013). While African slaves were not well fed by their masters and often suffered from preventable nutritional deficiencies such as pellagra and scurvy, many of them grew gardens and foraged for additional food sources (Wallach, 2013). Some of these foraged foods, like catfish, became emblems of African-American cuisine that still exist today as part of American cuisine, particularly in the South (Wallach, 2013). Today, the extent of African influence on American cuisine varies by the historical concentration of people of African descent in a geographic region (Wallach, 2013).

In the 18th century, as the colonies continued developing, the Revolutionary War neared closer alongside increasing frustration on the side of colonists. Interestingly, while colonists became increasingly displeased by their treatment by the English, they emulated the English in an effort to be more fashionable (Wallach, 2013). It is important

to note, however, that the intention behind this was not as a show of solidarity, but instead as a demonstration that they were equals to the English. In fact, colonists did not see themselves as English subjects at this point in time because of the large degree of separation between America and England (Wallach, 2013). After the Boston Tea Party, this becomes even more apparent with Americans' switch from drinking tea, the main beverage in England, to drinking coffee, which was considered to be a more patriotic drink (Wallach, 2013).

French influences on American food also occurred in the years leading up to the Revolutionary War. Once the Louisiana Territory was sold by the French to become part of America, a number of French Canadians moved south to what is today the state of Louisiana (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). As they settled there, their French-influenced cuisine merged with the amalgamation of English, Native American, and African that was already present there. This population of people, known as Acadians, eventually became known as Cajuns, also lending their name to the unique cuisine from Louisiana today that includes dishes such as crawfish étouffée (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). Around the same time, a slave uprising in Haiti caused French slave owners and Creoles to migrate to the East Coast, which also served to introduce French and Creole cuisine to American food culture (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004).

A third way French cuisine made its way into American food culture was because of Thomas Jefferson, who was a well-known Francophile (Wallach, 2013). While French food was not well known by most Americans, Jefferson hired a French chef to cook for

him in the United States. It is in part due to Jefferson that French food, particularly *haute cuisine*, became the food of the upper class (Wallach, 2013). This trend continues well into the 19th and 20th centuries in the US in such a way that French cuisine had been placed on this pedestal that upper class Americans had much appreciation for (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). However, the other Americans who were not part of the upper class regarded this appreciation of French cuisine as an insult and a looking-down-upon American fare (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 2004). It is possible that these feelings toward French cuisine, which has remained very much on this pedestal, persist today and are the source of the snobby French stereotype often imparted on its people. This poises French cuisine to be either highly praised or judged as "other" by the American people.

The 19th and 20th centuries in the United States can be characterized by even more frequent waves of immigration, wherein new, foreign cuisine was introduced to the existing American food culture. In 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signified the end of the Mexican-American War, and the acquisition of the Southwest to the US (Wallach, 2013). This area already had a culinary identity that combined Spanish, Mexican, and Aztec food influences following the Spanish Conquistadores exploiting the area centuries prior. Soon after this acquisition, Westward expansion took place, further incorporating differing food cultures into a single dynamic one (Wallach, 2013). Overtime, this new food culture was referred to as Tex-Mex and is an incredibly popular cuisine today (Wallach, 2013).

Around 1850 marked the beginning the Chinese immigration to the West Coast, which introduced a markedly different cuisine to the US that it had never seen before (Wallach, 2013). Most of the 25,000 immigrants were Chinese men who were hired to mine and build the railway system in the West (Wallach, 2013). As more Chinese immigrants arrived and as mining and railway work ran out, many people opened restaurants offering their traditional Chinese fare. While this was acceptable to other Chinese immigrants, the rest of American population regarded Chinese food with distrust and disgust. In order to survive in the US, these immigrants soon adapted their traditional dishes with ingredients and flavors recognized by Americans (Wallach, 2013). This represents a kind of integration on the part of Chinese immigrants into American food culture, but the acceptance of this new cuisine by Americans also signals the reciprocity of this integration.

Soon after the first waves of Chinese immigrants arrived in California, a total of 28 million immigrants from Europe started making their way into the US as well, primarily through Ellis Island on the East Coast (Wallach, 2013). This mass period of immigration occurred between 1860 and 1920 and included Italians, Jews, Irish, among many others (Wallach, 2013). During the 1880s, four million Italians came to the US, most of them poor peasants. Similar to other immigrant groups, Italians' food habits were judged harshly by other Americans, because they used strong flavors like garlic that were considered unpleasant to smell (Wallach, 2013).

During this same period of time, nearly two million Jewish immigrants settled on the East Coast, mainly in New York City (Wallach, 2013). The Jewish population in a

way introduced America to religious dietary laws, namely *kashrut* from the Talmud. Foods that they introduced and made fairly commonplace include corned beef and bagels (Wallach, 2013). However, it's important to note that Jewish immigrants experienced strong anti-Semitic discrimination, making their settling and integration into American society strained and difficult for many. Irish immigrants also dealt with similar discrimination due to a persisting stereotype that they were all drunkards and that they were unfit for hire and for work (Wallach, 2013). Today, however, Irish food and drink have been accepted and adopted into American food culture, and it is not uncommon for any American to consume a Guinness on Saint Patrick's Day.

Immigration to the US has persisted well into the 21st century. In 2014, the US population included 42.4 million immigrants, which is the highest number every recorded in American history (Zeigler & Camarota, 2016). From 2000-2014, 18.7 million new immigrants settled in the US, with no indication that this slow down (Zeigler & Camarota, 2016). New immigrants are mainly from countries in the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Pakistan, along with other countries like Egypt, India, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia (Zeigler & Camarota, 2016).

The political climate today strongly suggests that American hostility and mistrust toward foreigners and immigrants is a trend that persists. Many immigrants hope in coming to the US is finding safety and abundance. Historian Ronald Takaki says that "by adopting abundance, the immigrants [adopt] America" (Wallach, 2013). Indeed, another important aspect of American culinary culture is this idea of abundance that has been echoed throughout its history: as people have spending power, they purchase

more food for themselves and their families. Additionally, the integration of their foreign food cultures into American food culture have consistently gone through a process of rejection and distrust, curiosity, acceptance, and adoption by the American people who somewhat dictate this integration. Throughout American history, immigration has played a pivotal role in creating America's vibrant, dynamic culinary culture that we experience in every corner of the country today.

History of Foie Gras

Foie gras is most famously associated with France, and indeed it is part of the country's culinary heritage and is celebrated as such. However, the history of this product actually dates back to around 2500 BCE in Egypt, where there is evidence in bas-reliefs that depict the hand feeding of ducks, geese, and other migratory birds (Guémené, 2004), similar to Figure 1 presented below. There is insubstantial evidence suggesting the Ancient Egyptians consumed the livers of these birds, but the technique of hand feeding to encourage weight gain is one that will carry on and is important in foie gras. The Greeks, followed by the Romans, learned from the Egyptians the products that could be eaten from a fattened goose, which included both their meat as well as their livers. In fact, Cratinus, a Greek poet, is credited with one of the first reference to "geese fatteners" in the 5th century BCE (DeSoucey, 2016). Fattened geese were often gifted to Greek kings and emperors, like Nero, and were served at banquets (DeSoucey, 2016).

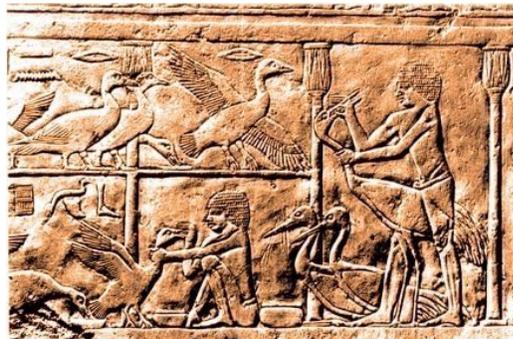


Figure 1. Egyptian bas-relief of two workers feeding birds by hand

It was not until the Romans adopted the bird fattening technique that foie gras was considered a delicacy (Guémené, 2004). During the Roman Empire, the task of fattening geese, the main fowl used at that time, was given to Jewish slaves, which

became important after the fall of the Roman Empire and through the Middle Ages. One theory of how foie gras came to France is during the time of the Roman Empire, when France was known as Gaul. The Romans may have brought the practice with them when they occupied Southwestern France, which is interestingly still a major production center of foie gras today (DeSoucey, 2016). While geese were the main fowl used during this time period, figs were the main feed used to fatten the birds, giving them the Latin name *jecur ficatum*, meaning “liver obtained with figs” (Guémené, 2004). Overtime, *jecur* was dropped, leaving *ficatum*, meaning figs. With the evolution of language, we see that during the 7th century, *ficatum* becomes *figido*, then *fedie* or *feie* in the 12th century. In today’s French, Italian, and Spanish, the words for liver are *foie*, *fegato*, and *higado*, respectively (Guémené, 2004).

There is little written about foie gras during the Middle Ages, though some suggest the reason foie gras survived this time period is because of the Jewish population who were forced to make foie gras as slaves for the Romans. Due to Jewish dietary laws, or *kashrut*, outlined in the Talmud, pork is a prohibited food. During the Middle Ages, lard from pork was the main source of cooking fat, so the Jews needed an alternate fat source that was kosher. Using their knowledge acquired as slaves, it is believed that some Jewish populations continued force feeding geese and other poultry to produce cooking fat as well as a plump bird with plenty of meat (Caro, 2009). It is possible that Jewish families were also able to sell the meat for additional income, because Jews were not allowed to own land (DeSoucey, 2016). This seems to be an echo of a commentary on a 3rd century parable written by a French rabbi called Rashi in the 11th

century that described coming across a fattened goose that is so fat that it is losing its feathers (Caro, 2009). This indicates that using geese as a fat source is not a far-fetched idea for the Jewish people, and that it may have already been around for quite some time. Due to their primary use as a fat source, geese were often referred to as “walking larders,” even though it was likely that every part of the bird was used to reduce waste (Caro, 2009). Some suggest that the Jewish dish of chopped liver may have also come from this historical background (Caro, 2009).

The Jews did not become commercial producers of foie gras until around the 16th century, when the product was “rediscovered” in a sense and recorded by a number of people, one of which being Pope Pius V’s chef and in François La Varenne’s book *Le Cuisinier françois*, written in 1651 (Caro, 2009). It is during this time period that foie gras became a dish consumed by the aristocracy (Guémené, 2004). It is also important to note that foie gras was being consumed all over Europe and not just in France - it isn’t until the 18th century that foie gras is considered a delicacy in France. It is said that foie gras was invented in the Alsace region on France (Root, 1992). Chef Jean-Pierre Clause reportedly served foie gras to the governor of Alsace, and the governor loved the dish so much that he brought it to Versailles around the year 1780 to share with the royal family (DeSoucey, 2016). It is believed that this enabled foie gras to become a celebrated and integral part of French cuisine. Today, major centers of foie gras production still reside in Alsace as well as in the southwestern region of France known as le Périgord (DeSoucey, 2016) (McWilliams, 2014).

The 18th century also brought about some developments in foie gras production and commercialization. Better sterilization techniques and transportation allowed for the product to travel longer distances without spoiling (Guémené, 2004). Corn imported from the New World was integrated into livestock feed and also became the main ingredient in goose feed to make foie gras (Guémené, 2004). In France, the use of corn as livestock feed developed greatly between the 17th and 19th centuries, particularly in the southwest part of the country (Root, 1992). This area, known as the Béarn and Gers, is where foie gras production developed the most to become a significant part of the region's economy. Beyond feed, geese were the main fowl used for foie gras up until the 20th century when they were replaced for the most part with ducks. Additionally, feeding and production methods did not improve greatly until the later half of the 20th century (Guémené, 2004).

One of the main developments in foie gras production from the 1950s through today is in feeding technology. The first improvement was the pneumatic dispenser used to feed the birds: the use of air pressure delivered a corn mash mixture faster, making feeding less time-consuming (Guémené, 2004). Previously, the main method of gavage was accomplished using a funnel, a tube, the feed, and gravity (DeSoucey, 2016). Around this time, birds were also placed in their own individual cages instead of multiple birds to a single pen. These two changes allowed for an increase in efficiency, with a feeding rate of up to 400 birds per hour (Guémené, 2004). The next development was the transition from a pneumatic to a hydraulic feed dispenser. While hydraulic dispensers also have the benefit of faster feed delivery, they also can be programmed

to deliver a certain volume of feed, which is useful in creating a consistent final product (Guémené, 2004). Some later developments take into consideration the birds themselves: barns now have lighting, temperature, and humidity controls to keep the ducks comfortable, especially around the garage period (Guémené, 2004). These developments could help mimic a winter-like environment, when ducks and geese are more likely to prefer high-carbohydrate diets to prepare for migration (“Understanding Waterfowl: Duck Digestion,” n.d.).

As previously mentioned, the 20th century marked a reversal in the ratio of ducks to geese used for producing foie gras. Before, geese were mainly used, while today they only account for about 8% of the world production of foie gras (Guémené, 2004). Geese take more time to raise in terms of laying eggs, hatching them, and raising them to maturity, which is inefficient when attempting to maximize production. However, they yield larger livers that lose the least amount of fat during cooking (Guémené, 2004). Nevertheless, ducks are by far the main waterfowl used to produce foie gras today. Interestingly, Hungary produces more foie gras from geese than from ducks out of all of the European countries that produce it (“Foie gras farms | An investigation by Animal Equality - Report,” n.d.). Besides France and Hungary, all other European producers of foie gras use exclusively ducks, while France uses both, but with a much heavier reliance on ducks (“Foie gras farms | An investigation by Animal Equality - Report,” n.d.).

In 2012, France was the largest producer and exporter of foie gras with over 20,000 tons produced from about 700,000 geese and 37 million ducks (“Foie gras

farms,” n.d.). Foie gras production accounts for 30,000 direct and 100,000 indirect jobs in France, indicating not only a culturally important product but also an economically important one (Guémené, 2004). For comparison, the US foie gras production rate in the late 2000s, was approximately 1/100th of the size of France's, translating to about 500,000 ducks used for foie gras each year (DeSoucey, 2016).

The other European producers of foie gras are Spain, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Belgium, which are all part of the European Foie Gras Federation, founded in 2008 (“Foie gras farms,” n.d.). Also referred to as Euro Foie Gras, the European Foie Gras Federation promotes foie gras as part of Europe’s cultural and gastronomic heritage while encouraging an increase in consumption without sacrificing quality (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.). This group is the antithesis of animal rights groups’ websites that argue against the continued production of foie gras, no matter the cultural or economic impact it may have. Foie gras' history is an extensive one, beginning in Ancient Egypt and eventually settling as a gastronomic icon in France and an important economic force in other European countries.

Production and Introduction to Foie Gras Ethics

The main point of contention with foie gras for many people is with its production. In this section, the species of birds and the gavage process will be detailed, as well as how this process encourages liver fattening to yield the desired product. This discussion of physiology will then extend into a first look into some of the ethical arguments surrounding this practice.

Today, there three species of bird used to produce foie gras: the grey Landaise goose (*Anser anser*), the muscovy duck (*Cairina moschata*), and the mule duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), pictured below in Figures 3, 4, and 5, respectively. (Guémené, 2004). As previously mentioned, geese are used the least frequently for foie gras due to the length of time associated with rearing and feeding, yet they yield the largest livers with the least amount of loss when cooked (Guémené, 2004). The muscovy duck is most susceptible to disease, but it produces the most meat and slightly smaller livers. The mule duck, which is a hybrid of the muscovy drake and the female common duck, is most frequently used to make foie gras due to their facility in managing and raising them and resistance to disease (Guémené, 2004). Hybridization is a strategy currently being applied by researchers to create a bird that is more efficient in producing large livers as well as breasts for maximum usage of the most valuable parts of the birds (Guémené, 2004).



Figure 3. Grey Landaise goose



Figure 4. Muscovy Duck



Figure 5. Mule ducks

The rearing process for ducks and geese destined for foie gras is usually separated into 2-4 phases, depending on the source. Put more simply, the 2-phase rearing process separates the phases of raising the ducks and geese to adulthood and then exposing them to gavage feeding for the last 12-16 days of life (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.). Longer phases describe a slower process of acclimating the ducks and geese to eating more feed at one time to prepare them for gavage (Guémené, 2004). *Ad libitum* feeding is usually allowed for the first 6-9 weeks, followed by hourly feeding restrictions for 3-5 weeks, meaning that feed is only available during certain hours of the day. This encourages the fowl to eat more when they have access to feed. Sometimes, quantitative food restriction is also used, meaning less food is available during the times when feed is offered, which also encourages increased consumption.

The pre-gavage period is between 3 and 10 days long, and uses the two strategies described previously, but the amounts of feed available and the amount of time it is available increases, encouraging even further increased consumption. The main objectives during this time period are initiation steatosis (or fattening of the liver), to stimulate increased digestive secretions to prepare the ducks and geese for gavage feeds, and to increase their crop size, which is the widened portion of the esophagus (Guémené, 2004). This last objective is to make the transition to gavage easier on the

birds, though interestingly, waterfowl tend not to have a crop and instead just have a very elastic esophagus that does not need training to expand (“Understanding Waterfowl: Duck Digestion,” n.d.). The pre-gavage period is also used to shorten the gavage-feeding period, since liver steatosis can result in livers weighing around 180g before gavage even starts (Guémené, 2004).

As mentioned previously, the gavage period itself only lasts between 12 and 16 days, with ducks being on the lower end and geese being on the upper end of this spectrum (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.). The timing of feeds is typically twice per day once ducks and geese have reached maturity around 10-14 weeks of age (Guémené, 2004). The feed used is a mix made primarily of corn that is both inexpensive and high in starch, which encourages lipogenesis, or fat production, in the liver. The most effective feeds are those that yield larger livers in a shorter gavage period that also lose less fat once cooked (Guémené, 2004). By law in France, duck livers must weigh 300g and goose livers must weigh 400g to be called foie gras (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.).

Various forms of foie gras are available for purchase. The liver in its entirety may be purchased raw, partly cooked, or completely cooked, seasoned and hermetically sealed (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.). It may also appear in preparations like bloc de foie gras, which are like a pâté, a kind of French spread or topping for bread made from meat, that can have larger pieces of foie gras in them or can be a smoother final product (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.). Often, these prepared products are seasoned with salt, pepper, cognac, truffles, and more. Beyond the liver itself, birds used to make foie gras are also used for other consumable products. These products include *magret*, or the breast meat

from these birds, and their rendered fat, which is primarily used for cooking, much like how Jewish populations used it during the Middle Ages (Guémené, 2004). A popular dish that uses the magret and fat from these birds, particularly ducks, is *confit de canard*. This dish is prepared by slowly cooking the magret in the duck fat to create a moist, tender product. While this can be purchased ready-made in cans, it is not uncommon to find duck confit at restaurants.

Foie gras means fat liver in French, and the process outlined above is meant to encourage the development of this fatty liver, which is also called steatosis.

Lipogenesis, or the production of fat for storage, in birds tends to occur more frequently in the liver as opposed to accumulating as adipose tissue (Guémené, 2004). This directly affects the nutritional content of foie gras, mainly translating to a high fat content, particularly as monounsaturated fats and cholesterol (“Foie gras : recettes et infos nutritionnelles | Larousse Cuisine,” n.d.). In 100 g (about 3.5 ounces) of foie gras, nearly half of it, about 46 g, is fat and has a total of 460 calories (“Foie gras : recettes et infos nutritionnelles | Larousse Cuisine,” n.d.). Additionally, it is rich in vitamins A and B12 and in iron. From a nutrition perspective, it is likely that foie gras would be recommended as a food to enjoy only on occasion, due mainly to its high fat content.

This fattening of birds' livers is the source of one argument against foie gras. Animal rights activists argue that steatosis, or fatty liver, is a diseased state, which makes the bird unfit for consumption by law, in addition to causing suffering to the bird itself (“Foie gras farms | An investigation by Animal Equality - Report,” n.d.). Cirrhosis is a condition that develops with long-term steatosis and causes scarring on the liver,

which impacts proper liver function and overall health. Proponents for foie gras argue that steatosis is a reversible condition, whereas pushing that limit and causing cirrhosis would be causing a disease state (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.). By tip-toeing this fine line, producers say that producing foie gras is mimicking the natural gorging process the birds initiate themselves prior to migration and is therefore called an “extra physiological” state (Guémené, 2004). Euro Foie Gras even cites a published scientific study (Bernard et al., 1998) to back up this steatosis versus cirrhosis argument.

Another point of contention of gavage feeding is the potential impact on the esophagus of the animals. Those in favor of foie gras insist that because ducks and geese have an elastic esophagus and no gag reflex that gavage feeding does them no harm (“Euro Foie Gras,” n.d.). Waterfowl indeed have elastic esophagus that allow birds to swallow things whole like fish, which are later “chewed up” by the gizzards (“Understanding Waterfowl: Duck Digestion,” n.d.). Additionally, some ducks are able to hold a quarter pound of grain in their esophagus (“Understanding Waterfowl: Duck Digestion,” n.d.). Animal rights activists argue that there is still risk of perforation, bleeding, and difficulty breathing with this process (“Foie gras farms | An investigation by Animal Equality - Report,” n.d.).

Other ethical arguments surrounding foie gras are more philosophical in nature and attempt to address birds' experience of pain. The question revolves around the distinction of reacting versus responding. It is argued that proponents of foie gras assume the ducks and geese only react to their environment because they cannot respond to it using language to communicate (Youatt, 2012). This conclusion is thought

to be too narrow-minded, and some critics of foie gras (and meat eating in general) argue that a more nuanced approach to animals' capacities, particularly for pain, is needed to evaluate how animals should be treated (Youatt, 2012). Interestingly, Youatt criticizes animals rights activists for reducing ducks' and geese's experience of pain as "passive sufferers," and that "war is waged on the matter of pity" instead of trying to assess animals' worth and experience (Youatt, 2012).

The science behind why gavage works is essential in the foie gras debate due to this tip-toeing on the line between healthy and diseased birds. While there is research investigating the sensory experience of the animals themselves, it is difficult to know fully, which further complicates the ethical discussion. Cultural implications stemming from each country's culinary history also complicates this debate, because while some cultures value a particular food product, others may not have those cultural values and the history to reinforce them.

Foie Gras in France

It is clear by the legislation enacted in France over the centuries that the French have a special appreciation for food, where it comes from, and how it is made. One of the earliest examples of this is from 1411 when the French crown gave a patent for Roquefort cheese, which entailed that it could only be made in Roquefort-sur-Soulzon to receive that name (Kurlansky, 2002). In modern terms, this would be the equivalent of AOC, or *appellation d'origine contrôlée* (Actimage, n.d.). This designation is recognized by both France and the European Union (EU) and indicates that the product was made using a specific, recognized production process within a particular region of France. A similar designation that exists today is the AOP, or *appellation d'origine protégée*, which is a more general designation given by the EU that can be used on any product of a country that is part of the EU (Actimage, n.d.).

These designations are meant to maintain the uniqueness and genuine quality of a regional product. By extension, it is possible for these designations to also protect small business, encourage tourism, and represent a form of national pride. They also acknowledge the idea of *terroir*, meaning that where a product is made influences the flavor and character of the final product (Actimage, n.d.). Terroir can also be the mark of authenticity of a food product that is free of adulteration and full of artisanal tradition.

While France and the EU appear to be on the same page in terms of protecting regionally unique food products, foie gras has emerged as a point of contention between them. In 1999, the Council of Europe issued a document making recommendations to improve the ethics surrounding foie gras (Guémené, 2004). Some

of these recommendations include continuing research to find alternatives to gavage and making other changes during the rearing process to reduce any possible suffering. Some of these other recommended changes include doing away with individual cage use and ceasing carrying birds upside down by their legs (Guémené, 2004). These recommendations suggest that the EU was moving toward harsher regulation surrounding foie gras.

However, a specific part within that document, referred to as Directive 98/58/EC, states that “[u]ntil new scientific evidence on alternative methods and their welfare aspects is available, the production of foie gras shall be carried out only where it is [in] current practice” (Guémené, 2004). While this seems like foie gras is safe from legislation, this document was enough of a threat to France that they felt the need to take preventive steps in ensuring the protection of foie gras. First, foie gras from the Périgord region of Southwestern France was awarded the protected geographical indication label in 1999, meaning that no other product could be sold under a name advertising it to be foie gras from Southwestern France (DeSoucey, 2016). Then, in 2005, the French General Assembly and Senate voted to legally protect foie gras as part of their gastronomic heritage (DeSoucey, 2016).

An important question to be asked here is why did the EU make seemingly contradictory recommendations within this single document? While numerous EU member states have banned foie gras, such as Italy, Poland, and Norway, others like France and Hungary rely on foie gras as an important aspect of their economies and culture (Guémené, 2004). By this token, EU member states are divided amongst

themselves, leaving the EU as an institution in the middle. In addition, tensions already exist between EU member states and the EU in terms of being one collective while maintaining individual and unique cultures. Because of this dynamic, it is possible that the EU is walking this line to satisfy EU member states that lie on either side of the foie gras debate.

Despite this potential threat, France was successful in legally protecting their prized dish of foie gras. While some may see these preventive actions taken by France to be hasty, it is due to France's strong culinary tradition surrounding foie gras as well as a genuine desire to keep the dish alive that fueled these protections. This will also ensure the continuation of this practice as an important part of France's economy. For now, foie gras is safe from further legislation by the EU.

Foie Gras in the United States

It is unclear when foie gras first came to the United States, and sources mentioning this are vague. It is possible that foie gras was brought to the US by various waves of European immigrant groups ("History Of Foie Gras," n.d.) or that innovations in canning and travel during the 20th century allowed for transport of the product over longer distances under more sanitary conditions ("Origins," n.d.). Similar to today, foie gras was by and large enjoyed by the upper class, and its consumption has remained fairly modest. In 2005, approximately 450 tons of foie gras was consumed in the US, 95% of which was in fine dining establishments (Youatt, 2012). In comparison to a more commonly consumed meat product, chicken consumption in 2005 was around 13 million tons ("Per Capita Consumption of Poultry and Livestock, 1965 to Estimated 2016, in Pounds," n.d.).

In the 1980s, the US banned the import of raw poultry products, which included foie gras ("History Of Foie Gras," n.d.). Up until this point, foie gras was imported, so this first bout of legislation spurred the creation of domestic foie gras producers. Today, there are three foie gras farms in the US: La Belle Farm in Ferndale, New York; Hudson Valley Foie Gras, also in Ferndale, New York; and D'Artagnan in Union New Jersey. Previously, there was a fourth, Sonoma Foie Gras, but it closed in 2012 due to the legislation in California, which will be addressed shortly ("About Sonoma - Artisan Foie Gras," n.d.).

The idea of "foiehibition," as it called by Michaela DeSoucey, in the US began in the early 1990s and slowly built up steam over the following two decades, wherein the

majority of anti-foie gras legislation took place (DeSoucey, 2016). Some of the main animal rights activist groups involved in this debate include the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), and the Animal Protection Rescue League (APRL) along with some smaller coalitions. In 1991, PETA released an investigation they had done on Hudson Valley Foie Gras, which at the time was called Commonwealth Enterprises, though their impact was fairly small (DeSoucey, 2016). A few years later in 1999, Michael Ginor was scheduled to participate in a panel discussion and tasting of foie gras at the Smithsonian Institute. However, this event was canceled by the institute due to numerous letters from animal rights groups (DeSoucey, 2016). This was yet another victory for animal rights activists that had a very small impact outside of their circles.

It wasn't until what transpired in California that foie gras emerged in the mainstream media. In the early 2000s, clips from the film *the Delicacy of Despair* were shown on the news by a San Francisco ABC Television affiliate (DeSoucey, 2016). The film is an undercover documentary wherein a team from Gourmet Cruelty investigated Sonoma Foie Gras and rescued a handful of their ducks for rehabilitation (“The Truth about Foie Gras - GourmetCruelty.com - Delicacy of Despair,” n.d.). Seeing these clips prompted a reporter from the LA Times and the head of APRL to visit Sonoma Foie Gras at night to gather evidence to show on the news the following day. Upon discovering this, the owner of Sonoma Foie Gras quickly sparked a legal battle by suing APRL for trespassing and theft (DeSoucey, 2016). APRL countersued, arguing that Sonoma Foie Gras broke animal cruelty laws.

In February of 2004, a Senate Bill 1520 (SB1520) was introduced in California that sought to ban the force feeding of birds with the intention of enlarging their livers for consumption and the purchase of this product (DeSoucey, 2016) (Duggan, 2016). Though the wording of the bill does not explicitly say foie gras, the target of this bill is clear. The bill was passed in September later that year with an 8-year delay in implementation. This delay was given as a kind of final chance for Sonoma Foie Gras to find and adopt a more natural alternative to gavage that would not be considered as cruel (DeSoucey, 2016). Unfortunately, Sonoma Foie Gras did not make these changes, and they were forced to close their doors in July 2012 ("About Sonoma - Artisan Foie Gras," n.d.).

Despite Californian production of foie gras ceasing, displeased chefs and restaurateurs worked around the ban, using loopholes such as indirectly selling foie gras to customers. This indirect selling typically involved purchasing something relatively inexpensive, like bread, at an expensive price, but this bread came with a "complimentary" serving of foie gras (DeSoucey, 2016). Others took advantage of their restaurant sitting on federal property, thus exempting them from California's law (DeSoucey, 2016). Of course, foie gras had to be purchased from another producer out of state.

Meanwhile, a coalition of foie gras producers from the US and Canada banded together to file an injunction against California's law, arguing that it violated the US Commerce Clause, which gives the power of regulating commerce within the US to the federal government (DeSoucey, 2016). While this was initially dismissed by judges in

California, a district judge in California's Central District later invalidated the ban in 2015 (DeSoucey, 2016). The Poultry Products Inspections Act, which is similar to the Commerce Clause, was cited as evidence to overturn the ban, specifically because it violated the regulation stating that states are prohibited from regulating some aspects of food distribution and sales (DeSoucey, 2016).

The success in 2004 in California prompted animal rights activists to expand their efforts: Chicago became the next epicenter of the foie gras debate. For activists, a victory in Chicago would be symbolically significant, because Chicago has a long reputation of being a major hub of the meat packing industry (Youatt, 2012). In April of 2006, a bill was passed in Chicago banning the sale of foie gras within city limits. Similar to California, chefs and restaurateurs either found loopholes or blatantly disregarded the law, creating "duckeasies," which resembled the underground speakeasies of the Prohibition era (Youatt, 2012). Many people were against the bill for more general reasons, because they believed the state should not be policing the food people choose to eat (DeSoucey, 2016). Some saw the bill as addressing the wrong problem: while people were not fond of gavage, they recognized that this practice was so infrequent compared to the activities performed on concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), which they felt actually needed addressing (DeSoucey, 2016). Others voiced their discontent with the bill because there were other concerns, like crime and poverty in Chicago, that were obviously being ignored with the time spent drafting and debating the bill (Youatt, 2012).

Once again, legal action was taken soon after the law passed. The Illinois Restaurant Association sued the city of Chicago, arguing that the city did have jurisdiction to regulate interstate commerce, especially because foie gras was produced out of state (DeSoucey, 2016). Legislators soon realized that this law was not worth their time. People increasingly criticized the bill, including the mayor at that time, Richard Daley, who said that Chicago has become the "laughing stock of the nation" because of it (Youatt, 2012). Only one instance of legal action was taking in the spirit of this bill, which was a fine of \$250 and the confiscation of 30 pounds of foie gras sausages from a hot dog restaurant cleverly called Hot Doug's, named after the owner (DeSoucey, 2016). As a result of a total lack of support of th bill, it was rescinded two years later in 2008 (Youatt, 2012).

While other foie gras bans have been proposed in legislatures in other states like Maine and Maryland, none have come to fruition ("Artisan Farmers Alliance, Foie Gras Farmers of America," n.d.). The remaining three foie gras farms on the East coast continue to be operational for the time being. While these are the largest producers, there are other companies producing similar products. One of these is Schlitz Foods in South Dakota, which sells what the website calls "late harvest fatty goose liver" ("Schlitz Foods," n.d.). Nevertheless, the amount of foie gras or foie gras-like products produced in the US remains to be fairly minimal in the grand scheme of meat consumption.

Despite all of the legislative actions against foie gras, it seems to have withstood them with little impact on the domestic market, except with the closing of Sonoma Foie Gras. While the end results in France are similar in that foie gras will remain protected

from legislation for now, it is interesting how the state-level legislation interacted with federal or union-level legislation. The US states attempted to control foie gras, yet they had no jurisdiction due to overlying federal law, whereas France created laws to protect foie gras when the European Union, to which France belongs, proposed legislation threatening its continued production.

So why was foie gras so strongly debated in the US? For animal rights activists, it is likely due to the fact that the foie gras industry is an easy target: it is a very small industry and is unaffiliated with large agro-business and poultry lobbies. This translates to foie gras having fewer people with less power fighting for its right to exist in the US. It is important to note that the choice to remain un-affiliated from large poultry companies and lobbies may be intentional in order to maintain a more artisanal image. However, this unwillingness to participate in such a pervasive part of agro-business may also be interpreted by other companies or other Americans as an unwillingness to integrate into American food culture, leaving a bitter taste in their mouths and a negative perception of foie gras as a whole.

Other hypotheses as to why foie gras endured this intense criticism and, some might say, punishment are that it is going through the same skepticism as other foreign food in the past before being integrated into American food culture or that it is such an important aspect of French cuisine that it may never integrate into American food culture. This first hypothesis echoes the patterns described in the history of America's culinary history: as foreign foods enter the US, many look upon them with suspicion and mistrust and may even flat out reject them. Overtime, the negative novelty of these

foods were off, and eventually they are integrated into some part of American food culture. For modern Americans, foie gras is a French term, adding a level of unfamiliarity in terms of language; liver is not a food that is part of American's regular diet and frequently makes people turn up their noses; and gavage is also relatively unheard of, making a negative reaction seem understandable. Since the foie gras debate picked up steam only about 30 years ago, it is possible that foie gras' journey to incorporation into US food patterns is still in its infancy.

A second hypothesis stems from the patterns from French culinary history: it is possible that since French cuisine is so unique and identifiable worldwide, foie gras' integration into American food culture may be impossible. In this sense, it would likely remain a luxury product in the US, maintaining its place on the culinary pedestal reserved for French cuisine that America has held dear since the Revolutionary War. While this denotes a more positive view of French cuisine in general, a negative perception of foie gras in the US exists simultaneously. With French foods being venerated as they are, some Americans may see French food to be out of their reach, reserved only for those who can afford it, threatening the appreciation of more American foods.

While there are multiple possibilities behind why foie gras experienced such intense legislation, California and Chicago have proven to be models for the rest of the country showing that foie gras will likely not be legislated in a way that will completely eliminate it. As legal action against foie gras has settled, so have the debates for the

time being. Only time will tell whether or not foie gras will become integrated into American food culture or remain its own French entity.

The Future of Foie Gras

The craze around foie gras of the early 2000s has died down considerably in both Europe as well as the US, though the arguments and feelings surrounding it have not, particularly in those who hold special interest in the topic, like animal rights activists, chefs, and proponents of French culture. It can be argued that for animal rights activists, they will not be satisfied with any decision that preserves the continued production and consumption of foie gras. As long as the consumption of animal flesh continues, it is likely they will be satisfied. On the other end of this spectrum, chefs and proponents of French culture long to preserve this culinary tradition and to continue sharing its richness to anyone willing to try it. For these people, the production methods are no more inhumane than those used for other meat production, and many argue that artisanal foie gras is perhaps more humane due to more attention being placed on the quality of the final product.

Where does this leave foie gras? For now, its place as a prized component of French gastronomy appears to be stable, especially in terms of protective legislation undertaken by the French government. The foie gras debate has also settled in the US, particularly since the Chicago law was overturned. Nevertheless, the closing of Sonoma Foie Gras represents a large hit to the foie gras market in the US since there are already so few producers. Though it is unclear when the next widespread debate about foie gras will surface, it is safe to say that, for now, the dust has settled, leaving foie gras virtually unharmed by all of the debate.

For those who find themselves somewhere on the spectrum between animal rights activists and cultural and culinary proponents of foie gras, there is a kind of foie gras production that is given the title ethical or humane production (Youatt, 2012). This production method's goal is also to produce a fattened liver, but the key difference is to achieve an enlarged liver without the use of gavage feeding. The only producer claiming to sell humanely produced foie gras is La Patería de Sousa in southwest Spain. Their claims to fame besides not using gavage feeding are being the first certified organic foie gras producer and only producing foie gras during the winter, matching up with the birds' natural gorging cycles in preparation for migration ("La Patería de Sousa" n.d.). Instead of using the typical corn-mash mixture that goes into gavage feeding, the Patería uses olives, figs, nuts, and acorns as part of the birds' feed (Youatt, 2012). In 2006, they were awarded best foie gras at the Paris International Food Salon, which was quickly met with criticism, mainly by the French Professional Committee of Foie Gras Producers (CIFOG). CIFOG argued that the definition of foie gras includes gavage feeding as part of the food's definition, and because the Patería's foie gras did not match this definition, the award was later revoked (Youatt, 2012).

There is a company in South Dakota called Schlitz Foods, which is a leading producer of goose products in the US ("Schlitz Foods," n.d.). Interestingly, they sell a product sounding eerily similar to foie gras, yet they call it "late harvest fatty goose liver," because gavage is not used ("Schlitz Foods," n.d.). Similar to the Patería, Schlitz Foods also only produces their fatty liver product once per year, making very limited quantities. On their website, they sell liver in one or two-pound packages for \$48.50 each ("Schlitz

Foods,” n.d.). While this company advertises their liver product as a foie gras alternative, it is unclear how much they produce yearly and if they sell their liver product to restaurants.

While there are new, albeit very small, producers of humane foie gras, the climate around traditionally used gavage feeding in foie gras production has settled substantially, allowing for its preservation in France and the US. This humane production compromise may be a solution to ease some outstanding tensions surrounding foie gras, though until the definition of foie gras is changed, particularly in France, these fattened livers do not represent the traditional image of foie gras. In terms of the more generalized ethical debate between animal rights activists and cultural preservationists, a solution that satisfies both sides is impossible, because either consumption of foie gras would need to cease completely or it needs to continue to be a living part of France’s culinary heritage.

Despite the persistent nature of the foie gras debate, it is clear that foie gras is here to stay for the time being. France's proactive measures to ensure foie gras' protection from EU legislation will allow for its continued celebration as an important part of the French's culinary gastronomy. The attempts to legislate foie gras in the US were ultimately unsuccessful, leaving American foie gras producers to continue their craft and share it with curious eaters. While the outcomes in both countries are similar, their paths were quite different due to their culturally influenced attitudes toward foie gras. It is in the study of culinary histories from which a country's values toward cuisine are derived, influencing not only daily food choices, but also influencing how food itself is regulated.

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